Towards an Audiovisual Archaeology of the End of the Cold War in Latin America

by

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Introduction

1. The solitude of Latin America

“ There have been five wars and seventeen military coups; there emerged a diabolical dictator who is carrying out in God's name the first Latin American genocide of our time. In the meantime, twenty million Latin American children died before the age of one - more than have been born in Europe since 1970. Those missing because of repression number nearly one hundred and twenty thousand, which is as if no one could account for all the inhabitants of Uppsala. Numerous women arrested while pregnant have given birth in Argentine prisons, yet nobody knows the whereabouts and identity of their children. Because they tried to change this state of things, nearly two hundred thousand have lost their lives in three small and stubborn countries...Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala.”¹

In 1982, Gabriel García Márquez, a Colombian writer, received the Nobel Prize on Literature. Worldwide, he’s known for belonging to a literary trend called magical realism: even though this attribution is debatable, and literature is not the subject of this research, it is important to point out that he belongs to a generation of writers, artists, and filmmakers that during the second half of the 20th century fought against the exoticization and tropicalization of Latin America’s reality. In his Nobel lecture, he recalls how our history is full of authoritarian regimes, and highly affected by the dynamics of the power of former empires and current superpowers. He said that we haven’t been far beyond the reach of madness and that this condition of outsized reality,

transformed in his masterwork “100 Years of Solitude”, was what probably claimed the attention of the Swedish Academy of Letters.

In this lecture, the author stated fiercely how - still- in the 1980s the time for democracy in Latin America wasn’t going to arrive anytime soon. On the contrary, as quoted before, he explained how Guatemalan dictator Efraín Ríos Montt, -recently converted to evangelical-, was consecrating his country to God while committing a genocide towards the Ixil (indigenous) people; and how Central America was losing its people and the control of its own territory due to the perverse dynamics on containing Communism at any cost (as the United States sponsored the Contras counterinsurgency army in Nicaragua). The Southern Cone and the Andes were no exception to this situation. This was no magical realism, but tragical realism. For García Márquez, this condition of trying to fit our region through the schemas of the other side of the world had condemned us to solitude.

Even though the Cold War is a trendy topic for 20th Century historians worldwide, studying Latin America in this context doesn’t go too far away from Cuba and the 1960s. Furthermore, comparative studies within the same region also tend to focus in the dictatorships of the Southern Cone (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, and Brazil) whereas the Andes and Central America are still pending subjects to develop. In the region, in general, studies on the active role that moving images and broadcasting material play in the writing - and in the outcome- of history are really scarce.

The eighties were a troubled time in Latin America. It was definitely a confrontation arena for the Cold War superpowers: The United States contention policy, with the determination to end Communism at any cost, was at its most, and this condition translated in the sponsorship of authoritarian regimes and/or counterinsurgency forces that tried to annihilate any form of opposition. Civilians got caught in the middle of the fire and were victims of various forms of oppression and Human Rights violations, almost on a daily basis. Still, in the 21st century, there are current judicial processes and Truth Commissions created with the purpose to look forward to reconstructing all of the important events and the memory of oppression and violence, resistance and
resilience in the decade. In the reconstruction of this history, moving images have played an important part as judicial evidence, but they still haven’t made it to the big leagues of historiography. That’s the main reason why I decided to conduct my research.

The role of broadcasting sources on revealing, hiding, or acting against critical situations that took place during the eighties in the countries that are subject for this research is crucial: In Chile, National Television took the part of the official government channel, showing to the audience a nation that was moving towards progress and civility thanks to General Augusto Pinochet. Simultaneously, an underground news program was being distributed from hand to hand to reveal the truth of oppression and crisis of the regime; In Colombia, the excess of violence and the unfortunate coincidence of the war on communism with the war on drugs, followed a series of tragic events that were broadcast practically in real time to the audiences during the whole decade; In Central America, mostly in Guatemala and Nicaragua, the information is limited, and it was thanks to foreign cameras from fierce journalists and filmmakers that the horror of Rios Montt’s Dictatorship and the resistance of the Ixil people became noticed worldwide, and that the Sandinista Revolution had full news coverage. For all of this cases, the presence of foreign broadcast correspondents was crucial: the moving images they produced are accurate sources to fill the voids of histories that were never told in their time and are vital to the reconstruction of truth.

The following pages are an attempt to portray the dynamics of the Cold War in Latin America through its broadcast archival sources in three case studies: Chile, Colombia, and Central America (focusing in Guatemala and Nicaragua). The selection of the case studies obeys to the purpose of widening the scope of analysis on the dynamics on the region by the 1980s, including countries that are not usually part of the historiography on the subject, especially Colombia and the countries from Central America. Also, it was important for the definition of the case studies to describe different levels of access to the audiovisual collections (if existed), and to analyse the uses and role that the sources play in the processes of reconstruction of history of those countries, due to the fact that in most of them there have been laws on Historical Memory, Truth, and Reconciliation that led to the creation of institutions with the same purpose.
The text is structured in chapters: the first one is the current introduction, an attempt to describe the context of production and a description of the methodology of research in each case; the following three chapters are each one devoted to explain how the research on broadcast material in each country helps to understand the role of television archives in documenting and revealing different nuances on the last decade of the Cold War in Latin America, the role of audiovisual sources in the reconstruction of historical truth, and the existence or absence of collection management policies for this kind of material. Finally, there is a chapter for conclusions.

2. Research Methodology and Audiovisual Collections

For this research, I visited five different audiovisual collections in Chile and Colombia. I visited Chile from the 7th of July to the 18th: First I went to the archives of National Television/TVN (FIAT Member), and then to the Centre for Audiovisual Documentation from the Museum of Memory and Human Rights. In Colombia I researched in the collections from Señal Memoria-RTVC (The National Public Broadcast Network), Fundación Patrimonio Fílmico Colombiano (FIAT member) and Citurna Productions (Independent production company that worked for BBC and German television during the eighties).

For the Central American cases, the sources were scarce and there was no possibility of contact for the case of Nicaragua, due to the current turmoil events that are still taking place in the country. In the case of Guatemala, I contacted filmmaker Pamela Yates, whose work on the history of this country since the eighties is remarkable, mainly because she relies on archival research for the making of her documentaries, and because some footage that she filmed was used as judicial evidence in the genocide case against dictator Ríos Montt. We had a Skype interview and she provided me remote access to many items from her collection. I also tried to contact NSA archivist Kate Doyle, whose work on Central America is known worldwide, but I didn’t get any answer. Since the sources for the case studies for these countries were so limited, I decided to explore the available content in the AP archives webpage, where I found many sources.
from American broadcasting networks that made reports on the region, and also presidential speeches by Ronald Reagan, justifying the US intervention in Central America.

2.1. Collection: TVN-Chile/ National Television of Chile (FIAT MEMBER)
Contact: Amira Arratia, Chief of Documentation

Collection profile and sources: The archive’s chronological scope goes from its creation in 1969 to current times. This collection documents the political and cultural history of the Chileans from the perspective of the government until 1992, when it became a public channel.

Most of the material related to the research was originally recorded in 2-inch quadruplex videotape and U-matic and started being digitized in 2011. I got access to consult the material thanks to the help of Amira Arratia, who has been in charge of the archive since 1973-before and after the Coup-. I reviewed the complete records on the NO/SI campaign, official speeches by General Pinochet, and records from foreign broadcast companies (never broadcast on national television during the dictatorship) that registered all of the traumatic events of the decade. In total, I visualized 43 items from the collection, with an approximate length of 30 minutes to one hour.

2.2. Collection: Museo de la Memoria y de los Derechos Humanos/ Museum of Memory and Human Rights Chile
Contact: Soledad Díaz de Los Reyes, Collection Development Department

Collection profile and sources: Created in 2010 during the government of former President Michelle Bachelet. The Museum has, besides the amazing curatorial script that rebuilds the history and stories(testimonies) behind the 1973 Coup d'etat and its tragical aftermath, an amazing audiovisual collection with more than 350 documents that can be accessed free by any person. The CEDAV or Audiovisual Documentation Centre, sponsored by Ford Foundation allows the visitor to research its collections easily through the use of 18 touchscreens.
This collection is managed with a structure of fonds, linked to the donations of different independent and institutional collections, mainly with copies of the original material. Hence, the Museum doesn’t have the copyright of any of these items, besides of its own productions; the donors sign an agreement with the Museum to exhibit and in some cases to conserve the material, these agreements don’t involve money.

The digital copies of the material are stored in a local server that is linked to the computers of all 18 touchscreens. All the material available is classified by categories: Documentary, fiction, audiovisual record, interview, testimony, television, art and culture, music and indigenous memories. Also, every record is cataloged to facilitate the research. One of the things that I found quite interesting was the amount of foreign material collected and curated in the audiovisual collection, mainly from the RAI.

In total, I checked 70 items with broadcast content (from Chile and abroad), documentaries with broadcast archives, and all of the programs of Teleanálisis, the underground news program created to spread the news on the reality of oppression during the last five years of the regime.
2.3 Collection: Citurna Archive / Colombia

Contact: Adelaida Trujillo, General Manager

Collection profile and sources: This collection is one of the most interesting I reviewed. Citurna is a Colombian production company that in the 1980s decided to pitch for Channel 4 and BBC, to produce documentaries that reflected on Colombia’s troubled times. In this context, they produced four documentaries that were broadcast in English and then German television: La Ley del Monte/ Law of the Jungle (1989), funded by Colombian Film Board, Television Trust for the Environment; Seguimos Adelante!/ Nothing will stop us (1990) for BBC1; Las otras guerras de la coca/ “Who will win the cocaine war”, for Channel 4; and La Constituyente/ The Constitution, for Channel 4 – The World This Week, 1991.

The rushes and master carriers from film and analog video and audio material are currently stored at the Fundación Patrimonio Fílmico Colombiano (FIAT member). However, for the case of Citurna, the significant amount of related documents from pre and post-production give a powerful insight to the production of documentaries in Colombia in the eighties, and also to the extreme conditions of filming and being a journalist in this context.
Besides having full access to the documentaries (they are not available online), I was also able to get a copy of all of the related documents of each of the productions for my research. Each film dossier has about 200 documents to read and understand the behind the scenes of every production. In the case of the film *Law of the Jungle*, I also could get access to the full content of the interviews (recorded in sound) made to the peasants of the Serranía of La Macarena, the place where the film took place.

2.4 Collection: Señal Memoria- RTVC / Colombia

**Contact**: Luisa Ordóñez, Collection Management Advisor

**Collection profile and sources**: The archives from the public broadcast network of Colombia, RTVC, cover a chronological scope that goes from 1940 to 2006, with all types of sound and audiovisual carriers and all of the possible topics to get an insight of Colombia’s history through the 20th century.
In relation to the topic of the research, the archive has documents that show the rough and cruel times that Colombian citizens were living during the decade: bombs in the cities, the Siege of the Justice Palace in 1985, and the official responses from presidents Belisario Betancur (1982-1986) and Virgilio Barco (1986-1990) to these troubled times. Additionally, the archive has the full coverage of the peace processes with the FARC guerrilla in 1984, the M-19 and the Quintín Lame guerrilla in 1989. In the archive, I also found a series of travel programs that took place in Nicaragua and Guatemala, and they provided a thorough picture of the political situation in both countries by the mid-1980s. In total, I reviewed 30 items with a length from 5 minutes to 1 hour and a half.

2.5 Fundación Patrimonio Fílmico Colombiano/ Colombia (FIAT MEMBER)

**Contact:** Rito Alberto Torres, Technical Sub-Director

**Collection profile and sources:** The Fundación Patrimonio Fílmico Colombiano is the institution in charge of preserving the film heritage from Colombia. Besides preserving motion pictures, it also has one of the most remarkable collections and fonds of small production companies that made contents for television and news programs that were broadcast during the 20th century. However, the material is only digitized on demand, and I just could get access to 7 items, most of them belong to the Telediario collection, digitized in the framework of the Save your Archive Grant, with a length of only 2 hours.

2.6 Skylight Pictures (United States)

**Contact:** Pamela Yates, Filmmaker

**Collection profile and sources:** The archive of Skylight Pictures holds all the material related to the production of Human Rights documentaries from the company. I became interested in the subject of Central America mainly for a film from Yates entitled *Granito: How to Nail a Dictator* (2011), directed by Pamela Yates. In this film, the director looks back to the audiovisual material that she collected while making her 1983 documentary *When the Mountains Tremble*, and realizes that the interviews that took place in this context, both to military leaders - including Ríos Montt- and indigenous
social leaders, are documents that constitute not only historical sources but also probative material to point out at Ríos Montt responsibility for the genocide of the Mayan (Ixil) people. The records that she collected were part of the trial.

I spoke to Pamela via Skype about the production of the film, the situation of Guatemala in the eighties and today, and about other productions related to the use of images in the reconstruction of history. She helped me to get remote access to most of the material that she has produced on Guatemala and also helped me to contact the archival producer of one of her films in Perú. Even though I’m not including Perú in this stage of my research, I got access to some audiovisual items used in the framework of the Truth Commission from that country.

2.6. AP Archives

Contact: Webpage

Collection profile and sources: To expand the coverage of material from Central America, and also to check the American perspective on the Colombian situation, I explored the AP archives webpage. It is a great source for researchers, despite the metadata of some of the records is not accurate.

Here, I reviewed 169 items from Colombia, and 228 from Nicaragua. The Nicaragua example is really important because the research results also cover many of the Reagan speeches, in which the war on communism and the justification to sponsor the contra army was the transversal axis of his discourses.

3. Towards an Audiovisual Archaeology of the End of the Cold War in Latin America

In the development of this research, I identified three main cross-cutting themes that are essential for the analysis of the region during the eighties: The first one is related to the historiography on the subject and the few comparative studies that exist on it so far; the second, on the creation and definition on both Archives of Oppression and...
Rights Archives that have helped to document the history of the decade during the 1980s and also a consequence of the creation of Truth Commissions; and finally, the agency of moving images - mainly broadcast- in the writing of political history (in all cases, traumatic) of these countries.

**Historiographic Trends**

To each of the case studies analyzed in the following chapters, belongs a vast volume of texts - mainly written in Spanish- that address all of the nuances in which Cold War dynamics was manifested in the region: how the National Security Doctrine and the Contention Policy from the United States translated in the sponsorship of several Coup d'Etat and authoritarian regimes; how the training of army soldiers from all of these countries in counterinsurgency tactics at the famous School of the Americas had tragic consequences on the everyday life of peasants, citizens, students, indigenous population and Human Rights advocates, where State of siege and curfew were the norm and not the exception; how the resilience and resistance of all of these people against oppression created massive cultural movements that eventually got noticed worldwide.

Most of the academic production is essentially focused on case studies by country as an individual subject, and there are few comparative history approaches. For the case of literature in English written by outsider scholars, the overview of the political circumstances on this territory is frequently interpreted as a byproduct of the decisions and policies of the United States and the Soviet Union. Just in a few cases, the countries’ own past plays an active role in the outcome of the process at the end of the 1980s.

According to Joseph Gilbert, “The region has rarely been incorporated into the great historiographic debates about the character of the Cold War and remains disproportionately underrepresented in journals specializing in the conflict”\(^2\), in his book *In from the Cold: Latin America’s New Encounter with the Cold War*, he stresses the

The fact that Latin America’s Cold War has been reduced merely as a conflict of both sides in which the only interesting point is to see games of strategy or how close the powers came to be in each stage of the conflict. However, one has to bear in mind that the Latin American past is littered with alternating cycles of social reform and intense conservative reaction, in which the influence, aid, and intervention of imperial powers have figured prominently. Even so, the dynamics of the Latin American Cold War are embedded in a particularly ferocious dialectic linking reformist and revolutionary projects for social change and national development and the excessive counterrevolutionary responses they triggered in the years following World War II.

Furthermore, these alternating cycles of liberal reforms and conservative and authoritarian regimes, have been part of the region’s history since the XIX Century. To reduce the analysis to the perspective of the superpowers is to discard a history about abuse of power, land tenure and reform, civil rights movements and revolutions that are still latent or emerging back to the surface for many of the countries in Latin América, from México to Chile. Latin American states used a Cold War rationale, generated outside the region, to wage war against their citizens, to gain or perpetuate power, and to create or justify authoritarian military regimes, I dare to say that this rationale is still alive for many of the political and military leaders in our countries.

**Human Rights Archives and Archives of Oppression**

For many of the Latin American Countries that experienced a dictatorship during the Cold War, the creation of a Truth Commission, in charge of reconstructing the history of the traumatic process was almost mandatory after 1989. Starting from Argentina, followed by Chile, Uruguay and Brazil, the production of ¡Nunca más! (Never Again) reports was a constant in the Southern Cone. The making of these reports relied on the access to victim’s testimonies and Human Rights NGs that collected the memories of...

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oppression during the years of dictatorship. As stated before, it is known, for the case of Chile, that broadcast archives also contributed to the reconstruction of truth.

In recent years, similar initiatives had taken place in Perú and Colombia, for the Peruvian case there is a vast amount of moving images collected, used mainly for the identification of missing people, later found in mass graves; in the case of Colombia the images were identified and some of them collected by the National Centre for Historical Memory. The recently created Truth Commission (2017), also has the task of accessing to these sources, but due to the current political circumstances in the country the conditions and use of audiovisual sources for this task are still blurry. In Central America, “The commissions that were sponsored by United Nations - Guatemala, El Salvador- decided to put their archives in the hands of this institution, in part due to the lack of confidence in the Government in office in their respective countries”.

Hence, it is important to say that most of the memories and versions of the story that are included in these reports are the ones that come from the victims, and not from the perpetrators. It is constant to see “the image of a war in which victims acquire clear profiles, but perpetrators, diffused and distant profiles”.

However, there are a couple of examples in which the image of the perpetrators emerged from the underground and its appearance helped to clear up many episodes of Latin American History: the “Archives of terror”, found in Paraguay in 1992 and produced during the years of the Alfredo Stroessner dictatorship (1954-1989), didn’t have only information about the mechanisms of oppression in the regime, but also a thorough insight on the Operation Condor, the United States plan on backing authoritarian regimes in South America to contain communism at any cost. Also, the

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5 Many of these material was also used by filmmakers Pamela Yates and Paco de Onís for their film Estado de Miedo/ State of Fear, that tells the story of Perú from the emergence of the Sendero Luminoso guerrilla, to the impeachment of former president Fujimori. For more information: https://skylight.is/es/films/estado-de-miedo/

6 In the 2018 elections, the Centro Democratico party, a right wing political party won the presidential elections. They are known for their fierce opposition to the peace process with former guerrilla FARC, and they are already redefining the terms of the peace agreement signed by liberal president Juan Manuel Santos in 2016.


archives of the National Police of Guatemala, discovered in 2005, had a detailed explanation of the activities of this institution in the second half of the 20th Century.

Even though these two examples are about two archives with mostly paper documents, they constitute a cornerstone for the history of Latin American archives and Human Rights archives, because they completed the puzzle on the role of perpetrators in the late Cold War context.

As you might see, these examples are recent and don’t go further back than the early 1990s, and this is another issue to point out, because is not until recently, and mainly due to the political will of liberal governments, that there has been some attention on archival preservation. For the case of Latin America, “an emphasis on archival preservation is often not explicitly highlighted as a key ingredient to deepening democracy and the long-term vibrancy of democratic practices in countries that have experienced traumatic pasts”\(^9\), archives are not yet seen as authoritative sources.

**Moving Images and Political History in Latin America**

In comparison to Latin American film history during the Cold War, where several studies have been produced in the last two decades, the study of broadcasting images has been really scarce, and for the purpose of this research only three texts were found on the subject: "*Muy Buenas noches: México, la Televisión y la Guerra Fría/ Muy Buenas Noches: México, Television and the Cold War*”, written by Celeste González de Bustamante, which focuses on the analysis of broadcast material produced in the 1960s in México, in particular the documents related to the 1968 Olympics and the Massacre of Tlatelolco; *Apuntes para una historia del video en Chile/ Notes for a History of Video in Chile*, written by Germán Liñero, a thorough study on the use of video as a political tool during the 1980s in the country, not only for journalists but for Human Rights advocates and artists. Finally, the printed version of the Audiovisual Catalogue from the Museo de

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la Memoria’s CEDAV, offers an exhaustive memory of the audiovisual production of the decade both from official sources as from independent sources.

The potential that the field of historical studies has on the research of broadcast images is enormous, not only because the lack of published studies on the subject, but also because not all of the audiovisual collections on the subject have been identified yet. Moreover, in contexts of oppression and restricted democracy, as in Latin America moving images are not only evidence but living agents in the possible transformation of current events, they “do not merely depict the historical world, they participate in its transformation”10.

To understand images as historical sources also demand to interpret them not as a mere illustration of the facts, in Latin America, the use of video technologies during the eighties was an “a medium for cultural struggle against the political local apparatus”11. Broadcast television wasn’t the only medium were images and news about critical events in Latin America during this period got noticed, video technologies were also used as a weapon of resistance, as many records were bootlegged in underground circuits and outside these countries to spread the word on what was happening.

To finish this introduction, I’d like to use the following quote by Joan Schwartz, in which the author recalled a re-purposing of photographs, to ask images what they can do for themselves:

“Let us stop thinking of photographs as nouns, and start treating them as verbs, transitive verbs. They do things. We need to ask not only what they are off, and what they are about, but also what they were created to do. And when they are preserved or digitized, published or in other ways repurposed and recirculated, we must ask how their material nature has been altered, and in the process, how the relationships embedded in them have changed, why and to what end”12

Acknowledgments

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**Chile: La alegría ya viene**

Image 4: Screenshot from Youtube video with an excerpt of the NO spot

The eighties in Chile began with the proclamation of a new constitution. After the Coup of 1973, the country faced a categorical division: half of the population celebrated the defeat of a left-wing government, led by Salvador Allende and his project of Unidad Popular (Popular Unity) associated with socialist and Marxist ideas; the other half, devastated for the collapse of their ideals, had to leave the country, and the ones that stayed and were political leaders from the left, were persecuted, killed or disappeared. This division accompanied the political dynamics of the country through the 1980s.

By 1980 the government controlled all television broadcast content on the channels National Television- TVN and Canal 13. That was, of course, an opportunity for the dictatorship to portray a unique version of the reality of the country. “Chilean people,

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13 Chile, la alegría ya viene! or Chile, happiness is coming! was the slogan of the political campaign that during 1988 helped to encourage Chilean citizens to vote for the NO option, against the prolongation of Augusto Pinochet in the presidency. On my research, I viewed all of the electoral spots on this campaign, broadcast on Chilean TV during September of 1988. Unfortunately, I wasn’t able to take screenshots from the material on the TVN archives, therefore the screenshots quoted on this chapter belong to Youtube videos that show fragments on the campaign.
during the 17 years of the military government consumed the image of a country that progressed in order, threatened by external agents linked to international Marxism, and that was “taking off” together with its economy thanks to the organized consumerism and the quiet conduct of its citizens”14.

In this context, General Pinochet decided to summon Chilean citizens to proclaim a new constitution. The 1980 Constitution was voted on a referendum, which had full coverage on the official TV cameras. After the triumph of this referendum the dictator asserted that the “constitution contemplates a strong authority that serves as a shield for freedom, and a guarantee for justice” 15, but the Constitution marks a cornerstone in the history of Chile: even though many of its content was keen to the modus operandi of the regime, there was something unprecedented: there should be a call for democratic elections in 1989, preceded by a referendum in 1988.

Therefore, the audiovisual sources that document the interval between 1980 to 1989 cover a wide range of manifestations. In the official versions, which means, the material produced by Chilean broadcast channels, the content goes from presidential discourses, in which Pinochet started dressing up as a civilian, to brief reports on the modernization and progress of the nation. In the meantime, independent journalists and foreign correspondents documented the daily life of a country in constant turmoil.

This chapter is divided into four sections: one dedicated to describing the material produced by the official sources, produced by TVN and Canal 13; the second focuses on the role of independent journalism and the underground news program Teleanálisis; the third one analyses the role of the SI/NO campaign on the defeat of Pinochet and a new path for democracy in Chile; finally, the last section overviews the recent television productions from the former official sources and film productions, that revisit the memory of the dictatorship with the use of broadcasting archives from the decade.

15 Transcription of his speech, from the “Mensage presidencial - Capítulo Único”, August 10th of 1980. TVN archives.
Besides the material directly connected to the oppressive regime and the resistance of the population, the collections that were part of this research also hold documents that are common to find in Latin American Collections of the time - as in Colombia-: Comedy Specials, beauty pageants, the coverage of Soccer World Cups of 1978, 1982, 1986 and 1990, boxing matches, the Olympics (very important for the context of the Cold War) and journalism specials covering the turmoils that came from other countries in Latin America.

**The official versions**

TVN was the official channel of the government, and therefore it preserves dozens of items regarding the visits of General Pinochet to every region of the country. Since it is traditional with authoritarian rulers, the recording and the broadcast of those visits was one of the key elements to the regime’s propaganda, by showing its sovereignty from the Atacama Desert to the Isla de Pascua. Also, TVN archives hold all of the presidential announcements until the last day of Pinochet’s rule, in 1990.

TVN broadcasting history during the 1980s never covered any event related to military oppression or Human Rights violations in Chile, besides the content of the NO spot broadcast during 1988. In fact, during the decade, the references to Human Rights abuses only focused in the actions from subversive groups, like the ones committed by the Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez an armed group that attempted against Pinochet’s life in 1986. After this attack, the general declared State of siege, which allowed him to arrest people in their own houses, to relocate them, to restrict their liberties to move around the country, to forbid the right of assembly, and to restrict associations and unions.

The other strategy to silence the state of upheaval in the country was the coverage of traumatic events in the region. In fact, the coverage of the crisis in Central America from the late 1970s until the mid 1980s was one of the options that the government had to show how communist revolutions: The news program Informe Especial, presented
full coverage of the rise of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, and of the Farabundo Martí front in El Salvador.

**Teleanálisis: Video as subversion**

Image 5: Screenshot from Youtube video with an excerpt of the first episode of Teleanálisis. This episode begins with the testimony of Estela Ortiz, wife of a sociologist that worked at the Vicaría de la Solidaridad, who was killed in 1984 by agents of the government.

Teleanálisis constitutes the best example of independent - and brave- journalism produced in the country during the regime. It is a 47 episodes series of programs that cover various topics on Chilean current events from the mid-1980s to the transition to democracy. The project started with initiatives from local NGOs that found the way through acquiring video technologies to present the overwhelming reality that the government was trying to cover with censorship by any means: while General Pinochet declared the State of Siege in 1984 and in 1986, “the strength and diversity of the human rights movement in Chile meant that copious amounts of documentary materials were produced during the period”\textsuperscript{16}.

Teleanálisis came from the experience of alternative journalism that started in 1977 with the magazine Análisis. In those years, written press from some parties from the opposition was allowed with some restrictions, as partial censorship, confiscation of editions and persecution of journalists. By 1984 the situation turned worst when the government decided to proclaim a law against the public information of any event related to crisis or that might cause alarm in the citizenship. The answer to this extreme

censorship was creating a news program that wasn’t meant to be broadcast, but that worked through subscriptions in which people received a VHS tape with the current news.

Financially, “The model that was used consisted in functioning with the money from international organizations and a distribution system that operated with subscribers that gave their own VHS (virgin) tape were the emission was recorded, every time the tape was full Teleanálisis told the subscriber to give a new one”\(^\text{17}\). Legally, as the proclaimed 1984 law had a restriction only to the Chilean territory, the journalists found a loophole, they put at the beginning of every program the message: “Public distribution in Chile is forbidden”.

The scope of the programs is very diverse, the journalists focused not only in documenting the oppression, but also on showing the cultural resistance from the youth: there are episodes on the latest music trends (the eighties are the golden age of rock in Spanish) from bands as Los Prisioneros and the Pinochet Boys, on the censorship on Chilean Cinema, and on the arrival of Inti Illimani (an Andean music band that was exiled) back to Chile in 1988.

While many of the Teleanálisis episodes are compelling reports on Chile’s resistance to oppression during the decade, I’d like to highlight episodes 22 and 39. Episode 22 “Pinochet and International Reality” emphasizes on Cold War dynamics and in the increasing war on Communism lead by Ronald Reagan’s foreign policy, the journalists used footage from Pinochet discourses in which he stated that the winner of World War II was Russia, and Communism wasn’t defeated yet, in the words of the dictator “The only country that can say that expelled the communists in Chile”.

Teleanálisis 39 features David Bradbury’s documentary *No pasarán*, with images from the Sandinista revolution, opinions from the Nicaraguan people, Ronald Reagan’s speeches against communism, and the creation of the collective direction of Sandinista Revolution, including famous Argentinian author Julio Cortázar. This documentary, in

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\(^\text{17}\) Ibid, page 60.
particular, presents an idealized version of the revolution, endorsed by the support of intellectuals and leaders of opinion around the world. It is sad to see, how in the 20th Century this revolution became useless and Daniel Ortega, a former member of the Sandinista rebels is stuck to power (he has been president from 1979 to 1990, and then from 2007 until today) by authoritarian means.

The role of foreign broadcast networks

Cameraman Pablo Salas is one of the most important figures in this history. As an independent journalist, he recorded many of the crucial events in where the strength of the opposition against Pinochet was evident, as the protests in 1983 and in 1986, and the resistance of the population in La Victoria, the marginalized neighbourhood in Santiago de Chile in which the tension and confrontations between the Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez and the agents of the government was always extreme. Also, he worked together with RAI journalists in the edition of one of the news programs from the Italian broadcast network. Many of the highlighted images from the 1980s in Chile were recorded by his camera and can be accessed on the collection of the Museo de la Memoria.

Additionally, I found material from Viznews, RAI (correspondent Italo Moretti), ABC News, CNN, NBC, TVE, ZDF and RTF both in TVN and in Museo de la Memoria. The presence of these records on TVN only obeys to the archival conscience of Amira Arratia, the chief of documentation of the channel, who during the 1980s found the material and kept it as evidence of the horrors of the regime.

On the Museo de la Memoria’s audiovisual collection, the RAI audiovisual sources occupy the vast majority of the broadcast sources. Fragments of news and full documentaries can be seen at the CEDAV, as the report “Chile, visiones contrapuestas/Chile, opposite visions”, about Chile 10 years after the Coup, and also the report by Itallo Moretti on La Victoria, one of the marginalized neighborhoods in Santiago the Chile, in which the presence of the Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez, delivering a - stolen-truck of free chicken to the people is one of the main features.
The NO/SI campaign

To accomplish the goal stated by 1980’s constitution, in which Chile must hold democratic elections by 1989, Pinochet’s government had the obligation to give room to the opposition to participate in the elections. The official candidate of the government, was again Augusto Pinochet, and while there was no option to postulate a candidate from the choices for the referendum were voting YES/SI to endorse Pinochet’s government for another decade, or just NO, to end the dictatorship.

It was strategic from the government side to give the NO option to the opposition (who’s going to vote for a No, anyway?). However, the advertising agency in charge of producing the NO spot in National Television made it a positive NO through a cheery campaign that looked more like a Coca-cola advertising spot than political propaganda. I viewed all episodes of the SI/NO campaign on TVN archives.

The National Television had the total control of the broadcast content, but finally, for the first time in 15 years, the opposition had the chance, for 27 days in 15 minutes at the end of the night (at 11 pm), to explain to the audiences why it was the time to change from dictatorship to democracy. The 15 minutes always started with the same advertising, a joyful spot with a jingle called “Chile: la alegría ya viene” (Chile: happiness is coming!), followed by diverse content: interviews to victims of the regime, musical or dance performances, comedy or symbolic spots in which the figure of Pinochet was implicitly criticized, and the words of journalists, actors and cultural personalities that had been marginalized from the screens and from the press because of their political opinion. Also, messages showing the support to the NO option from foreign artists, like Sting, Jane Fonda, Robert Blakey, Christopher Reeves, Isabel Allende, and Richard Dreyfuss, among others.
“Is not a democrat who governs by force, is not a democrat, who expels his compatriots out of the country without any trial, is not a democrat who violates Human Rights systematically, is not a democrat who imposes a custom-made constitution, is not a democrat, who wants to be in power for 24 years in a row, the suit doesn’t make you a democrat”

The producers of the NO spot had to deliver the edited program to the government one day before broadcast, that served as a reference to the SI side to use some of the material as a joke or as an argument to defend the need to avoid communism. In fact, for some episodes they made the same “La alegría ya viene” spot but they changed the subject to “Los marxistas ya vienen”: the marxists are coming, and disguised actors as the dancers that performed in the NO spot, with ski masks and molotov bombs.
The SI spot, always focused in the bad years of Allende’s government and its project of Unidad Popular (Popular Union), recalled the lack of food, the big lines to get any product, and the overwhelming presence of international communism in the country as an strategy to cause the fear of the past to its sympathizers. They also had a slogan and a spot that claimed that Chile was a winner country “País Ganador”, making a strong emphasis in the personality of Pinochet, in this scenario always dressed as a civilian. Moreover, when presenting the images of the infrastructure and modernization of the country due to Pinochet, they -always- put Indiana Jones’ soundtrack as background (no rights reserved!).

The spokespersons for the SI spot were business owners, mothers, and families from upper classes. They gave also their testimonies (they seemed extremely fake), and they stressed the fact that at the end of the NO rainbow, there was only misery because there was always marxism, and totalitarian governments were always from the left side of the picture. The development of this campaign showed how “the military embodied many of the values and traditions of the upper class while serving as a transmission belt that allowed lower and middle-class outsiders, more ideologically committed to defending a patriarchal vision of nationalism entry into that order. In the process, conservatism as a worldview moved from an instinctual defense of the status hierarchy to a more continuous, self-conscious ideology”¹⁸. I

Finally, on October 5th of 1988, the NO option won with 53.3% of the votes, against 43.01% from the SI, Pinochet had to go. The role of the NO spot in this outcome was crucial: the images that were produced from the opposition didn't encourage the audiences towards fear, but joy and they also produced the convergence of diverse political parties and Human Rights Movements, towards change. Louis Bickford, an author that has written several texts on the agency of archives in the construction of truth, states that “while it is not clear that these human rights movements caused the end of the military regimes, it is clear that they were influential in contributing to both the initiation and dynamics of democratic transitions”.19

The audiovisual sources that cover the aftermath of this success, from the recognition of the verdict by Pinochet to the change of government after the 1990 elections, in which Patricio Aylwin became president, are available for access at the Museo de la Memoria.

Reuse of archival material

The Chilean case is one of the most profuse in terms of the reuse of archival material in recent productions. On the 21st Century, TVN, Canal 13 and Chilevisión have produced several series that explore Chilean history in the 1980s with the use of archival material: Los 80s( The 80s), produced by Canal 13 a fiction series based on the history of a middle class family from 1982 to 1989, lasted seven seasons, from 2007 to 2013; Los Archivos del Cardenal, based on the history of the Vicaría de la Solidaridad, a Catholic NGO that helped the relatives of missing persons to find their beloved ones, lasted two seasons from 2011 to 2014; Chile: Las imágenes prohibidas (2013) was a documentary series of four episodes that used archival material from official and independent sources, to reconstruct the history of Chile during the 1980s. Finally, Chilean filmmaker Pablo Larraín produced the film NO, on the history of this campaign, it was nominated as best foreign film for the 2013 Oscars.

1. The Colombian Conflict as Epistemic Category: Notes for Audiovisual Archivists in Latin America

To document and to narrate the history of the Colombian armed conflict through its audiovisual sources is not an easy task. For more than sixty years, the country has been immersed in a spiral of violence that turns into a more complex stage as time goes on. Simultaneously to this situation, a huge volume of moving images such as broadcasting material, fiction and documentary films, artworks and video records has been produced.

The conflict is still an ongoing process with no visible solution in the short term. Even though Colombian government signed in 2016 a peace agreement with the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), the oldest and strongest guerrilla in the territory, the political scenario in the country is changing dramatically. After eight years of a liberal government that encouraged the peace process (former president Juan Manuel Santos won the Nobel Peace Prize) the restitution of land to the victims of the conflict, and the reconstruction of historical memory of the last six decades, there has been a radical turn to the right. As a result, the continuity of the peace agreement of

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20 ‘Gloomy Premonitions of what must come to pass’ is an engraving made by Francisco de Goya in 1814. This image is the first of the series ‘The Disasters of War’, which portrays the suffering of Spanish people during Napoleon’s occupation. It acts as a prelude to the upcoming tragedy, and as a premonition of the abandonment that this country experienced during the French invasion. The choice of title for this chapter as a reference to Goya’s work is an attempt to translate the analogy of the premonition of tragedy in Colombia’s case, with the analysis of audiovisual sources that have become documents that have rewritten the history of my country. I’d like to accentuate the historical value of these records, whose content is both a symptom of the critical conditions of the conflict in the 1980s and anticipation of the following stages of the process in the next two decades.

21 The definition of the Colombian violence as political violence, armed conflict, a civil war or a war, has been a large subject of analysis and profuse production of scholarly literature. Here, the work of Daniel Pécaut, Gonzalo Sánchez, Alfredo Molano, María Victoria Uribe, Marco Palacios, Eduardo Posada Carbó, among many others, has helped to build a solid historical and conceptual framework to understand its complexity and dynamics. However, the authors’ consensus, rather than assigning an exclusive and fixed definition to the process, is “to describe its presence as a phenomenon. Most of the works about the subject in the country don’t say what violence is, but how it is manifested, and overall, what can explain it” (Blair, 2009: 21).

For the purposes of this text, I will use the concept of armed conflict as the frame of reference to describe the series of events and multiplicity of actors that belong to the case studies. Currently, it is the most used definition to refer to the Colombian situation in the press, as in most academic literature and in all of the reports produced by the National Centre for Historical Memory.
2016 is at stake: more than a hundred opposition leaders from rural areas have been killed by paramilitary forces, the funding for the peace programs meant to start after demobilization is incomplete, and the budget for military purposes has raised unexpectedly.

Even when the FARC demobilized and became a political party (they have 10 seats in the Congress), there are many subversive armed groups still active in the Colombian territory, most of them linked to drug trafficking and with an extinct leftist discourse, at the same time there are also criminal bands and paramilitary forces that work as mercenaries of landlords and political leaders from the regions that want to repress former victims of the conflict, and any form of opposition and critical thinking to maintain their power and control over the land. In the crossfire of these two sides, there’s the civil population.

Trying to explain the dynamics of the Colombian armed conflict in a brief overview is not an easy task. Unfortunately, violence has become a structural component of daily life for every Colombian citizen, and for most people, there’s no memory of a peaceful past in their lives. On the contrary, for everybody, there’s always at least one time in which their personal story has crossed the path of the conflict, even tangentially.

Despite the fact that the struggle for control over the land tenure system is the origin and the central cause of it all, there are multiple elements involved in the process. Depending on the time period, internal and external facts, the history of the conflict has been classified in different periods or stages by the experts on the subject (Sánchez, 2003) (Pizarro, 2001), (Medina, 1999), (Pècaut, 2006 and 1987) (Palacios, 1995). Here, I take the periodization proposed by art historian Alvaro Medina (Medina, 1999), according to whom the history of the conflict can be divided into three stages.

The first one is a period known as La Violencia, (The Violence, with capital letters), which covers the decade of the 1940s to the beginning of the 1960s. This period consisted of a cruel fight between two parties, the liberal and the conservative, for the control of the political power in the country. La Violencia unleashed a major political
and social crisis in Colombia, where the fight of peasants and political leaders, left a balance of thousands of victims (Sánchez, 2007). A phase of revolutionary violence followed, from the 1960s until the late 1970s, where the guerrillas such as the FARC and the ELN emerged in the political scene within the framework of the Cold War. The third one is a period of narcotic violence in the 1980s and 1990s, in which the impact of drug trafficking and the rise of paramilitary groups created a peak of violence without precedents in the country’s history. In this period, the massacres, persecution of the political opposition, and attacks on civilians from the guerrillas, paramilitary groups and drug lords to the civilians were part of the daily life of every Colombian.

In the current century, there are some splinters left from the previous stages, mostly from the 1980s, the time where drug trafficking, subversion, political crisis and the annihilation of the opposition collided together in one of the worst stages of the conflict. We might say that the current stage, is an unnamed period characterized by the validation of paramilitarism by the state structure since the 1990s, and a subsequent influence of this phenomenon in political life with the justification of defeating the guerrillas. In the last years, with the demobilization of the paramilitary groups, the promulgation of the Ley de Justicia y Paz/ Law for Justice and Peace (2005), the Ley de

22 The Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia/ Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia- FARC, and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional/ National Liberation Army-ELN were founded in 1963 and 1964, respectively. Even when the creation of both guerrillas corresponds to the dynamics of the Cold War period and to the influence of communist ideology in Latin America, the first one has mainly a peasant origin, where most of their founding members participated or were victims of the former period of La Violencia. The second one, on the other hand, had a strong influence of the Liberation Theology. However, it is important to point out that the role that the guerrillas had in the political scenario in the sixties is completely different than the one that they play today. Their ideological discourse has had major fractures since the fall of communism and, for the Colombian case, the insertion of guerrillas in the business of drug trafficking, and the constant attacks to civilians in their aim to control the territory, has put them of the international spot as terrorist organizations.

The government of Alvaro Uribe Vélez (2002-2010), promoted a process of demobilization and amnesty to paramilitary groups, mainly the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC)/ United Self Defense Forces of Colombia. In the same context, Uribe Vélez denied the existence of an armed conflict in Colombia, with the aim to declare the guerrillas as terrorist groups. Uribe's government was characterized by a political discourse that was based on political polarization and the justification of war, in synchronicity with the American discourse after the events of 9/11. In this process, many civilians were victims of the crossfire between the army, the paramilitary groups (that in many cases supported the army’s actions), and the guerrillas. Today, Alvaro Uribe is a congressman and the main leader of the Centro Democratico, a political party that has the majority in the Congress, and that sponsored the campaign of Colombia’s current president, Ivan Duque.

24 As a consequence of the process of paramilitary demobilization, the government of Uribe Vélez promulgated the Ley de Justicia y Paz, or Law on Justice and Peace (Law 975 of 2005). This law gave the possibility to the surviving victims of paramilitary crimes, to start a process of truth, justice, and
Víctimas y restitución de tierras (2011), and the peace dialogues with the FARC, several groups in society have started to speak about the post-conflict (Rettberg, 2002) (Sánchez, 2013). However, the sequels of violence in the last thirty years are still present in Colombia’s current reality, many demobilized paramilitary leaders have created new criminal bands, the FARC hasn’t ceased fire, and some political institutions are still affected by extreme polarization of ideas, and corruption. Besides, drug trafficking continues to shape the dynamics of the conflict. In the middle of it all, the civilian population, and among them groups of indigenous people, African descendants, peasants, women and children, have paid the highest price as victims.

The historical discourse of the conflict has been written according to this complex reality. Layers and layers of events, agents and versions of history collide in the struggle for truth and reconciliation in the current processes of building a national historical memory. Many stories are yet to be told, and thousands of events do not yet have a legal closure. Concerning to this situation, it is important to ask for the role that audiovisual sources have in the writing of Colombian history, and how archival practices of access and reuse of audiovisual material might affect or contribute to this process. So far,

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25 The Ley de Víctimas y Restitución de Tierras / Victims and Land Restitution Law (Law 1448 of 2011), was promulgated in the government of former president Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018). This law brings back the concept of the armed conflict to define the Colombian situation, with the aim of recognizing the different actors in the violence scenario, and to concede the victims the legal framework to claim Human Rights Violations. This law considers the victims of the conflict from January 1th from 1985, hence, the chronological period and consequences of the application of this law are quite accurate for the periodization chosen in this research.

26 Since 2012, the government of Juan Manuel Santos started a process of peace dialogues with the FARC that concluded in 2016. Paradoxically, when the dialogues were coming to an end, and the Colombian citizens had to vote YES to legitimize the agreements, the Centro Democrático Party (from the right), lead a campaign against the plebiscite with a discourse that set the FARC as a referent for communism. The NO option won and the agreements had to be validated by a presidential order. It is important to point out how Santos’ political discourse collides with the previous and following government, in the shift from the denial of the conflict to the promulgation of a full legal framework to recognize the conflict and the victims, and now, back to denial.

27 According to the general report; ¡Basta ya! Colombia: Memorias de Guerra y Dignidad (NCHM, 2013) written by the National Centre for Historical Memory, in the frame of the conflict between 1958 and 2012, 220,000 people were killed (81, 5% were civilians, 18, 5% combatants), and 4,744,046 people have been displaced from their homes. 25,007 persons are declared missing, 27,023 have been kidnapped, and 1982 massacres have been committed (58, 9% by the paramilitaries, 17, 3 % by the guerrillas, and 7, 9% by the army).
there's an incipient bibliographic production on the subject, and a scarce conceptual framework of analysis for this particular case.

Particularly when focusing on the 1980s, the memories of the insertion of drug trafficking, peace processes, paramilitary massacres, the guerrillas' violence, the testimonies of victims and perpetrators, are spread in public and private institutions that use the audiovisual records for different purposes. For this decade, which was one of the most critical periods in the country's history, the memory is fragile, because the original analog video carriers in which the events were recorded are subject to rapid decay and not many have been digitized. On the other hand, the content of many records is an evidence of traumatic episodes that changed the course of Colombia's present and are not available for the general public. Most of those traces, recorded in analog video, are placed in the archives of private broadcasting channels (some of them already out of business), but they're not classified as specific audiovisual collections. On account of this, their visibility and accessibility is tied to political agendas, legal processes, and the deliberate forgetfulness that is an unfortunate characteristic of Colombia's society.

Thus, the practice of archiving its audiovisual records represents a huge challenge to the writing and interpretation of its contemporary history, due to the many actors and the subsequent many versions of the events intertwined in the course of the decades. Thousands of moving images of diverse origin and with multiple motivations have been produced in this context, and in this particular case, the location and availability of this material is not exclusive of audiovisual and archival institutions. In this process, victims' organizations, official institutions, broadcasting channels, legal and illegal organizations, and even the general public, have been producers as well as users of audiovisual sources.

In the Colombian case, the practices of access and reuse of moving images of the conflict in the last thirty years play an important role in the definition of audiovisual records as valid sources for the writing of history. Here, the archival work is not only a matter of conserving the materiality of a document, it is also a struggle to make sure that the audiovisual record can be valuable as a historical source, visible and recognizable as
such, but this struggle also takes place inside and outside the institutional framework.

Despite the large corpus of academic scholarship production on the subject, the role that audiovisual records have in the writing of history is barely addressed as a valuable document to narrate the conflict. Then, it is important for the present case to outline a preliminary state of the art of academic works that use moving images as historical sources.

2. State of the art and Conceptual Framework

Scholarship on the relationship of the history of the conflict to its moving images has been mainly written from the fields of film studies and art history. The literature that exists today reflects more on the content of specific audiovisual products (mainly films or artworks), than on the value of audiovisual sources for the writing of history. Broadcasting sources from the conflict have not been yet a subject for thorough studies: television series, broadcasting news, government propaganda and video testimonies of victims and perpetrators (in most cases legal evidence as well as audiovisual documents) have played a marginal role in the general overview of the link between visual culture and the writing of history. At the end of the list, audiovisual archiving is, at this moment, a pending subject of analysis.

In the case of film studies, the published works cover a range of several articles and books with the conflict as a central topic. Among them, it is possible to highlight texts as *Cine y violencia en Colombia/ Film and Violence in Colombia* (Pulecio, 1999) by Enrique Pulecio, written for the catalog of the 1998 exhibition *Art and Violence in Colombia from 1948, Nación y Melancolía: Narrativas de la violencia colombiana 1995-2005/ Nation and Melancholia: Narratives of the Colombian Violence 1995-2005* (Jaramillo, 2006) by Alejandra Jaramillo, *Cine y violencia en Colombia, claves para la construcción de un discurso fílmico/ Film and violence in Colombia, keys to the construction of a filmic discourse*, written by Juana Suárez and included in her book *Cinembargo Colombia: Ensayos críticos sobre cine y cultura/ Cinembargo Colombia: Critical Essays on Film and Culture* (Suárez, 2009) and *El cine urbano y la tercera violencia colombiana/ Urban Film*
and the Third Colombian Violence, written by Geoffrey Kantaris.

Recently, Juana Suárez published *Sitios de contienda. Producción cultural colombiana y el discurso de la violencia/ Sites of Contention. Colombian Cultural Production and the Discourse on Violence*. In this text, the author gives a panoramic approach to the problem of violence in film, visual arts, and music, dance and museum practices from 1980 to 2005. Suarez' work is perhaps the most complete analysis on the representation of violence in Colombian cinema written in the last years, allowing the reader to understand the strong link that exists between the discourse of the conflict and the history of national cinema.

On the other hand, in the field of art history and visual culture, recent works as *Performance of Violence and Political Contestations through Images of the Colombian Conflict* (Salamanca, 2013) written by Claudia Salamanca, *El escudo de Atenea: Cultura visual y guerra en Colombia/ Athene’s Shield: Visual Culture and War in Colombia* ( Yepes, 2014) , written by Ruben Yepes, and Claudia Gordillo’s *Seguridad Mediática: La propaganda militarista en la Colombia contemporánea/ Media Security: Military Propaganda in Contemporary Colombia* (Gordillo, 2014), are different approaches to the role that audiovisual production on the conflict has in the awareness of its contemporary history.

Salamanca's work, a doctoral dissertation, is a theoretical exploration on the performative characteristics of the content of selected video traces (for instance, audiovisual records of people kidnapped by the guerrilla presented as proof of life) and artworks that include or dialogue with moving images of the conflict. Here, the author studies the space of visuality and framing of those images through the use of video technologies, depending on its source of production (official, by the perpetrators, or the victims).

In Ruben Yepes' article, there is a proposal for ‘a conceptual framework with the purpose of understanding the role of visual culture in the construction of the historical memory of the armed conflict and the transcending of its legacy of violence, suffering
and horror’ (Yepes, 2014). Yepes uses a set of examples from Colombia's contemporary art and film, to underline the capacities that visual culture has in the writing of history. In this context, he suggests a theoretical framework using the of reference that dialogues with concepts as mediation, ecology of images and visual event. His work connects with a conceptual background from philosophy and cultural studies. Then, despite the highlights on the power of moving images in the construction of historical memory, there are no remarks related to the strategies of presentation of these images.

In contrast, the book Seguridad Mediática (Gordillo, 2014), written by Claudia Gordillo, is a thorough study on the strategies of presentation of propaganda images from the army during the government of Alvaro Uribe Vélez (2002-2010). In her book, Gordillo presents a set of official audiovisual pieces, with the aim of analyzing their impact in the naturalization of the discourse of the soldier as a hero in the war against terrorism28. This text features the power that media (specifically television and cinema) had in the general perception of the public about the recent processes of violence, in a context where the enunciation of the armed conflict was denied.

From the field of visual anthropology and sociology, Alejandro Castillejo's Tras los rastros del cuerpo:Instantáneas del proceso de Justicia y Paz en Colombia/ Behind Body Traces:Snapshots of the Process of Justice and Peace in Colombia (Castillejo, 2010), is a study on the social scenarios of confrontation between the perpetrators and the victims in the context of the paramilitary demobilization in 2005. Castillejo analyzes the implications of the uses of the camera as a mediation device, during the legal processes where the perpetrators' testimony was transmitted to the victims in a closed-circuit television camera.

Finally, it is important to cite the work of Camilo Aguilera and Gerylee Polanco Rostros sin rastros: Televisión, memoria e identidad/ Faces and Traces: Television, Memory and

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28 The political discourse of the war against terrorism, enhanced by United States’ foreign policy after the events of 9/11, was used during the government of Alvaro Uribe Vélez as a strategy to fight the guerrillas, marked as terrorist organizations in the international scenario. This discourse served as a tool to deny the enunciation of Colombia’s process as an armed conflict and a historical process of long duration, by pointing to the guerrillas as the one and only enemy of the society. In this sense, the army was presented as the heroic group that was going to bring peace back to the country.
Identity (Aguilera-Polanco, 2009), this book is perhaps the only work written on the specific topic of audiovisual archives in Colombia. It is the product of a research project of intervention, restoration and classification of the audiovisual collection of the documentary television series Rostros y Rastros, broadcast in a regional channel between 1988 and 2000. The author's reflection of the importance of audiovisual archives to the construction of historical memory, and their special attention to the preservation of analog material from a television series, is a major contribution to the field of archives and presentation of moving images in Colombia.

The previous background is significant, but relates tangentially to the archival practices on the moving images of the conflict as a subject of analysis. In fact, due to the heterogeneity of audiovisual sources (as documentaries, broadcasting material, artworks, fiction films and TV series, government propaganda, and other related documents produced by victims and perpetrators) and the fragility of its content, the topic of audiovisual archiving and the writing of history situates in the border of many disciplines, as archival theory, Human Rights, media archaeology, media history, film and cultural studies. Thus, for the Colombian case, the concepts and epistemological tools of analysis may vary due to the complexity of the process, the nature of the sources and the historical period of study.

in the particular scenario of the Colombian conflict, where there's a constant cohabitation of traumatic memories and forgetfulness, the definition of policies and strategies of access and reuse of audiovisual records, represents a stake in making the history public through archival practices. This depends on the institutional (or non-institutional) framework in which the material is made accessible, and moreover, in the selection of the traces that are considered essential documents for the recent history.

3 . Tragedy in Real Time vs Images as Evidence

The introduction of video technologies in television broadcasting in Colombia since the early 1980s, coincides with a period in which the intensity of the conflict rose in
unprecedented ways. Those were the times when drug trafficking, paramilitarism, political polarization and unsuccessful peace processes summed together in one of the most critical points in the country’s history. In that decade, the role of media, especially of television and radio, was crucial in transmitting the breaking news, such as the multiple attacks from the guerrillas on government infrastructure, the emergence of drug lords with an unlimited power in the political scenario and their terrorist war against civilians, the rise and spread of paramilitary groups in different regions, the assassinations of political leaders from the opposition; judges, one Minister of Justice; and three presidential candidates. For many of these events, there is an audiovisual trace that constitutes an irrefutable evidence of tragedy, and most of the Colombians that lived that time remember the place and time they were where they got the news: most of the records linked to these events were edited for broadcasting purposes, but many of the rushes of the full coverage of them can be found in AP archives, Señal Memoria-RTVC, and Fundación Patrimonio Fílmico Colombiano. For the last two cases the images are classified because many judicial processes on all of these subjects are currently active.

These records are both snapshots of a painful past, and clues to understand the outcome

29 With the emergence of drug trafficking in Colombia in the 1980s, drug lords (like Pablo Escobar and Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha, leaders of the Medellin Cartel) gained unlimited financial power that allowed them to manipulate the political scenario. However, in the context of a possible surrender, the government denied the abolition of extradition to the United States, and as a consequence, the Medellín Cartel unleashed a wave of terrorist attacks against civilians (mainly car bombs in the main capital cities).

30 In the context of the 1984 peace dialogues between the government of President Belisario Betancur and the FARC, the initiative of creating a political party that unified peasants, working class, sympathizers of the left and demobilized soldiers from the guerrillas, led to the creation of the Unión Patriótica-UP (Patriotic Union). This party had an unprecedented outcome in the congress and regional elections of 1986. “329,000 voters translated into the election of five senators, nine representatives, fourteen deputies and 351 city councillors” (Reiniciar 2005, 2). The traditional political class reacted to this situation with a strategy of stigmatization and persecution that ended in the genocide of many members of the party. Approximately 6000 members of the UP were killed between 1984 and 1996, among them, Jaime Pardo Leal and Bernardo Jaramillo Ossa, two presidential candidates to the 1990 presidential elections.

31 According to the National Centre for Historical Memory, “between 1979 and 1991, an annual average of 25 judges and lawyers were killed or suffered a threat to their life” (National Centre for Historical Memory, 2013)

32 In 1984, the Ministry of Justice Rodrigo Lara Bonilla was killed by a sicario, a young man hired by drug lords to perform murder against whomever was against them. Lara Bonilla, one of the leaders of the Nuevo Liberalismo- New Liberalism, was also one of the first persons to accuse the influence of drug trafficking and, especially of Pablo Escobar, in the political scheme.

33 During the presidential campaign of 1989-1990, Luis Carlos Galán Sarmiento (candidate for the Nuevo Liberalismo), Bernardo Jaramillo Ossa (candidate for the Unión Patriótica), and Carlos Pizarro (former guerrilla leader and candidate for the M-19), were killed.
of the conflict in the next three decades, because they summarize the agents in the political struggle and the role of media in the public awareness of the situation. Likewise, they contain crucial information to understand the radical changes that those events represent in the country's history, then and now. To understand the value of these records as historical documents is also a proposal for an archaeology of the audiovisual sources of the conflict in broadcasting archives, a task that is still pending for historians and media scholars in Colombia.

For the case of the 1980s carriers, ‘the history of archived television programming has been a case of accidental preservation’ (O’Dwyer 2008, 258). In Colombia, as in many other countries, the commercial vocation of broadcasting channels prevailed over the urgency of preserving television heritage, and many tapes have been erased, discarded or used to record new content over older programs. Moreover, when referencing the advent of the video technologies and portable cameras at the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, the picture of the preservation strategies of the recorded material during the next decades turns blurred. Storage with the goal of conservation wasn’t considered a priority to production companies; also, the video carriers on which the programs were recorded were characterized by its instability. In this decade, ‘three quarter inch U-Matic videotape, long a staple of broadcasting for its economical and portable nature, was used in thousands of TV s. Stations’ (Compton 2007, 130). However, ‘these tapes are now one of the most ubiquitous and simultaneously most endangered broadcast formats in archives due to its inherent fragility- they were never designed to be stored long term’ (Compton 2007, 130). In Colombia, most of the audiovisual production of the 1980s was recorded on U-Matic tapes, hence, the sources for the history of television regarding to this period might be defined more around gaps and voids, than to a full portrait of the broadcasted material from the decade.

However, in the last five years, initiatives as Señal Memoria-RTVC have helped to boost the amount of analogue video carriers digitized: only from 2015 to 2018, an average of 90000 video carriers have been digitized and 40000 contents have been catalogued. Thanks to that, I could get access to many of the sources quoted in this chapter. Also, the Save Your Archive grant that Fundación Patrimonio Fílmico Colombiano got in 2015,
lead to the digitization of many of the episodes of the news program Telediario, which covered the end of the 1970s and the early 1980s.

By that time, the national television network was divided into three channels owned by the government (Cadena 1, 2 and 3), and the programming functioned based on a system of agreements that allowed production companies to broadcast. Many of those companies ran their own news programs (approximately thirteen), and broadcast the shocking news that defined the course of the events of the country during the eighties. Simultaneously to this process, in 1984 the government authorized the creation of regional channels, many of them still functioning today. This has allowed the production of content from diverse nature and with different perspectives compared to the national broadcasting network. Today, the country has eight regional channels, as Telepacífico (in the south west), Telecaribe (in the north coast), Teleantioquia (in the north Andes), and Canal Capital (in Bogotá, the capital city), among others.

In 1998, the national broadcasting system changed dramatically when the government authorized the creation of two private channels, Caracol and RCN Television, owned by the two major economic groups from the country. As a consequence of this action, many small production companies that had been working since the eighties ceased to exist, and as the private channels started to have the highest levels of ratings, the national public channels, now named Canal Uno, Canal Institucional and Señal Colombia, began to play a marginal role in television culture.

From then on, the whereabouts of the broadcasting archives of former news programs are not entirely clear, and some of the material from small production companies is considered missing at this point. However, there's an important part of it placed in different locations and already digitized in Señal Memoria- RTVC and the Fundación Patrimonio Fílmico Colombiano. Also, Caracol Televisión holds the archive of the Noticiero Nacional, one of the most viewed news programs in the 1980s, and Programar Television, a former production company that kept working for public television in the next decades, has the records of seven different news programs34. Finally, the archive of

34 According to the webpage of the production company, they hold material from seven news
journalist Jorge Enrique Pulido and his news program Mundo Visión, which is a private archive, is now managed by the Cinemateca Distrital de Bogotá/ Bogotá’s Cinematheque, a public institution. Brief excerpts of the material of Programar Television and Jorge Enrique Pulido are available online, the first one has a Youtube channel that contains excerpts from ten records with a length of less than two minutes, and in the webpage http://www.jorgeenriquepulido.com there is a succinct description of the life and work of the journalist.

In the case of Caracol Television, the archival material from the eighties, formerly recorded in U-Matic, is now digitized and stored in the archive’s facilities. According to Marta Elena Restrepo, director of the archives, the records have been curated in specific audiovisual collections in order to help in the production of several fiction series as Escobar el Patrón del Mal (2012) and documentaries as Carta a una Sombra (2015).

The analysis of the following examples is an effort to outline the features of key audiovisual traces to understand the Colombian conflict in the 1980s, with the purpose of claiming a place for broadcasting material as an essential document for the writing of history. Originally recorded in analogue video technologies, their current digitization, accessibility and use in the production of new content in the last decade, represents a challenge to broadcasting archives in framing the material and making it available.

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programs produced in the last thirty years: Noticiero de las 7, En vivo 9:30, Noticiero Nacional, Hora Cero, TV Hoy, Uninoticias, and Noticias Uno.

35 Jorge Enrique Pulido was a renowned Colombian journalist in the eighties. He was killed in November of 1989 while he was going to work. Pulido had his own production company (JEP Television), and produced several programmes denouncing the sequels of drug trafficking in Colombian society.

(Images not available due to rights issues)

Images 11, 12, 13, 14: News program 24 Horas- Broadcast of day 1 of the siege. Reference UMT 200450 Corte 1. Señal Memoria Archives.

On the 6th of November of 1985, the M-19[36] (a former guerrilla group of urban and middle class background) occupied the Palace of Justice with the aim of calling for a public trial to President Belisario Betancur. The trial, according to the M-19, was necessary because Betancur did not keep the agreements of the peace dialogues that took place between the government and the guerrillas in 1984[37]. As a response to the guerrillas’ occupation of the Palace, the government answered with a refusal to negotiate and total silence, while at the same time the army led an offensive attack on the building. During twenty eight hours, hundreds of civilians, along with magistrates and workers from the judicial branch, became victims of the crossfire between the militaries and the guerrillas. The event was transmitted by radio on different stations (sometimes the hostages called the radio stations to ask the army to cease fire)[38], and broadcast live in the news of the two main broadcasting channels (Cadena 1 and Cadena

36 The M-19 (meaning Movimiento 19 de abril/ 19 of April Movement) was a guerrilla group founded on April 19 of 1970. Unlike the FARC or the ELN, its origin is not rural but urban, and its founder members were from the middle class. The M-19 had a particular way of operating, besides the irregular war, the group became famous for its actions, as stealing the sword of Simon Bolivar after a media campaign in newspaper promoting the group (when no one knew what M-19 meant), taking milk trucks from big companies to give milk to poor people, or interfering the signal of the broadcasting of presidential speeches to replace them with their own announcements.

37 In 1984, the government of Belisario Betancur started two processes of dialogues with the guerrillas. One with the FARC, which led to the La Uribe agreement and the foundation of the Unión Patriótica-UP. The other, with the M-19, where in the Corinto agreement, there was a pact of ceasing fire between the government and the M-19. However, the army disregarded the pact and attacked a group of guerrilla soldiers, due to this situation, the M-19 decided to take the Palace of Justice.

38 The radio broadcasting of the siege is one of the most important documents to understand the scale of the tragedy. In the two main radio stations (Caracol and RCN), the audience followed, not only every stage of the siege, but also listened to the hostages calling the journalists to claim the government the cease of fire. The most shocking episode of this broadcasting happened when Alfonso Reyes Echandía, the president of the Supreme Court, called Caracol Radio and, while asking for help, a bullet killed him. According to the investigations and the final report of the Truth Commission, the bullet came from a gun of the army.
The Palace of Justice Siege is renowned in Colombia as one of the most tragic episodes of its recent history and, at the same time, one of the unresolved truths of the conflict in the last thirty years. Although many books, journalist reports and legal documents on the subject have been published (Behar, 1988) (Plazas Vega, 2000) (Maya-Petro, 2006), there is no consensus on the different versions (from the guerrillas, the army and the civilian witnesses) about what happened in the twenty eight hours of the siege. For more than twenty years, the circumstances in which fifteen magistrates and dozens of workers were killed, and how ten persons are still declared missing, is unclear. In fact, it wasn’t until 2005 when three former magistrates, sponsored by the International Centre for Transitional Justice, the European Commission, the Ford Foundation and the Supreme Court of Justice, decided to create the Comisión de la Verdad/Truth Commission on the facts of the Justice Palace to clear up the truth.

(Images not available due to rights issues)

Images 15, 16, 17, 18: Raw footage- Broadcast of day 1 and 2 of the siege. Reference C1P 243400. Señal Memoria Archives.

The content of these recordings holds powerful and shocking images. When broadcast live, the Colombian TV spectators saw a military tank going through the main entrance of the palace in daylight, dozens of pedestrians running and hiding from the crossfire in the streets, and finally, the building bursting into flames. However, it is in the sequences of images of the hostages being released, where the big dispute for the truth takes place. In those images, some of them were seen coming out alive from the palace, but after the end of the siege they were found dead inside the building with a shot on their heads, or declared missing by their relatives in the following days. This means that the killings

39 According to the final report of the Commission, its creation responds to "the evidence of an incomplete truth, of impunity and to an express or tacit, but generalized, silence pact about what happened" (Gallejo, Jorge: 2010, 20)
and the disappearances were not a product of the crossfire, and that perhaps, the act of witnessing the tragedy cost them their lives.

During the two days of the siege, the army acted without the supervision of the government inside the building, while the government pushed the media to stop broadcasting the breaking news. On the night of November 6th, the Minister of Communications ordered the television channels to stop showing the military operations, the interviews from inside the Palace, and the announcements made by the M-19. Simultaneously, the radio stations were forced to broadcast a soccer match instead of reporting the event. This act of censorship, according to the Colombian journalist Yamid Amat, ‘caused the death of the Court. (...) The media was at that moment the open eyes of the public and they were blindfolded. They were the only light that the government had; when censorship came, they didn’t know what was happening’ (Amat 2010, 348).

According to the Truth Commission, the guerrillas⁴⁰, the army, and the government of Belisario Betancur, were responsible for the crimes committed inside the Palace. Regarding to the role of the militaries, the legal processes in which the victims claim the State to clarify the truth about what happened are still ongoing. In this context, some members of the army have been judged and sentenced, while many judges involved in the case had to leave the country to avoid death threats. At the same time, the whereabouts of the missing people are still unknown.

In this sense, it is important to consider how the presence of multiple cameras and recording devices on the site of the events, allowed different levels of witnessing in which the role of media was crucial, both in the public awareness of the scale of the event, as in the production of audiovisual content. The media was a direct witness present in the critical moments, recording the shocking moving images of the tragedy, keeping contact with the actors of every side of the siege, and performing the role of

⁴⁰ Concerning to the M-19 responsibility, it is important to clarify that this group demobilized in 1989. The peace process with the M-19 included the amnesty of the former guerrilla soldiers that were part of the siege.
mediator of the claims of the hostages (in the case of radio broadcasting). The general audiences, as TV spectators and radio listeners, followed the sequence of events as they were broadcast, not only as breaking news but as a critical point in the country's history, where the structure of justice – both material and symbolic – collapsed in front of their eyes. Finally, the relatives of the victims, who saw their beloved ones to survive the tragedy and then die or disappear, were both bearing witness and becoming victims of the circumstances.

Hence, the broadcasting material related to the siege represents an essential group of audiovisual documents to understand this episode in the history of the conflict, as much as evidence in the search for truth. Many of these images have been used several times by news programs as a reference to the legal outcome of the event, and in the last decade, in the work of documentary filmmakers, artists and even graphic novelists, who have used archival sources to present their own perspective on the story.

The archival material recorded on the 6th and 7th of November of 1985 is known to be profuse but not centralized, due to the changes in the Colombian broadcasting network in the following years. Some excerpts of the sequences recorded by the Noticiero Nacional41 are now preserved in the archives of Caracol Television, Programar Television, Señal Memoria-RTVC, and the Fundación Patrimonio Fílmico Colombiano.

In 2011, Colombian filmmaker Miguel Salazar and South African director Angus Gibson, produced The Siege, a documentary film that follows the story of the two days of the tragedy, while tracking the trial of Colonel Plazas Vega since 2009. The narrative structure of the film is composed of archival material from different broadcasting sources, and by the voices of all of the agents that took part of the story. Former soldiers and guerrilla members, lawyers, politicians, and the relatives of the victims have an active part of the film, giving their testimony as witnesses of the event and interacting with the archival material to tell their own version of the truth. In this film, the purpose

41 The Noticiero Nacional was the most viewed news program at that time; it belonged to Prego Television, a former production company that disappeared in 1997.
of the directors was not to present a hierarchy in which one voice prevailed over the others, but to let the spectators to draw their own conclusions about the history of the siege.

In an interview I conducted with director Miguel Salazar\(^42\), he described the crucial role that the archival records from broadcasting companies played in the production of the film. According to Salazar, the documentary production was possible thanks to the existence of this type of audiovisual evidences (to which he had access in the archives mentioned above), otherwise making the film was pointless. Even though the recorded testimony of the relatives is as shocking as the version of the soldiers interviewed on the film, the broadcasting images of thirty years ago are the ones that summarize and prove the scale of the crisis. The audiovisual testimony, in which the victims are seen alive for the last time, can be rewinded, forwarded, paused and played over and over again. Then, in the case of this film, the use of the documentary narrative to reflect on a historical episode helps to prove the point that without the archival sources, the full picture of the event will be incomplete.

\[\begin{array}{c}
\text{Image 19: Screenshot of the teaser of The Siege (2011). René Guarin recognizes his missing sister in the archival material.}
\end{array}\]

\textit{The Siege} is part of a recent boom of productions that after the re-opening of the case of the siege have revisited the events of the Palace of Justice by using broadcasting material. In 2011, the Colombian artist José Alejandro Restrepo made \textit{El caballero de la fe}, an artwork that reflects on a sequence of images where a gentleman in a tuxedo

\(^{42}\) I interviewed the director via Skype on April 30 of 2014 for a research I was making for my MA.
appears in the middle of Bogota’s central square, in front of the palace. This gentleman, apparently ignoring the crossfire, had a bag full of rice. The media recorded the moment when he fed the pigeons and, like in the eye of the storm, it seems like the tragic moment was suddenly paused. At the same time, the military tank and the soldiers remain in the background of the image, in silence.

The intensity of this record is unquestionable. In a critical moment, this brave man decides to challenge the shocking images of the war, by performing a daily life action. The work of the artist in recovering the archival material, consists in an edition of the source with the inclusion of intertitles that narrate daily life actions, and describe the search of Restrepo for the whereabouts of this man.

Video installation made by Colombian artist José Alejandro Restrepo.

The activation of the audiovisual records of the Palace of Justice siege, is a case in which the role of archives is capital for the revealing of truth and therefore, for the construction of historical memory. How often the dramatic moments of those days have been revived since, and how the status of the broadcasting images is regarded as a historical source, depends highly on the archival management of this material. Then, ‘every interaction, intervention, interrogation and interpretation by creator, user and archivist is an activation of the record. The archive is an infinite activation of the record, each activation leaves fingerprints which are attributes to the archives infinite meaning’ (Ketelaar 2001, 137) Here, the role of the archive in activating the records of the siege,

43 The origin of these broadcasting sources is still unknown.
calls for a constant confrontation of the past from the memories and the processes that are still ongoing in the present.

Despite the scale of this tragedy there is a paradox: M-19 is one of the few subversive groups in the country that had a relatively successful demobilization, and it is possible to say that so far it is the most well documented group in audiovisual archives from the 1980s and 1990s. This is due to the fact that since its beginning, it 1970, they became famous from its symbolic actions and their use of the surprise effect. In 1974 they stole the sword of Bolívar from the Bolívar Museum in Bogotá, and the coverage of this event is part of the material from Telediario that was digitized thanks to Save your Archive; in 1980 they occupied the Dominican Republic Embassy during a party - where the U.S ambassador was present, the records from this events are also in Telediario and in AP archives; their political leaders were very charismatic and recorded messages to the people from their camps in the mountains - these material is in RTVC-Señal Memoria ; finally, all of the peace process and the demobilisation was recorded by National Television, all of these records are in RTVC-Señal Memoria. Many leaders from M-19 were killed by paramilitary forces just after the cease of fire, including his commander and then presidential candidate Carlos Pizarro, however , today, the leader of the opposition to current government is a former M-19 member and was the major of Bogotá ( the capital city) from 2013 to 2015, and another former leader of the group is leading the poll for the candidacy of this position for 2019.

(Images not available due to rights issues)

4. From the Cold War to the War on Drugs

According to Colombian Journalist María Jimena Duzán, if in the first half of the eighties there had been a survey on the major problem than Colombia was facing, drug trafficking wouldn’t have been mentioned as a factor of instability. Subversion did (Duzán, 1992;50) . Then and now, it was and still is a mechanism for justifying
oppression and persecution of opposition. In fact, at the beginning of the 80s, the United State’s Foreign Policy was centered in fighting Communism and not on the war on drugs, one example was the support to the Contra Army in Nicaragua.

When trying to confront this statement with the archives, I found a surprising example in AP archives: In 1978, the Roving Report from the country consisted in the description of a rural country whose main crop and source of income was coffee, the story focuses in touristic attractions, colonial history and on the industry and high executives of the Coffee Federation, and of course, Juan Valdéz. The name of the capital city is misspelled, and they don’t present any political issues on the report.

Then, in 1982 the country is depicted as a democracy that is facing a political crisis due to the rise of protests due to the lack of education, inflation, and the alleged repression and subsequent political prisoners that were took during the state of siege in which the country was between 1978 and 1982. Drug trafficking is not mentioned, however, the capture of guerrilla arms and the seizure of Dominican embassy by M-19 is mentioned. Hence, subversion is already part of the picture of what was the country in
the early 1980s.

In 1984 the report was just entitled Colombia: Cocaine. Drug trafficking and political issues, from leadership to subversion, were depicted in the report.

Since the mid 1980s, this scenario changed. As explained before, the main issue was that it wasn’t Cold War apart from War on Drugs, in this decade all problems coexisted no matter what U.S foreign policy wanted to dictate.

In this context, it is useful to evaluate the production of Citurna, a Colombian production company that from 1989 until 1991 produced compelling documentaries to depict Colombian context to foreign audiences “Ley del monte”/ The law of the jungle (1989), “Las otras guerras de la coca”/ Who will win the cocaine war (1990), “¡Seguimos adelante!”(1990)/ Nothing will stop us y “La constituyente”/ The constitution (1991). These productions were commissioned by different public
European channels, they have been awarded in several international festivals and were broadcast by over 30 channels known worldwide, as BBC and Channel 4 (UK), ZDF (Germany), ARTE, FR3 and France 2, among others. It is important to highlight the research made for every production, the rating (Nothing will Stop Us was, for instance, prime time on BBC on Sunday and recommended of the day in every journal in the UK), and the fact that, they haven’t been broadcast in national television in Colombia(...) (Trujillo, 2015)

*La Ley del Monte*, The law of the jungle, was produced in 1989. The film is an in-depth analysis of the situation of settlers of the region of Serranía de la Macarena and Caguán, that arrived literally in the middle of the jungle to start a new life after the Violence of the 1940s and that at the end of the 1980s were facing the rise of drug trafficking, the absence of the State and the presence of the communist guerrilla and paramilitary groups. The images that structure the documentary give account of the progress of drug trafficking in the region, coca cultivation as the only way to survive in the context, while at the same time the political discourse of the guerrillas permeated the daily life of the people of this rural area.

Image 27: Screenshot from "La ley del monte" (1989), Patricia Castaño y Adelaida Trujillo.
This documentary puts together a series of testimonies of settlers that have arrived to the region since the 1940s, and also from guerrilla leaders that control the area. They present their perspectives on the reality of the country in the 1980s and their need for the beginning of peace negotiation. The filmmakers also included material linked to the assassination of political leaders from the left at the end of the decade.

_Las otras guerras de la coca_, or Who will win the Cocaine War, finished in 1990, is one of the most complex units of analysis in this archive due to the fact that, in the research process of the film, journalist Sylvia Duzán - main researcher- and three peasant leaders from the region of Norte de Santander (North East of the Country), were killed. The documentary is a thorough insight on the persecution of social leaders keen to leftist ideas at the end of the 1980s, as a consequence of the presence of paramilitary groups in the region. Furthermore, it develops a critical approach on US foreign policy towards Colombia at the end of the Cold War, were the focus became the War on Drugs with production as a target, - and not consumption. “Las otras guerras de la coca was filmed in the moment where started the most critical point in Colombia’s recent history. The massacres and assassinations portrayed in the film reconfigured our political landscape, the citizen’s mentality, and the economic structure of the land” (León; 2015). The use of the material that belongs to this film has to be taken care with the most secrecy yet, because Sylvia Duzán’s murder hasn’t been resolved.
¡Seguimos adelante! / Nothing Will Stop Us, finished in 1990, follows two weeks in the life of the newspaper El Espectador, one of the cornerstones of critical thinking and opposition in the country. After the murder of its director, Guillermo Cano, in 1986, it was also victim of a bomb in its main headquarters. The documentary begins with audiovisual records from another bomb in the city, and the coverage that the newspaper gave to this event, and closes with the killing of Gonzalo Rodríguez Gacha, one of the main drug lords in the country. As a counterpoint to these events, there is a complete illustration on the tense daily life of journalists in Colombia and their struggle to defend their right to freedom of expression.

Image 29: Screenshot from ¡Seguimos adelante! (1990)/ Nothing will stop us, a photographer from El Espectador takes a picture on the ruins of a kindergarden, destroyed after a bomb in 1989.
The master and rushes of the documentaries from Citurna are in the Fundación Patrimonio Filmico Colombiano, whereas the production documents are stored in the company’s office.

**Guatemala and Nicaragua: History is not enough**

By the time I started this research, former dictator of Guatemala, Efraín Ríos Montt, passed away at the age of 82. Few years before his death, in 2013, he was judged in a trial for genocide and violation of Human Rights to the Ixil Maya people during his government, in the early 1980s. “This historical case marked the first time, anywhere in the world, that a former head of state was tried for genocide in a national court, in the country where crimes were committed. It was also the first time in the history of South or North America, that the genocide of indigenous peoples was tried in a court of law 44”. Even when Ríos Montt was declared guilty of genocide, he was never incarcerated.

The following months after his death have been difficult for archives and Human Rights in Guatemala: Gustavo Meoño, former guerrilla soldier and director of the National Police Archives was removed from his position with no clear explanation; in late August Jimmy Morales, current president of the country decided to throw Ivan Velásquez, president of the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CIGIC, sponsored by UN) out of the country.

Simultaneously to this situation, Nicaragua was reaching a critical point: Daniel Ortega, a former guerrilla soldier from the Sandinistas, and president of the country since 2007 (he was also in charge between 1980 and 1990) is declaring social protest illegal, and repressing any sign of opposition with brutal violence. According to the news, in the last six months, there have been more than 300 deaths and apparently some extrajudicial killings.

The Central American case “reminds us not to minimize the strength of Latin America’s authoritarian tradition” (Gilbert, 2008:21). Even when, in Nicaragua’s example, the

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44 Description of the film Dictator in the Dock, produced by Skylight Pictures.
president was part of a paradigmatic revolution for the history of the continent, after a few decades he became what was once his worst enemy: a dictator. Here, history is not enough to redeem the country’s past, because it has a cyclic pattern that returns once in a while.

To follow the history of this region through audiovisual sources is more difficult than in the previous cases. Not only because paying a field visit to those places could be dangerous for the researcher, but also because there is little information and access to contacts to the persons in charge of the material. There is scarce information on National Archives, and almost no information for audiovisual archives. In this sense, “not all events are recorded, not all records are incorporated into archives: not all archives are used to tell stories; not all stories are used to write history”\(^\text{45}\).

To put together some of the pieces of the recent history of the region, I decided to look for traces of their history in other archives. I found audiovisual documents from the decade in Chile, Colombia, on the United States, and on the AP archives webpage.

In Chile, the news program Informe Especial, covered most of the riots and revolutions that took place in Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador in the early 80s. In the coverage of the El Salvador revolution, cameraman Carlos Ruiz from TVN was killed.

In Colombia, the travel program Pasaporte al Mundo/ Passport to the world, available in the Señal Memoria archives, produced a series of programs on the situation of Central America by 1984.

This was one of the most important discoveries of my research, because the program covered not only the touristic sites and the landscape of the countries of Central America, it depicted their history and how authoritarianism and colonialism led to several political and social crisis that ended with guerrilla revolutions in most of the cases. Because of this, the placement of counterinsurgency forces in each country was near to mandatory by the United States “Much more so than in Guatemala in 1954, Cuba in the 1960s or Chile in 1973, Washington executed its most fully realized counterrevolution in Nicaragua in the 1980s, bringing together a diverse foreign and domestic coalition to besiege and contain the Sandinistas” (Grandin, 2010:28), many of Ronald Reagan's speeches on TV are also an interesting source to analyse and understand how the dynamics of the Cold War and United States’ foreign policy permeated Central America. On the other side, as stated before, there are pending issues on the recognition of the indigenous victims of Guatemala, and the future of the National Police Archives, one of the recent cornerstones of Human Rights advocacy in Latin America, is at stake.

**Guatemala**

For the case of Guatemala, as explained in the introduction, my first source was the production of filmmaker Pamela Yates, who in the early 1980s fled to Guatemala to cover the oppression and the systematic extermination of the Ixil indigenous people, by dictator Efraín Ríos Montt. In the production of the film “When the Mountains Tremble” (1983) she interviewed Rigoberta Menchú, victim of the violence toward the indigenous population ( and a few years later, Nobel Peace Prize) and other victims, and Ríos Montt, a dictator recently converted to evangelical. The declarations of the dictator filmed by Yates, were evidence for the trial against him that took place in Spain during 2010. A thorough reflection on the value of audiovisual sources in the search for this particular truth and justice, materialized with the production of “Granito: How to Nail a Dictator”(2011). Even though these films are not broadcasting sources, they constitute one of the few audiovisual pieces that are accessible on the subject. The material is compelling and it summarizes the scope of the conflict since the 1980s.
Nicaragua and the Contras

The case of Nicaragua is the paradigm of the politics of contention of communism in the late Cold War, initiated by the US and Reagan’s government. “The contra war against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua is one such global conflict. In 1979, the Sandinista Front of National Liberation (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional or FSLN) came to power after overthrowing long-term dictator Anastasio Somoza Debayle in a popularly supported revolution. Soon thereafter, small factions of Somoza’s National Guard began to form guerrilla groups known as contras (from contrarrevolucionarios, “counter revolutionaries”). Beginning in 1981, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) assumed covert control of the training, arming and funding of the contras as part of the United States’ effort to oust what the administration of President Ronald Reagan claimed was the Communist threat posed by Nicaragua’s newly instated Sandinista Government.”

The audiovisual records of these events can be found mainly in audiovisual collections from other countries, as quoted before, and also in AP archives, that has 228 digitized resources from the late 1970 until 1989. Many of these resources are speeches by Ronald Reagan, in which he stressed the idea that Nicaragua is the beginning of a Soviet strategy to control the American Continent, hence, the sponsorship of counterinsurgency (the contras) needed to be done and was absolutely necessary.
Conclusions

The sources analyzed in this research, are examples of the potential meaning that broadcasting records have in the writing of the history of the end of the Cold War in Latin America. Since their creation, they have stood as key pieces in legal processes, and they have resisted forgetfulness thanks to their preservation in audiovisual archives, not necessarily national or institutional. Even so, they were not recognized as historical documents for decades, and it is their role as evidence is on trials, or its participation in film productions and television series, which has guaranteed their recognition. In this sense, the role of local and foreign journalists in documenting the events was crucial.

This situation makes the mediation of television a key piece of the puzzle in the preservation and the presentation of audiovisual content related to the historical processes, such as the end of the Cold War in Latin America. The coexistence of audiovisual memories of the past with the ones that are currently being produced, in the news as much as in the fiction series and other related audiovisual products, makes the archive a space of dispute in the construction of historical memory. Furthermore, the archive is not only marked by the pieces of the past, but by the records from the immediate future, which in some cases are affected by the same circumstances from three decades ago.