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Contextualizing Post-Dictatorship Argentina: Quantifying the Impact of La Dictadura and Art as a Method of Processing and Gaining Closure

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CONTEXUALIZING POST-DICTATORSHIP ARGENTINA: QUANTIFYING THE IMPACT OF LA DICTADURA AND ART AS A METHOD OF PROCESSING AND GAINING CLOSURE

by

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SUBMITTED TO SCRIPPS COLLEGE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS

PROFESSOR PARKER
PROFESSOR EDWALDS-GILBERT

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I. Introduction

Argentina’s government was in and out of periods of military occupation of the government throughout the 1900s, with a notable period of stability during Juan Perón’s time as president in the 1950’s before he was exiled to Spain. Upon his return, and his rather immediate death, his wife and vice president Isabel Perón was elected to office. This was a time when the “red scare” of communism had the Americas tight in its grasp and Peronistas developed warring factions that were either more or less socialist. With Isabel Perón’s ascension, and the changing political climate, came the start of the disappearances. The torture, forced disappearances, and deaths started in 1975, with estimates of around 100 people in that year, while Isabel Perón was still in power; that el terror started with Isabel is one of the best-known state secrets in Argentina.1 Following her failure to reignite the economy, and her weakening power as an executive, the military staged a coup that lead to the worst dictatorship in Argentina’s history, with the forced disappearance and presumed death of many Argentine citizens. What impact have la dictadura y los desaparecidos had on Argentines? I will address that impact through a historical analysis of the impact of releases of declassified documents and argue that art, especially public art, has been beneficial in assisting Argentines in commemorating los desaparecidos and moving forward through the intersection of art protest and social justice.

I start with a methods section, which will set the basis for the way in which I frame my analyses. Then I give a background of the state of affairs in Argentina prior to, during, and directly following la dictadura in addition to a discussion of how art has been used as therapy and the implications for using it with communities rather than individuals to set up my

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discussion of art. Chapter one addresses la dictadura in more depth, specifically in terms of the
U.S. involvement and the impact that the recent document releases have had in Argentina.
Chapter two is my analysis of art and the research that I completed in Argentina. This chapter
also includes a methods section that is specific to my research there. In this paper, I will show the
impact of la dictadura and art’s ability to mitigate and assist with lessening that impact.
II. Methods

Empiricism is one possible method through which to gain knowledge, and is often held contrary to rationalism, another method, in two key areas: “whether there are innate ideas and whether any propositions can be rationally justified independently of experience.” There are two basic types of Empiricism: conceptual and justificatory. Conceptual empiricism holds that there are no innate ideas because “all concepts are acquired through experience, either by introspection or by sense experience.” Conceptual empiricism arose from Locke’s disagreement with Descartes about innate ideas and knowledge; because we have senses and experience the world, we derive meaning using experience by abstraction, or using both our inner and outer senses.

Justificatory empiricism differs in that it holds that any knowledge of something’s existence that is outside of experience must be justified based on experience. This type of empiricism follows out of Socrates argument that a true belief may be correct by accident, so they must be held down, or justified, based on an “account.” It “holds that if the belief is about a real existent—an entity that exists independently of what is thought about it—it must be justified by sense experience or introspection.”

To follow this definition of empiricism in my analyses, I will use evidence that is experience-based, such as interviews, interdepartmental memos, meeting notes, and personal narratives. Using experiences of Argentines through interviews, government documents released

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3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid., 250.
from the United States, and studies performed by Argentine scholars, I will, through empiricism, analyze the potential impact of la dictadura on Argentines.
III. Background

*Argentina Antes, Durante, y Despues de la Dictadura*

The way that the history is told in Buenos Aires of the lead up to the military coup in 1976, the military began torturing civilians, or subversives, for communist leanings, calling them terrorists, and when there was no backlash from the citizens, they staged a coup to take over the government and adequately deal with the “communist problem” in addition to the more internationally recognized reason of attempting to pull Argentina out of the economic crisis it had fallen into that worsened during Isabel’s time in the executive office. Official histories say that Perón approved of the military initiating Operación Independencia, which would take army troops first to Tucumán to combat and annihilate armed guerrilla movements.

While the combating of subversives in military combat was very visible, the commencement of disappearances was surprisingly subtle. Some Argentines, mostly upper class and upper middle class Catholics, stayed relatively ignorant of disappearances—it was acknowledged that unless one knew a lot of people with leftist ideas, or specifically someone who has disappeared, they may not have been aware of what the military government was doing, other than what was portrayed through mass media. The Montaneros were one group that did speak out, both with words and violence, against la dictadura. Their warfare was the guerrilla warfare that the military government was to subdue violently and they were called a terrorist

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11 Interviews conducted in Buenos Aires, winter, 2016
organization. However, decedents of the Montaneros and scholars in Argentina today describe the Montaneros as a group of young people, most just older than university age, who wanted to start a political revolution in Argentina.\textsuperscript{12} They were young and fueled by ideals learned in University classrooms. During la dictadura, they were one group that did not just speak out against the disappearances, having many members who disappeared, but also reacted violently towards the military and police forces.\textsuperscript{13} As a result, they are a symbol of resistance that is still used in Argentina today against the police and government.

In 1976, the military enacted a coup that ousted Isabel Perón and her government in order to usher in a period of national “restructuring” that included the forced disappearance of between 9,000 and 22,000 people.\textsuperscript{14} La dictadura was characterized by wide spread terror and silence as those who spoke out against what was happening also disappeared. By 1977, thousands of Argentines had simply vanished. Argentina, however large a country it is, does not have a very large population, totaling 23,364,431 in 1970.\textsuperscript{15} At this time, there were approximately 11,746,982 people living in the Buenos Aires province (Gran Buenos Aires), which is made up of 35 “states,” one of which is Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires (referred to as Buenos Aires), where 25% of the people living in the Gran Buenos Aires province lived.\textsuperscript{16} The next largest population is in Córdoba, which is much smaller than Buenos Aires. The majority of the

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
disappearances occurred in the major cities, such as Buenos Aires and Córdoba, and those populations quickly dwindled to such a point during the dictatorship that the numbers of people disappearing dwindled due to population shortages. At this point, the junta militar gobierno needed a new reason to stay in power as they no longer had the excuse of the subversives for operating within the state of emergency. In Argentina, the lack of what was seen as a valid reason to stay in power, in addition to the lack of subversives and projected end of the national reorganization process, is the unofficial reason in Argentina for the war for the Malvinas, the Falkland Islands, against the U.K. It was only after this war was declared lost that the military hierarchy shifted and announced the decision to transition back to democracy. Unfortunately, one of the junta militar’s final acts was to destroy all evidence pertaining to military repression, including all documentation concerning the disappeared.

After Argentina returned to democracy, there were some trials for members of the military, but due to tensions between the new government and the military, the Full Stop Law, Ley de Punto Final, and the Due Obedience Law, Ley de Obidiencia Debida, were passed and limited the amount, if at all, that members of the military could be prosecuted and punished under the law. That, in addition to the lack of evidence as a result of the purging of documents at the end of la dictadura, made it challenging to convict anyone. In 1989 following two military rebellions, the newly elected president Carlos Saúl Menem issued a presidential pardon

17 Instituto de Desarrollo Económico y Social field site visit to Espacio Memoria y Derechos Humanos: Ex-ESMA, June, 2016.
18 Ibid.
20 Jelin, 123.
21 Ibid.
for military members who had been convicted and imprisoned.\textsuperscript{22} As a result of this pardon, many people escaped punishment or had their sentences rescinded. This decision was made largely out of fear; it was an attempt to appease a military that was still powerful enough to, once again, overthrow the government in an effort to avoid entering another period of terror and disappearances.\textsuperscript{23} Though some trials have occurred in recent years, for example the last of the Argentine generals who has been proven to have participated in Operation Condor in Argentina was sentenced in 2016, many people feel that justice has not been done in Argentina.\textsuperscript{24, 25} The lack of closure for many families who lost loved ones or who otherwise suffered under la dictadura in addition to the dragging out of the trials as new evidence comes to life, including the U.S. pledge to finally release classified documents concerning la dictadura in the end of 2016, has continued to have a large impact on Argentines.\textsuperscript{26}

\textit{Art as Therapy}

In the fields of psychology and therapy, many have studied and documented how art is used as a method of dealing with trauma. Art therapy has been used in mental health clinics for survivors of war and war refugees as Barbara Ann Baker studied. She especially studied how the staff at the Chicago Health Outreach used quilting with displaced members of the community to help with coping with war-related trauma and integration into a new environment where the refugees may not speak the language or be familiar with the culture. Her work showed important

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 124-5.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., 125.
\textsuperscript{25} Nunca más, xxii.
\textsuperscript{26} “Operation Condor Verdict: GUILTY!”
implications for using art therapy as a method to bridge cultural divides and for those who may not respond to, what she calls, more traditional talk therapy. There has also been significant research done by Bruce St Thomas and Paul Johnson on using expressive therapy to assist children who have experienced trauma through play, storytelling, drama, art and sculpture. Art therapy is a well-documented approach in the psychology world. Much is known about art when used in art therapy on an individual level, and used on mostly children, however, there has not been much documentation of art therapy’s broader uses, in community for example, and other uses of art, in protest and social transformation.

Both during and after la dictadura, art has been used as a form of expression, protest, and healing in Buenos Aires. The city is covered in murals, be they obviously political or not. Street art is pervasive to such an extent that there is a documentary about the walls of Buenos Aires. From murals to sculptures to street theater, Buenos Aires is teeming with collaborative art. What impact does this art have on communities in Buenos Aires? What is its place in commemorating, finding closure from, and moving forward from la dictadura?

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28 St Thomas, Bruce and Paul Johnson, “Empowering children through art and expression: Culturally sensitive ways of healing trauma and grief,” 1.
IV. Investigating the Impact of U.S. Action and Inaction on la dictadura and Post-
dictadura Argentina

The Cold War period was characterized by a U.S. military attentiveness to silencing any whisper of communism be it in the U.S. or abroad. Due to this vested interest in stopping communism at all costs, the U.S. involved itself in silently supporting and, in some cases, assisting the many dictatorships that started during this time in Latin America, especially the Southern Cone. The U.S. not only had knowledge of the planned Argentine military coup prior to March 24, 1976, when the coup took place, but has also held onto classified documents that gave evidence of Argentine military leaders’ involvement, as well as those showing U.S. tentative support of and conversations with Argentine military. The first wave of documents were declassified in 2006, with the next set declassified by Obama in August, 2016, again in December, 2016, and most recently, April 2017. Though thousands of pages of documents have been released, what the U.S. calls the Argentine Declassification Project, an 18-month program started by Obama, is still active and will continue the slow-release of documents until the end of 2017.30 The U.S. also provided military training of many of the juntas militares of the Southern Cone at the U.S. military School of the Americas in Panama, teaching about the “enemy,” communism, and how to operate within the U.S. doctrine of “national security” in order to fight off this enemy.31 Without the vested interest on behalf the U.S. of stopping communism, which was strongly connected to protecting U.S. values of capitalism and democracy, the CIA may not have influenced the Argentine SIDE (Secretaría de Inteligencia de Estado – secretariat of state

intelligence) by way of Operation Condor, which they had assisted with in Chile during Pinochet’s rise to power, into incorporating dealing with communist subversives into their clandestine activities.\textsuperscript{32} While there were other factors at play in the military coup that started the dictatorship of 1976-1983 in Argentina, the U.S. interest in eradicating communism influenced Argentina such that the new junta militar government proclaimed war against the “communist problem” and subversives as part of their Proceso de Reorganización Nacional (Process of National Reorganization), leading to the disappearance and declared death of between 10,000 and 22,000 people and longstanding effects on Argentines.\textsuperscript{33, 34}

After Argentina returned to democracy, there were some trials for members of the military, but due to tensions between the new government and the military, Ley de Punto Final, the Full Stop Law, and Ley de Obidiencia Debida, the Due Obedience Law, were passed and limited the amount, if at all, members of the military could be prosecuted and punished under the law.\textsuperscript{35} Unfortunately, in 1989 following two military rebellions, the newly elected president Carlos Saúl Menem issued a presidential pardon for the military members who had been convicted and imprisoned in an effort to appease a military that was no less powerful than when they had taken power in 1976.\textsuperscript{36} As a result of this pardon, many people escaped punishment or had their sentences rescinded. Though some trials have occurred in recent years, for example the last of the Argentine generals who has been proven to have participated in Operation Condor in Argentina was sentenced in 2015, many people feel that justice has not been done in Argentina.

\textsuperscript{32} Central Intelligence Agency, “CIA Activities in Chile,” \url{https://www.cia.gov/library/reports/general-reports-1/chile/#10}.
\textsuperscript{33} Linda et al, 11.
\textsuperscript{34} “Listas de Detenidos-Desaparecidos y Asesinados en Argentina,” 1.
\textsuperscript{35} Jelin, \textit{State Repression and the Labors of Memory}, 123.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 124-5.
The lack of closure for many families who lost loved ones or who otherwise suffered under the dictatorship in addition with the dragging out of the trials as new evidence comes to life has continued to have a large impact on Argentines.

Though there is not sufficient evidence to suggest that the U.S. knew of the military coup in Argentina prior to 1976, documents declassified by the U.S. government in 2016 show that the U.S. was well informed as to the intentions of the military leaders by February 27, 1976, a little less than a month before the coup would take place. In *The President’s Daily Brief* to President Ford on February 27, 1976, the Central Intelligence Agency informed the President that in Argentina, “the armed forces are reported ready to oust the President [Perón], perhaps as early as this weekend.”37 This was followed by a brief the next day, February 28th, confirming that the military was continuing preparations to remove Perón and was expected to do so any day.38 This presidential advisement came after a document was sent to Washington from Ambassador Hill in Argentina informing the Secretary of State that Argentine military members had approached U.S. diplomats and embassy members to not only reassure them that the Argentine military was conscious of the potential for human rights issues, unlike in Chile, but also to ask for advice on how to proceed should they have to perform executions of terrorists.39 This missive, which detailed events that happened on February 13, 1976 and also commented on the encouraging nature of the Argentine military’s approach to human rights issues, may have contributed to the suggestions by Hill to the U.S. Department of State to encourage the Junta while not becoming overly identified with it.

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[Videla] has a chance of pulling Argentina together again, stopping terrorism and getting the economy going. His [government], moreover, has promised to solve quickly our various investment problems (Exxon, Chase Manhattan, Standard Electric, etc.) and to bring about a better climate in general for foreign investment.\(^{40}\)

In this telegram to the Department of State sent on March 29, 1976, Ambassador Hill not only supported General Videla’s junta government using pro-U.S. economic arguments, but also through anti-communist and pro-human rights arguments. The military in Argentina was known by this time in their history to execute coups, or execute leaders, that they did not find effective. As a result, there had “been fears that hardline commanders in the field might exceed their order [during the coup] and arbitrarily shoot or arrest any labor leader…[however,] Videla and his moderate colleagues kept the hawks in line.”\(^{41}\) In combination with the military’s seeming consciousness of the potential for human rights issues and their assurances that they did not want problems with the U.S., the U.S. was prepared to be cautiously optimistic about the Argentine military occupation.

Unfortunately, this optimism did not last. On September 9, 1977, about a year and five months after the military coup, President Carter met with President Videla to discuss the charges of human rights violations against Argentina. Groups in Washington were pressuring the U.S. President to take a stand and had provided a list of about 3,000 people who were being detained “without public notice of their arrest or charges against them.”\(^{42}\) While the situation would have perhaps been easier if the U.S. did not want to keep Argentina as an ally, it was important for U.S. interests in the Southern Cone and Latin America to have Argentina. The U.S. needed

\(^{40}\) Amb. BUENOS AIRES to Secstate WASHDC, March 29, 1976, Argentina Project Declassification, 6-7.

\(^{41}\) Ibid., 3-4.

\(^{42}\) President Lt. James Earl Carter to President Lt. General Jorge Rafael Videla, September 9, 1977, Argentina Project Declassification, 2-3.
Argentina to sign the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which would “provide unrestricted use of nuclear energy for power but no introduction of nuclear explosives” to hemispheric countries. While Chile and Paraguay were committed to signing, they refused to do so without Argentina signing first. Argentina was the only country that had not yet committed to signing at this time. The U.S. was eager to avoid nuclear weapons programs in Latin America and the Southern Cone and therefore needed to remain on good terms with Argentina long enough for them to sign. The language that President Carter employed when talking about the issue of human rights violations shows this. The U.S. was walking a careful line between courting Argentina to sign the treaty and withdrawing their support as a result of the human rights violations. As such, President Carter “acknowledged [to President Videla] that some of these [human rights] allegations may be false or exaggerated…but he felt that more progress in this area would be welcome.” While President Videla was “most reluctant to give a date, [he] hoped and wished the problems of the detainees might be resolved by Christmas 1977,” and reprimanded President Carter saying that “all wars have their undesirable consequences” and Argentina was no exception. Videla did, however, stress his continuing dedication to protecting human rights and efforts to get the more blatant abuses of power under control. While this may have sufficed had the situation in Argentina improved, it did not and by 1979 Argentina was coming under major pressure from non-governmental human rights organizations, international groups, and governments to stop the human rights violations that were rumored to be happening under the military government. The ‘dirty war’ argument so frequently employed by Argentines to rationalize human rights abuses is no longer relevant. According to estimates drafted by the Argentine Federal Security Service in late 1978, there were only about 400 active terrorists in

43 Ibid., 2.
44 Ibid., 3.
Argentina…and no group was judged a serious and immediate security threat…the ‘war’ is over, i.e., there is no continuing high-level internal security threat. The explanation for the continuing human rights abuses lies in armed forces, and especially army, politics rather than in internal security problems…

In response, in August 1979 Argentina announced that it had invited a visit by the Inter-American Human Rights Commission, part of the Organization of American States, (OAS) to show that they had been addressing the human rights issue. They claimed that disappearances had declined from the 55 per month average in 1978 to just 13 between February 1st and May 13th of 1979. The visit was set for September, prior to which, in April, the OAS met and held an early election for the commission, giving the reason in an “Evening Report” to the National Security Council that “such an election will permit someone other than a hard line Brazilian to lead the Commission in its visit to Argentina” with the hope that the visit would go well and some of the pressure being put on Argentina would decrease, allowing the U.S. to focus on other aspects of their relationship. In a later “Evening Report”, National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski was encouraged to press the Argentines on an accounting of the disappearances and was given the following statistic: “659 Argentine soldiers or police were killed [during the civil war] (according to GOA, [government of Argentina,] sources) and 10-15,000 civilians.” This estimate was supported by a memorandum from the U.S. Embassy officer in charge of human rights, F. Allen Harris, that was sent on December 28, 1978 to the Department of State in which he informed the Department of State that a “senior army official had informed the [Nunciature First Secretary Kevin Mullen] that the armed services had been forced to ‘take care of’ 15,000

47 Department of State, “Briefing Paper Argentina,” August 1979, 1.
48 Latin America/Caribbean to Zbigniew Brzezinski, April 11, 1979, 1.
49 Latin America/Caribbean to Zbigniew Brzezinski, May 8, 1979, 1.
persons in its anti-subversion campaign.”⁵⁰ Interestingly, official reports filed by the Argentine government as well as those filed to human rights organizations only showed 4,780 reported disappearances from 1976 to November 1978.⁵¹

Unfortunately, by 1980 U.S.-Argentine relations were strained by the constant pressure on the Argentines to provide an accounting of the disappeared and to stop the human rights violations; pressure that did not seem to be enough incentive or encouragement for the situation in Argentina to adequately improve. As part of Argentina’s quest to improve their economy, one of the publicized reasons for the military occupation, Argentina reached out to the USSR in an effort to increase grain exports. While the U.S. was not very concerned about the development of closer ties between Argentina and the Soviet Union due to the clash of political rhetoric between the two, the U.S. was apprehensive that it would lose Brazil, where communism was gaining a slight foothold, and of the potential for losing Argentina should Brazil move towards communism and influence Argentina to do the same. As a result, at the Policy Review Committee Meeting of the National Security Council on May 14, 1980, it was decided that there was no need to “gratuitously offend Argentina on human rights” and that the U.S. needed to find “ways of rewarding improvement in [Argentina’s] behavior...[while keeping] the overall credibility of [the U.S.’s] policy in mind and should not trade off human rights concerns against loosening of [Argentina’s] Soviet ties or a cutback in grain sales.”⁵² It was also noted that Argentina has greatly improved in terms of human rights violations, though there were some still taking place and that “they have probably killed most of the people that they wanted to kill [and as a result,] there are now fewer political prisoners and in some instances the rule of law is being

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⁵⁰ F. Allen Harris to Department of State, December 27, 1978, 1.
⁵¹ Ibid.
followed better.” This signified a shift in U.S. foreign policy with regards to Argentina and the approach the U.S. took in respect to the human rights violations. While the Policy Review Committee decided that there was still a need for an accounting of the disappeared, human rights violations would no longer be the focus of their approach to Argentina.

The decline of the military government in Argentina began in March of 1981 when General Roberto Eduardo Viola replaced General Lt. Jorge Rafael Videla as president, only to be usurped by General Reynaldo Bignone in July of 1982, which occurred shortly after the brief invasion of the Malvinas, the Falkland Islands, and resulting war with the United Kingdom. At this time, the military government “announced that it would oversee the return to democratically elected government.” In addition, they also “lifted the ban on political activity, gradually removed restrictions on the press, relaxed constraints on trade union activity, released or remanded for trial all political prisoners, and sharply reduced the number of human rights violations committed by the security forces.” The U.S. Department of State was happy to note that this government, unlike Videla’s, seemed to follow through on its promises, as democratic elections did occur on October 30, 1983 ending the dictatorship, though not before the junta militar ensured that there would be no “satisfactory accounting” nor accountability for the disappeared.

Though the dictatorship officially ended in 1983 signaling a return to democracy, all was not well in Argentina. Before leaving office, the military Junta passed four acts that impacted

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53 Ibid., 2.
54 Ibid., 2.
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid., 8.
how the perpetrators of the dictatorship could, or could not, be tried for their crimes. In April of 1983, the military government passed the Documento Final (Final Document) and the Acta Institucional (Institutional Act), which made it so that all military operations were not subject to punishment. A mere two weeks before the election in October, the government sanctioned the Ley de Pacificación Nacional (Law of National Pacification, or Law of Self-Amnesty as it came to be known), “which granted immunity to suspects of acts of state terrorism, as well as to all members of the Armed Forces, for crimes committed between May 25, 1973, and June 17, 1982.” The last thing that the military government did was sanction a decree “ordering the destruction of documents pertaining to military repression.” This decree not only destroyed evidence that would have been useful during the trials that occurred during the first part of Raúl Alfonsín’s presidency, but also all documentation about the identities of los desaparecidos y los personas que desaparecieron. As a result, all records that could have verified the number of disappeared persons during la dictadura, and that could have provided closure for the families of the disappeared, were gone and the disappeared remained disappeared. It is only through a report given to the Chilean intelligence organization DINA in 1978 by one of their operatives stationed in Argentina with the Army Intelligence Battalion 601 that there is any remotely close estimate. In the report, Enrique Arancibia Clavel, who went by the pseudonym Luis Felipe Alemparte Diaz, stated that the Argentine government records he examined estimated that around 22,000 people had died and/or disappeared between 1975 and mid-July 1978, a number that is much higher than any official estimate released by the Argentine government or by human rights

59 Acuña and Smulovitz, 16.
60 Ibid.
61 Ibid.
organizations investigating the disappearances. His report also included names of subversives who had been killed accompanied by the dates of death and a promise to send more than the initial 54 names at a later date. Unfortunately, if he did send a later report, it has not been uncovered.

Clavel was stationed in Argentina as part of “Operation Condor;” a “formal cooperative agreement in which states agreed to exchange information, technical aid, and, ultimately, political prisoners…[as well as to create] ‘hit squads’ to take out enemies of the regimes party to the agreement.” The countries that made up this agreement were “Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay.” Operation Condor started in Chile. Prior to Pinochet’s regime, the CIA had been liaising with Chilean Security Services in order to gather information, propagate propaganda, and carry out assassinations in the U.S. interest. After the failure of propaganda in 1970 to weaken the Popular Unity coalition, it was clear that Allende would be the leading candidate in the Presidential election, which was contrary to U.S. interests, leading to the order by President Nixon to prevent Allende from coming to power. Unfortunately, efforts by the U.S., such as the assassination of Schneider, the Chilean Army’s Commander, did not stop Allende from winning the Presidential election. The CIA gained authorization to provide support for the encouragement of the military into the cabinet and to increase support for opposition political parties, leading to General Augusto Pinochet’s succession as Army Commander and to

63 Ibid., 6-8.
64 Slack, 494-5.
65 Carter Reports, “Counterterrorism in the Southern Cone,” May 9, 1977, 39.
66 Central Intelligence Agency, “CIA Activities in Chile,” 1.
67 Ibid.
the eventual coup. The CIA did not provide support in Chile during the coup; their orders were to engage strictly in intelligence gathering, and they terminated covert action plans in Chile by June 1974, and only continued with liaison relationships for intelligence gathering purposes. Their legacy in Chile was the Operation Condor network that they helped DINA start to build.

In Argentina, both the SIDE (Secretaría de Inteligencia de Estado—State Intelligence Secretariat) and the SIE (Servicio de Inteligencia del Ejército—Army Intelligence Service) coordinated with Chile’s DINA (Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional—National Intelligence Directorate) for Operation Condor.

State Intelligence Secretariat (SIDE)…serves as central repository for internal/external intelligence…directly responsible to the President. Army Intelligence Service (SIE)…reports directly to Army General Staff and Ministry of Defense…its staff is the largest in the military services…all intelligence is reported to the Military Intelligence Collection Center (CRIM)—formerly the 601st Army battalion—which has responsibility for processing the information.

Though it was purportedly the Navy Intelligence Service (Servicio de Inteligencia Naval—SIN) that had the worst record of human rights abuses during the dictatorship, the SIDE and SIE, both of which reported either directly to the President, the Ministry of Defense, or to Army General Staff, were reporting to the Army branch of the government. When the coup ousted Perón, Videla divided power amongst the Army, Navy, and Air Force in accordance with the three preexisting branches of state. Both clandestine services responsible for high numbers of disappeared peoples reported to the Army directly, which was at that point controlling the

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68 Ibid.
69 Ibid.
71 Ibid.
72 Ibid.
executive branch, and therefore President Videla directly. This indicates that, contrary to his claims, Videla knew, at least to some extent, what was happening with the disappearances.

For Argentines, la dictadura was a time of fear and repression. Though there were some groups who protested the disappearances without much retaliation, many who dared to speak out disappeared. As a result, Argentines learned to, in some respects, turn a blind eye to what was happening in order to not have it happen to them.\textsuperscript{73} When disappeared were released, which not many were, they knew that if they did not keep silent, their lives would be forfeit, though probably not until after they were tortured again, and worse than they had been during their previous tenure in a clandestine center.\textsuperscript{74} While the U.S. government focused on reportable human rights violations, specifically the disappeared who were classified as PEN (solely political) prisoners and who were held in prisons, there was another class of people who were disappeared. This group was kept in clandestine centers, unaware of where they were; they were tortured; and depending on what came out during their torture sessions, they would be released and sent to a new place to live or they would be transferred. Mrs. Falicoff describe the “transfer” process as part of her testimony on behalf of her husband:

> In early December, a transfer occurred. Apparently they were taking away those who had been there the longest; however, they included among them the lawyer who was next to me; in all, some 40 persons. They adjusted the handcuffs, the shackles and the hoods. They assembled them together, were taking them out when the noise of an airplane was heard that seemed to be landing nearby… After a time, the sound of an airplane was heard again, then nothing more. A guard asked another where they were being taken, and he answered: “Fishfood”\textsuperscript{75}

\textsuperscript{73} Interviews conducted in Buenos Aires, winter, 2016.
\textsuperscript{74} Instituto de Desarrollo Económico y Social field site visit to Espacio Memoria y Derechos Humanos: Ex-ESMA, Buenos Aires, Argentina, June, 2016.
\textsuperscript{75} Jonathan Silverstone to Charles Paolillo, July 3, 1980, 8.
What the guard is alluding to are the infamous “flights” where the group getting “transferred” would be dosed with drugs, taken on an airplane, and dumped out over the Rio de la Plata. Thousands of bodies were dumped and, nearly 35 years after the transition to democracy from la dictadura, there are still unidentified remains. Due to the nature of the transfers, and the lack of official documentation of disappeared persons, there are many families who do not have closure and have never found out what happened to their loved ones. These are the survivors of the dictatorship.

For many of these families, there is still no closure. There are no true graves to visit, and many bodies were never recovered. The desaparecidos are still disappeared. With new evidence, the generals, and other people who were in power during la dictadura, have been convicted, however, this has taken decades and has had the consequence of not allowing Argentines to heal. There are, however, methods that different communities have used in order to commemorate los desaparecidos and venues that the government of Argentina has dedicated to the catch-phrase of post-dictadura Argentina: “nunca más.”

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76 Nunca Más, 225-33.
77 Interviews conducted in Buenos Aires, winter, 2016.
78 Ibid.
V. Partnerships Between Com memorations and Protest: An Investigation into the Use of Art by Communities in Buenos Aires and Córdoba

When preparing to conduct research in Argentina this past winter, I started with the question of how communities in Buenos Aires have healed from la dictadura, especially considering what I had learned about los desaparecidos. I was interested in investigating how communal healing and community building through art, similar to Martha Gonzalez’s Fandango project, which uses “fandango to build and transform community…[through] protocols within dance, music, verse, and participation, [which] provide new channels of communication, connection, and understanding,” was used in Buenos Aires, which I knew to be a city with a long history of street art. Though I started my research process with a strong emphasis on communal healing, my research changed while I was in Argentina. As I explored Buenos Aires, visited sites, experienced the art of the city, and conducted interviews, I found that my research shifted in accordance with the art and people I interacted with. While how healing from la dictadura happens in communities and for individuals was still a prevalent and important part of my investigation, I found myself focusing more on concepts of memory, what it means to remember and to forget, and where those intersect with protest and art rather than healing.

Methodology for Research

My research was conducted through a mix of interviews, with individuals and organizations, and site visits. The participants for interviews were asked to answer interview questions concerning the method of art, specifically street art, as protest and a venue through which to engage in discussion and healing in their community. They were also invited to make

79 The Seattle Fandango Project, 1.
I had planned on conducting interviews with participants who I could approach in public without prior introduction, however, once I arrived in Buenos Aires, I found that there was a cultural barrier to conducting interviews in that manner and it made people very uncomfortable. As a result of this, my method for conducting research had to change.

I had more planned interviews than I had anticipated and my interview structure also changed based on the participant and whether they were an individual participant or an artist, member of an organization, or intellectual. I had to rely a lot more on brief conversations with friends of friends rather than the, admittedly still rather brief, five-minute maximum interviews I had planned on holding out in the city with strangers. I was exposed to groups that I had not thought I would be able to meet and spend time with, such as Elizabeth Jelin, a renowned scholar in Argentina, who I quote from her work on memory and la dictadura in my earlier chapters. The interview questions though they changed, were all still generally centered around art, specifically street art, though because the questions I had formed prior to going to Argentina were written with the assumption that I would be interviewing random people in front of a specific piece of art, I had to adjust my questions to be more broad as I adjusted my interview style. I also would adjust my question set based on the participant and their realms of knowledge and experience. Though that adjustment may seem to be arbitrary, it was led by the participant and where they wanted the interview to go in addition to what they felt comfortable sharing. My interviews were still centered around art, and I did ask participants about their connection to street art, their thoughts about it, if they think it has an impact and if so, what that impact is, in

Elizabeth Jelin gave permission for her name/interview to be used in association with her name as her work ties very closely into her interview content.
addition to questions about why the art is or is not a useful form of expression and protest, and how the art is or is not able to transcend time with respect to art that is about la dictadura in relation to art that touches on the current administration or current communal impacts.

I was very lucky to have made connections with artists and local intellectuals who not only let me interview them, but also were happy to introduce me to their friends and colleagues for more interviews, which is how I connected with Elizabeth Jelin. Some of these interviews I combined with a site visit, and in the locations where these overlapped I ensured that the organizations and artists that I spoke with were amendable to potentially having their responses/stories associated with their organization name. I have not had issues with keeping my participants anonymous—the permission gained was mostly only an issue for site visits with artists who spoke with me about their personal art; otherwise I made an effort to avoid including any personal information in my analysis of interview responses and even in my minutes of the interview. As required by The Institutional Review Board, I will not, in the duration of my analysis and discussion, disclose any sensitive material pertaining to individual participants and will attempt to speak in generalities when able.

The people who I interviewed came from diverse demographics and backgrounds including recent immigrants to Buenos Aires, upper-middle class Catholics, artists, professors, researchers, college students, activists, community organizers, memorial site tour guides and more. By the end of my time in Buenos Aires and Córdoba, where I went for a week to interview some artist connections and have a site visit with a women’s collective called La Colectiva, I had conducted interviews, participated in conversations, and visited with, in total, around 75 people and organizations. Though at first glance this number is not particularly large, it does include organizations, which I counted as one interview even though often those interviews encompassed
multiple people’s experiences as there was often a spokesperson for the organization who would speak with me. I made a point to interview a broad range of people with, or without art experience and/or memory expertise. Though some people did not seem to be as impacted by art, either because they lived in a part of the city that did not have as much exposure street art, or because, as some admitted, they didn’t pay attention to the art around them, the majority had an opinion about the art around the city, and those opinions were overwhelmingly positive. Others did not have strong opinions about concepts of memory, commemoration, and healing from la dictadura, either because they were more focused on the injustices in the present, or because they were not as impacted by the events of and following la dictadura and therefore felt that it was time Argentina moved on.\textsuperscript{81} However, for some la dictadura is still a sensitive topic, especially for those who I interviewed who had a loved one who desaparció. I had to be careful and sensitive to how much participants were willing to share, and found that artists and community organizers, especially those who had lost someone, were the most willing to share their thoughts, opinions and experiences.\textsuperscript{82} For my analysis of how art is used, I use my own experiences of the art I encountered in Buenos Aires in conjunction with interviews and sources concerning art and memory in Argentina.

\textit{Encuentros con el Arte de Buenos Aires y Córdoba}

During my time in Buenos Aires, I found many diverse ways that art is used. El Parque de la Memoria (Memorial Park), one site that I visited where I was able to speak with the artist of one of the sculptures, is a government-sanctioned and funded sculpture park and memorial site

\textsuperscript{81} Interviews conducted in Buenos Aires, winter, 2016.
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid.
that was built for the sole purpose of commemorating los desaparecidos. In el Parque, there are multiple sculptures dedicated to los desaparecidos, the pain of la dictadura, the “official” history of la dictadura, and the families of los desaparecidos. There are many pieces in el Parque, but I will focus on the one below.

Fig. 1: Photos by Reilly Anderson of Nicolás Guagnini, Unentitled, photo painted on posts, el Parque de la Memoria, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Left: front of sculpture, Right: back of sculpture.

When I first saw this sculpture, I was intrigued by the way in which the artist broke up the photo of his father in order to make a two-dimensional image three-dimensional. As I walked around the sculpture, the father’s face started to shift until there were many partial faces, and many desaparecidos, yet even they slowly faded out of existence as I reached the back of the sculpture where none of the photo is visible. I found that as I walked around the sculpture, the father shifted perfectly from one, to many, to none.

83 El Parque de la Memoria site visit, June, 2016.
84 Ibid.
The photo could have been taken of anyone, or a group of someone’s, as it moves fluidly with the wandering eye of the observer. Like the statistics on the number of desaparecidos, which is constantly changing, never truly known, the faces in the sculpture disappear, reappear, and blend into one, making this sculpture a fitting metaphor for the desaparecidos. This was especially true for me in relation to the monument with all of the names of the known desaparecidos. Whereas one showed names, birthdates, desaparecido dates, and death dates (if known), Unentitled retains that aspect of los desaparecidos that is unknown and represents the unknown disappeared—the names that are not represented on the gravestone-like monument next to it.\textsuperscript{86} The artist, Nicolás Guagnini, had a different idea in mind when he took the photo of his desaparecido father and made a sculpture with it.

For Guagnini, Unentitled is a discussion of memory. This discussion is two-fold; the first part of it is about personal recollections and the faulty nature of memory. Personal recollections of their loved one is very important for the children and relatives of the desaparecidos, claims Guagnini.\textsuperscript{87} He feels that this sculpture reflects his personal experience with memory and a father who desapareció: la memoria es como ver una foto de alguien muy claramente cuando estás a su alrededor y luego, después de su padre desaparecido, la imagen obtiene menos clara hasta que no pueden ser lo que parecen.\textsuperscript{88} Through the process of breaking up the photo of his father, and walking around the sculpture as the photo shifts from vantage point to vantage point, Guagnini explores how memories fade; how, little by little, the memory you have of your desapareció

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{86} El Parque de la Memoria site visit, June, 2016.
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{88} Interviews conducted in Buenos Aires, winter, 2016. Translation by author: “memory is like seeing a photo of someone very clearly when you are around them, then after your father disappears, the image gets less clear until the image cannot be what it seems—it is unrecognizable.”
\end{flushleft}
loved one becomes less clear until the image, too, has disappeared.\textsuperscript{89} It is also a sculpture that is in defiance to memory and the way that memory operates. It stands, commemorating the desaparecidos, even when they have disappeared from the memory of their families. The desaparecidos disappear not only in the way that is evident by their label as desaparecidos, but also from memory.\textsuperscript{90}

Unentitled is also, more broadly, a sculpture for remembering the desaparecidos and la dictadura, in conjunction with the idea of nunca más.\textsuperscript{91} It is a commonly held opinion that it is important to remember what happened so that it never happens again, which is the meaning behind the phrase “nunca más” to Argentines.\textsuperscript{92} The theme of “nunca más” was prevalent throughout el Parque and had the effect of emphasizing the importance of remembering and providing a space where people can remember that will also serve to remind people of the fate of los desaparecidos and the lives that were lost too soon.\textsuperscript{93} In el Parque, there is a combination of sculptures recounting the history of la dictadura, commemorating the lives lost, and showing the brutality of la dictadura in such a way as to assert that, “nosotros no podemos permitir que esto vuelva a suceder.”\textsuperscript{94}

Whereas many people think that it is important to be reminded that something like la dictadura can never happen again, others, especially those who lost a loved one, find that remembrance brings nothing but constant pain that it is challenging at best to recover from.\textsuperscript{95} Many children of the desaparecidos grew up without a parent or lost a parent during their youth.

\textsuperscript{89} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{90} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{91} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{92} El Parque de la Memoria site visit, June, 2016.
\textsuperscript{93} Interviews conducted in Buenos Aires, winter, 2016.
\textsuperscript{94} Ibid., Translation by author: “we cannot let this happen again”.
\textsuperscript{95} Ibid.
and try to find ways to adequately remember and engage with the memory of their loved one.

While some feel comfortable expressing their loss through documentaries, photographic projects, or song, others do not feel comfortable emerging themselves in painful memories in that way. For those who need a place to weep or a place to morn, el Parque is a sanctuary and a graveyard. Many people are still suffering from loss and the sculptures in the park are one venue through which that pain represented, through being interlaced with memory.

Other cities in Argentina also have official means through which they commemorate los desaparecidos. In Córdoba, banners are put out every Thursday in honor of los desaparecidos from the province of Córdoba. All of the known desaparecidos are represented through photos and short life stories that are hung between the main cathedral and the government archive, el

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96 Ibid.
97 El Parque de la Memoria site visit, June, 2016.
Comisión Provincial de la Memoria de Córdoba, which holds all of the evidence that was not burned from la dictadura. The archive also functions as a center for education about la dictadura, current politics and the state of the government, in a memorial effort similar to the way in which el Parque de la Memoria functioned as a site for “nunca más.” In this way, the government in Córdoba has worked to commemorate los desaparecidos and ensure that what the military did is visible. Their work to create links between la dictadura and current politics and educate visitors about those links also function as a method through which to hold the government accountable for its actions, again, so that la dictadura does not occur again.

Art Practices in the City: Comparing Muralismo Nómade en Resistencia and Meeting of Styles

Buenos Aires is covered in murals, some of which were painted by a group that I interviewed and did a site visit with. Muralismo Nómade en Resistencia is an artist-activist group that works in solidarity with communities around and outside of Buenos Aires. When they work with communities, everything that they do is based around what the community needs and wants. For example, they worked with a community where one of their members had been assaulted and killed by a militant. This was a horrifying experience for the community and they wanted to create a mural about the experience to honor the woman who died and show that they will stand against and do not condone violence. Muralismo Nómade en Resistencia assisted this community with designing and painting a mural that the community members felt honored

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99 Instituto de Desarrollo Económico y Social field site visit to Comisión Provincial de la Memoria de Córdoba, Argentina, June, 2016.
100 Ibid.
101 Ibid.
102 Instituto de Desarrollo Económico y Social field site visit to Muralismo Nómade en Resistencia, Buenos Aires, Argentina, July, 2016.
103 Interviews conducted in Buenos Aires, winter, 2016.
their vision and adequately commemorated what had happened to their community member in such a way that their opposition to and abhorrence of violence would be clear.\textsuperscript{104} This mural was painted in different locations across the community with the words: “Nos organizamos contra las violencias…no estamos solas” as shown in Fig. 3.\textsuperscript{105} Other versions of the mural changed “no estamos solas” to “no estas sola,” meaning you are not alone.\textsuperscript{106}

Fig. 3: Photo by Muralismo Nómade en Resistencia, Mural sobre La Mujer, paint on cement, Buenos Aires, Argentina.\textsuperscript{107}

All versions of the mural were in solidarity with the woman who was killed and were meant to send a message that violence is unacceptable. The visibility encourages recognition, discussion, and change within the community as more people learn, discuss, and admit to wanting change. The murals, however, do serve another role in regards to visibility—often events like the one this

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{105} Muralismo Nómade en Resistencia site visit, July, 2016. Translation by author: “We organize against violence; we are not alone.”
\textsuperscript{106} Ibid.
mural is based on are covered up, or are attempted to be covered up, by the government.\textsuperscript{108} By painting a mural in a public place and raising public awareness, Muralismo Nómade en Resistencia also helps to ensure that such events are not covered up.

During la dictadura, organizations like Muralismo Nómade en Resistencia and the artists who are a part of it were some of the few who dared to speak out against la dictadura, and they did so through the same type of mural art that Muralismo Nómade en Resistencia is involved in now.\textsuperscript{109} Though the dictatorship ended in 1983, murals have gotten no less political with regards to the government and as recently as 2013. Following the primary dictator during la dictadura, Jorge Rafael Videla’s, death in prison on May 17\textsuperscript{th}, 2013, new political stencils (Fig. 4) popped up around the city with the statement “Videla no tiene entidad. No esta vivo ni muerto” on a blank-face Videla.\textsuperscript{110} The dictator famously defended his actions during la dictadura to his grave and also refused to release any information about los desaparecidos after la dictadura ended.\textsuperscript{111} As a result, there were some mixed feelings about his passing—Argentines expressed happiness that he met his end in prison, justice having been served in that case unlike some military leaders who were pardoned until recently, but also frustration that he died before giving any closure to the families who have heard nothing about their desaparecido and who are still impacted by la dictadura years after its end.\textsuperscript{112}

Fig. 4: Nazza Stencil, Videla No Esta Vivo Ni Muerto, stencil, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2013.\textsuperscript{113}

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[108]{Muralismo Nómade en Resistencia site visit, July, 2016.}
\footnotetext[109]{White Walls Say Nothing – Art and Activism in the Streets of Buenos Aires, documentary.}
\footnotetext[110]{Bridget Gleeson, “Buenos Aires’ past, as told through street art,” BBC, 28 May 2013, 1.}
\footnotetext[111]{Ibid.}
\footnotetext[112]{Ibid.}
\footnotetext[113]{Nazza Stencil “Videal No Esta Vivo Ni Muerto,” (photograph), fall 2013.}
\end{footnotes}
Another example of a political mural that was painted more recently is shown in Figures 5 and 6. This mural was painted in 2011 by an artist, Blu, who is a part of the Buenos Aires Street Art group and was still in Monserrat, albeit slightly altered by another artist, in 2016. Blu paints a large crowd of white figures, all with scarves covering their eyes, with a dark figure in the distance, standing dominant over the crowd, wearing the presidential sash. There are two popular analyses of the meaning behind this work. The first is that Blu was commenting on the blindness of many citizens towards the disappearances during the dictatorship, especially by the upper and upper-middle class, and by bringing the figures into the present, showing how the state still controls what people see and think, prompting the question of how much has actually changed since Argentina’s return to democracy. Another interpretation is that Blu’s piece, as an eye grabbing, demanding mural that asks the viewer to think, is exposing the state and engaging in a breaking of the hegemony surrounding the semiocratic institution—by demanding

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114 Site Visit to Monserrat, Barracas, and la Boca, Buenos Aires, Argentina, July, 2016.
115 Interviews conducted in Buenos Aires, winter, 2016.
a reaction that is reflective through the mural’s blatant politics, it impacts the power relations inherent in meaning and encourages the viewer to think critically about, in this case, the state and the policies that the executive branch, signified by the presidential sash, act out on citizens of Argentina.  

Fig. 5: Blu, Blu en Monserrat, photo of a mural done with paint on cement, Monserrat, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2011.

Fig. 6: Reilly J. Anderson, Mural Con Bufandas, photo of mural of paint on cement, Monserrat, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2016.

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117 Blu from Buenos Aires Street Art “Blu in Monserrat,” (photograph), spring 2011.

Though over the years the paint has faded somewhat, Blu’s mural is still visible in Monserrat; the figure in black is a little harder to see, but is still imposing. The main difference between the two is the single face that has been unveiled, with a mixed look of surprise, shock, and horror (Fig. 6.). It is interesting to note that the artist who changed Blu’s mural also added an artist, spraying paint, who is responsible for the lifted scarf. This adds new meaning to the mural; do artists, then, have the power to subvert the government brainwashing through their work that forces the populace to think? Many of the artists who I interviewed would say “yes”—especially artists from Muralismo Nómade en Resistencia who always try to expose truths and stand in solidarity with the communities they work with.\footnote{Interviews conducted in Buenos Aires, winter, 2016.}

In contrast to the work of Muralismo Nómades en Resistencia, the murals in Barracas, a barrio in Buenos Aires, are all the work of international artists who were invited to attend a
festival called “Meeting of Styles” and paint in Barracas.¹²₀ Most of the murals were simply what
the artist was interested in painting, while others were intentional about their potential audience
and chose carefully what to paint. Entities of Peru, a group from Peru, painted what they called
Entesypesimo (Fig. 7).¹²¹

Fig. 7. Reilly J. Anderson, Entities of Peru, Entesypesimo, photograph of mural, paint on cement,
La Boca, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2016.

Their intention with this mural was to show the pain and struggle of immigrants in their path to a
new place to call home. The man represented the trans-Atlantic slave trade and how many people
were displaced as a result of the trade while the surrounding water was to show that immigration
has happened over water and largely still does. They meant for this piece to reflect on past

¹²₀ Barracas Murales de Meeting of Styles site visit, July, 2016.
¹²¹ Ibid.
immigration struggles in order to contextualize current ones.\textsuperscript{122} The idea behind Meeting of Styles is for artists to gather from all over the world and share their art with each other in another country; as such, it is very internationally-focused as opposed to locally, like the other political murals.\textsuperscript{123}

Los murales en Barracas son impresionantes obras de arte y son fascinantes para mirar. Sin embargo, los murales de los colectivo en Muralismo Nómade Resistencia hacen un mejor trabajo de hacer una declaración política o social. Destacan su relativa simplicidad y representación clara de los problemas de la comunidad que se pintaron hace les. Son un claro ejemplo del arte de protesta y desafío al espectador a pensar y lo que la imagen de muestra o habla sobre la investigación. Como tal es mi opinión que son el mejor conducto para el cambio social en comparación con los murales en Barracas.

\textit{Communal Art In Summation}

The final form of art that I researched is Teatro Popular, which started in Buenos Aires just after the dictatorship ended.\textsuperscript{124} It is different from other types of theater because it is not a show in the traditional sense; it is a community, a group of neighbors, coming together in order to act out a theme or event pertaining to their community.\textsuperscript{125} This could be simply expressing daily life, a violent event that happened in their community, or how politics affect their community.\textsuperscript{126} One of the older groups that performs Teatro Popular is called Catalina Sur and they are from La Boca, one of the more impoverished neighborhoods in Buenos Aires. While I

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{122} Interviews conducted in Buenos Aires, winter, 2016.
  \item \textsuperscript{123} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{124} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{125} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{126} Instituto de Desarrollo Económico y Social field site visit to Catalina Sur, La Boca, Buenos Aires, Argentina, July, 2016.
\end{itemize}
was in Buenos Aires, I was able to watch a play put on by Catalina Sur about how the dictatorship and the events that preceded and followed impacted their community. It was incredible to see the story told from a perspective other than that of the government, who tell an official story, and from a community’s point of view. The production was not only incredibly political and opinionated; it was also very heartfelt and honest.  

Teatro Popular is more contested than murals because of how visible and personal it is; there’s no room for anonymity.  

While the majority of community members support Teatro Popular, if their community has a group, there are those who do not and are not afraid to act out against it, usually by targeting community members who perform with petty theft and house burglaries during productions.  

Though there are those who are against Teatro Popular, overall it is a very popular form of communal art and is seen as a good venue through which to protest and express discontent by community members.  

\footnote{Ibid.}  

\footnote{Ibid.}  

\footnote{Interviews conducted in Buenos Aires, winter, 2016.}  

\footnote{Ibid.}
When interviewing locals, the majority were of the opinion that murals and other forms of protest art, such as Teatro Popular, are great for the city. The only concern about murals was the impact that some of them may have on tourism, as some people do not like murals or protest art, especially when the murals are painted near more expensive places that may suffer from being connected to political protests. There was also a sense that protest art and community art, including murals and Teatro Popular, are for poor people to protest against rich people. This statement, classist as it is, does have some truth to it. Much of the art in Buenos Aires is protesting conditions of the poor as well as the classism that is rampant throughout the society and the violence involved in that classism. From murals to stencils to Teatro Popular,

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132 Interviews conducted in Buenos Aires, winter, 2016
133 Ibid.
communities in Buenos Aires make their grievances visible and spark protest, discussion, and healing. Many people expressed to me that communal healing is very important to them and to the larger Buenos Aires community; healing, learning from what has gone wrong, and moving forward in a better direction.\textsuperscript{134} Art is seen as a venue for pursuing valuable change and healing.

\textsuperscript{134} Ibid.
VI. Conclusion

La dictadura was a time of state repression and terror as huge numbers of Argentines disappeared, never to be seen again. Following the return to democracy, trials held by the new government and the reinstated justice system tried to have justice served, but due to lack of evidence, in addition to pressure from the strong military, many of the dictators and high-ranking members of the military were not convicted, sentenced or they had their sentences revoked.

While trials have been held anew since 2010 as new evidence has come to life through documents released for declassification by countries like the United States, Argentines have had to survive the lack of closure on la dictadura and the disappeared for nearly 35 years. Meanwhile, the people responsible for los desaparecidos were free in society. Now, due to new evidence and trials, the perpetrators have largely been incarcerated, but the desaparecidos are still gone, and this has an impact on Argentine communities. Art has been an effective way through which Argentines have collectively processed and protested la dictadura and el gobierno de Argentina, both in the past and in the present. Art has become a highly successful venue through which Argentines subvert the often-controlling government and share experiences and culture with each other and it has the potential to assist Argentines fully move on from la dictadura.
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