

**GEOGRAPHIES OF PAIN: THE MEXICAN MOVEMENT FOR PEACE WITH JUSTICE
AND DIGNITY AND THE CONFIGURATION OF SPACES OF VICTIMHOOD**

Ana Catalina García de Alba Díaz

A thesis submitted to the faculty of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Department of Geography.

Chapel Hill
2013

Approved by:

Dr. Altha Cravey

Dr. Alvaro Reyes

Dr. James Peacock

ABSTRACT

ANA CATALINA GARCIA DE ALBA DIAZ: Geographies of Pain: The Mexican Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity and the Configuration of Spaces of Victimhood
(Under the direction of Dr. Altha Cravey)

Since 2006, Mexico has been embedded in a severe humanitarian and social crisis brought about by Calderon's "drug war" security strategy. On March 2011, the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity (MPJD), a social movement of victims was created in reaction to the growing death toll of drug related violence, the increase in human rights violations and the perception of a systematic effort by the government to belittle social costs of the war by manipulating the official narrative. Through protest marches, the MPJD articulated spaces of shared victimhood and set the path for victims' pain to be collectivized and politicized. This thesis illustrates how the spatial aspects of the official narrative of the drug war are countered by the emotional geographies constructed by the MPJD. These "spaces of pain" allowed for distinct emotional geographies that capture media attention to motivate collective action setting the foundations for reconstructing the social pact.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. BACKDROP TO THE MPJD: THE MEXICAN DRUG WAR.....	4
A. The 2006 Election and Calderon’s Quest for Legitimacy.....	4
B. The Drug War Strategy: Refuting its Foundations.....	7
C. Hell on Earth: The Local Geographies of the Drug War Violence.....	10
D. Neglected Victimhood: 90 per cent of the deaths are members of the organized crime.....	14
III. GEOGRAPHIES OF PAIN: THE MPJD AND THE CONFIGURATION OF SPACES OF VICTIMHOOD.....	19
A. Methodology: Ethnographic Content Analysis.....	21
B. Emotions Matter: Emotional Geographies as Theoretical Foundation.....	22
C. Pain and the Configuration of Spaces of Victimhood.....	29
a. From Cuernavaca, Morelos to Mexico City: Birth of the MPJD.....	29
b. The First Caravan for Peace: 3,000 Km. down the Route of Blood.....	37
c. Juarez, Coahuila: Shared Victimhood in Action.....	40
IV. CONCLUSION: FROM VICTIMS TO VICTIMHOOD	43
APPENDIX.....	45
REFERENCES.....	50

I. INTRODUCTION

For the last six years, Mexico has experienced a severe humanitarian and social crisis brought about by the drug war security strategy implemented by President Felipe Calderon. On March 2011, the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity (MPJD), a social movement led by victims emerged in reaction to the growing toll of victims of the drug related violence, the increase in human rights violations and the perception of a systematic effort by the government to downplay social costs of the war by recrafting the official narrative.

Since the first protests associated with the embryonic stage of the MPJD, the people participating in it worked towards enabling diverse processes that allowed for increasing recognition of victims of war, challenging the official narrative of victimhood constructed by Calderon's administration. Though the mobilizations and protest started as displays of solidarity configuring spaces for consolation, the exchange of individualized stories of drug-war-violence associated victimhood, quickly reconfigured these spaces, opening spaces of shared victimhood and setting the path for victims' pain to be collectivized and politicized along the way. The creation of these new spaces also allowed the MPJD to, by directly challenging the official narrative, put pressure on the government to try and enforce a shift in the national security strategy, moving from the disembodied idea of 'state' security towards a more broadly defined notion of 'human' security.

The notion of pain associated with unacknowledged victimhood and lack of justice rested at the heart of the MPJD actions of non-violent resistance and protest, which included mass mobilizations and "bus caravan tours" through the national territory.

These tactics were deployed as means of appropriating public spaces and using the appropriation as ways of furthering the recognition and vindication of the narrative of the victims' pain. Since its embryonic stage, the MPJD has challenged the official discourse regarding the casualties of the war on drugs, a limited narrative of victimhood that spoke only of criminals and collateral damage. The protesters' response to the official narrative heightened emotional reactions of indignation and pain associated with an invisible victimhood. For this reason, the efforts of the MPJD were focused on humanizing the statistics, collecting the stories of the victims and trying to push forward processes that allow the victims to gain both recognition and access to justice.

The present thesis seeks to illustrate how the MPJD members' pain associated with their victimhood allowed for the opening of spaces of shared victimhood, mobilizing individualized stories of pain towards creating a socialized experience of this emotion and ultimately founding a new political expression of victimhood. Moreover, it argues that the spatial aspect of the official narrative of the drug war, reflected in the geographical distribution of the drug violence and the spatial epistemology of the official database on the drug related killings, are countered by the emotional geographies constructed by the mobilization patterns of the MPJD, allowing the movement to articulate through it a counter-narrative of victimhood associated with the drug war and forming the foundation for the reconstruction of the social pact in Mexico.

In order to reach its goal, this thesis explores the case study of the public protest events and the first bus caravan associated with the embryonic stage of the MPJD (from April 26th to June, 2011), a process that concluded with the signing of the National Pact in Juarez, Coahuila. The analysis presented, is informed by the growing literature of the subfield of emotional geographies which acknowledges the crucial role that emotions play as mediators between society and space. As a final note, the data for this case study and the emotional geography analysis were collected through an ethnographic

content analysis based on the Mexican weekly news magazine *Proceso*. This and other publications that inform the current thesis are originally in Spanish hence, most of the materials have been translated by the author of this paper who is a native Spanish-speaker.

Since the current approach to the MPJD demonstrates that its actions articulated a counter-narrative to the official discourse of victimhood, the present document is structured as follows: An extensive background section explaining the emergence of the drug war security strategy, dissecting the rationale behind it, exploring the geographical distribution of the drug violence and the elements of the official narrative of drug war related victimhood. The following section pertains to the analysis of the subject of study as such it briefly introduces the nature of the MPJD, the methodological approach applied to obtaining the data, the theoretical foundations informing the analysis and the analysis of the three elements conforming the case study. The last section corresponds to the concluding reflection about the configuration of spaces of shared victimhood and the implications that enabling a transition process from victims to victimhood might have for Mexico.

II. BACKDROP TO THE MPJD: THE MEXICAN DRUG WAR

A. The 2006 Election and Calderon's Quest for Legitimacy

A considerable number of academics, political analysts and journalists suggest that the origins of the Mexican drug war can be traced back to the 2006 electoral campaign and the competition that emerged between the candidate for the right, Felipe Calderon Hinojosa and his leftist counterpart, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador. Perhaps the most notable works in this regards, correspond to those of Nuñez Albarrán (2012), Flores Nández (2012), Castañeda Gutman & Aguilar Valenzuela (2012) and Wolf, S. (2011). In their analysis of the drug war, these authors explore the nature of the electoral campaign and the configuration of events that led to the Federal Electoral Tribunal decision to concede the election to Felipe Calderon.

Eight political parties participated in the 2006 presidential election; however five of them joined forces in two different electoral coalitions. Because of this, the aggressive competition took place only between three candidates: Roberto Madrazo, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) candidate, in coalition with the Ecologist Green Party of Mexico (PVEM); Felipe Calderon Hinojosa, the candidate for the right National Action Party (PAN) which occupied the presidency at the moment; and Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, candidate for the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) and the coalition with the other two left political forces Convergence (PC) and the Labor Party (PT). Since Madrazo remained third in the polls, the serious competition took place between Calderon and Lopez Obrador.

Castañeda Gutman & Aguilar Valenzuela (2012) and Wolf, S. (2011) point out that both candidates' electoral platforms during the campaign served to establish a

common ground for analyzing how far removed the drug-related issue was from mainstream political concerns at the time for the election. Calderon campaigned under the slogan of the “president of employment” promising to boost economic growth and increase the generation of employment opportunities. His promises however, had little impact upon the electorate, who had already experienced unfulfilled promises from PAN’s president Vicente Fox. Throughout his presidential term, Fox had promised to boost employment, improve both education and health standards, and reduce polarizing inequality rampant throughout the country. Nonetheless, by the end of his term in office, working standards had deteriorated sharply, and both poverty and inequality had increased considerably. People were disappointed with what the first “transition” government in hands of the PAN and the generalized perception was that the party had little probability of remaining in power. (Wolf, 2011, p.685)

Lopez Obrador on the other hand, used his term as Head of Government of Mexico City as a stepping stone towards the presidency, widely showcasing his social welfare programs and his infrastructural developments of the city. He was widely popular within the federal district of the country and amongst the poorest and most vulnerable sectors of Mexican society. His electoral platform promised the implementation of an innovative and alternative economic model to replace neo-liberalist pillars of the economy founded upon the implementation of wider public policy in benefit of the most vulnerable social groups. This promise resonated nationally, positioning him throughout most of the campaign up until April, ahead of all the polls. What is clear for these authors is that the issue concerning drug trafficking, drug consumption and drug-related violence was seldom addressed by either one of the front-runners. Eventually, as the election date got closer, Lopez Obrador’s popularity began to decline, making the election one of the closest ever in the country.

Towards the closing of Election Day on July 2th, 2006, the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) declared that the results of the official quick count were too close to call, further announcing that the official count, which would begin on July 5th, was to determine which of the two candidates was to be recognized as president elect. However, based on exit poll results, both Calderon and Lopez Obrador declared themselves winners. In the meantime, the IFE's tardiness in announcing the final results only increased the resonance of claims of a "tainted" or "manipulated" election. By the time that the final announcement came, the IFE declared that Calderon had won over Lopez Obrador by a narrow margin of 0.6 per cent. On the following weeks, Lopez Obrador led major protest through the main avenues of Mexico City, demanding a "vote-by-vote" general recount. As Castañeda Gutman & Aguilar Valenzuela (2012) and Wolf, S. (2011) point out, Calderon would have been able to appease detractors by agreeing to the recount, but instead his refusal only exacerbated suspicion as to the legitimacy through which he had gained the presidency. In the midst of massive public outrage and protest, Lopez Obrador refused to recognize Calderon as legitimate president elect and instead proclaimed himself as the legitimate Mexican president later establishing a parallel governmental structure.

By the inauguration ceremony on December 1st, 2006, Calderon's legitimacy was severely compromised and at risk. Ten days into his presidency, he announced the drug war strategy and implemented a series of highly visible military operatives. Wolf further argues that the media deployment of images of military convoys crossing the country gave the impression of a relentless government. However, the public notoriety of military operations deemed the newly implemented strategy inefficient. For Wolf, the over-emphasis placed on the spectacular aspect of the drug war strategy sought, first and foremost, to have an impact over public opinion and consolidate social support for the presidency of Calderon. (Wolf, 2011, p.686)

B. The Drug War Strategy: Refuting its Foundations

The rapid implementation of the drug war strategy was officially justified by a statement: drug trafficking had become a major threat for the nation, more than what the president had been able to perceive before his election. The strategy was needed so “the drugs don’t reach your children”. (Wolf, 2011, p.686) Castañeda Gutman & Aguilar Valenzuela (2012) and Wolf, S. (2011) point out to three major official reasons given in support of the drug war: (1) The tightening of border security after 9/11 made it harder for drug traffickers to export their product, making it so that drugs remained and were marketed nationally, increasing drug consumption in the country, particularly amongst teenage population; (2) There had been a considerable increase of drug-related violence which was progressively undermining national security; (3) The rampant corruption had allowed for the state to lose control over much of the national territory that had in fact, been taken over by the drug cartels. (Wolf, 2011, p.686)

These authors however, also offer a series of rebuttal arguments projected in the official data sets. According to Castañeda Gutman & Aguilar Valenzuela (2012), at the time the strategy was announced, Mexico’s drug consumption was relatively low; the country was facing the lowest violence rates in its history (only eight murders per 100,000 persons) and the lowest level of penetration of the drug cartels in governmental institutions. Citing the Mexican National Institute of Statistics and Geography, the authors state that the number of killings for 2007 was 8,867 and that by 2011, it had risen to 27,199. Therefore, the number of killings per 100,000 persons went from 8.5 in 2007 to 24 in 2011. Additionally, they affirm that the total number of killings in the first five years of the presidency of Calderon totalled of 95, 659. Wolf (2011) provides her own account of the official discourse and the officially available data, which reflects the same line of thought as the previously referenced authors: According to the National Survey on Addictions, the increase of drug consumption amongst Mexican population had been

marginal, and the slight increase was observable within the teenage population; consumption in Mexico remained considerably less than that of the United States, Western Europe and even other Latin American countries and even though there was an increase in consumption, it was more likely attributed to population growth and the expansion of the Mexican middle class.

Perhaps the best comparison between Calderon's drug war rhetoric and the hard data corresponds to that of Nancy Flores Nández (2012). Her analysis masterfully articulates an exposé of the official lies through which the government tried to sell the idea that the drug war was total and effective. (Flores Nández, 2012, p.19). She carefully dissects the so called "successes" of the strategy pointing to the fact that in 2012 it had left a toll of more than 50,000 civilian casualties, 3,000 disappeared, 230,000 displaced, at least 1,226 minors (in Mexico the legal age is 18) executed and approximately 52,500 orphans (Flores Nández, 2012, p.173). In the meantime, it had not impacted the drug cartels' profits which oscillate between 18 and 39 billion dollars a year just for sales within the United States (Flores Nández, 2012, p.87). Additionally, she points to the dangerous implications of having the Mexican Army policing the streets and how the militarization can be read as a new "Guerra Sucia" (Dirty War) like that carried out during the 1960s and the 1970s between the PRI-ruled government and the left-wing student and guerilla groups under the presidencies of Luis Echeverria and Jose Lopez Portillo. The drug war created the perfect climate for criminalizing social causes, persecuting and repressing social and opposition leaders, activist and journalists. In the meantime, the Attorney General's Office acknowledges that there were only 1,359 arrests with demonstrable links to a drug cartel between 2006 and 2010 for crimes against public health, out of which 1,194 were processed and 165 were not even prosecuted. This number represents only 1.12 per cent of the 121,199 organized crime-related arrests reported by Calderon to the Mexican Congress. With these numbers at hand, Flores

Nández further suggests that the remaining 119,840 detentions might correspond to drug dealers, drug consumers, mules, peasants or even just innocent bystanders. (Flores Nández, 2012)

All these analyses together reinforce the idea that the drug war is more a media strategy than an active plan to regulate Mexican organized crime. Calderon's strategy challenged the current global trend of dealing with drug trafficking, which mainly proposes giving up the punitive-prohibitionist approach and instead addresses the matter from a more holistic perspective focused on public health and institution strengthening. Such a strategy would include measures to disrupt money laundering networks within both the political and economic sectors, invest in social crime prevention strategies and fight political corruption. The bottom line is that Calderon's strategy limited itself to the massive deployment of security forces, both the military and the police, without any complementary action seeking to establish a more long-term holistic approach towards fighting organized crime.

Despite the fact that the Mexican public applauded president Calderon's drug war strategy at its initial stage, the rapid and exponential increase of violence throughout the territory severely damaged both his image and the social support for his approach over the long run. The growing perception of insecurity and the 95-97 per cent rates of impunity eventually became catalysts for citizen-led action demanding a change on the national security strategy, concerns upon which the MPJD was founded. The "drug problem" and the war that came about with it, is now perceived as a self-fulfilled prophecy. Its discursive creation to boost president Calderon's public acceptance rates and legitimacy after a questionable election unraveled a reality, that is now forcing all the available resources of the country (the Army, the Navy and the Federal Police) to mobilize and fight the rampant violence brought about with the exaggeration of the drug threat. Castañeda Gutman & Aguilar Valenzuela (2012) support this idea by stating that

the shift in the official discourse towards blaming the drug cartels for all the evils that the Mexican nation was facing, pushed the cartels to create parallel defense structures. Furthermore, the authors express deep concern over the irresponsibility behind Calderon's actions. They also highlight that, despite having all the available elements to acknowledge the wrongful strategy and shift his approach towards conflict management, Calderon stuck to the unrealistic goal of eliminating the drug cartels, ensuring the increase of violence rates throughout the country.

One of the arguments for the drug war that has not been addressed in this section corresponds to that of the competition between the state and the drug cartels over the Mexican territory. This issue, along with that of the territorial extension of drug-related violence will be discussed in the following section.

C. Hell on Earth: The Local Geographies of the Drug War Violence

The official argument justifying the drug war stated that the drug cartels had openly defied the Mexican state through the social intimidation that arose from the conflict between them for the control of the drug distribution and trafficking routes throughout the country. Whether or not the dimension of this threat was blown out of proportions to serve political interests, the truth is that the implementation of the drug war strategy has indeed led to unprecedented levels of violence geographically dispersed throughout the territory and a generalized perception of insecurity in several zones of the country, particularly those closer to the northern border. According to security expert, Dr. Edgardo Buscaglia (2012) from the [Mexican] Institute of Citizen Action for Justice and Democracy, the patterns of violence in Mexico resemble the symptoms faced by fragile and failed states. In his research he claims to have found 982 small territorial failed state enclaves in Mexico and identified risks for the multiplication and extension of these failed state spaces throughout the country. The continuity of such

a trend could rapidly reconfigure the structure of governance bringing about a national reality that would be compatible with those Afghanistan or Pakistan. He points to zones, like the municipalities of Mezquital, Guanasevi and Cienega in the state of Durango where the absence of state is total and the organized crime has replaced state authority, extorting and even charging taxes through a fiscal roll including business owners. (Buscaglia, 2012)

In 2013, the Trans-Border Institute's Justice in Mexico Project published its *Drug Violence in Mexico: Data and Analysis Through 2012 Report* in which amongst other issues concerning Mexican reality, the researchers of this institution explored the shifting geographic patterns of violence using data on homicides and organized crime-related homicides available at the municipal and state levels. According to their data, while the "distribution of homicides has grown over the last several years it appears to have receded somewhat in 2012...Also, new local centers of violence have emerged, though not at the levels of intensity previously seen elsewhere." (Molzahn, C., Rodriguez Ferreira, O., & Shirk, D. A., 2013) The report summarizes the following: (1) the geographical distribution of the overall homicides; (2) the distribution of organized crime-style homicides; and (3) the new local centers of violence. Some of this data is reproduced and analyzed below.

(1) Geographical Distribution of Overall Homicides- According to the report:

...at the outset of the Calderon administration, in 2007, there were 1,875 municipalities with no reported homicides, but the number of municipalities free of such violence diminished more than 28 per cent to 1,337 by 2011. Meanwhile, the number of municipalities with 25 or more annual homicides grew from 50 in 2007 to 240 in 2011. This geographic dispersion of violence...has been attributed mainly to the proliferation of conflicts and internal disputes among drug-trafficking organizations. In 2012...the proportion of municipalities free from violence increased 16 per cent to at least 1,556 and the number with more than 25 homicides decreased more than 25 per cent to 178. (Molzahn, C., Rodriguez Ferreira, O., & Shirk, D. A., 2013, p.20)

...the worst violence has remained concentrated in fewer than 10 per cent of Mexico's 2,457 municipalities. During the first three years of the Calderon administration, the primary locations affected by this violence were found in the northwest (in the states of Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua and Sinaloa) and along the southern Pacific coast (in the states of Michoacan and Guerrero). Over the last three years, elevated levels of homicide continued in these areas but also spread to Mexico's northeast and, to a lesser extent, the southeast. (Molzahn, C., Rodriguez Ferreira, O., & Shirk, D. A., 2013, p.20)

(2) Distribution of Organized Crime-Style Homicides- Facing the fact that the officially reported municipal-level data for these type of violence has not been made available by the Mexican National Security System (SNSP) since September 2011, the reporting done by the Trans-Border Institute's Justice in Mexico Project focuses its discussion on this matter on the available data at the state level, referencing two major national newspapers (Reforma and Milenio):

..in 2012, Reforma reported a total of 9,746 executions, a roughly 21 per cent reduction compared with the 11,631 reported for the same period the year before...there is a significant correlation between increases in overall homicides and the number of [organized crime-style] homicides identified by news-media organizations...[I]n 2012, drug-trafficking- and organized-crime style homicides were most concentrated in the central and eastern border regions, as well as in central Pacific coast states on the mainland. According to Reforma's data, from January through November 2012, five states—Sinaloa (1,077), Chihuahua (1,049), Nuevo León (1,190), Guerrero (925), and Coahuila (735)—accounted for over half of organized-crime-style killings nationwide. Milenio's tallies for the top five states differed: Chihuahua (2,137), Guerrero (1,408), Sinaloa (1,089), Nuevo León (1,014), and Coahuila (775). Except for Chihuahua and Guerrero, there is a close correlation between the estimates of 24 Reforma and Milenio. Again, it is unclear why Milenio's estimates are so much higher in Chihuahua and Guerrero...These states host major drug transit routes, and organized-crime groups have been active in these areas for many years. (Molzahn, C., Rodriguez Ferreira, O., & Shirk, D. A., 2013, p.22-24)

(3) New Local Centers of Violence: Regarding the shift of the localized centers of violence, this assessment estimates that Juarez, which in 2010 was titled the most murderous municipality on the planet, with more than 3,000 homicides in a city of 1.3 million, a worse per capita rate than Kandahar, Caracas or Baghdad (International Crisis

Group, 2013, p.34), by the end of 2012 had been markedly transformed changing the dynamics and patterns of violence, positioning Acapulco at the top:

From 2008 through 2011, the largest share of violence was concentrated in Juarez. When the violence hit its peak there in 2010, Juarez accounted for more than one out of 10 registered homicides in Mexico and nearly a third of organized crime-style homicides documented by the Mexican government. However, in 2011, the relative share of homicides and organized crime-style killings in Juarez diminished, as violence spread elsewhere. According to SNSP, overall homicides dropped from 2,738 in 2010 to 1,460 in 2011. From 2011 to 2012, Juarez saw a continued decline in overall homicides, from 1,460 to 656. As a result, for the first time since 2008 the border city was displaced from its unenviable position as the municipality registering the most homicides nationwide. Instead, that title went to the resort city of Acapulco in 2012. Over the last six years, Acapulco saw a dramatic increase in the number of overall homicides occurring there. In 2008, with 70 homicides, Acapulco was ranked ninth nationwide. The number of homicides in Acapulco grew to 150 in 2009, 370 in 2010, 1,008 in 2011, and 1,170 in 2012, gradually increasing the city's ranking for overall homicides. (Molzahn, C., Rodriguez Ferreira, O., & Shirk, D. A., 2013, p. 26)

Meanwhile, three other major cities experienced similarly large and rapid increases in overall homicides in recent years: Monterrey, Torreón, and Nuevo Laredo...in the northern border state of Nuevo León, Monterrey had 22 homicides in 2009, but this number grew to 179 in 2010 and 700 in 2011, before falling to 551 in 2012. Torreón, the largest city in the neighboring state of Coahuila, experienced 316 homicides in 2010, 455 in 2011, and 462 in 2012. Meanwhile, the border city of Nuevo Laredo saw a sharp increase to 288 homicides in 2012, up from the 123 homicides that occurred there the year before. (Molzahn, C., Rodriguez Ferreira, O., & Shirk, D. A., 2013, p.27)

The changing trends of geographical distribution of violence can be attributed to the temporal shift both cartel and state-sponsored violence and the conflicts. The increased violence registered for the 2008-2010 period correlates to conflicts between specific drug cartels operating in particular geographic regions. In the northwestern Mexico, the Arrellano Felix cartel faced new competition from the Sinaloa cartel. In the north-central corridor through Juarez, the Carrillo Fuentes family also faced competition from the Sinaloa Cartel. In northeastern Mexico violence can be attributed to a falling out between the Gulf Cartel and the Zetas, while violence in central Mexico can be blamed on clashes between the Beltran Leyva, the *Familia Michoacana* and the Knights Templar cartels. The geographic shift in violence patterns in 2012 seems to be explained in large

by the consolidation of the Sinaloa cartel power in Baja California, Sinaloa, Sonora and Chihuahua; and the territorial expansion of the Zetas towards Tamaulipas, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon and Veracruz. The local geographies of the drug war violence seem overall to be driven by the dynamic within and among the cartels for the control of the territory. (International Crisis Group, 2013, p.1-4)

D. Neglected Victimhood: 90 per cent of the deaths are members of the organized crime...

President Calderon's administration assured the Mexican public dismissively that 90 per cent of the death toll of the drug war represented members of the organized crime. (Cascente, 2011) The statement is a good example of the overall discursive practice of the Mexican authorities regarding victimhood associated to the drug war. It is underpinned by a complete disregard of the rule of law, basically condoning the killing of alleged cartel members instead of making them go through the national judiciary system. Additionally, by projecting the official death toll and civilian casualties as the remaining 10 per cent, the narrative minimizes the social cost brought about by Calderon's national security strategy. The administration's notion of victimhood was discursively narrowed, as exemplified by the introductory statement to this section, throughout the initial stage of the implementation of this strategy. It was not until 2009 when a series of high profile confrontations resulting in a high number of civilian casualties, that the narrative of victimhood articulated by the government was proven to be conveniently limited and extremely obscure.

This narrative was later projected in the coding of the main database of killings associated with the war, presented by the government in January 2012. (Presidencia de la Republica, 2012, p.2) The database claimed to reflect the "killings associated to presumed criminal rivalry" and was eventually renamed "*Database of Homicides*

Presumably Related to Organized Crime". According to its methodological annex, it was constructed with the aim of providing means for following up the phenomenon of violence associated with organized crime. With this goal, the federal government generated a "systematized and reliable registry" of killings within the drug war context. The categorization of the data conceals important implications regarding the victimhood framework of President Calderon. The database integrated three datasets composed of the following categories: executions, confrontations (against the authority and between criminals) and aggressions against authority figures and governmental property. These categories reflected very specifically defined notions of officially acknowledged victimhood:

(1) Executions: A killing in this category represents that in which the victim or the perpetrator is presumably a member of an organization with links to organized crime and it is neither result of a confrontation nor of an aggression. It involves "extreme violence" meaning that the victim is found decapitated, dismembered, tortured, mutilated or burnt. It also involves a "multiple" component meaning killings that imply more than one single victim.

The following are characteristics of a victim of an execution: the victim presents gun impacts; signals of torture or mutilation; the victim was killed where the body was found, in a different place to that in which it was found or in the interior of a vehicle; the materials used to carry on the killing are consistent with the organized crime *modus operandi*; the victim is presumed to have a relationship with organized crime groups; the victim was found next to a message of the organized crime; and finally, the victim was kidnapped, ambushed or persecuted before being killed. (Presidencia de la Republica, 2012, p.5)

(2) Confrontation: This category includes the killings resulting from spontaneous and isolated acts of violence, from the commission of criminal acts, the disturbance of

social peace and order through acts against authority figures carried out by organized criminal groups using firearms and military equipment. They can also be defined by events in which the public, due to the circumstances, are forced to use their weapons to ensure respect of the law. Additionally, killings resulting from events between members of groups of organized crime and feuds between different cartels will be considered within this category.

For an event to be considered as a confrontation it may include the following characteristics: that the criminals involved are at least three individuals or that in case of being less, they make use of weapons considered to be of exclusive use of the military; that the criminals resist authority through violent and lethal means; in cases in which the criminals cannot be controlled in a quick way involving one single tactic action from the public forces; a persecution derived from the previously stated aggressions; and events in which authority figures responds to an aggression with a sustained gunfire exchange. (Presidencia de la Republica, 2012, p.5)

(3) Aggressions against authority: The acts categorized under this type include the attacks by organized criminal groups against authorities of any of the three levels of government, in which the later does not have the opportunity to repel the attack by use of force. The main intent behind these attacks is to affect the institutions or intimidate security personnel in a generic manner, not targeting any one particular individual. These attacks are carried out against government property, military checkpoints, goods and services used by the government, and supervision convoys. (Presidencia de la Republica, 2012, p.7)

A series of high-profile cases, widely covered by the media, made it clear that the limitations of the official notion of victimhood conveniently relived the government of responsibility or accountability under the allegation of “presumed links to organized crime groups or internal feuds.” (View Appendix Table 1: High-profile cases involving

civilian casualties in Mexico 2009-2011) Calderon's administration's practice surrounding these cases denoted a consistent pattern of behavior within the Mexican institutions both local and federal, that demonstrates not just a lack of resources for investigating the facts behind the killings related to the drug violence, but a lack of will to actually look into who the victims are. This official trend compromises access to justice by failing to establish evidence linking the victims and the cartels and a whether or not there is real motivation behind these murders. The information contained in Table 1 and resulting from the preliminary content analysis of the media coverage of 21 cases facilitates the reconstruction of the traditional governmental narrative of victimhood in the context of the drug war.

This narrative is based upon the assumption that the victims are in some way connected to organized crime, which in turn provides the government with its central justification for its national security strategy. At points within this narrative, the level of violence and its escalation are discursively framed as an indicator of success. The insistence that most of the killed within the war have presumed links to the cartels, has allowed the government of Felipe Calderon to portray his war as having a marginal impact in Mexican society. This however, represents a dangerous reinterpretation of Mexican reality, one with actual practical costs for the government. The assumption that every murder that complies with one or more of the characteristics stated within the officially acknowledged notions of victimhood, introduces high levels of uncertainty and subjectivity to the national security strategy. Additionally, the numbers resulting from the official database provide an extremely weak foundation for policy-making decisions. The categorization of killings included in the database does not actually match any judiciary (neither local nor federal) typology, meaning that there is no correlation between the official data presented by the Calderon's administration and the criminal investigations carried out by the different state attorney's offices throughout the country. In other

words, the data on the killings reflects no actual pathway towards access to justice for the victims.

The rest of this document focuses on the way in which pain worked as driving force, enabling people to transition from victims to victimhood, and from its individualized experience towards its socialization and a later, politicization through the work of the MPJD. The main focus for the remaining sections of the thesis lies in the spatialities articulated throughout this process and the way in which pain became the main mechanism through which space was experienced and created by the members of the MPJD and how new spaces opened up by their actions.

III. GEOGRAPHIES OF PAIN: THE MPJD AND THE CONFIGURATION OF SPACES OF VICTIMHOOD

On late March 2011, a social movement initiated by relatives of victims of drug violence and state-sponsored human rights abuses was articulated in Mexico: the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity (MPJD). Its members were reacting to the growing toll of victims associated with the drug war, the rising number of human rights violations linked to the presence of the military throughout the territory and the humanitarian crisis the country was experiencing. Since its formation the MPJD has worked towards enabling diverse processes allowing for increasing awareness of victims of the drug war as stakeholders in the decision-making process concerning the national security strategy. For the MPJD members, drug-violence-related victimhood should be addressed with public policy recommendations that acknowledge the victims' rights, a capacity development program that provides the necessary skills for effectively participating in the policy-making process, and an agenda to comply with victims' demands of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-repetition. With these goals in mind, the MPJD attempts to effect a change in the Mexican state national security strategy transforming the disembodied idea of 'state' security and moving towards a more broadly defined notion of 'human' security, prioritizing both human rights and gender approaches.

The MPJD has articulated two main paths of action: On one hand, an open channel of dialogue with the authorities, including the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary branches at the federal level and better communication at the local level; and the cooperation and coordination with some political leaders as means for leverage in

the public debate and decision-making processes. On the other hand, the MPJD has led several actions of non-violent resistance which include mass mobilizations and bus caravan tours through the territory as means of appropriating public spaces and using these actions as ways of furthering the recognition and vindication of the narrative of the victims' pain. The following sections seek to unravel the underlying complexities of the MPJD's notion of victimhood articulated in response to the official narrative. To do so, it explores the case study of the first MPJD public protest in Cuernavaca, Morelos and the later bus caravan mobilization that concluded with the promulgation of the National Pact in Juarez, Coahuila. To explore these complexities, the current document proposes to examine the formation stage of the movement (from April 26th, 2011 to June 10th, 2011) drawing from the growing literature of the subfield of emotional geographies.

Despite the fact that this subfield appeals to a multiplicity of geographical traditions, namely the humanistic-phenomenologist, feminist, psychoanalytic and non-representational approaches, there appears to be one common thread underlying the geographic work on emotions: Emotions matter. They are always present in our everyday-life and serve as foundations upon which human beings recompose and transcend the underlying routine of our mundane experience into intense understanding marking larger-than-life moments in our lives. Emotions then define places as much as they define people and since they are pervasive they can be located anywhere and everywhere. Emotional geography focuses on the relationality between people and the environment, the way in which emotions are embodied and how they serve to color our experiential world. Emotions are the mediators between society and space.

Drawing from this theoretical field, and particularly the socio-spatial relationality of emotions, this thesis seeks to illustrate how the MPJD members' pain associated to their victimhood allowed for the articulation of spaces of shared victimhood, mobilizing

individualized stories of pain towards creating a collective experience of this emotion and ultimately founding a new political expression of victimhood. This paper argues that the spatial aspect of the official narrative of the drug war, reflected in the geographical distribution of the drug violence and the spatial epistemology of the official database on the drug related killings, are contested by the emotional geographies constructed by the mobilization patterns of the MPJD, allowing the movement to articulate through its actions a counter-narrative of victimhood associated with the drug war and forming a foundation for the reconstruction of the social pact in Mexico. The data for this case study and the emotional geography analysis were collected through ethnographic content analysis which will be further explored in the following section.

A. Methodology: Ethnographic Content Analysis

Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA) refers basically to an ethnographic approach to document analysis based on principles of data collection and analysis. This “reflexive analysis of documents” perspective can help outline patterns of human action by approaching document analysis as fieldwork. The “ethnographic” aspect of this kind of analysis refers to the description of people and their culture, in other words, human beings engage in meaningful behavior becomes the subject matter that guides the research. (Altheide, 2013, p.14) ECA can also be referred to as qualitative document analysis and as research methodology it is oriented towards documenting and understanding the communication of meaning, as well as verifying theoretical relationships. It places the researcher at the center making it a highly reflexive and interactive methodology in nature. ECA allows the researcher to be systematic and analytic without having to face the constraints of a rigid protocol. It focuses on the collection of numerical and narrative data without forcing it into predefined categories:

The assumption behind ECA is that the general process of data collection, reflection, and protocol refinement is more significant for a study and that the details involving coding procedures, practices, and categories do emerge...ECA is not oriented to theory development but is more comfortable with clear descriptions and definitions compatible with the materials... [It is] more oriented to concept development, data collection, and emergent data analysis. (Altheide, 2013, p.19-20)

For the present thesis, the relevance of this reflexive observation strategy is illustrated by the study of the public protests in Mexico led by the drug war victims from April 26th- June 10th, 2011, as it was covered by the weekly news magazine *Proceso*. The sampling process required a qualitative exploration of the twelve numbers published throughout this period, from No.1796 to No. 1808. A preliminary review showed that out of these numbers only ten of them contained relevant material regarding the public protest linked to drug war-related victimhood (1796, 1797, 1798, 1799, 1801,1802,1803,1804, 1805, and 1806). A closer reading of the content of these issues allowed the identification of twenty articles covering the protest mobilizations that included extensive individual narratives of victimhood. These articles were originally in Spanish hence, most of the materials have been translated by the author of this paper who is a native Spanish-speaker.

The theoretical focus for the interpretation and understanding these data is based on literature of emotional geographies further described on the next section. The literature review of the subfield provided the foundation that informed the basic assumptions and approaches in this thesis. It enabled the researcher to conduct a theoretically informed reading of the news coverage, providing the necessary data for further conceptual refinement and analysis that exposes the spatial aspects behind the victims' narratives of pain.

B. Emotions Matter: Emotional Geographies as Theoretical Foundation

Addressing the relevance of emotions as subject-matter of geographical research always leads back to the Anderson and Smith (2001) editorial *Emotional Geographies*, as turning point in the disciplinary approach to both emotions and affects. In their brief intervention these authors call for a serious reconsideration as to the way in which emotions had been generally approached or more accurately disregarded as legitimate means for knowledge production:

We have been reflecting on the extent to which the human world is constructed and lived through the emotions. In doing so, we have been forced to confront the glaringly obvious, yet intractable, silencing of emotion in both social research and public life. (p.7)

The authors contextualize the neglect of emotional geographies in the “return to ‘relevance’” of the ‘policy turn’ within geography. To counter it, they articulate a broader research agenda calling for the acknowledgement of emotions as legitimate objects of study with valuable insight potential for illuminating the emotional content of social relations, the possibility of emotionally charged spaces and the way in which “social relations are mediated by feeling and sensibility.” (p.8)

Perhaps the most relevant idea posed by Anderson and Smith for this thesis is that: “Emotions are an intensely political issue...” (p.7) In the case of the pain of the victims of the drug war, the current document demonstrates that it is indeed the emotional resonance of the personal narratives of victimhood that gave rise to the articulation of a social space, initially in the city of Cuernavaca, Morelos, intended to foster the exchange of these stories. The expansion of these spaces throughout the mobilization of the bus caravan that concluded in Juarez, Coahuila made it possible for sharing of personal stories to become a counter-narrative of victimhood challenging the official narrative.

It was not until few years later, that Anderson and Smith’s call for attention to emotional geographies was fully realized. As Steve Pile (2010) highlights, since then:

...geographers have described a wide range of emotions in various contexts, including: ambivalence, anger, anxiety, awe, betrayal, caring, closeness, comfort and discomfort, demoralization, depression, desire, despair, desperation, disgust, disillusionment, distance, dread, embarrassment, envy, exclusion, familiarity, fear (including phobias), fragility, grief, guilt, happiness and unhappiness, hardship, hatred, homeliness, horror, hostility, illness, injustice, joy, loneliness, longing, love, oppression, pain (emotional), panic, powerlessness, pride, relaxation, repression, reserve, romance, shame, stress and distress, suffering, violence, vulnerability, worry. Even those who declare themselves suspicious of the language of emotions – such as ‘hatred, shame, envy, jealousy, fear, disgust, anger, embarrassment, sorrow, grief, anguish, pride, love, happiness, joy, hope, wonder’ – have nonetheless attended to anger, boredom, comfort and discomfort, despair, distress, enchantment, energy, enjoyment, euphoria, excitement, fear, frustration, grace, happiness, hope, joy, laughing, liveliness, pain, playing, rage, relaxation, rhythm, sadness, shame, smiling, sorrowfulness, ‘Star Wars affects’, surprise, tears (crying), touching, violence, vitality. (p.6)

The plethora of research on emotional geographies today sheds light into an element which has been missing from our discipline. It allows for a disciplinary self-reflection that decomposes and recomposes disciplinary boundaries of what may be included within our field. It is not about opening our eyes to this new emotional *terra incognita*, but rather about making us aware that these unexplored territories permeate all of the previously done geographical research and that acknowledging its emotional dimension recomposes the field in a socio-historical level. In her paper: *Making connections and thinking through emotions: between geography and psychotherapy*, Liz Bondi (2005) reflects on the different conceptualizations of emotion, locating them within wider socio-historical contexts. She suggests that the ‘emotional turn’ within our discipline has been informed mainly by three existing bodies of geographical scholarship: humanistic, feminist and non-representational geographies. In exploring the academic debates concerning the engagement with emotions, Bondi highlights their key limitations and makes a case for psychotherapy as an additional venue for developing a relational approach to emotional geographies. (p.434)

Based on the works of Ley and Samuels (1978), Rowles (1978) and Tuan (1979), Bondi (2005) brings attention to the emotional engagement of humanistic

geography as a concern for the “subjective dimensions of human life... [Attending to] how people feel and experience places and spaces.” (p.435) She additionally points to the influence of phenomenology and existentialism on redirecting humanistic geography towards questions of human meanings, perceptions and values; coining concepts like ‘life-world’ to “overcome the distinctions between objective and subjective, and between external and internal worlds” (p. 435); and emphasizing the capacity of places to evoke emotions. Furthermore, the phenomenological approach identifies a world that is not the result of the Cartesian dualism, but rather a lived world perceived and produced through emotionally laden activities, recognizing the self’s entanglement with its surroundings. Places like people can be understood as being constituted within an emotionally charged middle ground (Casey,2001) and in this sense, the phenomenological tradition offers a mean to develop descriptions of how emotions occur in everyday life, understood as the richly expressive feeling-cum-behavior of continual becoming that is chiefly provided by bodily states and processes. (Thrift, 2004, p.60)

Feminist geography approaches emotions in a different way. Steve Pile (2009) summarizes it brilliantly when he states that “if humanistic geography describes people’s rich experiences of place and emotions, then feminist geographers politicized it.” (p.7) By bringing attention to women’s experiences of space and place feminist geographers uncover feelings, but also make explicit connections with the broader social system of politics and power allowing for emotions to be framed, consequently producing a gendered experience. While investigating these taken-for-granted emotional aspects of women’s embodied experiences, feminist geography emphasizes the relational, reflective and inter-subjective nature of emotional relations that permeate geographical practices. Pile (2009) further articulates this matter by citing Valentine’s *The geography of women’s fear* (1989) and explaining that “under feminist imperatives humanist studies of landscapes of fear became studies of the social geographies of women’s fear... fear

itself was re-interrogated by emotional geography as having both interior and exterior aspects [while]...calling any presumption of a fixed binary of interior and exterior into question.” (Pile, 2009, p.7)

Non-representational theory adds a complete new layer to the mix by focusing on the necessary incompleteness within the act of representation itself. This approach prioritizes the use of the notion of ‘affect’ rather than emotion because, as Nigel Thrift suggests the latter is indicative of those more immediate embodied engagements with the world beyond language. This break on the representability of emotions and affect has configured a larger debate resulting in two distinct approaches: emotional and affectual geographies. Pile (2009) teases out the similarities and differences between both and identifies agreement on matters of a relational ontology, privileging of proximity and intimacy and the favoring of ethnographic methods, while exploring the political implications of the fundamental disagreement concerning the relationship or non-relationship between emotions and affect.

Moreover, the psychoanalytic and psychotherapeutic perspectives have strongly influenced the work on emotions in geography. Bondi’s (2005) work regarding this matter, explores the different factors that mitigate the creation, maintenance, or dissolution of the psychosocial boundaries that are constitutive of individual subjectivity and social identities. Emotions clearly play a fundamental role in the formative processes which impact both individual mental health and sociopolitical cohesion, shaping social relations through the mediation of the self’s relations to those deemed as the other. An additional aspect of her work that particularly informs the current thesis is the ethical imperative of taking people’s expressed emotions seriously. This is clearly stated in her description of how a psychotherapeutic approach might aid geographical research:

“[psychotherapists] listen and seek to convey understanding of the other person’s emotional experience; they cultivate a form of acceptance sustainable in the context of deeply disturbed and disturbing behavior, informed by a belief in the

human potential for repair and positive self-development; and they meet with those with whom they work as emotionally open, honest and genuine people.” (p.442)

Steve Pile (2009) further reinforces the ethical imperative by assuring that it “privileges people’s expressed emotional experiences, and treats their accounts as open, honest and genuine.” (p. 8) The work presented in this thesis seeks to understand the spatialities of the MPJD notion of victimhood, a notion that was created as a reaction to the neglect, silence and manipulation reproduced by the official narrative of victimhood associated with the drug war. Hence, while the author acknowledges the relevance brought about by an affectual geography perspective, she considers this specific aspect of the psychotherapeutic influence of emotional geography as necessary means to pay respect to the research subject she is engaging with and the bloodshed that the personal narratives of victimhood used on this thesis represent.

The final section of this literature review, builds upon these authors’ work by making a case for the relevance of emotions in the configuration of the spatiality of social relations. It explores the way in which the vindication of emotional knowledge can be incorporated into the geographical analysis of political activism and social change. (Bosco, 2007, p.549) Fernando Bosco’s work *Emotions that Build Networks: Geographies of Human Rights Movements in Argentina and Beyond* (2007) and his previous work on the Argentinian movement of the *Madres de la Plaza de Mayo* explore the interplay between social movements and emotions, highlighting the strategic importance of emotions to activist mobilization and to the sustainability of activism across space-time. He brilliantly references Pulido (2003, p.47) on her call to geographers to probe further into the ‘interior life of politics’, those dimensions of activism that are rooted inside humans as individuals and that include emotions. (Bosco, 2007, p.549) Fernando Bosco (2007) brings attention to the fact that despite there being cross-disciplinary work regarding the emotions of activism and the geographies of social

movement in relation to 'mobilizing grievances', there is a lack of a unified conceptual framework. He engages in a synthesizing exercise bringing together existing research on this issue to articulate what he deems a "fruitful conceptual platform from where to pursue further research" (p. 549) which he summarizes as follows:

"The emotional dimensions of social networks are crucial for the emergence and cohesion of activists in social movements (Taylor & Rupp, 2002). Many times, such emotional dimensions are tied to home places of resistance (Routledge, 1993; Pile & Keith, 1997) because places themselves are often layered with emotional symbolism that relate to past activism (Ansell, 1997; Bosco 2006). Because places are open, porous and relational (Massey 1991, 1993) the emotional identification of activists with particular places is of strategic importance to the construction and maintenance of personal bonds among activists and of larger trans-local networks (Ettlinger & Bosco 2004). In the latter case, activists in broader, geographically-dispersed networks experience emotional proximity – rather than actual local interaction – through their emotional connection to key symbolic places that are important to the movement (Bosco 2006, p. 359) or through new communications technology (such as the Internet) that provide virtual meeting grounds (Escobar 1999; Hess & Zimmerman 1999; Hampton & Wellman 2003). Even though communications technology provides a valuable infrastructure for networking, place and place-based social ties are still important (Parham 2004). Both symbolic and virtual places create arenas that permit the performance of reciprocal emotional bonds and enhance emotional proximity among participants. The strategic deployment of emotions is also crucial in the construction of broader activist networks. Activists often draw from shared 'emotional templates' (Taylor & Rupp 2002, p. 151) that allow for specific interpretations and displays of emotions and that are influenced by the larger social and cultural context. Activists often also create emotional templates that align with interpretations and experiences of the emotions of other groups (Jasper 1997, 1998)...the construction of broader activists' networks also occurs through a process of 'place framing' (Martin 2003) – when activists strategically and symbolically talk about places to match the interests of other groups." (Bosco, 2006, p.549-550)

His synthesis of ideas informs the current research by providing the theoretical foundations to explore the way in which pain worked as a driving force, enabling people to transition from victims to victimhood, and from its individualized experience towards its socialization and a later, politicization. The following section seeks to illustrate the spatialities articulated throughout this process; and to illuminate through personal narratives of victimhood how pain became the main lens through which space was experienced by the members of the MPJD from the first public protest in Cuernavaca,

Morelos and the later bus caravan mobilization that concluded with the promulgation of the National Pact in Juarez, Coahuila. The following sections explain the history behind the foundation of the MPJD and the situated personal narratives as means to articulate the geographies of pain and the configuration of spaces of victimhood throughout the first 'caravan for peace'.

C. Pain and the Configuration of Spaces of Victimhood

a. From Cuernavaca, Morelos to Mexico City: Birth of the MPJD

Alexander Von Humboldt referred to the city of Cuernavaca, Morelos as the "City of the Eternal Spring" during his travels through Mexico in the early 1800s. By this, he was making reference to the paradisiac climate characterizing this place, a distinctive feature that had positioned it as a major touristic destination in the country. However, after the implementation of the drug war national security strategy by president Calderon, the spatial perception of the state was reconfigured by the presence of the organized crime and the increase of drug related violence. News reports indicate how by April 2011, the "Highway of the Sun", the main road leading to the Acapulco, was being referred to by the local population as the "Route of Death", mainly because the part of the road that stretches through Cuernavaca became the dumping site for most of the 335 bodies, victims of executions in the state of Morelos from 2010-2011 alone. Local accounts blamed the state's governor, Marco Antonio Adame Castillo, for turning Cuernavaca into the battleground for the organized crime. Within the first four months of 2011, the death toll amounted to 80 executions, five times more than those registered during the first quarter of the previous year, while neither the military nor the police at the municipal, state and federal levels had made any arrests. (Olmos, 2011a)

Jose Gil Olmos (2011a) reports how the impact of the violence and the presence of organized crime has affected local life, while the authorities reinforce a narrative in

which neither of these factors has affected people's living in the city: "*No es como Juarez*" (It is not like Juarez). The journalist cites the words of the state's attorney and counters them with the narratives of Juan Carlos Salgado Ponce, former president of the local Mexican Employers' Association (COPARMEX) and the Independent Commission of Human Rights of Morelos. According to the former, tourism has dropped nearly 60 per cent, despite the fact that the state's government keeps assuring citizens that tourism has increased by 4 per cent; the latter affirms that insecurity, violence and the presence of organized crime in Cuernavaca has completely shredded the social fabric and that fear has forced its inhabitants to take extreme preventive measures: not talking about organized crime in public places or taxi cabs, reducing leisure time spent in public spaces, avoiding taking any roads after sunset and not trusting the police who are perceived as working for the cartels. A case that reinforces the counter-narrative as to the social impact of the drug war in Cuernavaca took place in April 16th, 2010, when most of the city's population complied with a curfew allegedly dictated by the South Pacific cartel. Fear had paralyzed Cuernavaca. (Olmos, 2011a)

After the discovery of a series of bodies on March 27, 2011 amongst which that of Juan Francisco Sicilia, son of the Mexican poet and political analyst Javier Sicilia was found, the city erupted in protests against the national security strategy and more specifically, against the administration of Marco Antonio Adame Castillo, governor of Morelos. Javier Sicilia is perceived as the founding member of the MPJD, because the public outrage and mass mobilization that followed the killings of March 27 highlighted the death of his son, but also because he took the lead in the strategic deployment of emotions. His first effort to articulate his pain and victimhood towards a political agenda that responded to the national context was introduced in an open letter published in *Proceso* a week after his son's murder, titled: "*We are fed up (Open letter to politicians and criminals)*". Throughout the text of this document, Sicilia explains that his pain is not

exclusive, but rather a common reality in Mexico caused not just by the organized crime but by the “rotten hearts” of both the political class and the criminal groups, that had broken their honor codes. Upon the foundation of his pain, Sicilia elaborates an argument for social action based on both solidarity and indignation and calls for the first protest of what was to become the MPJD:

“There are not words for this pain. Only poetry can come close to it, and you do not know about poetry. What I do wish to say to you today from these mutilated lives, from the pain that has no name because it is fruit of something that does not belong in nature – the death of a child is always unnatural and that’s why it has no name: I don’t know if it is orphan or widow, but it is simply and painfully nothing – from these, I repeat, mutilated lives, from this suffering, from the indignation that these deaths have provoked, it is simply that we have had it up to here...The death of my son Juan Francisco has lifted up solidarity and a cry of indignation – that my family and I appreciate from the depth of our hearts – from the citizenry, and from the media. That indignation comes back anew to put in our ears the phrase that Martí directed at those who govern: “If you can’t, then resign.” Putting this back in our ears – after the thousands of anonymous and not anonymous cadavers that we have at our backs, which is to say, of so many innocents assassinated and debased – this phrase must be accompanied by large citizen mobilizations that obligate you, at these moments of national emergency, to unite to create an agenda that unites the nation and believes in a state of real governability. The citizen networks of the state of Morelos are calling for a national march on Wednesday, April 6, that will leave at 5 p.m. from the monument of the Dove of Peace to the Government Palace, demanding justice and peace. If the citizenry does not unite in this and constantly reproduce it in all cities, in all towns and regions of the country, if we are not capable of obligating you, “señores” politicians, to govern with justice and dignity, and you, “señores” criminals, to retake your codes of honor and limit your savagery, the spiral this violence has generated will bring us on a path of horror without return. If you, “señores” politicians do not govern well and do not take seriously that we live in a state of national emergency that requires your unity, and you, “señores” criminals, do not limit your actions, you will end up winning and having power but you will govern and reign over a mountain of ossuaries and of beings that are beaten and destroyed in their souls, a dream that none of us envy.” (Sicilia, 2011a)

Sicilia’s call for action was taken up by many residents in 38 cities around Mexico. On an interview the day after the protest, he referred to the official narrative of victimhood as denying and deforming reality, he further stated that: “Language makes sense of reality; when the language is corrupted, the nation is betrayed.”(Sicilia, 2011a) During the protest acts in Cuernavaca, Sicilia reflected upon pain as a driving force,

saying that “Pain is not for hating, but for recovering the love and justice that have been lost.” (Sicilia, 2011a)

This first protest and those that followed reconfigured the sense of space and opened the possibility of emotional spaces. The generalized fear had turned homes into prisons. The context of violence increased the social distance among members of Mexican society and shredded the social fabric. Living under this reality, the consequences of the drug war were perceived on an individual level, as isolated cases of victimhood. The official narrative only reinforced the exceptionalist nature of victimhood: 90 per cent of the casualties had chosen their fate by joining the criminal organizations and an unfortunate 10 per cent that represented both civilian casualties, framed as collateral damages and members of the army “fallen in action”. The protest represented a collective adherence to Sicilia’s “We are fed up” claim and in itself, constructed a new moral boundary, a line that Mexican society was not willing to cross, a spatial expression of moral indignation and ethical rebellion. Within this collectivity diverse and contradictory individualized identities are merged under the aspiration for a greater good led by higher values.

The reconfiguration of the perception of space by the act of reclaiming public spaces through the MPJD mobilizations is an act that in itself constructs a counter-narrative. This alternative story founded upon the massive expressions of citizen outrage and the thousands of individualized stories of victimhood challenge the normalization of the social consequences of drug war violence. The protests configure spaces of victimhood that redefine this experience, collectivizing it, constructing a shared sense of victimhood and reshaping the epistemological and moral coherence behind the official narrative. The shared notion of victimhood arising from these spaces, fostered a renewed awareness of the sense of vulnerability of Mexican society; of the level of involvement of the nation in the reconstruction of the social fabric and the re-emergence

of a sense of hope for the population at large. The counter-narrative was articulated by having Mexican society reclaim ownership over national consensus regarding Calderon's national security strategy. The participants of the MPJD protests and the later bus caravan made it clear that the governmental action was illegitimate in the eyes of many Mexicans. The sense of social consensus backing it up had been artificially constructed through the crafting of a very narrow narrative of the drug war and its limited acknowledgement of victimhood that left no space for greater social consequences. These newly created spaces of victimhood though ever-changing and ephemeral, created a rupture that forced Mexican society towards resistance, into a collective reflection, towards action and the reconstruction of the social fabric, towards retaking the streets, breaking the confinement, re-humanizing the different parties to the war (authorities, drug cartels, civil society groups, victims of the drug-related-violence, Mexican society), above it all to avoid the officially-sanctioned narrative reproduced in the media: that the ends justified the means.

The reconstruction of a shared victimhood founded upon the acknowledgement of the commonality of pain was in itself a political act that had two objectives: reclaiming justice and letting other victims know that they were not alone in their experience of victimhood. The construction of a sense of solidarity and trust allowed for the participants, victims of the so-called drug war to tell their stories. A few of these personal narratives of victimhood were collected by *Proceso's* journalist Jose Gil Olmos (2011e) during the protest march that took place from April 5th to April 8th, 2011 from the fountain of the Peace Dove placed in the exit from Cuernavaca towards the main plaza, Zocalo in Mexico City, are translated and reproduced here to exemplify the diversity of experiences and the multiplicity of causes of victimhood associated with the Mexican context. These stories and thousands more just like them, provided the backdrop for the MPJD's counter-narrative not just to the drug war but the national context, allowing it to

identify deeper root causes for the drug war reality and providing the movement with the necessary tools for articulating a concrete political agenda to promote social change.

Olmos (2011e) describes the crowd as citizens, walking together some carrying the photos of their relatives who had been either murdered or disappeared. Despite the fact that the journalist followed the march that took place from Cuernavaca to Mexico City, the protest as said before was replicated in at least 38 cities, where as Olmos (2011e) describes it “the land is also tainted with blood”. Olga Lidia Reyes narrated her story: “Hope is built step by step...we are all united by Javier Sicilia’s pain.” She admits to being nervous but becomes indignant when she remembers her six relatives killed, the four houses that had been burnt to the ground in Chihuahua; and her mother and daughters locked away on a safe house under federal protection. Another story is that of Julian LeBaron, a Mennonite from Chihuahua who had led a social protest in Chihuahua against the kidnapping and murders of his brother Benjamin and his friend Luis Widmar on July 2009. Conzuelo Valenzuela a 60 year-old woman tells the story of her daughter Julieta Marlen Gonzalez who went missing ten years before in Chihuahua. Maria Elena Sanchez, a young woman seeks to find her brother Jethro Ramses, who had just gone missing from the local fair in Cuernavaca on May 1st, 2011, just a few days before the protest. Miguel Garcia Hurtado, despite being state’s attorney of Michoacan was wrongfully accused of having links with the organized crime and imprisoned without enough evidence. Another narrative is that of the mother of Joaquin Tena, who describes how her son used to love the sea. After spending some time in Cancun, he returned Mexico City to pursue studies in architecture at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). However, his dreams were cut short on August 7th, 2010 when an armed group broke into his house and gunned him down. He lived near Parque Hundido, in Mexico City and was only 21 years. (Olmos, 2011e)

The relatives of Niza, Rocio and Jose Angel Alvarado, who went missing in Chihuahua walk along those of Palma Leticia Portillo who was murdered in 2010 in the same state. Hector, a sixteen-year old boy who decided to change his last name after his brother Paris was murdered in 2010. Paris was twenty-eight years old and Hector demands justice for him. Along with all of them walks the father of Melchor Flores Hernandez, originally from the State of Mexico, Melchor left his home to try his luck in Monterrey where he used to do public performance in Santa Lucia, right next to the state's capitol. On February 25th, 2009, he was detained by the local police units 534, 538 and 540. Since then, no one has heard from him. His father tells how they have exhausted every possible legal resource, yet no one is listening. Their involvement in the protest is based on this need to be heard, he says. The family members of the 48 children that died on the fire of the ABC daycare center in Hermosillo march along demanding punishment for those responsible for the fire. One of them, Jose Francisco Garcia Quintana, who lost his son Andres Alonso Garcia Duarte explains how everyone that was arrested was released due to weakening of the state's evidence: "They mock us, they mock our pain. This is why we are participating in this protest, because we have been affected by the corruption and the impunity. There is no justice. We tell people not to stay at home, not to think that they are safe, we ask them to come out and protest because the situation is severe all over the country." (Olmos, 2011e)

When the group protesting alongside Sicilia walked along the Mexico-Cuernavaca highway stretch between km 76-78, it stopped in front of a cross with the name of Jesus Sanchez, a 35 year old man who had been murdered on April 22nd, 2010. Sicilia asked for a minute of silence. "We must look at each other in the eye to be able to recognize ourselves in the other. Right now there is a lot of pain in us, but we must look at each other to recognize ourselves as human beings. The pact that we are proposing comes from the heart and from love." Olga Lidia Reyes explains that "peace

opens the way through firm steps, getting rid of the fear that has got into us to our bones, paralyzed us and forcing people to stay in their homes.” (Olmos, 2011e)

The reconfiguration of space prompted by the protest in Cuernavaca was replicated in many other places and allowed for the collectivization of pain and the articulation of a sense of shared victimhood. The socialization process conducted through the sharing of individual narratives of victimhood also countered the very simplistic official narrative of the problems affecting the country. It allowed for the identification of the root causes of the violent Mexican reality and their inclusion on what the emerging MPJD would define as the National Pact a few weeks later. This pact represented the politization of that victim’s pain that initially drove people to the streets, a citizen-devised mechanism to put pressure on the political class. The protests reflected a generalized sense of exhaustion over the national context and a renewed cry for peace and justice. This cry, Pietro Ameglio stated, was related to a specific space, territory and time. The cry for peace in Cuernavaca was different than the cry for peace in Juarez, and it was different today than it was five years ago (as referenced in Olmos, 2011f).

Despite the fact that after this first protest march the embryonic MPJD, had a draft of the National Pact including six very specific proposals for social change, there was still work needed in terms of emotional mobilization. In an interview right after the march, Javier Sicilia explained how his son’s death allowed people to channel and name the accumulated pain, that which had been erased by the government under the slogan of collateral damages: “All of a sudden the death of my son started naming all that pain, naming the dead, showing that those collateral damages were not just numbers, that plenty of them were not criminals and that all of them had a name, surname, broken families. After the people started naming their pain, they started moving away from their fear.” (Olmos, 2011f) Seven weeks after the murder of Sicilia’s son and these first

expressions of society's public rejection of Calderon's national security strategy, the world started witnessing the birth of a national peace movement: the MPJD.

b. The First Caravan for Peace: 3,000 Km. down the Route of Blood

After the first interstate protest, the MPJD called for a longer march, one that traveled throughout the "national geographies of destruction" (Olmos, 2011g), from Cuernavaca where the movement was born to Juarez, Coahuila. Within a timeframe of six days, from June 4th to June 10th, 2011, the national Caravan for Peace with Justice and Dignity visited nine states and traveled through approximately 3,000 km. These states had been particularly affected by the drug war violence, within five years the death toll for these territories totaled 19,000 dead by the hand of three cartels: Sinaloa, the *Familia Michoacana* and the Zetas. (Olmos, 2011g) Javier Sicilia explained the goal of the bus caravan: "The aim is to go where the hearts are hurting the most, break the fear, break the fence, hug each other and let the lords of death- wherever they are, whether they are criminals or people in the public administration working with organized crime- that we Mexicans are not alone." (Olmos, 2011g)

The MPJD symbolically referred to this route as the route of terror or the route of blood. *Proceso* reported the number of killings that took place since the implementation of the drug war strategy in the cities where the caravan stopped, these corroborated the accuracy of such a title: Mexico City (825); State of Mexico (1500); Michoacán (1750); San Luis Potosi (261); Zacatecas, Durango, Saltillo and Monterrey (4500); and Torreon (2500). (Olmos, 2011h) Sicilia explained the multi-dimensional symbolism of the caravan:

"[As a] caravan of consolation" it was a demonstration of the country's unity and bravery; It is an open message of hope and justice for the thousands of families affected by Calderon's national security strategy; It is about giving continuity visiting those places hurt the most, keep consoling each other, letting each other know that we are not alone, feeling each other's pain acknowledging that we are

still a brotherly country, a country that can be united in pain, in love to construct a citizen consciousness. The Caravan for Peace will take place in a climate of violence and death, and hence its double message: One for the government and one for the criminals. We want to let them know that we are fed up with their war, their corruption, from their willingness to humiliate this nation. People want to live in peace and walk to the streets every day without fear.” (Olmos, 2011g)

The presence of the caravan articulated spaces of shared victimhood like those that had been previously opened up in Cuernavaca and Mexico City. In this way, the caravan collected testimonials of victims in every public plaza of every town and community visited, even along the road towards Juarez. It brought attention to the families of the victims and again challenged the official narrative by also highlighting that this reclaimed drug-war victimhood was not just civilian in nature but that it included members of the police and military forces too. Some of the victimhood stories shared along the way are reproduced below:

In the state of Zacatecas, two families denounced cases in which members of the municipal and ministerial police forces disappeared at hands of the Zetas. Enriqueta Trejo narrated the story of her son, Dagoberto Esparza who was a ministerial police officer and went missing on September 24th, 2010 after the detention of a group of armed men, allegedly members of the Zetas. Dagoberto had not been part it, but had been photographed standing next to the alleged hitmen when the authorities presented the arrest to the media. According to his mother, Dagoberto had received a call, asking for the release of the men arrested or would face the consequences if he did not comply. Later that day Dagoberto went out to buy hamburgers with a colleague, Veronica. They were both kidnapped. His mother explained that the attorney office did not share any information with her and that the state governor refused to meet with them. She had learned that Veronica had been released, but Dagoberto’s mother had been prevented from contacting her to inquire about her son. (Olmos, 2011i)

In the municipality of Calera, Zacatecas, Edgar Heriberto Quezada went missing on July 13th, 2010. His mother, Ofelia Castillo tells how her son called her in fear, claiming that a group of men who introduced themselves as zetas, had threatened him. Before becoming member of the police force, Heriberto was a first sergeant in the Army. His family denounced his disappearance to the authorities, but his mother claimed that it was the municipal police who handed him to the zetas. (Olmos, 2011i)

In Monterrey, Gloria Aguilera denounced the disappearance of her husband and two sons all of them transit police in Santa Catarina, who went missing in September 2008: "They have a name, a face and a mother looking for them." On June 7th, as the caravan traveled through Saltillo, a young female journalist gave an anonymous testimonial, saying that since 2007 there had been six registered attacks against the offices of the media in Coahuila. The newspapers, she stated, received anonymous calls prohibiting the publication of certain news coverage dealing with the organized crime. (Olmos, 2011i)

The configuration of spaces of shared victimhood challenges the official narrative of the social consequences of the war. Javier Sicilia reflected about what he saw during the caravan:

"We found more than what we expected because of the massive load of suffering, of impunity, of injustice that we have seen. There are too many people in pain for the death of their sons and daughters, their parents, their brothers and sisters; there is an immense injustice and a big public outcry for it. I was expecting pain, but not at the levels that we have collected through the way. This is a clear indication that both the political class and the president have a wrongful vision, foreign and abstract to the country, and this is why they are so divorced from the needs of its citizenry." (Olmos, 2011i)

The changing spatialities of the caravan reflected a new stage for the social struggle and the peace movement in Mexico. It reflected a call for action led by Mexican society, a purposeful engagement with the national context, it was not just about rejecting Calderon's notion of armed peace but rather all of the stakeholders in Mexican

society to redefine the notion of peace towards one founded upon the pillars of justice and dignity. The decision of making Juarez the final destination of the caravan and the host city for signing the National Pact reflected the paradoxical nature of the local context: Juarez was emblematic. It represented both the failure of Calderon's national security strategy and the society's action to counteract the impact of the drug related violence in the community through local organizing and social action. The following section explores this paradox further.

c. Juarez, Coahuila: Shared Victimhood in Action

On the evening of January 15th, 2009, the whole nation was shaken by the news of an alleged cartel attack against a group of young students between 15 and 20 years of age, who had gathered to party at a house at the residential complex of Villas de Salvarcar in Juarez. The students were surprised by an armed group of at least 20 hit men who broke in and started shooting at the crowd. By the end of the attack the toll amounted to 18 dead and 10 wounded. The government, following the pattern of its official narrative, rushed in explaining the attack as a settling of accounts between rival drug dealing gangs. The families and relatives however, insisted publicly that they were all students and none were members of any gang. (Turati, 2011e) On February 2011, and due to the public outrage caused by the official narrative and the social pressure it engendered, Calderon's administration announced a public policy plan for the reweaving of social fabric and the reduction of the levels of violence: *Todos somos Juarez* (We are all Juarez). The national reality at the time of the Peace Caravan seemed like a self-fulfilled prophecy.

Despite the deployment of 10,000 members of both the military and the federal police since 2009, the violence in the city could not be contained. Furthermore, the militarization represented an increase of human rights violations and the numbers cited

by Marcela Turati (2011e) reflect the social consequences of *Todos somos Juarez*: 250,000 displaced, 7,000 killed, 10,000 orphan children. Only within 2010, the city registered 3,111 violent deaths, a greater number than those registered in Afghanistan for the same time period. The author further describes the reconfiguration of the landscape of the city: at least 100,000 abandoned houses, fenced streets, corner stores emptied, military checkpoints all over the city, generalized unemployment and insecurity. (Turati, 2011e) The lack of impact of Calderon's program in the city and the generalized mistrust towards the government conditioned Juarez' willingness to engage in a public dialogue or even allowing the involvement of official representatives in the creation of the National Pact promoted by the MPJD founders. The failure of the strategy and the social impact of the levels of violence in Juarez fostered a more active local civil society. Social engagement in that context was a matter of survival for most of the citizens of Juarez.

The massacre of Villas de Salvarcar had configured a space of shared victimhood and forced the local population to counter the official narrative at least two years before the events in Cuernavaca. Juarez as the final destination of the caravan represented not just the pain, but the hope that effective citizen action could bring change. The violence had pushed forward the creation of profession-based civic action groups (doctors, students, artists, etcetera) working towards recovering public spaces in the city and reconstructing the social fabric. Marcela Turati (2011e) references some of these groups: Center for the Attention of Human Growth and Education for Peace; Partners, Pact for Juarez, Youth Promotion Home. Additionally, she describes a brilliant example of the way in which the process of ownership of victimhood took place in Villas Salvarcar, Juarez. After the killings, the government built a sports field and a park in memoriam of the victims of the massacre. Julian Contreras, local community organizer narrates how the poor quality of the construction offended the community:

“The park was done badly on purpose to demoralize the parents. That which was constructed was wired up, the grass is synthetic and it is badly set, the cement is not properly embedded in the plaster membrane, the name plates were done on plastic and were ripped of the wall by the parents who were so upset that they rather remove the names of their children and take it home.” (Turati, 2011e)

Turati (2011e) describes a house, decorated by colorful paintings a block away from the now vandalized park. It used to be an abandoned house, but the members of the community rescued the property and founded in it a children’s library. As such it is used by the local children to do their homework, learn how to navigate the web and read. Additionally, the space has become a meeting point for the members of the community. Contreras tells the story of how the society claimed ownership over the process of reconstruction of the local social fabric:

“The government promised many things, and since it did not delivered everything it promised, people became upset and decided: “Let us do it all ourselves.” They wanted to do a volleyball court, then some got excited and talked about building a local communal kitchen, but then they appropriated the abandoned house for the library. The bookcases were donated by a woman who used to own a bookstore, but went bankrupt because of the insecurity; the paint was donated by the owner of a hardware store that had been forced to close; some other neighbors working in the local maquiladoras for wood; and people provided the books.” (Turati, 2011e)

Julian Contreras and other members of the community travelled to Cuernavaca for the first protest march and shared with others their experience of victimhood. The signing of the National Pact in Juarez represented not just the acknowledgement of the severity with which drug violence has punished this city, making it the world’s murder capital or the prospective future of the rest of the country if the militarization strategy is not changed, but rather the commitment of the city’s society and its resilience in the face of the drug war.

IV. CONCLUSION: FROM VICTIMS TO VICTIMHOOD

Since the implementation of the drug war national security strategy by President Calderon, Mexico has been embedded in a crisis. The high levels of drug related violence and its pervasiveness has forced people into the perceived safety of their homes, their private spaces. This retreat from public spaces inhibited the creation of a shared understanding of the social impact of the drug war. It was not until March 2011 that public outrage associated with the drug related violence, the escalating human rights violations perpetrated by the military and the generalized perception of a systematic manipulation of the facts by the government, that people took back the streets articulating the MPJD. This movement's emotional work articulated spaces of shared victimhood, setting the path for the victim's pain to be collectivized and politicized. The present thesis aims to demonstrating how the MPJD member's pain associated with their victimhood allowed for the articulation of these spaces mobilizing individualized stories of pain towards creating a collectivized experience of this emotion and ultimately founding a new political expression of victimhood. Through this process the MPJD also constructed a counter-narrative to the official narrative of victimhood, regaining ownership of over the narrative of their social reality and setting forward the foundations for the reconstruction of the shredded social fabric and the social pact.

The current thesis has reviewed the process of the MPJD formation by exploring the protest events that took place right after the murder of Juan Francisco Sicilia in late March, 2011, the protest march from Cuernavaca to Mexico City and the first Caravan for Peace, exploring the exchange of personal narratives of victimhood along the way. It also looks at the emotional geographies of Juarez in its own particular logic, being not

just the city most severely affected by the drug war but also the first one that experienced the most rapid disarticulation of the social fabric, it was also the first one to find a way of constructing a space of shared victimhood and fostering a process of strengthening of social resilience.

Because of the limited scope of this thesis, it was impossible to follow up the historical evolution and the geographical extension of the entirety of the process of the MPJD; however, the effective politization of the sense of shared pain has allowed Mexican society to push forward a new legal framework for victimhood. Additionally, the current work tried to limit its analysis to the emotional geographies constructed by the participants of the protest and mobilizations within the embryonic formation of the MPJD, without further exploring the complexities of its victimhood. In this sense, it has not explored victimhood associated with the Central American immigrants, the gendered aspect of drug related victimhood, the victimhood associated with Church activism against human rights violations and targeted violence against migrants, the different types of victimhood (direct or indirect). There is a lot to be done in terms of emotional geographies associated to the MPJD actions and the implications of the configuration of these spaces in the strengthening of society's resilience. Since its foundation, the MPJD has organized at least 20 bus caravans throughout the national territory and one bus caravan across the US.

APPENDIX

Table 1- High-profile cases involving civilian casualties in Mexico 2009-2011

Date, Place and Reference/ Title in Media	Description	Official Reaction
September 3 rd , 2009 (Juarez, Chihuahua) Attack to the Rehabilitation Center " <i>Leyes de Reforma</i> "	The rehab center was attacked by an armed group, killing 17 patients and critically wounding another 5.	The state governor Jose Reyes Baeza Terrazas ordered the investigation of 63 rehabilitation centers to look into the sources of their funding; the state minister for Public Security, Victor Valencia de los Santos announced that 10 rehab centers were to be closed down to avoid further attacks; the state attorney Patricia Gonzalez Rodriguez stated that this attack is part of a war of extermination waged between criminal groups and that the rehab centers are used by the drug cartels as centers for distributing and dealing drugs as well as being refuge for people running away from the organized crime.
December 22 nd , 2009 (Paraiso, Tabasco) Family members of a marine involved in bringing down one of the main drug lords are killed, due to lack of confidentiality of the government.	At least four members of the extended family of Melquiades Angulo Córdova are gunned down by alleged members of the organized crime. The authorities never concealed the marine's identity enabling retaliation of the cartels over the marine's family.	The state attorney of Tabasco, Rafael Miguel Gonzalez Lastra stated that the authorities will pursue the matter until the last consequences so that the crime does not go unpunished. He stated that it is clear that this is an act of revenge with the goal of intimidating not the government but Mexican society, so that they fear not just for their lives but also for their families' as well. Additionally this may justify an escalation of violence of the war.
January 31st, 2010 (Juarez, Chihuahua) Massacre of <i>Salvarcar Villas</i> .	14 young adults between the ages of 15-20 are killed and at least another 14 are critically wounded (three more would die from their wounds) when an armed group irrupted and open fire in an afterschool party in Juarez.	Immediately after the killings and while in an official visit to Tokyo, Japan the Mexican president Felipe Calderon declared that the massacre was the result of a settling of scores between drug gangs. He later had to apologize to the parents for the statement.

<p>March 19th, 2010 (Monterrey, Nuevo Leon) Killing of Tec de Monterrey students</p>	<p>Members of the military confronted an armed group in the grounds of the private university ITESM, where two students were caught in the crossfire and shot dead.</p>	<p>The first official statements from the Nuevo Leon state attorney's office about the killings claimed that the two casualties of the confrontation were two drug cartel enforcers and it was not until the parents of the students recognized the bodies that the casualties were civilians. It was later discovered that the bodies had been moved by the military from within the university grounds to the main avenue, that their student ID's had been removed and that guns had been planted next to the bodies.</p>
<p>June 10th, 2010 (Chihuahua, Chihuahua) Attack to the Rehabilitation Center "Fe y Vida".</p>	<p>An armed group broke into the rehabilitation center killing 19 patients.</p>	<p>The state attorney's office of Chihuahua informed that members of the drug gang Los Mexicles were inside the rehab center, who along with the drug gang Killer Artists, fight along the Sinaloa drug cartel to control the drug trafficking within the state.</p>
<p>July 18th, 2010 (Torreon, Coahuila) Massacre of Torreon.</p>	<p>17 people killed and 9 are wounded at a birthday party in Torreon. The perpetrators were serving a sentence at the local prison however, got out and carried out the attack using vehicles, weapons and uniforms of the prison guards. After carrying out the attack they returned openly and freely to the prison.</p>	<p>The General Attorney's Office declared that regarding the facts of the massacre everything leads to the presumption of the attack being committed by members of the organized crime.</p>
<p>August 22-23rd, 2010 (San Fernando, Tamaulipas) Frist Massacre of San Fernando</p>	<p>72 undocumented immigrants from South America are gunned down in the municipality of Huizache, the only survivor Freddy Lala denounces the massacre to the Mexican authorities.</p>	<p>The General Attorney's Office presented confusing and contradictory accounts of the massacre. Initially it declared that the executions were carried out by the Zetas because the immigrants refused to join their organization. It was later stated that the Zetas killed them because they confused them with members of other drug cartels. The official killing toll is now of 183, however some independent sources site at least 500 bodies.</p>
<p>October 27th, 2010 (Tepic, Nayarit)</p>	<p>An armed group kills 15 young adults that</p>	<p>The attorney's office for the state of Nayarit declared that presumed members</p>

Massacre of October 27th.	were working at the carwash 'Autolavado Gamboa' in the neighborhood of Rey Nayar.	of organized crime attacked a carwash located in the capital city of the state and killed at least 13 people. No further information was released right after the attacks.
December 28th, 2010 (Mezquital, Durango) Attack to <i>Tierras Coloradas</i>	Facing the intimidation of the local drug lords, the entire population of the town of Tierras Coloradas, all of them of indigenous origin, within the municipality of Mezquital, are forced to abandon their homes and seek refuge in the mountains. The town is later raided and the houses burnt to the ground by an armed group.	The state attorney for Durango, Ramiro Ortiz, declared that the violence is spilling over and that nowadays the organized crime has no limits, no respect for families, civilians, women or children. The violence has turn the situation toward unexpected levels of brutality that the state cannot handle.
April 1st, 2011 (Juarez, Chihuahua) Shooting at a bar in Juarez.	There is a shooting at a bar in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua where 10 people are killed.	Authorities declared that they had little additional as to the motivation of the attack.
April 6th, 2011 (San Fernando, Tamaulipas) Second Massacre of San Fernando	177 bodies showing signs of execution style killing are discovered in San Fernando, the victims had been kidnapped days earlier from low cost buses.	Confusion and contradictions remain, the government claims to have captured all the Zetas involved in the first massacre however, monetary rewards are still offered leading to the capture of more people related to the killings, the first round of arrests in relation to the second massacre led suspects arrested and then released in relation to the first massacre.
April 21 st , 2011 (Victoria de Durango, Durango) Massacre of Durango	7 mass graves were discovered containing somewhere between 249-340 bodies, no official number has been disclosed.	The state attorney's office of Durango declared that he could not disclose any information regarding any arrests or leads concerning the mass graves found in Durango because this would compromise the investigations.
April 28 th , 2011 (Temixco, Morelos) Killing of Juan Francisco Sicilia Ortega	The police find the bodies of seven individuals including that of Juan Francisco Sicilia	The General Attorney's Office declared after a series of inconsistencies on the declarations regarding the killings, that it had received the order of not giving any further updates in the case. The media

	Ortega, son of Mexican poet and political analyst Javier Sicilia.	speculated that this was because Javier Sicilia's son was one of the victims. The initial statements from this office declared that the victims were not related, later declarations stated that only five of them knew each other but that neither Juan Francisco Sicilia nor Jesus Chavez Vazquez belonged to this group. However, family and friends contradicted this narrative.
June 7 th , 2011 (Torreon, Coahuila) Attack to the Rehabilitation Center "La Victoria"	The rehab center was attacked by an armed group, killing 13 patients.	According to the first official statements from the state attorney's office, the attack was conducted by armed groups that traveled in five vans and after the attacks there was a persecution and shooting in Reforma Blvd. related to the rehab attack. No further information was provided.
June 24 th , 2011 (Ixtepec, Oaxaca-Medias Aguas, Veracruz) Kidnaping of a train with Central American immigrants	The priest and activist Antonio Solalinde denounces that an undetermined number of Central American immigrants are kidnapped from the train in which they were traveling from the state of Oaxaca to Veracruz.	The General Attorney's Office announced that it has opened to investigations for kidnapping, after the public statement of Alejandro Solalinde denouncing that somewhere between 80 and 100 Central American immigrants had been kidnapped by what now is presumed to be a criminal group of the Zetas. He also stated that the narrative of the events states that at least 10 armed individuals driving luxurious vans had intercepted the train and forced the people out of it and into the vans.
July 7 th , 2011 (Apatzingán, Nueva Italia, Zinapécuaro, Úspero and Morelia, Michoacan) Series of <i>Narco</i> -blockades	Groups of the organized crime conducted a series of blockades through these cities, obstructing and closing down the main roads and resulting in open confrontation between the drug cartels and the police.	Little was stated by the authorities, just that the actions were caused by a confrontation with groups of the organized crime motivated by the retaliation against a strategic action carried out by the federal police in Apatzingan. After several hours the federal police declared that they had the situation under control.
July 9 th , 2011 (Torreon, Coahuila) 10 decapitated bodies are found in a vehicle	The bodies of 10 individuals, three women and seven men were found decapitated inside a van while their heads were found	The official statements reported that the bodies were found decapitated and left on the street scattered throughout the city, additionally a vehicle was located which contained the beheaded bodies of 10 individuals along with a <i>narco</i> -message which content was not revealed by the

	scattered around the city with <i>narco-messages</i> .	police. The identity of the victims remained unknown.
July 26 th , 2011 (Boca del Rio, Veracruz) Killing of Yolanda Ordaz	The journalist Yolanda Ordaz is killed.	The authorities denied that the death of the journalist was related to her line of work, suggesting that the motivation may be linked to links to organized crime.
August 25 th , 2011 (Monterrey, Nuevo Leon) Casino Royale killings	At least 52 people are killed in an attack with hand grenades that produces a fire in a casino in Monterrey.	Official statements declared that the attack on the casino were motivated by a disagreement between the criminal group of the Zetas and the owner of the business who refused to pay the weekly "right to floor" fee of 130 000 pesos demanded by the Zetas.
September 20 th , 2011 (Boca del Rio, Veracruz) First Massacre in Boca del Rio	35 bodies are abandoned in Boca del Rio, within them the bodies of two minors a 17 and a 15 year-old were found.	There were contradictions and confrontations regarding the narrative of the massacre between the federal and the local attorney's offices. The speaker for the federal government regarding issues of Security, Alejandra de la Sota denied the version of the Veracruz attorney, Reynaldo Escobar Perez in which he stated that the all the victims had a criminal record. Additionally, the state governor, Javier Duarte published in his twitter account that though the killings of 35 people was a tragedy, it was more of a tragedy that those people devoted their lives to killing, kidnapping and extorting money. The state attorney declared within hours of the findings that all of the bodies had been identified and that all of them were related to the organized crime.
September 23 rd , 2011 (Veracruz and Boca del Rio, Veracruz) Second Massacre in Boca del Rio	14 bodies were scattered throughout the cities of Veracruz and Boca del Rio.	

REFERENCES

- Ackermann, J. M. (2011, April 10). La paciencia se agota. *Proceso*, (1797), 50–51.
- Allsop, D., Allen, H., Clare, H., Cook, I., Raxter, H., Upton, C., & Williams, A. (2010). Ethnography and Participant Observation. *Research Methods in Geography: A Critical Introduction* (pp. 206–221). Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Altheide, D. L. (2013). Ethnographic Content Analysis. *Qualitative Media Analysis* (pp. 14–24). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE .
- Ameglio, P. (2011a, April 17). La reserva moral mexicana sale a la calle. *Proceso*, (1798), 22–24.
- Anderson, K., & Smith, S. J. (2001). Emotional Geographies. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 26, 7–10.
- Bondi, L. (2005). Making connections and thinking through emotions: between geography and psychotherapy. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 30(4), 433–448.
- Bosco, F. (2007). Emotions that Build Networks: Geographies of Human Rights Movements in Argentina and Beyond. *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie*, 98(5), 545–563.
- Buscaglia, E. (2012). *La Paradoja Mexicana de la Delincuencia Organizada ¿Más policías.....Más violencia organizada y.....¿Mas corrupción? ¿Hasta dónde?* México: Instituto de Acción Ciudadana para la Justicia y Democracia, A.C.
- Cascante, M. M. (2011, December 14). México: 60.000 muertos en la lucha contra los narcos. *La Nacion*. Retrieved from <http://www.lanacion.com.ar/1432490-mexico-60000-muertos-en-la-lucha-contra-los-narcos>
- Casey, E. S. (2001). Between Geography and Philosophy: What Does It Mean to Be in the Place-World? *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 91(4), 683–693.
- Castañeda Gutman, J., & Aguilar Valenzuela, R. (2012). *Los saldos del narco: el fracaso de una guerra*. México, D.F.: Punto de Lectura.

- Díaz, G. L. (2011, April 17). Clamor por los desaparecidos. *Proceso*, (1798), 10–12.
- Dixon, D. P. (2010). Analyzing Meaning. *Research Methods in Geography: A Critical Introduction* (pp. 392–408). Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Flores Nández, N. (2012). *La Farsa detrás de la Guerra contra el Narco*. México, D.F.: Océano.
- Graham Ronald Shaw, I., Dixon, D. P., & Jones III, J. P. (2010). Theorizing Our World. *Research Methods in Geography: A Critical Introduction* (pp. 9–25). Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- International Crisis Group. (2013). Peña Nieto's Challenge: Criminal Cartels and Rule of Law in Mexico. *Latin America Report*, (48), ii– 48.
- Lamas, M. M. (2011, April 10). Deber de memoria. *Proceso*, (1797), 52.
- Ley, D., & Samuels, M. S. (Eds.). (1978). *Humanistic Geography: Prospects and Problems*. Chicago: Maaroufa Press.
- Molzahn, C., Rodriguez Ferreira, O., & Shirk, D. A. (2013). *Drug Violence in Mexico: Data and Analysis Through 2012*. San Diego: University of San Diego, Trans-Border Institute- Justice in Mexico Project.
- Nuñez Albarrán, E. (2012). *Crónica de un Sexenio Fallido: La Tragedia del Calderonismo*. México, D.F.: Grijalbo.
- Olmos, J. G. (2011a, April 3). Indignacion y hartazgo. *Proceso*, (1796), 6–11.
- Olmos, J. G. (2011b, April 10). Javier Sicilia: Escucha al pueblo, Calderon. *Proceso*, (1797), 6–9.
- Olmos, J. G. (2011c, April 10). Cuernavaca: el tour del horror. *Proceso*, (1797), 10–12.
- Olmos, J. G. (2011d, April 17). Ante la cegera presidencial, la movilizacion nacional... *Proceso*, (1798), 18–25.

- Olmos, J. G. (2011e, August 5). La caminata hermanada por el dolor. *Proceso*, (1801), 12–18.
- Olmos, J. G. (2011f, May 15). Hacia la resistencia civil...*Proceso*, (1802), 16–21.
- Olmos, J. G. (2011g, May 29). Por la ruta de la sangre. *Proceso*, (1804), 20–21.
- Olmos, J. G. (2011h, June 5). Con justicia y dignidad, consigna indeclinable. *Proceso*, (1805), 10–11.
- Olmos, J. G. (2011i, June 12). Aun se puede evitar el estallido.*Proceso*, (1806), 6–31.
- Pile, S. (2010). Emotions and affect in recent human geography. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 35(1), 5–20.
- Presidencia de la Republica (2006-2012). (2012). *Metodologia- Base de Datos de Homicidios Presuntamente Relacionados con la Delincuencia Organizada*. Retrieved from <http://www.sergioaguayo.org/biblioteca/contandocruces/MetodologiaBD.pdf>
- Pulido, L. (2003). The Interior Life of Politics. *Ethics, Place and Environment*, 6, 46–52.
- Rhoads, B. L., & Wilson, D. (2010). Observing Our World. *Research Methods in Geography: A Critical Introduction* (pp. 26–40). Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Rowels, G. (Ed.). (1978). *Prisoners of Space: Exploring the Geographical Experience of Older People*. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Sicilia, J. (2011a, April 4). Javier Sicilia's Open Letter to Mexico's Politicians and Criminals. (NarcoNews, Trans.)*The Narco News Bulletin: Reporting on the Drug War and Democracy from All America*. Retrieved from <http://www.narconews.com/Issue67/article4346.html>
- Sicilia, J. (2011b, May 8). Nuevo pacto o fractura nacional.*Proceso*, (1801), 6–11.
- Sicilia, J. (2011c, May 8). Por un Mexico en paz con justicia y dignidad. *Proceso*, (1801), 8–10.

Thrift, N. (2004). Intensities of feeling: Towards a spatial politics of affect. *Geografiska Annaler*, 86, 57–78.

Tuan, I.-F. (Ed.). (1980). *Landscapes of Fear*. Minneapolis, MN: Univ of Minnesota Press.

Turati, M. (2011a, April 17). La descomposicion nacional. *Proceso*, (1798), 6–9.

Turati, M. (2011b, April 24). Por la memoria de los muertos. *Proceso*, (1799), 30–37.

Turati, M. (2011c, May 15). Familias en busca del cadaver perdido. *Proceso*, (1802), 22–24.

Turati, M. (2011d, May 15). ...y cadaveres en busqueda de identidad. *Proceso*, (1802), 25–27.

Turati, M. (2011e, May 22). En el terror, una brasa de esperanza. *Proceso*, (1803), 19–21.

Valentine, G. (1989). The Geography of Women's Fear. *Area*, 21(4), 385–390.

Wolf, S. (2011). La Guerra de México contra el Narcotráfico y la Iniciativa Mérida: Piedras Angulares en la Búsqueda de Legitimidad. *Foro Internacional*, LI (206), 669–714.

(REFERENCES FOR TABLE 1)

Diario Digital El Informador. (2011). *Tec exige aclarar asesinato de estudiantes en 2010*. Retrieved from <http://www.informador.com.mx/mexico/2011/278733/6/tec-exige-aclarar-asesinato-de-estudiantes-en-2010.htm>

Diario Digital El Informador. (2009). *El narco mata a familia de marino*. Retrieved from <http://www.informador.com.mx/mexico/2009/164977/6/el-narco-mata-a-familia-de-marino.htm>

Diario El Economista. (2010). *Matanza en San Fernando*. Retrieved from

<http://eleconomista.com.mx/columnas/columna-especial-politica/2010/08/26/matanza-san-fernando>

Diario El Economista, A. (2010). *Masacran a otros 15 jóvenes en Nayarit*. Retrieved from <http://eleconomista.com.mx/seguridad-publica/2010/10/27/masacran-otros-15-jovenes-nayarit>

Diario Excelsior, A. (2011). *Comando quema tres viviendas en Durango*. Retrieved from http://www.excelsior.com.mx/index.php?m=nota&seccion=&cat=0&id_nota=790551

Diario Excelsior. (2011). *Investiga la PGR secuestro de migrantes en Veracruz*. Retrieved from http://www.excelsior.com.mx/index.php?m=nota&seccion=&cat=&id_nota=748096

Diario Excelsior. (2011). *Casino Royale, la herida que aún permanece abierta*. Retrieved from http://www.excelsior.com.mx/index.php?m=nota&id_nota=855478&seccion=seccion-nacional&cat=1

Diario La Jornada. (2010). *Chihuahua: ejecutan a 19 en un centro de rehabilitación*. Retrieved from <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2010/06/12/politica/003n1pol>

Diario Publico. (2009). *Asesinados 17 pacientes de un centro de rehabilitación*. Retrieved from <http://www.publico.es/internacional/248393/asesinados-17-pacientes-de-un-centro-de-rehabilitacion>

Fundacion MEPI. (2011). *Secuestro de migrantes en Veracruz ¿cinco o más de cien?* Retrieved from http://fundacionmepi.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=187:secuestro-de-migrantes-en-veracruz-icinco-o-mas-de-cien&catid=58:nacional&Itemid=78

Informaver. (2011). *Se termina de caer versión oficial sobre masacre en Boca del Río*. Retrieved from <http://www.informaver.com/locales-informacion-de-veracruz/notas-generales/2750-se-termina-de-caer-version-oficial-sobre-masacre-en-boca-del-rio.html>

Milenio Diario. (2009). *Segunda masacre de adictos en 2 semanas*. Retrieved from <http://www.milenio.com/cdb/doc/impreso/8642376>

Milenio Diario. (2010). *Ejecutan a 17 jóvenes en Torreón*. Retrieved from

- <http://www.milenio.com/cdb/doc/noticias2011/7c954b2a681dd8c89db2c26cafaadfbe>
- Milenio Diario. (2011). *Muere hijo del escritor y periodista Javier Sicilia (Cobertura Especial)*. Retrieved from <http://www.milenio.com/cdb/doc/noticias2011/7124535617041c8e5402057a53a32084>
- Milenio Diario. (2011). *A un año de la matanza de jóvenes en Salvárcar (cobertura especial)*. Retrieved from <http://www.milenio.com/cdb/doc/noticias2011/2be504ebb2fb2703724fc150cf2d625d>
- Milenio Diario. (2011). *Asesina comando a 11 jóvenes en centro de rehabilitación de Torreón*. Retrieved from <http://www.milenio.com/cdb/doc/testing/d818d6627abaf84cdae35218fd8246bd>
- Noticieros Televisa. (2011). *Encuentran octava fosa clandestina en Durango*. Retrieved from <http://noticierostelevisa.esmas.com/nacional/301360/encuentran-octava-fosa-clandestina-durango>
- Portal Terra Noticias. (2010). *Atribuye PGR masacre en Torreón a crimen organizado*. Retrieved from <http://www.terra.com.mx/noticias/articulo/927194/Atribuye+PGR+masacre+en+Torreón+a+crimen+organizado.html>
- Proceso. (2011). *Encuentran 10 decapitados en Torreón*. Retrieved from <http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=275386>
- Radiar Noticias Michoacan. (2011). *Múltiples narcobloqueos en Apatzingan, Uruapan y Morelia, Michoacan*. Retrieved from http://radiarnoticiasmichoacan.blogspot.com/2011/07/multiples-narcobloqueos-en-apatzingan.html?m=nota&seccion=&cat=&id_nota=748096
- Radio La Nueva República La Democratización de la Palabra por una Nueva República. (2011). *San Fernando, otra vez. ¿Cuántas más?* Retrieved from <http://www.lanuevarepublica.org/?p=970>
- Reporteros sin Fronteras. (2011). *Con el asesinato de una periodista, el estado de Veracruz se convierte en uno de los más mortíferos del país desde el inicio del año*. Retrieved from <http://es.rsf.org/mexico-con-el-asesinato-de-una-periodista-27-07-2011,40703.html>

W Radio- Noticias. (2011). *Provocación, secuestro de migrantes: Solalinde*. Retrieved from <http://www.wradio.com.mx/noticias/actualidad/provocacion-secuestro-de-migrantes-solalinde/20110627/nota/1495837.aspx>