**Political Violence and Fiction in Mexican Film: the Case of Carlos Bolado’s *Colosio: el asesinato* / *Colosio: the Assassination* (2012)**

**Abstract**

The year 2014 marked the twentieth anniversary of the assassination of Luis Donaldo Colosio, presidential candidate for the ruling Partido Revolucionario Institucional / Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). The impact of this event on perceptions of the PRI and the Mexican political system has prevailed within the public imaginary, and continues to fuel conspiracy theories in relation to the possible motives for the candidate’s assassination. This article examines a filmic exploration of this traumatic moment in recent Mexican history, an event that changed the way the nation viewed its then President, Carlos Salinas de Gortari’s, and subsequent PRI governments. At this moment the public mood was transformed, from a prevailing sense of false security, driven by the dictums of neoliberal policies under the banner of *Salinismo*, to a state of shock and fear of a society spiralling into increasing violence and an economic downturn, with repercussions for years to follow. Framing *Colosio: el asesinato* / *Colosio: the Assassination* within discourses of the thriller genre, and borrowing from theoretical notions of “conspiracism”, I explore the significance of Carlos Bolado’s film in light of the timing of its release (prior to the 2012 presidential elections), and the contents of its narrative. Moreover, the article explores the role of history and fiction in this detective story, alongside the way in which film as a medium processes traumatic events. Ultimately, I examine how the film’s metanarrative formatprovides the exploratory premise from which to access otherwise un-visualized and complex theories surrounding the case.

**Keywords**: Political Thriller. Mexico. Colosio. Film. Bolado.

**Political Contexts**

On 23 March 1994, whilst at a scheduled rally held in the neighbourhood of Lomas Taurinas in Tijuana, the presidential candidate for the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), Luis Donaldo Colosio, was shot at close range in the head and in the abdomen, as he was surrounded by a crowd of supporters. He later died from his injuries at the Tijuana General Hospital where Colosio was taken for emergency treatment. That same evening, from the steps of the hospital building, Licenciado Liebano Sáenz announced the candidate’s death to a crowd of reporters waiting outside. Speculations concerning other possible culprits, aside from the arrested gunman named Mario Aburto Martínez, has inspired investigative analyses, reports, books, press coverage, public and televised debates, documentaries, and now a fiction film by Carlos Bolado released fewer than two weeks prior to the 2012 Presidential elections.[[1]](#endnote-2) At the time of the film’s release, opinion polls predicted a PRI return to Los Pinos after a thirteen-year absence from power after the Partido de Acción Nacional’s (PAN) landslide victory in 2000.

A detailed examination of the PRI’s 71 years of single party rule, and indeed of twentieth century Mexican political history, lies beyond the parameters of this article. However, a brief exploration of the last six years of government prior to Colosio’s assassination will serve to contextualise my readings of Bolado’s film. Remembered for its status as governing party for most of the twentieth century, the PRI’s image and its relationship with the electorate has significantly changed over the decades. Specifically towards the latter part of the twentieth century, the PRI was seen as governing through autocratic rule; a party marked by intolerance and repression as witnessed by its orchestration of the 1968 Tlatelolco massacre, which became the topic of Bolado’s 2013 film *Tlateloco, verano del ‘68*. During Carlos Salinas de Gortari’s presidency (1988- 1994), the new technocratic government’s effort to engage in a modernising discourse was prevalent, and the party underwent substantial public relations exercises to proclaim its democratic and progressive agenda, which included major economic reforms and the establishment of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). That the proposed neoliberal economic model, which was enshrined in NAFTA, happened to be inaugurated on the same day as an insurgent uprising in Chiapas, remains as one of history’s ironies, and 1 January 1994 subsequently marked the beginning of the end of Salinas’ political dream. Since leaving office Carlos Salinas has carved out a troubled and controversial legacy in Mexican political history. Towards the end of Salinas’s *sexenio* (six year term in office), accusations of illegal business deals, which involved powerful cartels and the political elite, were rife. The political scandals continued following the arrest, and subsequent charge of the ex-President’s brother, Raúl Salinas in 1995, amidst allegations of the latter’s money laundering activities, which involved a multi-million dollar fortune that was transferred to US and Swiss bank accounts.[[2]](#endnote-3) Furthermore, Raúl Salinas, also known in the media as the ‘uncomfortable brother’, was convicted of masterminding the assassination of his ex-brother–in-law and President of the Party, Francisco Ruiz Masseiu, which will be discussed in more detail later in this article. In line with these accusations, existed the suspicion that Raúl Salinas had been involved in illicit dealings with organized crime, the outcomes of which saw large quantities of assets deposited into foreign trust funds. In his analysis of the events of 1994, investigative journalist and author Andrés Oppenheimer, notes that:

A principios de los noventa, el gobierno – quizás a través del hermano del presidente, Raúl Salinas – había hecho un acuerdo explícito o tácito con los jefes de los cárteles mexicanos de la droga por el cual se les permitiría operar ciertos corredores aéreos para transporta drogas a Estados Unidos a cambio de que mantuvieran un bajo perfil, sin exceder los niveles “tolerables” de contrabando de cocaína, y depositaran la mayor parte de sus ganancias en México.

In the early 1990s the government – perhaps through the president’s brother, Raúl Salinas – had entered an explicit or subtle agreement with Mexican cartel leaders, which allowed for these to operate certain aerial routes with the aim of transporting drugs into the US. In exchange they were to maintain a low profile, not to exceed ‘tolerable’ levels of smuggled cocaine, and to deposit most of their earnings in Mexico.

(Oppenheimer 1996, 312)

To add credence to these suspicions, in an interview conducted in February 2009 with Mexican journalist Carmen Aristegui, ex-President Miguel de la Madrid (Carlos Salinas’s predecessor and mentor) accused his protégé and the ‘uncomfortable brother’ of misappropriating resources from the national treasury, and of conducting business with the cartels. In relation to Carlos Salinas, de la Madrid states that the former president had condoned ‘una gran corrupción de parte de su familia, sobretodo de su hermano […] Permitió que Raúl y Enrique consiguieran de manera indebida contratos de licitación / a large scale corruption on behalf of his family, mostly involving his brother […] He had inappropriately allowed Raúl and Enrique to acquire contracts through tender’.[[3]](#endnote-4) When probed further, de la Madrid recalls that Raúl ‘[c]onseguía contratos del gobierno, se comunicaba con los narcotraficantes […] los que le dieron el dinero para llevárselo a Suiza / had secured government contracts, and was in contact with drug-dealers […] who had given him funds to take to Switzerland.’ (Arestegui 2009) The media reacted with widespread concern, since these revelations provided further evidence of what had already been suspected was taking place within the corridors of power. (Anon 2009; García Hernández 2009) However the Salinas family fought back with a letter penned by Carlos Salinas himself, addressed to Aristegui, in which he expressed his ‘pain and indignation’ at the accusations being made, stressing the lack of substantial evidence to support the allegations made against his brothers, and highlighting the fragile nature of de la Madrid’s health at the time of the interview. These same preoccupations for the ex-president’s state of health were mirrored in a declaration made by de la Madrid’s family, who reiterated the elder statesmen’s ailing condition. De la Madrid himself later withdrew his claims, admitting to ill health and the tendency to become confused when being questioned. In response, Aristegui made public all the documentation related to the interview, alongside the letter sent to her by Carlos Salinas. In subsequent conversations with the media, Aristegui stood by her interview, assuring that de la Madrid had appeared lucid, charming and in control of his faculties during the entire hour-long interview. (Villamil 2011) To the present day, Raúl Salinas has denied the accusations made against him, yet in total has served ten years in prison for the crimes of homicide, embezzlement, tax fraud and money laundering. In August 2013, a federal judge exonerated Raúl Salinas of his crimes, coinciding with the return of a new PRI government under the Presidency of Enrique Peña Nieto. This action marked a significant twist to the drama of the Salinas family, and led to criticism from political commentators in the media. (Villamil 2013a) The exoneration, in the eyes of analysts, altered Raúl Salinas’s public status from being a symbol of political corruption, to a representation of impunity. (Villamil 2013b) In an interview with *Proceso* magazine, essayist and historian Lorenzo Meyer recognizes that:

Hay solidaridad en la impudicia de una clase política que fracasa una y otra vez en su cometido fundamental que debe ser el bienestar del país, pero a ellos les va muy bien. Se han montado en una tendencia que es histórica en México: la incompetencia de la clase política y su impunidad.[[4]](#endnote-5)

There’s solidarity in the shamelessness of a political class that fails time and again in its fundamental commitment, which should be the welfare of the country, but things go well for them. They have benefited from a tendency that is historical in Mexico: the incompetence of the political class and its impunity.

(Villamil 2013a)

In *Colosio: el asesinato*, Bolado explores such accusations and portrays Raúl Salinas as an ill-tempered authoritarian, whose ruthless ambition leads to outbursts of anger directed at the candidate’s unwilling position to continue with the status quo. Meanwhile, Carlos Salinas is depicted as maintaining an almost omnipresent influence on the party, acting as peacekeeper during a scene of altercation between Colosio and Raúl. As Colosio’s mentor, and the nation’s then president, Carlos Salinas publicly supported the candidate’s campaign, although rumours of a political rift were prevalent at the time of his death; an issue that Bolado examines in the film through his depiction of the possible motives behind the assassination, as will be discussed later. The conspiracy theories and subsequent details of the multiple investigations following the candidate’s assassination, which are too extensive to elaborate in detail in this article, navigate a myriad of possibilities concerning the masterminding of the assassination, inculpating varying sectors of Mexican society, from disgruntled PRI officials, to the intervention of rivalling drug cartels intent on obstructing Colosio’s ascent to the presidency, to incriminating suggestions that point towards the culpability of the upper echelons of the nation’s political elite. Four Special Fiscal reports later, the official conclusion remains that the assassin, Mario Aburto, acted alone and was the intellectual and material author of the crime. Public opinion, however, remains unconvinced, and the demand for clarification concerning the unexplored investigative leads, discarded witness statements, a corrupted scene of the crime, and the public denouncement of key figures accused of involvement in the event, voiced by prominent personnel within the Procuradería General de la República / The Attorney General’s Office (PGR) and former PRI representatives, all point towards unresolved issues pertinent to a sense of closure.

At the time of *Colosio*’srelease in Mexico, the PRI was leading in the opinion polls. Critics praised the film’s bold depiction of the events surrounding the assassination of the presidential candidate in 1994, and some speculated as to whether the film’s contents would influence voting behaviour on July 1, 2012.[[5]](#endnote-6) In response to these queries, Bolado outlined his desire to raise awareness of this key moment in history, and to encourage debate regarding this and other important moments in the recent past.. Bolado’s representation of that pivotal moment in recent Mexican political history is driven by a preoccupation not to forget the events of 1994, but perhaps more significantly, not to restore the PRI to power. (Vértiz de la Fuente (2012, 72); Camarena (2012, 7) The significance of 1994 for subsequent political developments in Mexico is stressed in the opening credits of the film, where Bolado’s insertion of a quotation by Lenin ‘Hay décadas en las que no pasa nada, y semanas en las que pasan décadas / There are decades where nothing happens; and there are weeks where decades happen’ makes reference to the turbulent nature of that same year.

The film *Colosio* focuses on a fictional top-secret investigation funded by the government into the murder of the presidential candidate. Heading the special investigation is military intelligence officer, Capitán Andrés Vázquez (Jose Maria Yazpik), who gathers a team of experienced analysts, researchers and forensic specialists to work on the case. From the outset *Colosio* is presented as a political thriller, and upon the film’s release critics in Mexico observed a lack of films belonging to this genre within national film history. Given the historical connections between the State and the film industry in Mexico, the productive context for a genre such as the political thriller has, until recently, been curbed due to a lack of artistic freedom of expression. As film critic Lucero Calderón notes in relation to *Colosio*:

me parece una cinta muy interesante pues representa un ejercicio de género en un terreno poco explorado en la cinematografía del país: el *thriller* político. Precisamente no se había trabajado más en ese rubro debido a que las condiciones políticas y, por consiguiente culturales de México, no lo permitían.

I thought it a very interesting film, since it pertains to a genre that constitutes an unexplored territory in the nation’s cinematography, seen in the political thriller. It is precisely the political and subsequent cultural conditions of the past that had previously denied the possibilities for this type of work.

( Calderón 2012, 6)

In the past, political critique in national cinema relied on notions of allusion and metaphor, steering clear of direct references to political parties through their respective names, and instead providing discreet, yet crucial observations, on the state of national politics. Productions such as Julio Bracho’s *La sombra del caudillo /*(1960), Felipe Cazal’s C*anoa* (1976), and Jorge Fons’s *Rojo amanecer* / *Red Dawn* (1989), exemplifythe directors’ tendency to work within the confines of self-censorship existent at the time of the film’s making. Those deemed too openly critical-- Bracho’s *La sombra del caudillo* is the classic case *--* saw their projects *enlatados* (‘canned’)*,* for up to thirty years; such was the fate of *La sombra del caudillo* shortly after its completion. (Haddu 2007, 42) The screening of *Rojo amanecer*, however, during Salinas’s *sexenio* in 1989, is an example of the PRI’s tactical aim of attempting to distance itself from past modes of governing. By allowing a screening of the film, and thus a visualization of a historical moment (such as Tlatelolco ’68), which had until that point vilified the old PRI in the eyes of the population, the Salinas government aimed to portray itself as an ‘open’ and ‘democratic’ ruling class. (Haddu 2007, 12-14) At the turn of the twenty-first century, and on the cusp of a change in national politics, Luis Estrada’s *La ley de Herodes* / *Herod’s Law* (1999) altered the way political representation took place on the Mexican screen, by addressing party names, emblems, policies and key figures head on. As a result, film finally became a forum for social and political critique via the medium of satire on the screen. In 2004, Jorge Ramírez Suárez released his *Conejo en la luna* / *Rabbit on the Moon*, a political thriller, which took fictional political figures, placing them in the midst of a corrupt political system and featuring the death of a nominated candidate at the core of its narrative. Although not until Bolado’s *Colosio* had a fiction film directly addressed the candidate’s assassination, Colosio’s death has made its haunting presence felt in several contemporary films.[[6]](#endnote-7) *Conejo en la luna* details the brutality, corruption and perversion of justice conducted by government officials and the police force in both Mexico City and London. Its sources of funding, location and filming are transnational; and the narrative accusations of political mishaps reach beyond Mexican boundaries and across the Atlantic onto European turf. Government officials, whether Mexican, British or Swiss, are portrayed as scheming, ambitious and morally corrupt. Politics as a vocation is entered into with the sole purpose of self-gratification, the acquisition of power, and personal wealth. The main story follows the trajectory of a Mexican-British couple, who, through circumstance and chance acquaintances find themselves embroiled in an international scandal involving political assassinations, money laundering, kidnap and exile. Although not always convincing in terms of plot development and execution, Ramírez Suárez’s *Conejo* is an important contribution to national filmmaking because, despite its faults, the film nevertheless articulates its criticisms of the Mexican political system in an open manner, paving the way for other future projects, such as Bolado’s *Colosio: el asesinato* and *Tlatelolco, verano del ’68*.

Like *Conejo en la luna*, *Colosio* shares the former’s concern with institutional corruption, developing its narrative within the framework of the political thriller, a genre that presents a mystery or puzzle that needs to be solved by a principal character. Accordingly, in *Colosio* we see the assassination of the presidential candidate as the central event of the film, and the quest to find the real culprits, aside from the arrested gunman Mario Aburto, propels the narrative forward, meeting the generic criteria for plot development. The mystery behind who killed the candidate puzzles the main character, Capitán Andrés Vázquez and his team, and engages the audience in a fictional examination of probable conclusions to the crime. The whodunit structure of the film’s narrative provides layers of meaning related to an event that shocked the nation and set in motion a sense of collective mourning. In this sense, *Colosio*’s narrative develops according to the police thriller model, in that it seeks to address the question of whodunit in relation to the murder of the presidential candidate. The narrative drive and contents of the film thus borrow from the *modus operandi* of the detective fiction genre, a paradigm that is transferable across national borders and is in dialogue with the context of its production. As José Colmeiro notes:

Detective fiction […] was born out of the need to explain the unexplainable that defies logic and threatens the established normality, to bring back the bourgeois order temporarily destroyed by the transgression of the law, by means of implementing scientific positivist methodologies and deductive logical reasoning.

(Colmeiro 2001, 52)

Although following the narrative archetype provided by the detective fiction genre, seen principally in the protagonist’s role and actions, *Colosio*, as many critics highlight, also belongs to the political thriller, as observed above. Mexican writer, Julio Patán notes that although undoubtedly a political thriller, the film aligns itself with what has been termed as conspiracy cinema because:

El conspiracionismo le sienta [sic] bien al *thriller*. Más: le es indispensable […] El *thriller* necesita conspiraciones: el thriller político, teorías de la conspiración. Es decir, complots todoabarcantes, sin fisuras, imputables a algo que se conoce como el “sistema”, una entidad indefinida.

Conspiracism fits well with the thriller. In fact it is indispensable […] The thriller needs conspiracies and the political thriller needs conspiracy theories. In other words, all-encompassing plots without fissures attributable to something known as the ‘system’ constituting an undefined entity.

(Patán 2012, 65)

Thus the existence of conspiracy theories is fundamental to *Colosio*’s generic character as a political thriller. Furthermore, in terms of the thriller genre within the literary domain, Alberto Moreiras (2007, 47) highlights an ethical dimension corresponding to the narrative and states that its purpose is to ‘unveil’ and not just ‘express’ the treatment of murder. He further notes that a ‘thriller is, in every case, an ethical aestheticization of politics. It renders the political in a narrative form, and it does so from a primarily ethical stance’. (47) This recognition of the ethical role within the genre is crucial for our reading of *Colosio* in terms of the resulting effect of the film. The assassination of a presidential candidate (as insinuated in the film, because of his political views) is seen as the unethical deed committed, and one which requires correction through the unveiling of the culprits. By restoring the order to the disorder caused by the elimination of an important political figure, Andrés’s investigation is driven by the ethical desire to put right what has been done wrong. Therefore Bolado has chosen the political thriller to narrate the events concerning the assassination because it is precisely the models of representation assigned to this particular genre that provide the narrative with an ethical purpose. As Moreiras (2007, 156) notes, a ‘thriller is always a political reaction to a suspension of ethics. A crime against a human being is always a suspension of ethics’. In an interview, the actor who plays the Machiavellian ‘Doctor’ in the film, Daniel Giménez Cacho, describes the assassination of Luis Donaldo Colosio as containing Shakespearean dimensions, noting that the murder of a political candidate is tantamount to the obliteration of social order itself. (Baños 2012) The dismay and sense of collective loss felt by the Mexican populace following the assassination, amidst growing fears of becoming a society governed by violence, had not been witnessed for several generations.[[7]](#endnote-8) Furthermore, the political arena depicted in the film is characterized by its challenging ethical discourse, and by the prominence of the morally corrupt environment within which the main players navigate their course to power.

What is more, Bolado’s choice to opt for the political thriller for depicting the events of 1994 forms part of a transnational cinematic practice that characterizes the genre in what Moreiras (2007, 147) terms as ‘the dominant, and perhaps even normative narrative structure of our time’. Historically the political thriller prospered in Hollywood productions, particularly as a response to the cultural context of the Cold War, seen in films such as John Frankenheimer’s *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962), followed by his *Seven Days in May* (1964), and later Alan J. Pakula’s *All the President’s Men* (1976), a film that would come to re-define the genre. (Melley 1999; Shaw 2007) The focus of the narrative here follows *Washington Post* reporters Bob Woodward (Robert Redford) and Carl Bernstein (Dustin Hoffman), as they investigate the story that would become known as the Watergate scandal, which ultimately implicated senior White House officials in the acts of coercion and corruption. Subsequently President Richard Nixon became the focus of speculation concerning Watergate, and, in 1974, was forced to resign as president of the United States.

Set in a context of conspiracies and paranoia regarding a ‘higher power’ manoeuvring significant events that shape society, political thrillers articulate common anxieties concerning unexplained events of historical significance. (Darwin, Neave, and Holmes 2011, 1289) The basis of such theories, a conspiracy is seen as an endeavour that ‘involves multiple agents, working together in secret in order to realize hidden goals that are malevolent or unlawful.’ (1289) In the US, events such as the John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, and Robert F. Kennedy assassinations, alongside the more recent 9/11 attacks, form contextual bases for conspiratorial theories to take form. In Mexico, vernacular speculation took precedence over official statements made in the media following the assassination of Colosio, where word on the street pointed towards the State’s masterminding of the crime. These observations are highlighted in Bolado’s film and are processed via the medium of radio broadcasts, voiced by Vázquez’s girlfriend, Verónica (Kate del Castillo). Here the radio presenter embodies the *vox populi* of the nation, articulating social anxieties and the suspicion felt following the arrest of the alleged assassin Mario Aburto. (Volpi 1999; Aguilar Camín 2014)

***Colosio: el asesinato***

As mentioned earlier, the film begins with the epigraph: ‘hay décadas en las que no pasa nada, y semanas en las que pasan décadas / There are decades where nothing happens; and there are weeks where decades happen’. The mise-en-scène then moves on to a ninety-second sequence of audio and film clips, in addition to newspaper cuttings which together provide a social context for the months leading up to the event. We witness reports of the increasing narco-violence, and the linking of cartel chief Joaquín ‘El Chapo’ Guzmán, with the assassination of Cardenal Posadas Ocampo in November 1993, the first of several high profile assassinations in less than a year. The images convey the official inauguration of NAFTA, and Carlos Salinas de Gortari’s voice can be heard introducing the new accord. Through framed newspaper headlines, we see the emergence of the masked rebel group the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN), coupled with the extra-diegetic presence of its spokesperson subcomandate Marco’s voice, describing who the insurgents are. These utterances are juxtaposed with the photographic evidence of armed conflict in the southern state of Chiapas, in response to the EZLN’s declaration of war upon the Mexican government. Colosio himself is introduced through newspaper clippings outlining the initial stages of his presidential campaign, and an allusion is made to the media’s initial lukewarm reception to the candidate. The mise-en-scène presents the viewer with frames of Colosio’s speech at the Plaza de la Revolución in Mexico City on the 65th anniversary of the PRI. This event was destined to alter public opinion in favour of the candidate, as highlighted through the encircled newspaper headline: ‘La revolución Colosista / The Colosist Revolution’. It was during this speech that Colosio attempted a public re-launch of his political persona, outlining his proposed reforms for the party, a move that many signalled as a possible motive for his assassination.. After this scene. we are presented (as if conclusively) with the footage from the Lomas Taurinas rally, which is promptly followed by the visual and audio recording of the decisive gunshot that ended the life and career of the candidate. The montage sequence then presents the viewer with a blank screen and the script --‘Esta es una ficción basada en hechos reales / This is a fiction based on real events’ -- which both situates the film within a historical metafictional framework, and also initiates the debate concerning fiction and reality pertinent to a reading of the film’s narrative from its outset. Some drew attention to Bolado’s choice to classify the film as ‘fiction based on real events’ since the narrative explores a historical reality that remains present within the public imaginary. (Ellingwood 2012) However, the artistic freedom that is awarded through fiction, which sees the alliance of fictional characters sharing screen space with representatives of historical figures, allows for an exploration of possible conclusions to the question of who masterminded the assassination. Furthermore, through the creation of fictional characters, in addition to the representation of historical characters, Bolado is able to explore and bring to the screen the conspiracy theories circulating at the time of the aftermath of Colosio’s assassination. Mexican moviegoers are thus able to recognize the character of ‘el Doctor’ as that of Dr. José María Córdoba Montoya, who was Chief of Staff during Salinas’s time in government, and Vázquez’s police counterpart in Tijuana, Benítez, as that of Federico Benítez López, Chief of Public Security, who had been investigating the Colosio murder, and was himself assassinated on 23 April 1994. Equally the character of ‘El Licenciado’ represents Francisco Ruiz Massieu (himself assassinated six months later), and ‘Dr. Torres’ is a replica of the Special Prosecutor Dr. Miguel Montes; the first assigned to lead the Special Fiscal investigation in 1994. Bolado has kept the Salinas brothers Raúl and Carlos, Manuel Camacho Solís, the figure of Luis Donaldo Colosio, his widow, Diana Laura Riojas, alongside Don Fernando as true to a screen representation of their historical counterparts as possible. Meetings, events, and conversations are re-created for the audience, who recognize their significance from newspaper reports that were in circulation at time. Thus the opening claim that the film constitutes a fiction based on real events allows for the hybrid fabric of the narrative to take shape, outlining possible speculations concerning the event. And crucial to an understanding of this aim is the exploration of the footage which is shown during the opening sequence, subsequently re-examined both by the public gaze, and by Vázquez’s investigative team during the course of their work.

Recorded by a PGR official worker on the day of the Lomas Taurinas rally, the now infamous 1min and 28 seconds footage captures the final moments leading up to, and including the assassination of the presidential candidate. Captured from a high level angle, the camera follows the trajectory of the candidate as he leaves the platform, from whence he addressed the audience, proceeded to walk through the multitude. As more and more supporters keen to shake hands and speak with Colosio slowly surround him, the candidate’s security team become engulfed in the crowd and crucially lose their strategic protective positions. The ensuing chaos of the overwhelming masses surrounding the candidate creates the ideal context for the infiltration of a weapon and the close approximation of the assassin to his target, enabling him to shoot his victim in the cranium with a .38 calibre Taurus revolver. The moment of the mortal gunshotis captured for eternity by the PGR camera, and the film’s contents will constitute the evidential material that will be intricately scrutinized by forensic scientists, detectives, attorney generals and four Special Fiscal investigations over the course of six years. The same images will also become iconized over time, due to their repeated screenings, and will thus become embedded within the public imaginary as visual relics of a traumatic past event. A range of critics have compared this event and its testimonial footage to the case of JFK’s assassination, also recorded by an amateur camera. (Sotelo 2012, 13; Aviña 2012, 4; Jordán 2012, 11; Cayuela 2012, 68) However, contrary to the JFK footage, which was released to the public in phases, blocking out the critical moment of the President’s death through the mortal head wound until years later, the Colosio footage was shown on Mexican television networks shortly after the announcement of his death. These same frames would dominate the public field of vision in the months following the event, and would be replicated in both still and moving forms of the image. Now accustomed to these images of the assassination, Mexican moviegoers recognize the footage inserted into the narrative of *Colosio* as a reality that has established itself as a visual palimpsest, taking on levels of meaning beyond its denotative origins, to now stand as an iconic example of the traumatic events of 1994.

The insistent repetition of the traumatic moment of Colosio’s death that is to be found in the process of re-visioning the PGR’s footage fits in with Freudian observations on the act of re-living past traumas as a process of appropriation and thus resolution of an otherwise repressed pathology. (Caruth 1995; Guerin and Hallas 2007) Mirroring the condition of the individual subject that has become traumatized, a collective may find itself re-living and re-examining the traumatic event that has ruptured the social fabric and shattered its last illusions of peace, as was the case of Mexico in 1994. Thus the events of 1994 can be harnessed under the term ‘cultural trauma’, which, according to Jeffery Alexander (2011, 307) ‘occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways.

Key to the processing of such cultural traumas is the need to find an explanation for the event via its visualisation. In relation to this observation, Ron Eyerman (2007, 306) suggests that cultural trauma ‘calls attention to the negotiated recollection of events and to the role of representation’. He argues that the collective experience of remembering the trauma assists in the creation of a cognitive map through which the shaping of individual and social identity takes place, noting that:

The past is a collectively shaped, if not collectively experienced, temporal reference point […] what the past means is recounted, understood and interpreted and transmitted through language and through dialogue. These dialogues are framed as stories, narratives which structure their telling and influence their reception.

(Eyerman 2007, 305)

Linked to the need for a representation of the traumatic event, Alexander (2007, 308) suggests that in order for ‘traumas to emerge at the level of the collectivity, social crises must become cultural crises’. The death of Colosio reverberated across broad sectors of society because it mirrored the condition of national politics, which in turn led to the re-evaluation of the democratic process in Mexico. Such collective traumas require reflection because in Alexander’s view ‘identity revision means that there will be a searching, re-remembering of the collective past, for memory is not only socially fluid but deeply connected to the contemporary sense of the self’. (309) And it is this link between past influences on the present national condition that Bolado confirms is the driving force behind his re-creation of the Colosio assassination and its meanings for the present. (See Estrada 2012, 11).

[INSERT FIGURE HERE]

The traumatic moment in the nation’s consciousness is therefore encapsulated in the image of the shotgun being pointed at the head of the presidential candidate, as captured by the PGR camera. A break from a familiar past occurs at the moment of the bullet’s impact, and the chaos of the following months is epitomized in the panicking crowds, framed as a response to the unloading of the shotgun, and the subsequent lynch mob descending on the alleged assassin. These same images -- of a disorganized crowd surrounding Colosio, of the (faceless) assassin’s revolver hovering over the heads of those close to the candidate, and of the gunshot that changed the course of Mexican political history --are examined and re-examined by Andrés Vázquez and his team, and subsequently by the audience’s gaze, constituting counter-images and zoomed frames of differing angles and areas of the footage. These images become crucial witnesses to the event and their scrutiny alludes to hidden plots, unknown participants, and a possible conspiracy against the presidential candidate. Thus, these images outline what Stella Bruzzi (2000, 16) calls the ‘footage’s burden of proof’, where visual testimony to the event is framed by the gaze’s desire to decipher further evidence in the quest for answers. In this context, Bruzzi analyses the Zapruder film, which captured the last moments of John F. Kennedy’s life, and like the Colosio footage, provided visual evidence of the assassination and subsequently became the source of exhaustive investigative analyses. Bruzzi’s (2007, 16) observations, applicable here to a reading of the Colosio footage, recognizes the paradoxical position of the image in relation to the Zapruder film, where ‘as an authentic record, it functions as incontrovertible ‘evidence’, whilst as a text incapable of revealing conclusively who killed President Kennedy it functions as an inconclusive representation’. Although this is not the angle taken by Bolado in his presentation of Vázquez’s examination of the Colosio footage, the process undergone in the frame-by-frame dissection of the film, coincides with Bruzzi’s observations on the resulting effect of what is simply the representation of a fatality. Here her suggestion that the onlooker of the image desires for it to prove itself as a reliable witness text, and as testimony to the probable source of the conspiracy, parallels the role of the raw footage used in *Colosio*. Applicable also to a reading of the PGR footage, Bruzzi observes that the ‘Zapruder film has become the dominant assassination text, onto which is poured all the subsidiary grief, anger, belief in conspiracy and corruption surrounding the unresolved events it depicts’. (17) During one important scene in *Colosio*, we witness Vázquez persistently watching and rewinding the same frames from the PGR footage concerning the moment of the trajectory of the revolver towards Colosio’s head, and the capturing of a bloodied Aburto following the candidate’s assassination. Jessica Wax-Edwards has observed that during these scenes:

The frames and camera angles chosen suggest that Vázquez can and will identify something within the footage. By watching and rewatching the imagery, it is inferred that Vázquez will discover the true reason for Colosio’s murder. Equally the demonstrative shots of the remote control and the recorded footage underline the central role of the visual medium in solving the case.

(Wax-Edwards 2013, 77-78)

The extensive examination of the frame-by-frame contents of the PGR footage does indeed lead the main character in the film to piece together the necessary evidence in order to formulate a conclusion that points towards a State-instigated plot to assassinate Colosio; a theory that is re-enacted by Vázquez and his team in the final scenes of the film. Assisted by insider witness statements and exhaustive investigative research, the protagonist draws to a conclusion what, at first, appears to fulfil the thriller genre’s requirements for a sense of restored order at the finale. In this way it appears to affirm Moreiras’s (2007, 150) observations that ‘the thriller is not a means to an end but an affirmation of the end as an ethical end.’ Such ethical ends, however, are not provided by the film. Consistent with the inconclusiveness that characterizes the Colosio case, Bolado chooses instead to end his narrative with the annihilation of the main protagonists, including: Vázquez and his girlfriend Verónica; alongside several other characters associated with the case, for example, ‘el licenciado’, who is put in charge of the subsidiary investigation. The final scene frames Vázquez’s lifeless body, which has been thrown into a now contaminated river full of his own blood. The film’s last scene thus acts as an epilogue to the main narrative, and prophesizes further violence and death resulting from the events of 1994. In a closing image, directly borrowed from Virgil’s *The Aeneid* Book VI, Bolado presents his audience with the bleakest of outcomes for the nation’s future. Whereas Virgil’s oracle articulates a pessimistic vision of the Tiber River filled with blood, thus prophesizing a future dominated by war and loss in ancient Rome, Bolado’s bloody river motif at the end of the film visualizes a Mexican future shaped by the events of 1994. This idea is further emphasized by the statistics provided over the watery image at the end of the film, outlining the number of casualties directly and indirectly related to the Colosio case. Furthermore, the data also contextualizes the present problematic of increasing levels of narco-violence and growing instability in Mexican society as corresponding with the events of 1994. (See for example, Watt and Zepeda 2012) Linking these ideas, as observed earlier, is the bridging of past events with the present day. Significantly the connection of past and present elements becomes a means to process the cultural trauma that the Colosio case signified within the Mexican psyche, an event that has since been defined as a watershed moment in recent national history.

**Socio-Political Contexts for Murder.**

 As observed earlier, Bolado’s film commences with the assassination of Luis Donaldo Colosio and, through a sequence of flashbacks, reflects on the possible motives and contributing factors that may have inspired a conspiracy plot to murder the candidate. In the film, Colosio is presented as a man in search of his own political destiny, overshadowed by a public rivalry with fellow *priísta* Manual Camacho Solís, but who nevertheless holds the favour of the outgoing president Salinas. Colosio comes across as a respected mediator amidst an ideologically divided party, and a devoted family man in private. In the early months of 1994, the media’s coverage of Colosio’s election campaign was less than favourable. The PRI’s candidate for the presidency was portrayed lacking charisma and political focus. Such perceptions propelled Colosio’s campaign team to re-define the candidate’s public image. Matters were complicated by the rivalry existent between Colosio and Camacho Solís, which was fully played out in the national media, undermining Colosio’s candidacy. Indeed, such antagonism between these politicians is alluded to in the film when Colosio’s widow, Diana Laura Riojas (Ximena Rubio), refuses to assist the president by signing a letter that would publicly exonerate Camacho of any culpability in the Colosio case. Diana Laura refuses to cooperate with the president, both in fiction and as related by witnesses., [[8]](#endnote-9) As if through bad timing, or one of fate’s ironic coincidences, Camacho had finally renounced any claims to the candidacy on 22 March, 1994, one day before the assassination of his rival, declaring that ‘sí quiero ser presidente de la República, pero no a cualquier costo / yes I do wish to become president of the Republic, but not at any cost’. (Arriaga Tapia 1994, 150) Just what said ‘cost’ implies is left to speculation, and some recall the competitive nature of the relationship between the two men as bordering on the hostile, possibly one of the motives behind Diana Laura’s refusal to fraternize with Camacho following her husband’s death. (Estrada 2012, 14)

The position maintained by the president during this whole process of fellow rivalry was one of observer, fuelling the fallout, as Bolado’s film outlines, through his promotion of Camacho as Commissioner for the Peace in Chiapas during a period of significant instability, thus securing the latter’s full coverage in the news. During this time, Salinas spoke out against the speculation regarding the replacement of Colosio as candidate for the presidency, by famously confirming: ‘no se hagan bolas: el candidato es Colosio / don’t get confused, Colosio is the candidate’, thus seeming to stand by his choice of successor. (Quintero and Rodríguez 1994, 1992) Whilst appearing to support Colosio in public, the rumour mill continued to churn, and it was suspected that in private the president was less than satisfied with Colosio’s political moves. (Palma César 2004, 46) It was the perceived lack of public support, exacerbated by Camacho’s refusal to acknowledge Colosio’s candidacy following the *destape* in November 1993, alongside the unfavourable coverage in the press, that led Colosio’s campaign team to re-think their strategies in pursuit of election victory.[[9]](#endnote-10) Thus Bolado’s film focuses on Colosio’s re-invention as a political reformer and idealist,, framed by the footage taken from the candidate’s speech delivered at the Plaza de la Revolución in which he famously declared ‘veo a un México con sed y hambre de justicia / I see a Mexico that is hungry and thirsty for justice’. In this way, Colosio attempted to present himself as a man of the people. However, the journey towards public acceptance and political success was not easy.;As mentioned above, the initial months of Colosio’s presidential campaign at first were obscured by the emergence of an armed rebel movement in Chiapas, which dominated the headlines,relegating the candidate to the middle sections of the daily press. Thus Colosio’s 6 March speech formed part of a carefully instigated plan to re-launch the campaign, and re-present the candidate in a new light, in the context of flagging opinion polls and a perceived decreasing popularity. Thus a parallel was drawn by the press, positioning the more media-friendly and vociferous ‘other’ candidate, seen in the figure of Camacho Solis, against Colosio, who was until then seen as the uncharismatic official candidate. It is acknowledged in the film that Colosio’s weakness was related to his public speaking, where he appeared to lack conviction and political focus. These issues were addressed by his campaign team, and the 6 March speech was put together (with the help of historian Enrique Krauze), tested on focus groups, and then presented to a large receptive crowd at the Plaza de la Revolución on the 65th anniversary of the PRI. It was no coincidence, then, that the focus of said speech, given the context and timing of its delivery, indicated a desire to move away from previous modes of governing. In the speech, we find evidence of a pledge to listen to the Mexican populace and its grievances, alongside an endeavour to eliminate corruption, coercion and impunity from the political system.[[10]](#endnote-11)

Perhaps the clearest indictment of the PRI as the possible culprit behind the killing is made via the character simply introduced in the film as ‘Don Fernando’ (Emilio Echevarría) in an important scene shared with Andrés Vázquez. In this scene, Bolado sets the agenda for the staunchest and most direct political criticism made in the film thus far. The scene begins with special investigator Bertha (Karina Gidi) and her boss Vázquez, as they arrive at the splendid offices of Don Fernando. An important member of the old guard, Don Fernando is an experienced politician, having served during the Miguel Alemán presidency (1946-1952), holding prominent positions within the government and its security offices throughout a career spanning over half a century. The character of Don Fernando is modelled on Fernando Gutiérrez Barrios, a PRI veteran who devoted most of his life to public service. During a meeting held withGutiérrez Barrios in 1994, Oppenheimer makes the following observation regarding the politician:

Pocos políticos de la vieja guardia inspiraban más temor que don Fernando Gutiérrez Barrios, la figura tenebrosa que había dirigido el aparato de inteligencia del país durante gran parte de las últimas tres décadas y que lideraba una de las camarillas políticas más poderosas del país. Don Fernando, como era conocido en el mundo político, tenía ya sesenta y siete años y había dejado su último puesto en el gobierno como secretario de Gobernación de Salinas en 1993, pero aún conservaba un lugar de primera línea en la vida política de México.

Few politicians from the old guard inspired more fear than don Fernando Gutiérrez Barrios, the tenebrous figure who had led the nation’s intelligence apparatus during most of the last three decades, and currently was chief of one of the most powerful political groups in the country. Don Fernando, as he was known in the political world, was already sixty-seven years old, and had left his last official post as Salinas’ Interior Minister in 1993; however he still maintained a prime position within Mexican political life.

(Oppenheimer 1996, 187)

In the film, Vázquez meets Don Fernando in the latter’s imposing study in order to find out more about the party’s dealings in relation to the assassination. The camera frames moments of revelations and a sense of conspiracy is achieved through close-up shots of eyes, mouths as they speak, and fingers drumming in thought. Positioned behind the aging *priísta*, we observe the framed image of Fidel Castro, recalling the veteran’s days as an intelligence officer in Mexico, and the important role he once played just before the Cuban Revolution. As Oppeheimer confirms:

La marca distintiva de Don Fernando era haber forjado estrechos vínculos con la izquierda revolucionaria latinoamericana desde el día en que, como un joven oficial de inteligencia, había interrogado a un joven rebelde cubano llamado Fidel Castro, que estaba preparando una expedición para derrocar el régimen de Fulgencio Batista en Cuba. Gutiérrez Barrios había dejado en libertad a Castro, y su encuentro original había dado lugar a una cálida amistad con el dirigente cubano después del triunfo de la revolución en 1959.

Don Fernando’s distinctive mark was having established close ties with the Latin American revolutionary left, consolidated on the day when, as a young intelligence official, he had interviewed a young rebel by the name of Fidel Castro, who at the time was planning an expedition to topple the Fulgencia Batista regime in Cuba. Gutiérrez Barrios had let Castro go free, and their initial encounter gave way to a warm friendship between the two, which continued after the triumph of the Revolution in 1959.

(Oppenheimer 1996, 188)

The use of the image of a highly influential *priísta*, such as Gutiérrez Barrios, serves to legitimize the film’s main accusations of conspiracy, whereby the character of Don Fernando makes revelations of political corruption to an increasingly uneasy Vázquez. Don Fernando outlines the trajectory of internal politicking, backstage manoeuvres and the unfolding of the events that led up to the assassination of Colosio. The response to his posed question: ‘¿Quién lo mató? Fuente Ovejuna: todos lo mataron / who killed him? Fuente Ovejuna: they all killed him’ articulates the overarching suspicion that a government-instigated assassination was committed against a wayward candidate, metaphorically conducted in the manner of Lope de Vega’s play *Fuente Ovejuna*. The apprehensions relating to a collective involvement in Colosio’s death circulated widely in the months following the event. (Rico 1994; Rotella, and Fineman 1994) These concerns grew stronger after the assassination of the PRI’s Secretary General and Salinas’s brother-in-law, Ruiz Massieu, in September of that year, where it was widely believed that responsibility for social instability lay with the PRI.[[11]](#endnote-12) On the morning of 28 September 1994, after a PRI breakfast meeting held at the Hotel Casa Blanca in central Mexico City, Massieu boarded his vehicle outside the hotel. As the politician accommodated himself in the driver’s seat, Massieu was mortally wounded in the throat by a gunman named Daniel Aguilar Treviño. This assassination is replicated in *Colosio* when ‘el Lic’ exits a hotel in the early morning and is shot through the windscreen of his car, the bullet piercing the politician’s throat and ending his life.

Don Fernando’s theory for the reason behind the Colosio assassination, moreover, ties in with the suspicions that, following Colosio’s 6 March speech, president Salinas forthwith viewed the candidate’s moves towards political independence as threatening to his legacy and power.

Bolado’s inclusion of the character of Don Fernando in the film is significant. In his book, , novelist and essayist Guillermo Samperio, , outlines an alleged meeting that took place between Colosio and the PRI veteran. During this meeting, it is alleged that an amicable conversation took place between the candidate and the veteran *priísta*. Here Gutiérrez Barrios is said to have advised Colosio to modernize and re-energize his campaign by reaching out to the Mexican public. According to Samperio, Gutiérrez Barrios counselled the candidate:

[…] se tienen que hacer a un lado las viejas fórmulas, buscar alianzas, abrir su abanico, incluir y no excluir [..] Atención especial requieren los sectores agraviados en su nivel de vida, en sus condiciones de trabajo, en su austera economía doméstica […], sin justicia social, sin compromiso con los hechos concretos, la democracia se convierte en una abstracción sin relación con el país real, con el cuerpo social, con la nación de seres de carne y hueso […] Hoy, para vencer hay que convencer, porque los votos cuentan y se cuentan.

[…] old formulas need to be placed to one side, and there needs to be a search for new alliances, an opening of the fold, include and not exclude […] Special attention needs to be paid to the aggrieved sector in terms of their quality of life, their working conditions, their austere domestic economy […] deprived of social justice, without compromising concrete events, democracy becomes abstract, without any relationship with the country or with its social corpus, with human beings […] In this day and age, one has to convince in order to win, because votes count and are counted.

(Samperio 1995, 95-96)

This statement seems to indicate that Gutiérrez Barrios’s analysis of the political pulse of the nation influenced the contents of Colosio’s definitive speech. Furthermore, Gutiérrez Barrios’s recognition that election victory was no longer achievable through electoral fraud recalls the election results of 1988, whereby an allegedcomputer failure halfway through the counting process halted proceedings, at which point Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas for the Frente Democrático Nacional (FDR) had been in the lead. Once all functionality had been restored and the computers were back in order, Salinas was leading by a 50.6% majority, the lowest in the PRI’s electoral history. In his biography ex-president Miguel de la Madrid recalled the night of the rigged elections of 1988, acknowledging the fraudulent nature of the results, and his role in the process. (Thompson 2004) After the results were announced and Salinas was declared the winner, the events of the previous night’s proceedings caused grave doubts concerning the legitimacy of Salinas’s election win. Following the 1988 election, Gutiérrez Barrios was called to serve in Salinas’s government as Secretary of the Interior at the height of diminishing public opinion. In *Colosio*, Bolado outlines what appears to be Don Fernando’s ire at having been pushed to one side once his assistance was no longer needed, Salinas’s rise in popularity having been achieved. The veteran’s bitterness over this action is what leads him to accuse the government of conspiring to assassinate Colosio, as revealed in the film, a notion that is demarcated by the multiple culprits the narrative explores.

Not convinced by the solo assassin theory, the makers of *Colosio* expand upon the original notion of multiple culprits and re-visit the idea of a plot working within the framework of the conspiracy theories in circulation, in combination with the contradictions offered by the case and articulated in the national press. Although Mario Aburto may have pulled the trigger, the intellectual mastermind behind the crime, the film argues, is the State itself. Omnipotent, anonymous, united in guilt, yet increasingly fragmented in practice, the PRI, it is asserted, manoeuvred through careful planning, the murders of both its presidential candidate and asenior politician of the standing of Ruiz Massieu. What is more, the film’s thesis lays the blame with the PRI for a number of other deaths related to the case following the assassination, alongside the continued bloodshed and increasing levels of violence. This, the film argues, constitutes the legacy left behind by 71 years of single-party rule and dictated autocracy. The projection of these ideas onto the screen, as Bolado points out, has the aim of recuperating a sense of ‘memoria histórica / historical memory’. This isa concept that both belongs to the populace, and continues to shape the modern nation and its political discourse. Or as the director puts it ‘Lo que queríamos con la cinta es rescatar esa memoria histórica que a veces hace mucha falta para ver dónde estás y hacia dónde vamos’. (Zubieta 2012, 18)

1. See, amongst others, Arriaga, Tapia, and Gisela(1994); Cortésand Cordero(1996); Samperio (1995); Quintero and Rodríguez Zárate(1994); and the documentary *El caso Colosio* (2010 dir. Alan Tomlinson). [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
2. See Preston, Julia, ‘Mexican Plot: Salinas Family, Swiss Bank and $84 Million’, *The* *New York Times* (November 25, 1995), accessed on http://www.nytimes.com/1995/11/25/world/mexican-plot-salinas-family-swiss-bank-and-84-million.html [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
3. Enrique Salinas de Gortari was the younger brother of Raul and Carlos. He was found dead in 2004. See Daviliaand Chavez (2004). [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
4. Villamil Jenaro, ‘Raúl, de la mano de Carlos, símbolo de impunidad’ *Proceso* (August 4, 2013): 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
5. See, amongst others, Aviña (2012); Jordán (2012, 11);Calderón (2012,7). [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
6. In *La lay de Herodes*, for example there is an attempt on the life of a politician standing for Governor during his campaign trail which is conducted in broad daylight. In *Conejo en la luna*, a presidential candidate, opposed to the ruling party’s allegiance with drug-dealers, is shot at point blank whilst in his car one morning, having just left a media conference. Moreover, the economic repercussions of Colosio’s assassination in 1994 are also explored in Leon Serment’s *El efecto Tequila* / *The Tequila Effect* (2010). [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
7. This can be seen in the media’s response to the event the following weeks, and in the reporters’ cries when the news broke out on the steps of the hospital in Tijuana, and which were captured on camera. Displays of mourning were also embodied in the appearance of black ribbons that were displayed, painted on, or worn in public spaces. Additionally, the same black ribbon emblem was used to frame the campaign images of the candidate, distributed all over the country, so as to reference the state of national mourning. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
8. It is well known that following her husband’s assassination Diana Laura would no longer engage in friendly dialogue with the president, refusing to answer his phone calls and rebuffing the said letter exonerating Camacho. See Quintero (1994,113). [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
9. The ‘destape’, or unveiling of the new presidential candidate, consisted of a system (no longer in place) whereby the outgoing president would introduce his chosen candidate to run for the presidency, on the eve of his last year in office. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
10. In the film Colosio prepares and delivers his speech that includes the accusatory proclamation: ‘Es la hora de cerrarle el paso al influyentismo, a la corrupción y a la impunidad / it is time to close the door on influentialism, corruption and impunity’. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
11. ‘Los mexicanos estaban recibiendo pruebas de una conspiración para matar a un político importante, y la conspiración parecía venir del epicentro mismo del partido que se preciaba de haber mantenido la estabilidad de México durante casi siete décadas.’/ ‘Mexicans were in receipt of proof of a conspiracy to kill an important politician, and the conspiracy appeared to originate from the epicenter of a party that had credited itself with having maintained stability in Mexico for nearly seven decades.’ Oppenheimer (1996, 199). [↑](#endnote-ref-12)