

## Collective memory, alternative media and post-agreement

### *Memorias colectivas, medios de comunicación alternativa y post acuerdo*

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### **Abstract**

*This text illustrates the role of the alternative media in the denunciation and visibility of cases of forced disappearance and murder of social leaders after the signing of the Peace Agreement in 2016 in the Department of Meta-Colombia. Based on this, this research proposes to name the leaders, their territories, the role they played in their communities in order to state the characteristics of the subjects who still continue to suffer from these affectations; the possible authors and the relevance of the alternative media in making them visible in favor of the construction of collective memory.*

*For this, an analysis of documentary and content data was carried out, which accounts for the various ways of reporting and denouncing these affectations. The research contributes to positioning the relevance of these alternative communication media in the construction of collective memory without forgetting these affectations as transcendental social and political facts and that these media, through multimedia narratives from various textual, graphic formats, sound and photographic are positioned on virtual platforms, making visible the voice of families and communities that denounce and seek their relatives who try to claim their right to truth, reparation and memory.*

### **Keywords**

*Collective memory, alternative collective media, forced disappearance, murder of social leaders.*

### **Resumen**

Este texto ilustra el rol de los medios de comunicación alternativos frente a la denuncia y visibilización de casos de desaparición forzada y asesinato de líderes sociales después de la firma del Acuerdo de Paz en el 2016 en el Departamento del Meta-Colombia. A partir de ello, la investigación que se relata en este artículo, pretende nombrar a los líderes, sus territorios, el rol que desempeñaban en sus comunidades para enunciar las particularidades de los sujetos que aún siguen sufriendo de estas afectaciones; los posibles responsables y la relevancia que tienen los medios de comunicación alternativos en hacerlos visibles, para la construcción de memoria colectiva.

Para ello se realizó un análisis de datos de tipo documental y de contenido durante el periodo 2017-2020, que da cuenta de las diversas formas de informar y denunciar estas afectaciones. La investigación aporta en posicionar la relevancia de estos medios de comunicación alternativos en la construcción de memoria colectiva y el no olvido de estas afectaciones como hechos sociales y políticos trascendentes y que estos medios a través de narrativas multimediales a partir de diversos formatos textuales, gráficas, sonoros y fotográficos se posicionan en las plataformas virtuales visibilizando la voz de las familias y comunidades que denuncian y buscan a sus familiares que intentan reivindicar su derecho a la verdad, reparación y memoria.

### **Palabras clave**

Memoria colectiva, medios de comunicación alternativos, desaparición forzada, asesinato de líderes sociales.

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## Introduction

Colombia has experienced a period of social and political violence that has lasted for more than 60 years, which has brought consequences at the individual, collective and project level of the country. There has been multiple previous negotiation attempts with actors outside the law and self-defense in Colombia. In 2012 there was a historic negotiation between the Santos Government and the FARC that concluded in 2016 with the signing of the Peace Agreement. This agreement with the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) focused the hopes of an entire country on the cessation of confrontations between a significant part of the actors within the armed confrontation; however, the war continues, since this agreement unleashed the presence of dissidents and other actors in the territories that are now disputed by them, according to Indepaz (2020).

According to Cardozo Rusinque *et al.* (2020), non-compliance by the State with the Agreement is mainly due to “general ignorance of the Agreement and its content, as well as the lack of pedagogical policies for the construction of peace” (p. 3), suggesting that peace is also a struggle of political powers where not everyone agrees with what has been agreed. In addition to this, Coronado Riaño (2019) points out that another relevant factor is the defunding of the structure for peace that has caused great desertion from these processes to those who rejoined civilian life, since the State has allocated “25% of the General Budget of the Nation ... where the peace programs should be inscribed, but in Duque’s plan these are not clearly defined by any side” (para. 3). In turn, Anzola (2010) foresees the lack of clarity regarding the fate of these resources:

These resources of the Development Programs with Territorial Focus PDET are at a crossroads defined by regional clientelism, an institutionality linked to agribusiness and a technocracy that limits the resources that can reach the territories. (p. 2)

The transition period to peace has been full of uncertainties and effects that still occur in the territories, including the assassination of social leaders that has significantly increased, according to the report Registry of leaders and human rights defenders (Indepaz, 2020, p. 3), a record that covers the presidential period of Santos and Duque from September 2016 to July 2020, in which 971 murders to social leaders were recorded. This report highlights

the differential approach in the characterization of the victimizing act towards them, with severely affected populations of which 342 cases refer to the peasant population, 250 cases to the indigenous population, 124 cases to the civilian population and the remaining figures are distributed among Afro-descendant, artisanal-mining, environmentalist, communal, trade union, victim representation and diverse populations, with a growing trend compared to previous years.

In this process of political transition towards peace, enforced disappearance, classified by the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights as “an inhuman act that transgresses the identity, dignity and integrity of the disappeared person and that of his/her families since it violates multiple human rights and aims to make them invisible and non-existent forever” (200, p.14), continues being present, according to the Report on the Situation of Enforced Disappearances in Colombia presented to the United Nations Committee on Enforced Disappearances, cited by Chinchón Álvarez and Rodríguez (2018), approximately 80 000 people are reported, 160 000 victims are registered in the UVR (Single Register of Victims), of which 46 000 are direct victims and the rest are their families. The above figures also reveal the huge difference between official and unofficial reports of these cases, which highlights the political disputes underlying the conflict and the reparation processes and real impacts of the conflict.

At the regional level, specifically in Meta, there are 32 cumulative cases since 2016 (Indepaz and Marcha Patriótica, 2020; Gómez, 2020). According to the Single Register of Victims, to date there are 2491 victims of the armed conflict in the Meta, of which 254 correspond to people in situation of enforced disappearance (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, 2018). A detailed report on the profile of murdered social leaders indicates that both this event and the forced disappearance are strongly linked, i.e., the dynamics of violence used to silence the lives of these victims may be represented in one or both of the aforementioned crimes.

In the face of political and social disputes that are discussed by the government, actors outside the law and victims in the consolidation of a peace project with justice and reparation, it is necessary to confirm scenarios of public and citizen opinion where the media have a transcendental role, since according to (Huerta *et al.*, 2011), they are political actors that shape the thoughts, behaviors and actions of their recipients.

It is until Santos's presidential term that dialogues with the FARC-EP group begin and take place. In 2005, the Justice and Peace Law presented by then-President Álvaro Uribe emerged, which is not carried out; on the contrary, it is one of the periods in which the highest levels of human rights violations are reached, according to the Human Rights Watch organization, as stated by Carrasquilla (2020). This development shows how peace and the implementation of policies become the object of manipulation by actors with particular interests. As a result, social organizations and community leaders have addressed the conflict by developing initiatives such as the visibility of their situation at risk and the search for their missing relatives through artistic and popular actions. To make this possible, they have relied on new communication alternatives, and this is how alternative media play a fundamental role for victims and their rights.

Given the above, currently society has been mediated by various digital and communication channels that influence the psychosocial development of people, i.e., they are elements that cross human life as knowledge, emotions and cultural beliefs (Villa *et al.*, 2020). Regarding political issues, these media have built ideas that lead to two main problems: on the one hand, there is the political polarization in which two opposing and rigid positions are found, which it seeks to legitimize a single truth and way of governing; on the other hand, it generates the construction of an enemy, i.e., it does not recognize the Other as a political being and reproduces a discourse of fear or terror in front of their actions, thus dehumanizing those who do not belong to the same way of thinking (Villa *et al.*, 2020).

This dehumanization of the other leads to the idea of taking it as an object, which Butler (2017) calls as the "deserving of life". This is framed in contexts of armed conflict and violence as to how to apprehend life or "to know what to recognize, or, rather, what to guard against injury and violence" (p. 16). In fact, the media embrace these notions when Butler (2017) states that they are part of some recognition frames, i.e., those lives that can be seen by one public and those, selected by another, that cannot be due to centralized power, the dislegitimacy of the humanity of the other and the search for a single truth, in more specific words he states that "it is also to fight against those notions of the political subject that suppose that permeability and damages can be monopolized in one place and rejected completely in another." (p. 249).

According to the above, the media play a very important role in the construction of collective memory because they not only influence public opi-

nion and political debate but also the recognition of narratives and stories that are not widely told, likewise the content and approach of what is transmitted is limited.

This is strongly linked to “necropolitics” by understanding the dynamics of guaranteed and protected lives in case these align with the position of those in power, this detaches from biopolitics, understood as the power to conduct behaviors, i.e., it does not act on people, but on their actions, leading them, facilitating them, making them difficult, limiting or preventing them. Thus, relationships of “power become of domination when they are blocked by techniques that allow domination of the behavior of others” (Estévez, 2018, p. 3). This implies understanding that not only is the power to discern the subjectivity of people, but also dominates and puts these discourses in public policies on the actions of people, linked with the management of human life. From this, for Mbembe (2011), Valencia (2010) and Valverde Gefaell (2016) “biopolitics is a primary starting point for analyzing domination relations” (p. 18).

Mbembe (2011) describes that it is insufficient to explain the power relations where criminal and state violence reveal that the main objective is the regulation of death instead of life, i.e., where these objectives are provided it could not be categorized as biopolitics (politics of life) but as necropolitics (politics of death), this term is used “to analyze the use of massacres, executions, forced disappearances, sexual violations, femicides and forced displacement” among others (Estévez, 2018, p. 28); thus, it is understood that necropolitics ignores human rights by first placing control, power and violence.

The problem lies in the disappearance of truth, memories, history and what humanity represents. Therefore, there is an alteration in history where there are gaps that are filled with an incomplete narrative through silence and terror, to which the various communication channels contribute; however, there are alternative media that under an ethical and political proposal to claim the right to truth of victims and communities, generate processes of memory and recognition through visible platforms such as social networks, places of contemporary memory in which stories are deposited subalternately.

## **Interpretative methodological approach of the research**

The research in the recognition of this scenario of tension and dispute for truth and memory starts from the imperative need to uncover the actions

that the population does at the territorial level to denounce and inform the citizenry for the constant violation of human rights and especially of crimes related to *the forced disappearance and murder of social leaders in the municipality of Meta, which historically has been a territory of conflict*. For this, from a qualitative analysis and following Sampieri *et al.* (2014), the nature and narratives exposed by the Alternative Media MCA on these affectations are analyzed, which additionally allow observing the constants in these damages and their consequences in the territory.

Journalistic contents are evidenced from this approach, which as for Fernández-Flórez (2009) it underlies content analysis as a technique that brings the reader closer not only to what the news tell but to global readings of a local context. According to Peña and Pirela (2007), they also give account of information sources that present themselves as whistleblowers and active citizens that are part of a struggle for truth. Considering the above specificities, the investigative process carried out the tracking of MCAs that used virtual platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, websites or blogs to report such effects in the municipality of Meta during the years 2017-2020; the selected media were those self-described as MCA and which fulfill this function of reporting or denouncing the State from counter-hegemonic ways and that by its incidence in the territory had more than 300 reproductions of their news in that period.

## Results

This section illustrates the alternative media MCA that reported and spread news related to cases of forced disappearance and murder of social leaders at Meta in the selected period. It should be noted that this period could be called a period of political transition after the signing of the Agreements; hence, its nature, the type of narratives used in its communication; the type of visual or media tools used for this purpose and the actions or strategies used to disseminate this content. This is relevant since many of them incorporate collective actions of community and social type to generate political scenarios of incidence; subsequently, a detailed analysis of what managed to systematize in this process is exposed.

The analysis reflects the profiles of the people who suffered these affectations, giving alerts in front of regions where these events are more recu-

rent and the ages and roles that leaders and disappeared people had in their communities. It also tries to communicate the subjects and perform an act of memory and dignification of people who may be forgotten by the state statistics but not by their relatives and community and social environments.

The selected MCA enter in this category because they are not means that operate with state funding or with the support of entities or economic groups with direct influence in the country, but instead operate from resources and actions developed from the movements or groups of human rights defenders in the country and have influence in the territory of Meta; therefore, the cases presented here were not visible in traditional (hegemonic) media in the selected period.

**Table 1**  
*Alternative Media Matrix*

Name	Town	Who are they?	What is narrative?	How do they tell their narratives? / From whom?
Newspaper "Desde abajo"	Bogota	It published its first edition in 1991. It has made various proposals and concrete efforts in different social sectors.	Collective literary and photographic narratives, with the main objective of promoting the protagonism of the popular sectors, facilitating the information between different community experiences.	They intend to call different strands of social and intellectual effort to a reunion of dreams and actions that will be manifested, not only in a press that fights not to be marginal, but above all, in the construction of a new social and political option for the whole country. The development of this entire project depends, to a large extent, on the participation of the forgotten, as well as of those who, without being so, embrace their cause.
Análisis Urbano		Press agency that works on the analysis, investigation and denunciation of the urban conflict. Portal dedicated to search for urban and rural PEACE.	Collective literary narratives.	They gather historical data that give sense or a common thread to the facts. In other words, the background to understand the cases of Enforced Disappearance and Murder of Social Leaders.

Name	Town	Who are they?	What is narrative?	How do they tell their narratives? / From whom?
Revista Lanzas y Letras	Neiva/Cali	Editorial with more than 25 years of stories. Ideas, aesthetics and narratives produced by the popular. Created by a professor from the U South Colombian of Neiva to exchange opinions and legitimize other truths.	Photographic Narratives. Coherence between government actions and community response.	From sociological, pedagogical, and historical analyses. Its statements are critical. The social movements of the left face the strategic challenge of intertwining their social struggles with the political-electoral activity, so that the latter does not dominate the former and that the profound change of the relations of social power “from below” is not lost sight.
Contagio Radio	Bogota	It was born in 1995. In its beginnings the name was given to the human rights journal that had a biannual periodicity, which gave life to this communication in 2009.	Collective graphic and sound narratives to inform and make visible the work of human rights in Colombia. A research project with a human rights focus.	Today, it is the radio and audiovisual expression of a multimedia communication commitment, with a focus on HR, which seeks the democratization of information, through the radio, audiovisual and new technologies, allowing more freedom of expression of rural and urban communities of various social sectors in Colombia and the world.
Agencia Prensa Rural (APR)	Magdalena Medio	Alternative journalism organization, allied with groups around Colombia and human rights associations.	Autobiographical narratives, collective and individual, memory.	Agencia Prensa Rural (Rural Press Agency) opens space for social leaders to use both physical and digital platforms to denounce and present their truth. They announce the profiles of the disappeared and of murdered leaders, making visible their realities, their life expectations, their wealth, culture, among others.

Name	Town	Who are they?	What is narrative?	How do they tell their narratives? / From whom?
Trochando sin Fronteras	Arauca	Media of the Mass, Social and Popular Political Movement of the Central East of Colombia	Narratives for informative purposes and visibility around the analysis of categories such as common goods, capitalism in crisis, agrarian issue, women and new society or power and democracy, through editorial publications or opinion columns.	From the investigative process of Trochando sin frontera and according to the context and development of the news, events of social mobilization, human rights violations and needs or problems of various populations are usually presented according to the context (regional, national or international)
Pacifista	Bogota	Pacifista is an outreach project focused on content about human rights and peace building in Colombia.	Audiovisual narratives such as documentary production in relation to conflict, gender approach, leaders and culture.	Voices are given through investigative and outreach work to the population involved in the development of the news or to the direct victims of the events.
El Cuarto Mosquetero	Villavicencio	It was born in 2016 with the support of communities, organizations and social movements	It deconstructs the current truth through a reflective photographic, sound or graphic narrative mainly in territories such as Meta and Santander. "El cuarto mosquetero" carries out communication activities from figures from communication and reporting, which contribute to the defense of the territory, the construction of peace and gender equity.	Between audiovisual works, photo reports, texts, podcasts, forums and the photographic exhibition. "Through the Lens" they have reached different academic and urban spaces, which have strengthened and maintained through the practices exercised by groups of young communication students linked as a collective that contributes to democratization. By word of mouth, the "musketeers" communicate from the popular action, starting in human settlements until achieving an outreach in educational institutions of Meta and Santander

Name	Town	Who are they?	What is narrative?	How do they tell their narratives? / From whom?
Rutas del Conflicto	Colombia	It is the type of journalism that follows the Armed Conflict in Colombia. It was created with the need to show stories of the conflict that had not been documented by the traditional press or by the State in official documents.	Audiovisual and sound narratives. It collects stories and organizes the memories of communities in order to make show them, sensitize and reflect on them.	Journalism in <i>Rutas del Conflicto</i> affirms the essence of the fourth power: It transmits narratives from the victims, involves emotions, memories, and their perspective.

Table 1 shows that alternative media have a wide territorial coverage, although several belong to the territory, there are media such as Trochando sin Fronteras de Arauca or Agencia Prensa Rural de Magdalena Medio that are working to transmit the narratives regardless of geographical location, which may be due to the dynamics of multiple violent events of those who suffer these difficult situations as forced disappearance and homicide of their loved ones, leading in several occasions to the forced displacement of families and acquaintances.

The table reveals the type of narratives that each media outlet uses for presenting the stories of the communities, including literary, audiovisual, graphic, sound and/or photographic narratives. This results in a narrative convergence in which they meet harmoniously and are presented to the public as a single story told from several senses and manage to convey what was experienced at the time of the event in such a way that not only is visible, but also raises awareness and calls for mobilization for justice, truth, reparation and guarantees of non-repetition.

These media recognize the strength of the political discourse and the pedagogical processes that it contains to configure social ideas and collective emotions, which can contribute to the construction of peace and search for truth. Therefore, it is important to highlight that the MCAs describe the facts and profiles in order to make the victims visible and to eliminate the stigma generated by other means of political and economic control. This is how Butler's (2017) war frameworks are broken to humanize "other" lives that are recognized in the pain and collective memories of their families and their communities.

## Who were those murdered and disappeared?

The media analyzed reveal cases of forced disappearance and murder of social leaders, which suggests a relationship with multiple victimizing acts such as torture and threats directed at both men and women between the ages of 20 and 81. This is much more than figures included in the register of disappearances and murders; it is important to understand the seriousness of non-compliance with agreements and systematic facts that do not discriminate against sex, gender or age. Even considering this, the cases found in this investigation did not identify ethnic groups, which could be subject to further investigation.

**Table 2**

*Matrix Profiles of Forced Disappearance and Murder of Social Leaders*

Name	Last Name	Year of the Victimizing Fact	Group or Ethnicity	Family Role	Age of Disappearance or Murder
Sebastián	Coy Rincón	2018	N.R	N.R	18 years
Jefferson Andrés	Arévalo Robayo	2018	N.R	Husband	24 years
Richard	Silva	2017	N.R	N.R	N.R
María	Cruz Roja	2017	N.R	Wife-Mother	N.R
Carlos	Mena	2017	N.R	N.R	N.R
Héctor	Almarío	2018	N.R	N.R	N.R
Israel	Rodríguez	2018	N.R	N.R	81 years
Camilo	Pinzón Galeano	2017	N.R	N.R	N.R
Eliver	Buitrago	2017	N.R	N.R	N.R
José	Anzola Tejedor	2017	N.R	N.R	61 years
Luz	Anzola Tejedor	2017	N.R	Mother	45 years
Oliver	Herrera Camacho	2018	N.R	N.R	N.R
Ramón	Montejo Plazas	2020	N.R	N.R	N.R
Simón	Ochoa	2020	N.R	N.R	N.R

In addition, recognizing the territory as a space of dispute and vulnerable to the violation of rights is pivotal when there are no means to make visible the conflict and the selective and systematic assassinations. These are the reasons to understand the historical migratory process for the repopulation of the Llanos, first, the planting of illicit crops, the transfer of conflicts between families and gangs; and the arrival of the FARC to this territory once they left Tolima towards the Meta where they settled to expand their military and social power (Gobernación del Meta, 2016).

The guerrilla bases are consolidated with the arrival of the FARC and various social, economic and political issues, between the 60s and 80s, taking over strategic points such as the Municipality of Uribe, the Ariari, Guayabero and Duda rivers, leading to the confrontation with the public force and several attempts at peace agreements which fail and break off again a new cycle of violence that will later be confronted by the Democratic Security of former President Uribe. However, the FARC and other guerrillas are not the only ones present in the conflict against the governments, the existence of paramilitaries is recognized since the 50s, but it is until the 80s that they take strength under the cause of the fight against the communist insurgency, committing violent acts such as the massacres in Mapiripán and the bloody confrontations in the eastern plains with other illegal armed actors in the 2000s (Gobernación del Meta, 2016).

This research highlights the municipalities of Mapiripán, Mesetas, Vistahermosa, Uribe, El Castillo, Puerto Rico, La Macarena and San Martín where the victimizing events occurred and which continue being conflict territories and have been subjected to various processes of peace agreements to guarantee the right to non-repetition, which has been violated, therefore, the right to the Truth, Justice and Reparation will also be.

**Table 3**  
*Matrix Profiles of Forced Disappearance and Murder of Social Leaders*

Name	Last Name	Subregion	Municipality	Place
Sebastián	Coy Rincón	Duda-Guayabero	Uribe	N.R
Jefferson Andrés	Arévalo Robayo	Bajo Ariari	Puerto Rico	El Danubio
Richard	Silva	Bajo Ariari	Mapiripán	El Rosario farm
María	Cruz Roja	Bajo Ariari	Mapiripán	Family farm.
Carlos	Mena	Bajo Ariari	Mapiripán	Rincón del Indio

Name	Last Name	Subregion	Municipality	Place
Héctor	Almarío	Duda-Guayabero	La Macarena	Family farm.
Israel	Rodríguez	Duda-Guayabero	La Macarena	El Palmar
Camilo	Pinzón Galeano	Medio Ariari	San Martín	Housing
Eliver	Buitrago	Duda-Guayabero	Mesetas	Place of work
José	Anzola Tejedor	Duda-Guayabero	Mesetas	The Governor
Luz	Anzola Tejedor	Duda-Guayabero	Mesetas	The Governor
Oliver	Herrera Camacho	Duda-Guayabero	La Macarena	Brisas del Guayabera
Ramón	Montejo Plazas	Alto Ariari	El Castillo	Vereda Caño Claro
Simón	Ochoa	Alto Ariari	El Castillo	Vereda Caño Claro

However, from a dignified approach it is important to mention who are the specific victims of these violent acts. In this research there are social leaders or people with peasant labor, falling into the stigmatization of vulnerable population as power of enemy, opposition or linked to work of the opposite side who fulfilled tasks such as peasant work, community in the Boards of Action, reincorporation, coordination of programs on Coca cultivation, members of political parties of the left. This is not only associated with their roles or social activities, but also with historical aspects previously exposed in the territorial analysis, where migrations, settlements, displacements and social projects established by guerrillas, paramilitaries, and criminal gangs play an important role that endorses prejudices and rejects political subjects of human rights.

**Table 4**

*Matrix profiles of forced disappearance and murder of social leaders*

Name	Last Name	Role or Organization	Social Activity	Authors or potential authors
Sebastián	Coy Rincón	ETCR Mariana Páez	N.R	««««
Jefferson Andrés	Arévalo Robayo	N.R	Peasant	Hooded people
Richard	Silva	Social Leader	President of the community action board of the village of San Antonio.	N.R
María	Cruz Roja	Leader of the program to replace the Unibrisas del Iteviare sidewalk.	Peasant	Hooded and armed people.

Name	Last Name	Role or Organization	Social Activity	Authors or potential authors
Carlos	Mena	Social Leader	N.R	FARC dissidents
Héctor	Almario	Social leader. National Coordinator of Coca and Poppy Growers.	N.R	Hooded people
Israel	Rodríguez	Community Action Board of the Sidewalk El Palmar	Peasant	Unknown
Camilo	Pinzón Galeano	Community Leader, Vice President of the Community Action Board, vereda Mundo Nuevo	N.R	Unknown
Eliver	Buitrago	Community leader, president of the community action board, sidewalk Buenos Aires.	Peasant	Unknown
José	Anzola Tejedor	SINTAGRIM. member of the agrarian summit, member of the communist party	Peasant	Unknown
Luz	Anzola Tejedor	SINTAGRIM, Member of the Communist Party	Peasant	Hooded, armed - identified as illegal groups
Oliver	Herrera Camacho	Social Leader	President of the community action board of the San Antonio village.	Two armed men
Ramón	Montejo Plazas	Social Leader	President of the Communal Action Board of vereda caño clara	Men mobilized on a motorcycle
Simón	Ochoa	Member J.A.C vereda caño clara	Peasant	Men mobilized on a motorcycle

In the municipality of Meta, in Colombia, where these parishes are located, there have been episodes of deep violence, which have been announced from the collective to the media, with a recognizable force and continuity disposition in some social fields since the nineties. These episodes initiated and spun during presidential periods from Álvaro Uribe period (2002-2010),

Juan Manuel Santos and the Peace Agreement (2010-2018) and Iván Duque (2018-present). The peace agreement is the starting point to conduct the trace through alternative media, which report acts of violence that have been presented, reported and investigated.

According to the above, these have been events that have led to deepen on the concept of forced disappearance both in the territory and in the structuring of the meaning, which has triggered a collective concern in the communities with more reported cases of acts of continuous violence, as well as has allowed the search for actors who are both responsible and affected. The Editorial Board, an organization dedicated to investigative journalism, wrote a report that included reports, files and photographs reporting cases, alliances and complaints from 1977 to 1988 to denounce and recognize the truth of crimes against humanity that no longer fit the justification of a war that transgressed the time, where murder and kidnapping went from a daily pain already recognized and announced, to a new mechanism from which more strident forms of violence were presented, enforced disappearance.

According to Gutiérrez-Peláez (2009), there are emotional, family and personal and collective memory impairments related to forced disappearance that take a long time to be processed, as well as uncertainty and a constant feeling for not forgetting. Likewise, Tizón (2004) states that the mourning experienced in front of this process is related to socio-cultural networks that manifest themselves in the impossibility of doing rituals, in his monograph *Loss, sorrow, mourning: experiences, research and assistance* suggests that this would not only be a matter of the family order but an environment that also suffers affectations.

In the specific case of Meta, the matrix shows a distribution of origin, the three parishes with more cases are: Mapiripán, La Macarena and Mesetas recording three cases each of them, according to the trace developed in the period of publication from 2017 to 2020, focused on alternative media in the department of Meta.

Bearing in mind that the signing of the peace ended in 2016 during Juan Manuel Santos period, there are still cases of forced disappearance and murder of social leaders. Two women and 12 men belonging to organizations involved in social activities were registered, seven of them farmers, three belonging to the board of communal action, and four with a not very clear record of their social activity. There are no cases of minors, however, through testimonies it has been corroborated that these persistent events continue in the different municipalities of Meta.

The narratives found in these alternative media respond to a digital culture by allowing to build stories and events through the transmedia, i.e., various platforms to make the content visible: audio, text and image. It is found that this information is constructed collectively to transmit in different ways the truths of each community, family or individual.

According to Jenkins (2006), transmedia narratives aim to take advantage of each particularity or capacity of each medium to generate a complex narrative framework, without ignoring or considering obsolete the media prior to this, since they would also be part of the cultural convergence of narratives through their resignification or adaptation to cyberculture or through different means such as: film, videography, the Internet, literature, textual writing and types of languages, whether verbal, non-verbal, symbolic or iconographic (Jenkins, 2006). This narrative seeks to exploit the qualities and capabilities of each media from the creation of content, because the dispersion of information is fundamental to understand what the consumer reads to go from being a passive receiver to an active agent in the search, recovery and verification of information.

This allows us to reaffirm the construction of collective memory by depositing diverse oral, graphic, audiovisual and literary narratives that converge on these platforms created by alternative media with a background of circulating the truth that is not told in traditional media in order to generate another opinion more critical of the government management in turn, public policies, awaken society about the reality of the territory and, above all, recognize the collective pain of a community that tries to rewrite history based on its militant memories, recovered from its disappeared and murdered social leaders.

Rodríguez and Lévy (2014) coined the term collective intelligence, to refer to the new social structures that allow the production and circulation of knowledge within a connected society. To understand the converging narratives that arise in relation to the memory of the victims and that have been silenced or hidden, it is necessary to recognize in them the subaltern stories, those that do not correspond to the “official” but reflect a “Collective Memory”, concept coined by Halbwachs (1992, pp. 53-78) to refer to the social process carried out to resignify the past and build a story from below, i.e., from a certain group, a community or society that highlights those “non-heroic” actions that allow a communication of collective identity, community empowerment and dignity.

## Theoretical discussion

### Emergency of alternative media

According to Pazos (2019), the media is recognized as a political actor with power, shaping itself with the judicial, legislative and administrative system as a central axis that infers from the Government and uses it. Therefore, the media have presented and have existed under the shadow of state and business elites, strategically spreading a unipolitical view of reality. According to Pazos (2019) and Cárdenas (2015), the media are devices of surveillance and power actors with the capacity to generate and create political opinion and, therefore, according to (Federación Internacional de Periodistas, 2016) generate agendas, and their concentration in the elites hegemonize speeches, practices and limit expression.

The media have been historically in charge of informing through discourses and images, so they are expected to have a plural vision; in this sense, the media not only inform, but legitimize content (Cárdenas, 2015); they narrate worldviews, build meanings around violence, peace or war, and contribute that “the citizenship and the different actors build their own perspective of the conflict and perpetuate structural cultural conditions that feed the continuity of violence in all order” (Cárdenas, 2015, pp. 42-43). The media that have been adapted by homogenizing devices have been called traditional media, in contrast to those that underlie the margins, whose purpose is to tell other truths, in which Ayala (1996) highlights the MCA and its presence as a proposal in the face of the monopolization of information.

For Ayala Ramírez (1996, p. 121), the alternative is due to means that pretend to open the spectrum and the place occupied by the recipient of the information, in addition to putting it in the foreground; an alternative construction and place of active citizenships and that claim other truths, but that at the same time can access channels to do so. This is relevant if we move it to the place that these can have in the construction of collective memory in scenarios of conflict or political transition where according to García (2017), “subjectivity is influenced by the hegemonic discourse reproduced from the media, while the discourse is understood as a type of memory that means something about the one who organizes it” (p. 99).

Humanes *et al.* (2013) point out that “traditional media are not pluralistic in terms of information, they do not usually represent interests different from their own whether ideological, economic, political, which becomes an

information barrier that affects equity” (p. 7), showing a limitation against subalternated discourses that sometimes fail to have a place of expression. In this sense, the MCA have the alternative of contributing to build memory, understood this and in the words of Nora (2008) as:

Memory is life, always embodied by living groups and, in that sense, is in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of memory and amnesia, unaware of its successive deformations, vulnerable to all uses and manipulations, capable of long latencies and sudden revitalizations. (pp. 20-21)

In this same way, Halbwachs (1992) describes Collective Memory as a construct of stories, narratives that are not defined with a single story and that, as stated (Martín-Baró 1983 quoted in Villa, 2014), “is the relationship of the group that remembers, placing the subject in a social structure” (p. 81), the construction of collective memory requires plural, non-homogenizing speeches that are linked to reflections on what happened and as Castillo points out (2016):

The intense presence and influence of the media has allowed much to be said about their power and the roles and positions they occupy in the political dynamics. From defined as fourth power to counterpower, passing through the influence they can exert on public decision makers as subjects that publicly express the opinions of citizens. (p. 9)

For Erll (2012), “Collective memory is a generic concept that covers all those processes of organic, medial and institutional type, whose meaning responds to the way the past and the present influence each other in socio-cultural contexts” (p. 45), and in it the role of the media in fundamental terms.

## **Truth and post-truth as an active element in every historical moment**

The conception around truth and the right to the term itself has been by innate design (Bernales, 2014). As it is known from different non-governmental institutions and organizations, it has always been considered as adjacent to “due process”, i.e., it is taken for granted that the truth must be present in each person, integrating it as an autonomous right. It should be emphasized that recognizing the truth in this way is not sufficient for its correct implemen-

tation. What is currently at stake for a truth implemented from the legal point of view is that it should be recognized from the formality in international conventions, “as in the fundamental charters of States” (Bernales, 2014, p. 34).

If speaking since history, the truth has been directly linked to the passage of the victims to the multiple humanitarian crises of various kinds, whether these are given by authoritarian governments, or by a transcendence of undignified facts and conditions in certain territories. This being so, the truth develops in terms of seeking answers for violent events that leave without any trace the people who are involved in these events, especially the families and/or communities to which the victims belong. In the searching for answers arise questions such as why the events occurred? In the case of enforced disappearance, where are they?

During the Colombian peace process, truth has been recognized as one of the agreement points reached in 2016. Victims have wondered for decades what is the truth behind the injustices that have threatened the lives and integrity of their families and communities. This process has therefore allowed the truth to be demanded from an institutional response that will enable the peace process to continue from all its actors. At the moment in which expectations of the truth are not met, as in the Colombian case, these demands begin to be perceived from victims and people who hail the truth as a clear abuse of the right seen from the political sphere, leaving aside the recognition as a fact that allows the development of social justice. The truth then moves to a place in politics that takes polarized positions in a context of demanding answers through negative emotionality, leaving aside the dignity of the person as a fundamental cause for the search and demand for a truth.

The hegemonic discussion comes into play from the perception of the media that takes the discourse of truth. It can be accepted or rejected socially, sustaining and strengthening the political discourse as a dignified fact. Is this truth manipulated by a private interest? what the reality does not show is that the victims who claim truth during the process continue to be the most affected by the fact of directly suffering the crime, remembering the events in the judicial process, waiting long bureaucratic procedures that provide clear answers, being that these have transcended both over time where they end up being forgotten, or in the worst case generate threats to the same collectivity who demand narration and recognition of the truth. The victims of peace processes then disband, lose hope in dialogue and relapse into the rejection, rightly so, of an opportunity to claim their dignity and rebuild the social fabric.

## Conclusions

The data exposed in the period 2017-2020 in nine MCA show a continuity in the presence of murders of social leaders and people reported missing in the municipality of Meta, indicating that these crimes continue to operate as means of pressure and repression of people who live in this territory, although the data normally do not mention who committed these crimes, it is evident that they are actors that continue operating with active war schemes in these territories.

The research does not cover the period after 2020, so this is a call to systematize this information and make possible analyses of the variations and particularities of these events in the face of the change of government and the bet for the “Total Peace” of current President Petro; other factors not explored here can be analyzed.

The silenced voices in these crimes represent a group historically affected by the conflict as are the peasants; therefore, we think it is positive the recent willingness to name them as subjects of reparation and special protection. This will be a way to make visible multiple affectations that continue to occur, but above all, the measures and policies to protect, repair and accompany their processes from different perspectives.

The alternative MCA investigated represent collective initiatives whose main purpose is to generate critical political opinion and give tools to the citizenry to occupy the space of communication as a field of debate, denunciation, and positioning. In addition, these media accompany their actions with collective processes of mobilization, monitoring and constant reporting of human rights violations committed in this region and in the country. This research emphasized on the Ariari region, but some of these outlets cover other regions where the conflict has been equally acute.

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