30,000 Reasons to Remember:
Artistic Strategies for Memorializing Argentina's Disappeared

by

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Abstract

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This dissertation traces the construction of memorials from 1976-2009 dedicated to the victims of state-sponsored terrorism under the 1976-1983 military dictatorship, now known collectively as the disappeared, and the creation of new paradigms in public art and memorialization practices in Argentina. I examine a typology of memorials to the disappeared and analyze the spatial power dynamics in the public realm under the dictatorship and in the democratic era. This dissertation is the first scholarly text to focus on the history of patronage and the range of visual forms in Argentine memorials to the disappeared.

My research analyzes the relationship between a memorial's subject and the artists' chosen formal representational strategies. I explore the artists' use of various media and styles to memorialize the disappeared, including documentary photography, guerilla art, conceptualism, minimalism, abstraction, performance, and figuration. Aesthetic choices reflect the political platforms and goals of the memorials' main patronage groups: human rights organizations, cultural institutions, and the government. My investigation reveals that the memorials dedicated to the victims of state-sponsored terrorism are part of a contentious struggle in the politics of public space that began under the military junta and continues to this day. The production of Argentine memorials that honor the disappeared are a reflection of the present moment in which they are designed. Artists and human rights organizations created these works to challenge and alter the established government order and cultural institutional spaces became sites of resistance

against the historical narrative put forth by the military and the ruling democratic presidents. Minimalism, on the other hand appears to have become a favored choice for government-sponsored memorials because it lacks and therefore erases an apparent narrative. This project stresses the importance of understanding and considering audience response to the major paradigms of Argentine memorial construction. In addition, the interdisciplinary nature of my research incorporates the study of Latin American art with public art, and memory studies, thereby providing a new lens through which to analyze contemporary Argentine art production.

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Argentina, Argentina
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-Singer Fito Paez, "La Casa Desaparecida"[1]

The Final Document of the Military Junta on the War Against Subversion and Terrorism (1983) stated:

> There is also talk of "disappeared" persons who are still held under arrest by the Argentine government in unknown places of our country. All of this is nothing but a falsehood stated with political purposes, since there are neither secret detention places in the Republic nor persons in clandestine detention in any penal institution.[2]

"Disappeared" evolved into a noun in the twentieth century to describe those people who were kidnapped, tortured, and killed under the military dictatorships of Latin America in the 1970s.[3] Argentina's dilemma of the disappeared, whose existence was denied in the military junta's official history, prompts questions on memory, history, and representation.

Not all human rights groups or Argentine citizens agree on how to memorialize the disappeared. The divide in Argentina's public opinion towards memorializing the disappeared

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[1] Fito Páez, "La casa desaparecida,"*Abre*, 2000. "Argentina, argentina/Qué pasó en la argentina/Es la casa desaparecida/Argentina, argentina/Bienvenidos a casa argentina/A la desaparecida." Unless otherwise noted, all translations in this dissertation are by the author.
[2] The Final Document of the Military Junta on the War Against Subversion and Terrorism (Documento Final de la junta militar sobre la Guerra contra subversión y el terrorismo conceptos fundamentales), Argentina, April 8, 1983. Se habla asimismo de personas "desaparecidas" que se ecntrarían detenidas por el gobierno argentino en los ignotos lugares del pais. Todo esto no es sino una falsedad utilizada con fines politicos, ya que en la republica no existen lugares secretos de detención, ni hay en los establecimientos carcelarios personas detenidas clandestinamente.
[3] Laurel Reuter and Lawrence Weschler, *Los Desaparecidos* (Milano; Grand Forks; New York, N.Y.: Charta; North Dakota Museum of Art; Distributed by D.A.P./Distributed Art Publishers, 2006).

reflects the diverse reactions of the citizenry's support of, opposition to, or silence towards the last military government (1976-1983). Taking this disparity of historical accounts into consideration, this dissertation examines the Argentine memorials created from 1976 to 2009 (in all media) dedicated to the disappeared. I consider how international and Argentine artists gave an aesthetic shape to a disputed history within Argentina's public, collective memory, a memory or set of memories that is "shared, passed on, and constructed by the group," as well as its collected memory, the way "groups and societies remember through their constituent memories."[4] Human rights groups, cultural institutions, and the Argentine government commissioned artists, and determined the distinct artistic strategies that they used; documentary photography, guerilla art, conceptualism, minimalism, performance, abstraction, and figuration can be tied to distinct groups of patrons and the audiences they hoped to address. This dissertation argues that the political agenda of each patronage group is revealed by the visual manifestations that they favored. A study of memorials using patronage as the main frame provides a full and nuanced picture of memorials and the politics and debates behind their conception, creation, and construction in Argentina.

A Brief History of the 1976 Military Coup in Argentina

In order to analyze contemporary memorial production in Argentina, it is imperative to understand the socio-political and historical circumstances that created a fraught tension between official history and lived memory before, during, and after Argentina's dictatorial rule. The early period of the 1970s in Argentina was marked by the return and death of President Juan Perón (in office 1946–52, 1952–55, 1973–74) and the Alianza Anticomunista Argentina (Argentine Anti-

[4] Defined in Anne Whitehead, *Memory* (London: Routledge, 2009), 158.

Communist Alliance, Triple A) death squadrons.[5] Political violence committed by left-wing urban guerilla groups including the Montoneros and the Ejercito Revolucionario del Pueblo (People's Revolutionary Army, ERP) was prevalent during this time. In response, the Triple A killed sixty-six young guerillas under Perón's last presidency, which forged a precedent for the violent and brutal actions of the 1976-1983 military dictatorship.

After Perón died in 1974 power was handed over to the vice-president, Peron's third wife, Isabel Martínez de Perón (1974-1976).[6] In 1974 and 1975, under Martínez de Perón's constitutional government, the Triple A directed the detention and disappearance of around 600 people, and summarily executed 500 people, according to government sources.[7] Human rights organizations estimated that these totals were closer to 900 disappeared and 1,500 executed people.[8] Martínez de Perón's presidency was weak, because she was unable to control the extreme left and right fronts that were active at the time. On March 24, 1976, the Argentine military launched a coup against Martínez de Perón's government. The leaders of the first military junta were Navy Admiral Emilio Eduardo Massera, Army General Jorge Rafael Videla, and Air Force Brigadier General Orlando Ramón Agosti.[9] Coups were not new in Argentine history; they had taken place throughout the twentieth century.[10] In fact, the change in power was at first welcomed by many citizens and was supported by renowned personalities such as

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[5] The Triple A is also referred to as the AAA.
[6] Isabel Martínez de Perón was a cabaret dancer that Perón met in Panama.
[7] "Hubo 600 desaparecidos antes del 76," *La nación*, Buenos Aires, January 13, 2007, política section, http://www.lanacion.com.ar/875007-hubo-600-desaparecidos-antes-del-76 (accessed October 8, 2009).
[8] Ibid.
[9] Graciela Fernández Meijide, *La Historia Íntima De Los Derechos Humanos En La Argentina: a Pablo* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 2009). There were three military juntas that ruled in succession from 1976-1983.
[10] Other *coup d'etats* that took place during the twentieth century occurred in 1930, 1955, and 1966.

Argentine writers Ernesto Sábato and Jorge Luis Borges.[11] Like these internationally famed literary figures, many Argentine citizens believed that the military coup would transform Argentina into a stable and safe nation.

The communist threat of the Cold War era penetrated deep into the dogma of the Argentine military dictatorship. General Leopoldo Fortunato Galtieri, who served as the de-facto president from 1981-82, declared, "The First World War was a confrontation between armies, the Second was between nations, and the Third is between ideologies. The United States and Argentina must stand together because of their common concerns and aspirations."[12] Buttressing Galtieri's assertion was General Ramón Juan Camps's explanation of Argentina's role in the struggle for world domination between the Soviet Union and the United States. Camps stated, "We have to look at this globally and strategically, since Argentina is merely one theatre of operations in a global confrontation between Moscow and the United States. What the Soviet Union wants is not to destabilize Argentina but to destabilize the United States, and for this it needs the help of other governments in the region."[13] Along with fighting the communist threat, the military junta declared that it was firmly establishing and maintaining Western, Christian, family values. Therefore, the Catholic Church aligned itself with the junta.[14] In fact, the Church,

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[11] Héctor Horacio D'Amico, "Sábato y Borges Almuerzan con Videla," *La nación*, Buenos Aires, May 2, 2011. On May 19, 1976 Borges and Sábato ate lunch with Videla and praised the military's efforts. Their endorsement for the military junta changed after they became aware of the military's human rights abuses committed in the name of national security.

[12] *La Prensa*, Buenos Aires, November 3, 1981, cited in Conadep, "Part V The Doctrine Behind the Repression," *Núnca Más Never Again Report of Conadep 1984*, http://web.archive.org/web/200310191551110/nuncamas.org/English/library/nevagain/nevagain_281.htm (accessed May 12, 2009).

[13] "Interview with General Camps," *La Semana,* Buenos Aires, February 3, 1983, quoted in Conadep, "Part V The Doctrine Behind the Repression."

[14] For further information on the role of the Church during the dictatorship see Emilio Fermín Mignone, *Witness to the Truth: The Complicity of Church and Dictatorship in Argentina, 1976-1983* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1988).

like the military, denied the practice of disappearance. In 1982, Cardinal J.C. Aramburu made a statement that was later echoed in The Final Document of the Military Junta. Aramburu asserted, "There are no common graves in Argentina and each coffin corresponds with a cadaver…Disappeared? You know that there are disappeared persons that today are living tranquilly in Europe."[15] The Church further enabled the denial of disappearance through the defense of the military's actions during the dictatorship.

The junta's propaganda campaign circulated its ideology through newspapers, magazines, and posters, which successfully convinced a large part of Argentine citizens that those people who the military targeted were extremists and terrorists.[16] The junta controlled the media and circulated official advertisements in magazines combining text and image in an effort to combat "subversion." For example, in 1977 in the newspaper *La Opinión* the military published a full-page black and white ad with a picture of the silhouette of Argentina on a plate with a fork and

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[15] Cardinal J.C. Aramburu speaking to the newspaper *Il Messagero*, Rome, November 12, 1982. Quoted in Eduardo Blaustein and Martín Zubieta, *Decíamos Ayer: La Prensa Argentina Bajo El Proceso* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Ediciones Colihue, 1998), 516. "En la Argentina no hay fosas communes y a cada cadaver le corresponde un atáud…¿Desaparecidos?...Usted sabe que hay desaparecidos que hoy viven tranquilamente en Europa." The military used its victims to produce a series of news items for the national and foreign media to counteract the campaign, which was calling on the government to produce the disappeared alive. For example, military forces kidnapped Thelma Jara de Cabezas on April 30, 1979. They forced her to write letters to Pope Paul VI, General Videla, Cardinals Primatesta and Aramburu, and to her family, stating that she was not disappeared, but that she had to flee to Uruguay because she was afraid that left-wing guerilla groups would kill her. All of the letters were posted from Uruguay. The military set up an interview with a reporter from *Para Ti* magazine Jara de Cabezas for a September 1979 issue of the periodical. In this way, the military tried to close down the investigations into her disappearance. While she was being held she was taken to Uruguay three times, where the sham was repeated for different journalists and media outlets. For more on this case see File No. 6505 in the Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas., *Nunca Más: Anexos: Informe De La Comisión Nacional Sobre La Desaparición De Personas, CONADEP* (Ciudad de Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 2006).

[16] Gail Holst-Warhaft, *The Cue for Passion: Grief and Its Political Uses* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), 111.

knife resting on either side. The phrase "United… and we will not be devoured by subversives" accompanied the image.[17]

This time period under dictatorial rule is referred to as The *Processo de Reconstrucción Nacional* (Process of National Reconstruction, *Processo*). The military leaders also named the years of its rule the "Dirty War" because the Argentine dictatorship established that there was an "internal enemy," without a specifically known location, which had to be identified secretly among the population. In the dictatorship's view, actions of opposition included taking part in union or student activities; opponents of the dictatorship were intellectuals who questioned state terrorism, or anyone who could be identified "simply because they [the victims of state-sponsored terrorism] were relatives, friends, or [had their] names included in the address book of someone considered subversive."[18] The distinction in terminology for this historical moment is important to clarify. The "Dirty War" is a phrase that the military dictatorship invented to suggest that it was fighting a war with an equal, but opposing faction. Leaders of the military wanted to emphasize that it was in the midst of a war, as opposed to terrorizing its own citizens. In fact, in 1981 when a journalist from the newspaper *El Clarín* asked about the need for an investigation into the disappearances, General Roberto Eduardo Viola, who served briefly as president from March-December 1981, replied, "I think you are suggesting that we investigate the Security Forces - that is absolutely out of the question. This is a war and we are the winners. You can be certain that in the last war if the armies of the Reich had won, the war crimes trials

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[17] Official ad, *La Opinión*, Buenos Aires, October 14, 1977. "Unámos…y no seremos bocado de la subversion." This image unwittingly shares visual parallels with Victor Grippo's (1936-2002) *Analogía IV* (*Analogy IV*, 1972).

[18] Conadep, "Part VI Recommendations and Conclusions," *Núnca Más Never Again Report of Conadep*, 1984, http://web.archive.org/web/20031019155334/nuncamas.org/english/library/nevagain/nevagain_283.htm (accessed May 12, 2009).

would have taken place in Virginia, not in Nuremberg."[19] Conversely, it should be noted that those who were victims of the military were not fighting a war, this period of armed hostility was one in which the government abused its disproportionate might to inflict human rights abuses on its own population. The dictatorship's "enemies" were victims of state-sponsored terrorism and therefore it is critical to refer to this era as the *Processo*, the last military dictatorship, or the era of state-sponsored terrorism, instead of the "Dirty War."

Disappearance

The military attempted to erase the disappeared from memory, from reality, and from history. The junta leaders, who observed and learned from the earlier 1973 *coup d'etat* in Chile that perpetrated an open repression, decided upon a secretive method of disappearance. The Argentine military used unmarked cars and men in plain clothes to conduct the kidnapping operations. Disappearance left no trace of the victim, or the identity of the perpetrator; political anthropologist Jennifer G. Schirmer has explained that, "disappearance then is a form of censorship of memory by the state."[20] Beginning in 1974, abduction, as stated above, was also used by the Triple A as a method of repression prior to the military coup of March 24, 1976. From 1976 on, forces that usurped power took absolute control of the resources of the State so that disappearance became a widespread practice with the greatest number of disappearances occurring from 1976-1978. Art historian Andrea Giunta observed, "Individuals and spaces that were previously immune now became not only the enemy but also 'legitimate' targets for extermination. This presumed the denial of their situation as citizens within national borders.

[19] *El Clarín*, Buenos Aires, March 18, 1981, cited in Conadep, "Part V The Doctrine Behind the Repression."
[20] Jennifer G. Schirmer, "'Those Who Die for Life Cannot Be Called Dead:' Women and Human Rights Protest in Latin America," *Feminist Review*, no. 32 (July 1, 1989): 5.

First, they 'died' as citizens through the elimination of all their rights, which left them *deterritorialized* and finally, they were eliminated physically."[21] One of the difficulties that citizens of Argentina faced is that there was often no physical site of the remains, no ruins, and no known site of death or burial and no traces of most of the disappeared.[22]

The exact number of disappeared persons in Argentina is difficult to assess. Human rights organizations such as the Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo (Association of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, Asociación Madres) and the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo, Abuelas) assert that 30,000 people were disappeared by the military government. By contrast, the Argentine Human Rights Ministry's registry shows that the number of disappeared was closer to 13,000.[23] Human rights organizations emphasize that the discrepancy in data is due to the fact that many relatives of disappeared persons have not come forward because of the shame associated with disappearance and fear for their own safety. Additionally, there were instances in which entire families were disappeared at the same time, so no one remained to report the disappearances. Therefore, the number 30,000 has become a symbolic numerical representation of the disappeared. It is in solidarity with the human rights organizations that I use the number 30,000 in the title of this text.

Who were the disappeared? Human rights activist Rita Arditti described them as "Male and female, young and old, babies and teenagers; pregnant women, students, workers, lawyers, journalists, scientists, artists and teachers; Argentine citizens and citizens of other countries, nuns

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[21] Andrea Giunta, "Bodies of History: The Avant-Garde, Politics, and Violence in Contemporary Argentinean Art," in *Cantos Paralelos*: *Visual Parody in Contemporary Argentinean Art* (Austin: Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art, 1999), 153.

[22] Human rights organizations such as Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (Center of Legal & Social Studies, CELS) have actively researched the fate of the disappeared through interviews and testimonies of survivors of Clandestine Detention Centers.

[23] In 1985 Conadep reported that there were 8,961 disappeared.

and priests, progressive members of religious orders-all swelled the ranks of the disappeared."[24] The disappeared came from many different regions in Argentina, but the majority of them were from Buenos Aires. Anyone could have been a target of the military forces, including high school students who organized to protest bus-fare hikes. Their disappearance from the city of La Plata became known as *La noche de los lápices* (The Night of the Pencils).[25] Thousands of those victims were never linked to any political activities at all. Among the disappeared and those captives who were eventually released from Clandestine Detention Centers (CCD) were people from every social strata and career. The government statistics on disappeared persons included: 30.2% blue-collar workers, 21% students, 17.9% white-collar workers, 10.7% professionals, 5.7% teachers, 5.0% self-employed, 3.8% housewives, 2.5% military conscripts and members of the security forces, 1.6% journalists, 1.3% actors and performers, and 0.3% nuns, priests, and religious leaders.[26] Jewish people comprise 2% of the Argentine population but 10% of those disappeared.[27]

There were many commonalities between the Argentine dictatorship's ideology and that of the German National Socialist party (Nazis).[28] The concept of disappearance originated with the Nazi Night and Fog decree, issued by Hitler in 1941 to vanish people that threatened German

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[24] Rita Arditti, *Searching for Life: The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo and the Disappeared Children of Argentina*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 14.
[25] For a full and moving account of the events surrounding The Night of the Pencils see María Seoane and Héctor Ruiz Núñez, *La Noche De Los Lápices* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Contrapunto, 1986).
[26] Conadep, "Part IV Recommendations and Conclusions," *Núnca Más Never Again Report of Conadep*, 1984, http://web.archive.org/web/20031019155334/nuncamas.org/english/library/nevagain/nevagain_283.htm (accessed May 1, 2009).
[27] Marguerite Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 90.
[28] The ideology of the Nazis was pervasive in the military dictatorship. For example, objects found by archaeologists at the ex-clandestine detention center Club Atlético in Buenos Aires included Nazi insignia and a swastika on the inner brim of a police cap.

security. The actions carried out under this order left relatives and the general population uncertain of the victims' fates.[29] The disappeared and detained in Argentina were given a letter and a number in the bureaucratic style of the Nazi tactics, and the method of disappearance that the dictatorship used was similar to the Nazis's kidnapping of resistance members who could not be proven guilty in a court of law.

Like the Nazis, the Argentine military security forces imprisoned their victims in concentration camps that are now referred to as Clandestine Detention Centers. There were 360 CCDs in operation during the dictatorship, located in rural areas on the outskirts of metropolitan areas, as well as in the very center of cities throughout Argentina. At the CCDs the military members physically and psychologically tortured the detained citizens and in many instances forced them into slave labor. According to the CONADEP Report, "There were thousands of deaths, none of these came about through an ordinary or military trial, none was the result of a sentence. Technically speaking, they were murders, murders into which no proper investigation was ever carried out and for which those responsible were never, as far as we know, punished in any way."[30] People alleged to have been killed in combat by the forces of repression were in fact taken alive from a secret detention center and killed in simulated military confrontations or in faked attempts at escape.[31] The Equipo Argentino de Antropología Forense (Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team, EAAF) explained one of the many procedures that the military followed for disappearing the bodies of its victims:

> Others [members of the military] buried them [the disappeared] as John/Jane Does in municipal cemeteries. In the latter case, shortly after the killings, the bodies were

[29] Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture*, 47.
[30] Conadep, "Part I The Repression," *Núnca Más Never Again Report of Conadep*, 1984, http://web.archive.org/web/20030910092824/www.nuncamas.org/english/library/nevagainevagain/056.htm, (accessed May 4, 2009).
[31] Conadep, "Part IV Recommendations and Conclusions."

> typically deposited in public places, and an 'anonymous' call would be made to the local precinct. The police, sometimes accompanied by local judges, would go to the site and recover the bodies. Prior to anonymous burial in local cemeteries, the bodies were often photographed, fingerprinted, and given a perfunctory examination by a police or judiciary forensic doctor, who issued a death certificate, and the registry office would provide a burial certificate. It is unusual to have such thorough official documentation of bodies that were later buried in anonymous graves.[32]

Contrary to Cardinal Aramburu's claim, corpses were buried in cemeteries under existing graves. Anthropologist Ludmila da Silva Catela explained:

> The idea that the common graves, utilized in 'normal' periods and situations for the 'destitute,' 'poor,' or people with unknown ties, is in itself a great contradiction. The military members used it to 'dissolve the disappeared' that for them were like in the great plagues of the Middle Ages, very, and in this case, symbolically 'contaminated.' Moreover, equal to kidnapping, the common graves was a form of erasing all identity, of not permitting the reconstitution of family ties even after death."[33]

The unusual and systematic brutality of the military's actions did not end with burials in anonymous graves. Security forces also cremated their victims who were tortured to death in order to avoid detection and eliminate evidence of the disappeared person's existence. In other cases, members of the military gruesomely severed hands from bodies, so that corpses could not be identified through fingerprinting. Political scientist Marguerite Guzman Bouvard explained that the "destruction of the bodies was an important part of the policy of *disappearance*. Wiping out the identity of corpses increased the ambiguity hanging over the fate of the thousands of

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[32] Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team, "The Argentine Experience, Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team," http://eaaf.typepad.com/argentine_experience/ (accessed March 10, 2009). The EEAF is a non-governmental, non-profit organization established in 1984 to investigate cases of disappearance in Argentina.

[33] Ludmila da Silva Catela, *No Habrá Flores En La Tumba Del Pasado: La Experiencia De Reconstrucción Del Mundo De Los Familiares De Desaparecidos* (La Plata: Ediciones Al Margen, 2001), 124. "La idea de las fosas communes, utilizadas en períodos y situaciones "normales" para "indigentes", "pobres" o personas sin lazos cognoscibles, es en sí misma una gran contradicción. Los militares las usaban para "deshacerse de cuerpos" que para ellos eran, como en las grandes pestes de la edad media, muchos y, en este caso, simbólicamente "contaminados". Además al igual que el secuestro, la fosa común era una forma de borrarles toda identidad, de no permitir la reconstitución de lazos familiares ni siquiera después de muertos.

disappeared and gave relatives hope that their loved ones might still be alive."[34] The Navy's method of disappearance included drugging and sedating its detainees, who were then thrown out of airplanes into the River Plate while still alive.[35] Other arms of the military buried their victims in ditches or barbecue pits.

Family members could technically file a writ of habeas corpus (in Latin literally "show me the body"), a procedure in which a neutral judge orders that a prisoner be brought to the court to determine whether she is being imprisoned lawfully.[36] The courts were then to request information about the missing person from the federal police, Ministry of Interior, Armed Forces, and the local police. However, because the military junta appointed the judges, these investigations never took place; the military dictatorship of Argentina denied habeas corpus to its prisoners and their families. The negation of habeas corpus and the destructive and furtive burial practices of the dictatorship beg the question: How does one mourn when there is no body, no grave, and no known site of death? Social psychologist René Käes, in reference to the disappeared bodies of the victims of state-sponsored terrorism, explained:

> They have disappeared without a trace, without bodies, without a word of truth about the reason for their disappearance. In no case is the disappearance analogous to that produced by a natural or technical disaster. In those cases, mourning is possible: a consensus supports the representation of death and verifies the disappearance of the body. The specificity of the trauma that the military dictatorship provoked is mute disappearance. It is revealed in the terror imposing silence on words.[37]

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[34] Marguerite Guzman Bouvard, *Revolutionizing Motherhood: The Mothers of the Plaza De Mayo* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1994), 42.
[35] Horacio Verbitsky, *The Flight: Confessions of an Argentine Dirty Warrior* (New York: New Press: Distributed by W.W. Norton, 1996). The bodies washed ashore in a disfigured state on various Argentine and Uruguayan beaches from mid-1976 onward.
[36] Susan Ellis Wild, *Webster's New World Law Dictionary* (Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley, 2006).
[37] Kaës, René, Janine Puget, and S. Amati Sas, *Violencia de Estado y psicoanalisis* (Buenos Aires: Centro Ed. de América Latina, 1991), 159. "Han desaparecido sin huella, sin cuerpo, sin palabra verdadera sobre la causa de su desaparición. En ningún caso se trata de una desaparición análoga a aquella producida por una catástrofe natural o técnica. Allí el duelo es possible: un consenso sostiene la representación de la muerte y certifica la desaparición del cuerpo. La

The Climate under the Dictatorship

While families searched for their missing loved ones, many Argentine citizens under the dictatorship believed that "there must have been a reason" for their neighbors to have been taken away, or that the disappeared "must have done something." This assumption predominated then, and even today some Argentines adhere to this misconstrued understanding of the past under the military dictatorship. Many citizens remained silent and claimed that they were unaware of the kidnappings. However, some people did witness kidnappings that occurred in public places.[38] "We did not know" became a murmured excuse of Argentina's collective consciousness under the dictatorship and during the post-dictatorial era.[39]

Along with human rights abuses, there were many other lasting effects of the dictatorship's policies upon Argentine society, politics, and economy. There were over 300,000 political exiles; 10,000 political prisoners; the closure of 50,000 small and medium-sized businesses; 700,000 fewer workers; and fifty billion U.S. dollars of external debt accumulated during the dictatorship's tenure.[40] In addition, the dictatorship privatized public space and physically transformed Argentina's cities. The junta imprinted the cityscape with new highways, football stadiums and cement plazas, and constructed concrete, closed-off spaces at universities

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especificidad del traumatismo provocado por la dictadura es la desaparición muda. Se revela en el terror imponiendo el silencio a la palabra."

[38] Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture*, 151.

[39] Two examples of mass backing for the dictatorship (or at least of the population not expressing any kind of public protest) were the 1978 World Cup hosted in Argentina and the 1982 demonstration in the Plaza de Mayo in support of Argentina's occupation of the Malvinas Islands. According to Julio Flores, these popular manifestations that spilled into Argentina's streets helped prolong the dictatorship. Julio Flores, "Arte del museo: memoria ¿de que?," in Sandra Lorezano, Ralph Buchenhorst, eds., *Políticas de la Memoria: Tensiones en la palabra y la imagen,* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Gorla, 2007), 187.

[40] Proyecto de Recuperación de la Memoria del Centro Clandestino de Detención y Tortura "Club Atlético" (Buenos Aires, 2007), 16.

and in the civic sphere to prevent mass mobilization.[41] In the end, the dictatorship's legacy of repression and censorship continued to reverberate well beyond the years of military rule.[42]

The Rise of Human Rights Organizations

To combat the dictatorship's crimes against humanity, Azucena Villaflor de Vicenti and thirteen other mothers came together to protest the forced disappearance of their children at the Plaza de Mayo, the main square in Buenos Aires and the public space that faces The Casa Rosada, (the presidential palace), and The Buenos Aires Metropolitan Cathedral, the religious seat of power. The Madres de Plaza de Mayo (Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, Madres) first marched in the plaza around the Pirámide de Mayo (Buenos Aires's oldest national monument) on April 30, 1977 (Fig. 1).[43] The mothers originally met in court, in prisons, and in government offices while urgently searching for their disappeared children. From then on, they gathered every Thursday at 3:30 p.m. to demand that their offspring be returned to them.[44] The members of the Madres donned with white, hand-embroidered handkerchiefs on their heads, symbolizing diapers of their children, both to emphasize their status as mothers and to identify themselves as a group. Through their protests, the Madres confronted the dictatorial military regime in the

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[41] Estela Schindel, "Las ciudades y el olvido," *Puentes* vol. 7 (July 2002): 28.

[42] For example, a man who lived close to the ex-CCD El Olimpo in Buenos Aires was commanded by the military to keep his window facing the site closed. In 2005, twenty-two years after the dictatorship ended, the man asked volunteers at El Olimpo, which had by then been preserved and converted into an education center, if it was all right to open his window. Joan Portos, interview by author, Buenos Aires, Argentina, June 8, 2009.

[43] Memoria Abierta, *Memorias en la ciudad: señales del terrorismo de estado en Buenos Aires* (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 2009), 11.

[44] In 1979 the government did not allow the Madres to enter the Plaza de Mayo because of a visit from the Organization of American States (OAS). Throughout this dissertation I use the word "it" to refer to the group, the Madres de Plaza de Mayo and "them" when referring to the organization's members.

public sphere. “In the blackest moments of the dictatorship, [the Madres] became the civic conscience of the nation.”[45]

Despite this later recognition, members of the Madres endured threats, aggression, and even abduction, simply for asking that their children be returned alive. Attacks on mothers generally did not take place during their marches at the Plaza de Mayo, but assaults against them occured out of public view on their way home from protesting and in their own homes.[46] Founding members of the group, Azucena Villaflor, María Eugenia Ponce de Bianco, and Esther Ballestrino de Careaga, were kidnapped from the Santa Cruz Church in Buenos Aires in December 1977 by a group of naval security officers.[47] They, like their children, were disappeared.[48] Yet others continued to protest and continue to march every Thursday in the Plaza de Mayo.

In 1977 The Asociación Civil Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo Civil Association, Abuelas) emerged as a group separate from the Madres but aligned with them.[49] The Abuelas’s mission is to find the estimated 500 children that were disappeared

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[45] Conadep, “Part III The judiciary during the Repression,” Report of Conadep, Nunca Más (Never Again), 1984, http://web.archive.org/web/20040630181926/nuncamas.org/english/library/nevagain/nevagain_275.htm (accessed May 12, 2009).

[46] Carmen Lapaco, interview by author, Buenos Aires, Argentina, October 17, 2009.

[47] Alfredo Ignacio Astiz was a naval intelligence officer who infiltrated The Madres by pretending to be the brother of a disappeared sister. His intelligence gathering led to the military’s abduction and assassination of Villaflor, Ponce de Bianco, and Ballestrino de Careaga.

[48] Based on survivors’ testimonial evidence Villaflor, Ponce de Bianco, and Ballestrino de Careaga were taken to the clandestine detention center Escuela de Suboficiales de Mecánica de la Armada (The Navy Mechanics School for Officers, ESMA) in Buenos Aires, where they were tortured and then thrown out to sea alive to drown.

[49] The other major human rights organizations that actively protested against the disappearances were Familiares de Detenidos y Desaparecidos por Razones Políticas (Relatives of the Detained and Disappeared for Political Reasons, 1977); Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS, 1978); Asamblea Permanente por los Derechos Humanos (Permanent Assembly for Human Rights, APDH, 1975); Movimiento Ecuménico por los Derechos Humanos (Ecunemical

together with their parents, and to locate children who were supposedly born in captivity to mothers that the government disappeared while pregnant.[50] The Catholic Church's profound support of the dictatorship was riddled with contradiction. Despite the Church's backing of disappearance and allowing parents to be stripped of their freedom (and in many instances their very existence), the leaders of the Catholic Church did not condone the killing of unborn children. Instead, disappeared mothers were permitted to give birth to their children while in captivity, and the military then put the newborn babies up for adoption. Military members themselves were often the adoptive parents, in part because the dictatorship leaders did not want the children of the disappeared to grow up and detest the military. The Abuelas call the missing grandchildren *desaparecidos con vida* (the living disappeared). One hundred three such children have been identified since the return of democracy in 1983.[51] The goal of the Abuelas is to reunite the *desaparecidos con vida* with their biological families and to restore their true histories and identities.[52]

Movement for Human Rights, MEDH, 1976); Liga Argentina por los Derechos del Hombre (Argentine League for the Rights of Man, LADH, 1937) and Servicio Paz y Justicia (Service Peace and Justice, Serpaj, 1974).

[50] The original name of the organization was the Abuelas Argentinas con Nietitos Desaparecidos (Argentine Grandmothers of Disappeared Little Grandchildren). In 1980 the name changed to the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo. The organization's members first began meeting in Buenos Aires and the city of La Plata.

[51] For information on the Abuelas's methods of identifying the missing grandchildren, including the use of genetic testing see Las Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, *Las Abuelas y La Genética* (Buenos Aires: Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, 2008).

[52] Asociación de Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, *Niños Desaparecidos, Jovenes Localizados: En La Argentina De 1976 a 1999* (Buenos Aires: Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo: Temas, 1999), 21.

The Return to Democracy

The military did not lose power until 1983, after a failed war with Britain over the control of the Falkland Islands and increasing economic turmoil.[53] Raúl Ricardo Alfonsín of the Radical party (1983-1989) took over the presidency in 1983 and opened a public debate about the dictatorship. Alfonsín, in a speech to Congress on December 10, 1983, condemned the military dictatorship's Doctrine of National Security that was "used to prevent the free, frank and spontaneous life of our people."[54] The Alfonsín government also issued a decree which ruled that the members of the Military Junta must stand trial; it stated: "Thousands of people were illegally deprived of their freedom, tortured, and killed as a result of the repressive measures inspired by the totalitarian Doctrine of National Security."[55] Despite Alfonsín's condemnation, the defense of the dictatorship's crimes against humanity was of paramount importance to the leaders of the military after Argentina's transition to democracy. The junta leaders' justification for their systematic disappearances of Argentine citizens was supported by the Theory of the Two Demons, which developed during the first years of the Alfonsín administration. It equated the violence inflicted on the nation by the military dictatorship with subversive political acts perpetrated by left-wing guerilla movements, including the Montoneros and the ERP during the mid-1970s and bolstered the idea of a "Dirty War."[56] The Theory of the Two Demons provided a

[53] The Malvinas is the Spanish name for the British Falkland Islands. Britain and Argentina have disputed the sovereignty of the islands since the nineteenth century. General Leopoldo Galtieri's choice to begin a war to regain the islands was perhaps a diversion tactic to move the nation's focus away from the dictatorship's failed economic policies and crumbling power. The islands are enriched with oil deposits, which made Britain reluctant to readily give up this territory.
[54] Conadep, "Part V The Doctrine Behind the Repression."
[55] Ibid. Decree No. 158/83.
[56] In 1984 Ernesto Sábato wrote a prologue for the Núnca Más (Never Again) Report for the Comisión Nacional sobre la desaparición de personas (Conadep, the National Commission on Disappeared Persons) explicating the Two Demons Theory. To read the prologue and report see Argentina, Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas, *Nunca Más: Anexos: Informe*

warranted defense for the human rights abuses committed by the dictatorship. In the midst of the widespread circulation of the Two Demons belief, a survey revealed that 59% of the population disapproved of the Madres's activities.[57]

In 1985, nine leaders of the three military juntas were tried for crimes against humanity in a civilian court, but tensions between human rights organizations and the democratic government escalated during the trial. The Madres de Plaza de Mayo accused the District Attorney of agreeing with the military's accusation that some of the disappeared were terrorists and subversives. The D.A.'s behavior in court essentially placed the disappeared on trial alongside the perpetrators of crimes against humanity.[58] Despite the protests by the Madres, at the trial's end some of the leaders of the dictatorship were only given sentences of five years in prison.

In order to move beyond the dictatorial era, the Alfonsín government decided to support strategies toward national reconciliation rather than justice and punishment for the human rights abusers. The Punto Final (Full Stop) Law passed in 1986 set the final date of February 22, 1987 for filing suit on human rights abuses. The next year, the Obediencia Debida (Due Obedience) law passed, allowing lower ranking officers to claim that they were just following orders. In addition, Alfonsín's government was confronted with several military uprisings and economic problems that included inflation that rose to 5,000 percent in 1989.[59] Therefore, citizens were preoccupied with the economic crises of the day rather than the recent past's human rights

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De La Comisión Nacional Sobre La Desaparición De Personas, CONADEP. President Nestór Kirchner's government modified the prologue in 2008 in order to remedy the political, social, and judicial effects of Sábato's theory.

[57] Latin American Federation of Relatives of the Disappeared (FEDEFAM), "Annual Report," 1987, 3.

[58] The Madres made this accusation against the District Attorney during the National Meeting of the Madres on June 24, 1985.

[59] The Carapintadas (in English Painted Faces, which referred to camouflage paint) was a group of military members who carried out a series of uprisings against the Alfonsín government from 1987-1989.

violations inflicted by state-sponsored terrorism or the Madres's crusade to seek punishment for those involved in the disappearances.

The Division of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo

In 1986 the Madres de Plaza de Mayo split into two distinct organizations. Asociación de Madres de Plaza de Mayo, led by Hebe de Bonafini, and Madres de Plaza de Mayo Línea Fundadora (Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, Founding Line, Madres-LF), headed by Renée Epelbaum.[60] The members were divided on the issue of whether to support or oppose the government, among other grave concerns. Members of the Madres-LF did not view the democratic government as analogous to the military government. Although the Alfonsín administration continued to withhold answers about the human rights abuses that occurred under the dictatorship, the Madres-LF believed that the constitutional government allowed for public discussion of human rights that did not take place under the dictatorship.[61] Other fundamental disagreements between the organizations involved the exhumations of common graves to unearth the bodies of the disappeared.[62] The Alfonsín government's uncovering of mass graves caused further tension within the nation and amongst human rights organizations. Madres-LF adhered to the idea that, in cases in which the remains of the disappeared were scientifically identified, the recovery of the body was a personal, family choice. In fact, Tati Almeyeda, a member of Madres-LF, emphasized the denunciatory power of exhuming the bodies: "It is [the

[60] Adela Antokaletz became vice-president of the Asociación Madres.
[61] Martin Prieto, "Síntomas de division entre las Madres de Plaza de Mayo," *El Pais*, Madrid, February 8, 1996. http://elpais.com/diario/1986/02/08/internacional/508201218_850215.html (accessed June 2, 2009). As of 2012 Hebe de Bonafini continued to lead the Asociación. Epelbaum passed away in 1998. For more information on her life see Marjorie Agosín, *Mothers of Plaza De Mayo (Línea Fundadora): The Story of Renée Epelbaum, 1976-1985* (Stratford, Ont.: Williams-Wallace Publishers, 1989).
[62] Ibid.

disappeareds'] voices that from their remains, their bones, denounce how they were assassinated."[63] The Asociación Madres, on the other hand, rejected the exhumations under any circumstances because the organization refused to recognize the deaths of their children while their murderers continued to be unpunished.[64]

The division of the Madres organization did not weaken the human rights cause, but Argentine President Carlos Saúl Menem (in office 1989-1999), whose term followed Alfonsín's, further impeded the realization of institutional justice for the disappeared and their families.[65] In 1990, in another blow to the advancement of human rights in Argentina, Menem granted a presidential pardon to the members of the military (including Videla and Massera) who were indicted under the Alfonsín administration. This left ex-detainees and family members of the disappeared interacting with murderers and torturers living among them as fellow citizens. Menem not only left the country void of justice, but in 1994 went so far as to publicly praise the military for fighting against subversion, thus perpetuating the military's own justification for its crimes against humanity over a decade after dictatorial rule had ended.[66]

A series of laws that passed under the Menem government further extended the divide between the ideologies of the Madres's splintered organizations. The laws provided economic reparations for those who were wrongfully imprisoned and for the relatives of the disappeared. Law 24.043 passed in 1991 compensated people detained by the nation-state without cause or

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[63] Gustavo Bruzzone interview with Tati Almeyda, in "Quiero tocar el nombre de mi hijo," *Ramona* 9, 10 (December 2000/March 2001), 12. "Son las voces de ellos que desde sus restos, sus huesos, denuncian cómo los asesinaron."
[64] Matilde Mellibovsky, *Circle of Love over Death: Testimonies of the Mothers of the Plaza De Mayo* (Willimantic, CT: Curbstone Press, 1997), 179.
[65] Menem adhered to a neo-liberal political and economic policy and was the leader of the Justicialista party. He is currently serving as a national senator for the Province of Rioja.
[66] "Menem elogió a los militares y advirtió contra el revanchismo," *Clarín*, Buenos Aires, June 21, 1998. revanchismohttp://edant.clarin.com/diario/1998/06/21/t-00801d.htm (accessed February 11, 2011).

legal prosecution, and those who were tried under a military court but were not themselves part of the military.[67] In addition, The Presumption of Death Because of Disappearance Law granted relatives who declared the disappeared legally dead the ability to collect a pension and other benefits.[68] Judith Said, the Coordinater for the Archivo Nacional de la Memoria (National Archive of Memory) in Argentina, explained, "During the nineties even though the State gave economic compensation to the victims of political prison, forced disappearance, or summary executions, it also promoted impunity for the perpetrators and appealed to stale euphemisms like 'national reconciliation' and the 'need to leave the painful past behind.'"[69]

Human rights organizations maintained that these economic reparations were not enough, but some groups recognized that the laws were a first step in the State taking responsibility for its actions and revealing the truth behind the disappearances. Many families have accepted the financial reparations, while other families and organizations like the Asociación Madres have refused them. Hebe de Bonafini and her group vowed to reject any type of financial compensation from the government because the members of the organization asserted that the

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[67] Neil J. Kritz, *Transitional Justice: How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995), 541.

[68] Clara E. Lida, Horacio Gutiérrez Crespo, and Pablo Yankelevich, *Argentina, 1976: Estudios En Torno Al Golpe De Estado* (México, D.F.: El Colegio de México, Centro de Estudios Históricos, 2007), 206. The Presumption of Death Because of Disappearance Law is officially referred to as Law 24.411. Social Security Benefits in the Case of Absence of the Person, Law 22.062, gave the legal right under the pension laws for spouses to claim benefits if a partner was absent for more than one year.

[69] Quoted in Sebastian Brett, et al., *Memorialización y Democracia: Políticas De Estado y Acción Civil* (Santiago Chile: Agencia Canadiense para el Desarrollo Internacional, la Oficina para los Andes y el Cono Sur de la Fundación Ford, la Fundación Heinrich Boll, el Goethe Institute, National Endowment for Democracy, Open Society Institute, June 20, 2007), 26. "Durante los noventa, aunque el Estado entregaba compensaciones económicas a las víctimas de prisión política, desapariciones forzadas o ejecuciones sumarias, también promovía la impunidad de los perpetradores y apelaba a manidos eufemismos como 'la reconciliación nacional' y 'la necesidad de dejar atrás el doloroso pasado.'" President Néstor Kirchner (2003-2007) created the Archvio Nacional de la Memoria in 2003 to preserve testimonies and documents concerning the Argentine 1976-1983 dictatorship.

blood of their sons and daughters was not for sale. [70] De Bonafini also explained:

> What we decided was that we should not recognize death. The military members are the ones who need to say that they killed them. If we recognize it, it is very serious. The capitalist system, imperialism, however you want to call it, makes it so that you have to recognize the death of your own family members. They never said what they did. They make you go to the cemetery, they bring you anthropologists, they exhume the dead for you, they give you money for the deaths and you have to recognize their deaths without [the members of the military] telling you that they killed them. They killed them and they have to say it. I'm not the one who has to recognize it. If I seize death and I seize the economic reparations, I am recognizing that they killed them. And where is the murderer? I remain with the death and the murderer gives what? They want us to say: 'They're dead.' Flowers to the river, plaques on the walls. [71]

Literature

As Hebe de Bonafini poignantly emphasized, the memorials to the disappeared produced during the 1970s to the mid-2000s were constructed during a period lacking institutional justice. In a victory for human rights, Argentina's Supreme Court overturned the amnesty laws in 2005, paving the way for prosecutions against the perpetrators of disappearance to begin. However, attempts to rectify the historical amnesia and absence of institutional justice created tensions within various sectors of society. Memorialization in Argentina (and elsewhere) is not devoid of politics, and the method and form of the memorials varies according to the sponsor's political beliefs and goals. Scholars from multiple disciplines have contributed research on memorial

[70] "Nuestras Consignas: Ni un Paso Atras!" pamphlet published by the Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo, Buenos Aires, unknown printing date.

[71] Hebe de Bonafini, interview by Juan Gelman and Mara la Madrid, *Ni El Flaco Perdón De Diós: Hijos De Desaparecidos* (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 1997), 56. "Lo que nosotras decidimos es que no hay que reconocer la muerte. Son los militares los que nos tienen que decir que ellos los mataron. Si nosotras la reconocemos es muy grave. El sistema capitalista, el imperialismo, como se lo quiera llamar, hace que vos tengás que reconocer la muerte de los tuyos. Ellos nunca dicen lo que hicieron. Te hacen ir al cementerio, te traen los antropólogos, te exhuman los muertos, te dan plata por los muertos y vos tenés que reconocer la muerte sin que ellos te digan que los mataron. Ellos los mataron y ellos tienen que decirlo. No soy yo quien tiene que reconocer. Si agarro la muerte y agarro la reparación económica, estoy reconociendo que lo mataron. ¿Y dónde está el asesino? Yo me quedo con el muerto, ¿y el asesino entrega qué?...Ellos quieren que nosotros digamos: "Están muertos". Flores al río, placas en las paredes."

production dedicated to the disappeared in Argentina. However, little has been written on how the actual form of a memorial explicates or erases the historical narrative of the victims and perpetrators of state-sponsored terrorism. This dissertation is the first scholarly text to focus on the history of patronage and the range of visual forms in Argentine memorials to the disappeared. There has been virtually no work done on this topic from the perspective of art history. I analyze the memorial designers' use of diverse artistic strategies in memorializing the disappeared in collaboration with the patrons' political goals. Furthermore, there are few scholars in the U.S. who investigate Argentine art, which is critical to contextualizing the art of the Americas and fostering a circum-Atlantic dialogue on modern and contemporary art within the field. Moreover, I provide a methodological model based on contemporary memory scholarship that is useful for exploring larger issues pertaining to patronage and memorials, and contributes to an international dialogue on monuments and memorials. I write in the interdisciplinary spirit of memory studies and draw upon scholarly texts from social history, Holocaust studies, anthropology, human geography, and performance studies.

Literature on the Argentine Dictatorship & Art

The most useful histories for understanding the dictatorial era are Claudio Martyniuk's *ESMA: Fenomenolgía de Desaparición*, which investigated Argentine clandestine detention centers and explicated the dictatorship's methods of disappearance.[72] Psychologist René Käes studied the psychological effects of state-sponsored violence on the Argentine populace.[73] Literature scholar Marguerite Feitlowitz vividly illuminated the social, political, and historical

[72] Claudio Martyniuk, *ESMA*: *Fenomenología de la Desaparición* (Promoteo: Buenos Aires, 2004).
[73] René Kaës, Janine Puget, and Silvia Amati Sas, *Violencia de Estado y Psicoanalisis*.

consequences of the *Processo* through the dictatorship's use of language. Additionally, Da Silva Catela analyzed personal forms of memorials and some built memorial structures through an anthropological lens. These studies are particularly relevant to my discussion of human rights organizations and institutional patronage.[74] Sociologist Elizabeth Jelin and historian Victoria Langland provided further insight in understanding the territorialization of memory in government-sponsored memorials and urban interventions. Together they studied memory formation and monuments during and after periods of state repression.[75]

Art curator Inés Katzenstien offered an art historical context for works created under and in response to Argentina's previous military dictatorship during the Juan Carlos Onganía regime (1966-1970).[76] Argentine art in the 1960s was characterized by performance art and conceptual practices. Artworks that fall under these categories and which are art historically germane to this dissertation include *Tucumán Arde* (Tucumán is Burning, 1968), which occurred under the Onganía government in Buenos Aires and the city of Rosario, and Luis Pazos's (b. 1940) *Monumento al prisionero político desaparecido* (Monument to the Disappeared Political Prisoner, 1972) for a Centro de Arte y Comunicación (Center for Art and Communication, CAYC) exhibition. In *Tucumán Arde*, a collective of artists partnered with the national trade union the Confederación General de Trabajo (General Confederation of Labor, CGT) to create installations in protest against the dismantling of sugar refineries in the Tucumán province of Argentina. It functioned as a politico-artistic confrontation on the exploitation of thousands of

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[74] Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture*.
Catela, *No Habrá Flores En La Tumba Del Pasado: La Experiencia De Reconstrucción Del Mundo De Los Familiares De Desaparecidos*.
[75] Elizabeth Jelin and Victoria Langland, *Monumentos, Memoriales y Marcas Territoriales* (Madrid: Siglo XXI de España: Social Science Research Council, 2003).
[76] Inés Katzenstein, *Listen, Here, Now!: Argentine Art of the 1960s: Writings of the Avant-Garde* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2004).

workers and exemplified the strategic potential for collaboration between artists and organizations promoting social causes and basic human rights. Luis Pazos's *Monumento al prisionero político desaparecido* in the exhibition *Arte e Ideología en CAYC al aire libre* (Art and Ideology: CAYC Outside) in the Plaza Roberto Arlt, Buenos Aires, was a condemnation of the rising totalitarianism in Latin America, which formed a foundation for the abuses during the 1976-83 dictatorial era (Fig. 2).[77] In a blending of conceptual and performance practices, Pazos placed three tombstones in a public plaza while three people lay down in front of each headstone. The work specifically referenced the Trelew Massacre, in which sixteen political militants were shot while attempting to escape from prison and was a forerunner to future memorial strategies dedicated to the disappeared in the public sphere.[78] The artistic vanguard movement exemplified by *Tucumán Arde* and CAYC, so vibrant in Argentina in the 1960s, appeared to be lost in the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s under the last military dictatorship.

While scholars have considered the dictatorship and national memory, art historical literature on contemporary Argentine memorials to the disappeared is scant. However, examples of exhibitions that included the disappeared of Argentina as subjects are art curator María Teresa Constantin's *Cuerpo y Materia: Arte Argentino Entre 1976 y 1985* and photographer and human rights activist Marcelo Brodsky's (b. 1954) *Memory Under Construction: The ESMA Debate*.[79]

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[77] Estera Milman, "Latin American Realities/International Solutions," University of Iowa Libraries CAYC, http://sdrc.lib.uiowa.edu/cayc/caycintro.htm (accessed June 26, 2009). For a list of participating artists in the exhibition see Centro de Arte y Comunicación (CAyC). "CAyC: Hacia un Perfil del Arte Latinoamericano. Muestra presentada por el CAyC. Grupo de los Trece e invitados especiales (GT-128 -GT-128 II - GT-128 III)," June 12, 1972. Exhibition announcement. Biblioteca del Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires. For more information on CAYC see Jorge Glusberg, *Art in Argentina* (Milan, Italy: Giancarlo Politi, 1986).

[78] The exhibition was closed by authorities after only two days.

[79] María Teresa Constantin and Imago Espacio de Arte, *Cuerpo y Materia: Arte Argentino Entre 1976 y 1985* (Buenos Aires: Imago Espacio de Arte, 2006).

Additionally, curator of art Laurel Reuter's *The Disappeared* exhibition and catalog was useful for contextualizing the memorials in Argentina in relation to memorials to the disappeared in other Latin American nations.[80] A particularly valuable text to this study is Diana Taylor's analysis on how the Madres de Plaza de Mayo used performance to protest the dictatorship.[81] Furthermore, Argentine art historian Ana Longoni wrote an essay that surveyed Argentine political performance art from the 1960s to the 2000s, and edited a volume on the history of and responses to the public art work the *Siluetazo* (1983), which was created in reaction to dictatorial repression and which memorialized the disappeared in the public sphere.[82] I add to this art historical literature through my identification of a typology of memorials to the disappeared in Argentina, and I discuss the memorials' formal qualities, style, and art historical precedents.

Literature on Memory Studies

Pertinent frameworks on memory include Maurice Halbwachs's writings, in which he argued that human memory can only function within a collective context, that individual memory relies on.[83] Collective memory as defined by Halbwachs is always selective; various groups of people have distinct collective memories, which in turn give rise to different modes of

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Marcelo Brodsky, *Memory Under Construction: The ESMA Debate*, Colección Lavistagorda (Buenos Aires, Argentina: La Marca, 2005).

[80] Reuter, Weschler, *Los Desaparecidos*.

[81] Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's "Dirty War"* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997).

[82] Ana Longoni, "Action Art in Argentina from 1960: The Body (Ex)posed," in *Arte No Es Vida* (New York: El Museo del Barrio, 2008): 84-101. Ana Longoni et al., *El Siluetazo*, Sentidos (Buenos Aires: Adriana Hidalgo Editora, 2008).

[83] Maurice Halbwachs and Lewis A. Coser, *On Collective Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

behavior.[84] For Halbwachs, memory does not exist unless one can discuss it, and he sees collective memory as a reconstruction of the past in light of the present.[85] The memorials created in Argentina are a product of collective memory's interaction with the past and the present. James E. Young expanded on Halbwachs's framework and provided a useful methodology and model in his study of Holocaust monuments and anti-monuments in Europe and his analysis of temporary versus permanent memorials.[86] Young discussed the notion of "collected memory," which emphasizes memory's fragmented and individualistic traits.[87] According to Young, collected memory is made up of disparate sets of memories and assembled in a single commemorative space.[88] Drawing upon Halbwachs's and Young's terms, I analyze how memorial forms dedicated to the disappeared are created by and operate on Argentina's collective and collected memory.

Site-specificity also plays a crucial role in understanding the meaning and content of the memorials dedicated to the disappeared in Argentina. Historian Pierre Nora's *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory), which is any entity such as a memorial, museum, or cemetery that "has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community" is particularly significant to this study.[89] Although Nora's discussion is specific to France, his theory can be applied more broadly to Argentina, which also constructs sites of memory to block forgetting. Another scholar who aids in the understanding of a site's role in memorialization is geographer

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[84] Ibid. Halbwach analyzed dreams, family, religion, and social class in relation to collective memory.
[85] Ibid., 173.
[86] James Edward Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).
[87] Connerton essentially formed the concept of "collected memory," but Young was the first to use this specific term. Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
[88] Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*, xi.
[89] Pierre Nora, ed., *Les Lieux de mémoire* (seven volumes) (Paris: Edition Gallimard, 1996), xvii.

Kenneth E. Foote who examined the treatment of the actual spaces of tragic events and provided a typology of sites of trauma in the United States that I believe also pertains to Argentina. He established four categories of sites of violence to understand the impact of memory on the landscape and history in the U.S. He described how history is inscribed into the landscape of the United States. His four categories on site and violence: conflation, designation, rectification, and obliteration can also be applied to Argentina.[90]

Methodology

Along with an integrated discussion of the above-mentioned literature, personal interviews of artists, architects, art curators, members of human rights organizations, family members of the disappeared, and torture survivors of state-sponsored terrorism illuminated the diverse opinions about memorialization in Argentina. In addition, audience interviews conducted at public memorials were critical in understanding the contemporary reception of the memorials to the disappeared. Many of the memorials that I discuss in this dissertation fall under the broader category of public art, which has maintained a satellite relationship to studio art and museum and gallery-supported fine art. I refer to audience instead of public to indicate those people who interact directly with the memorials in the public realm. This is because the term "public" is an amorphous concept, whereas the word "audience" is time-and space-specific.[91] I collected data from audience members through on-site interviews and discussions about the

[90] Kenneth E. Foote, *Shadowed Ground: America's Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003).
[91] A caveat should be noted in the application of the term audience, which can also imply a passive reception on the part of the audience member.

memorials at permanent sites.[92] I asked many individual visitors a series of questions to identify their own reaction to and understanding of the site and how they themselves used the memorial. I also recorded visitors' interactions with the memorials. The information that I collected was based on direct observation and when possible I recorded the interactions over an extended period of time.[93]

Sociologist Hugo Vezzetti asserted that after thirty years of the military coup the discord is no longer over whether to remember or forget. Instead, the conflict is between different and often contradictory ways of remembering.[94] According to Vezzeti, it is not whether we should remember, but what and how we remember. This dissertation analyzes the ways in which the disappeared are remembered by various sectors of society. The collective memory, or group memory, of a nation is physically manifested through the monuments and memorials that it chooses to erect. In Argentina, the visual languages used to express collective and collected memories vary according to patron and serve to highlight distinct political goals of competing memories about the dictatorship.

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[92] The distinction between public and audience, and the methodology of audience response was introduced to me during a 2006 The Graduate Center, City University of New York "Memorials" seminar taught by Harriet F. Senie.

[93] For a larger discussion of the methodology of audience response see Harriet F. Senie, "Responsible Criticism: Evaluating Public Art," *Sculpture Magazine* 22, 10 (December 2003). http://www.sculpture.org/documents/scmag03/dec03/senie/senie.shtml (accessed February 21, 2008).

[94] Hugo Vezzetti, *Pasado y Presente: Guerra, Dictadura y Sociedad En La Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Siglo Veintiuno Ed. Argentina, 2002), 15.

Chapter Summaries

Therefore, this dissertation is organized by patrons of the memorials and each chapter is arranged chronologically.[95] Chapter One, "Developing Memory: Human Rights Organizations as Patrons of Activist Memorials," addresses human rights organizations as sponsors of memorials to the disappeared, which took the shape of pictorial and performed denunciations of crimes against humanity by the members of the military dictatorship. In reaction to the dictatorship, Argentine human rights organizations developed a democratic form of memorialization in response to the *Processo*'s authoritarian grip. Their rejection of hierarchy and authoritarianism led to a multiplicity of forms in the public sphere. For example, The Madres de Plaza de Mayo used enlarged documentary photographs in public spaces beginning in 1977 as evidence of the disappeared's existence. Hijos por la Identidad y la Justicia contra el Olvido y el Silencio (Sons and Daughters for Identity and Justice Against Oblivion and Silence, H.I.J.O.S.) was part of the second generation of human rights organizations and was formed by children of the disappeared in the 1990s after Argentina's return to democracy. This group collaborated with the art collective Grupo de Arte Callejero (GAC) to create unsanctioned memorials in the form of performance and graffiti art that directly targeted the perpetrators of the dictatorship's crimes.

In Chapter Two "Institutional Spaces and Memory Formation" I discuss cultural institutions that sponsored memorials to educate the public about the dictatorship. I compare the shift in content of the memorials from three periods: the era of censorship under the dictatorship (1976-1983), the decade of politically enforced forgetting (1986-1994), and the memory boom (1995-1998). This chapter begins with a discussion of censorship under the dictatorship and the artistic strategies that artists such as Juan Carlos Distéfano (b. 1933) and Diana Dowek (b. 1942)

[95] See Appendix 1 for a timeline of the memorials produced by each patron and Argentine history.

used to avoid the government censors. It then turns to an analysis of the goals of a newspaper, cultural center, and educational institutions in memorializing the disappeared through circulating memorials, art exhibitions, and permanent memorial sites to educate the populace about Argentine history.

Chapter Three "Competing for Memory: Government Patronage and the Parque de la memoria" is a case study that analyzes the government-commissioned memorial, the Parque de la memoria (Park of Memory, now under construction). The park is a green space with seventeen abstract and figurative sculptures by artists including Dennis Oppenheim (1938-2011), William Tucker (b. 1935), and Nicolás Guagnini (b. 1966), as well as a monument dedicated to the victims of state-sponsored terrorism by Varas-Lestard-Baudizone Studio in Buenos Aires.[96] The park signaled a new paradigm in public art and memorialization practice: it was the first sculpture park dedicated to memory. I argue that the government-supported monument at the park took the form of minimalism, a global memorial paradigmatic style used to convey a message of national reconciliation that the Alfonsín and Menem administrations touted.

A comparative analysis between Argentina's memorial production and sponsorship and similar commemorative activity found in Chile is offered in Chapter Four, "Memory Construction in Chile." Chile was also subjected to military dictatorships and disappearances of its citizens during the 1970s and 1980s. In this chapter, I discuss the government sponsorship of sites of memory in the form of a monument and an ex-clandestine detention center, the distinct role of the Church in human rights in Chile, and the valorized status of victims' families in the construction of a memorial to the disappeared. The situation in Chile explicates the Argentine memorial process through overlapping and divergent artistic strategies for memorializing the

[96] After 2000 it was just Varas Studio that was in charge of the monument's design.

victims of state-sponsored terrorism in the same geo-political region. Finally, the epilogue explores the political uses of vandalism by human rights organizations and supporters of the military government on monuments and memorials dedicated to the disappeared and the military.

Despite the patronage group, the mnemonic projects discussed in this dissertation articulate Argentina's past, present, and future, and the commemorations themselves have become sites of public debate.[97] I focus on the juxtaposition of the permanence of monuments to commemorate the disappeared versus the performative capturing of the disappeared's trace. This project questions whether the memorials are reinforcing the place of the disappeared in history or disappearing their memory once again. Comparative literature scholar Andreas Huyssen reminded us that "we are living in a time in which the remembered past invades the present."[98] It is the tensions and conflicts, as expressed in visual memorial form during and after the dictatorship, that this dissertation explores in order to understand how the memorials dedicated to the victims of state-sponsored terrorism under the dictatorship are themselves a reflection of the present moment in which their memorials were created and the inherent tensions and competing claims of memory and power.

[97] James E. Young argued that the most effective memorial is the debate surrounding the creation of memorials. Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*.
[98] Andreas Huyssen, "En Busca Del Tiempo Futuro," *Puentes* 1, no. 2 (December 2000): 12-29.

Chapter 1:
Developing Memory: Human Rights Organizations as Patrons of Activist Memorials

Your sons are considered subversives because they go out
to paint graffiti on the walls after strumming on their guitars.
-Argentine military Captain Ferrone's reply to Melchor
Cáceres who was looking for his disappeared sons.[1]

Introduction

In 1985, Dr. Julio César Strassera, the prosecutor in the trial of the Argentine military juntas declared, "Your Honors, I shall renounce any pretensions to originality, by using an expression which is not mine, but which belongs to the Argentine people. Your Honors: Never Again."[2] He hoped that never again would Argentina experience a government that practiced kidnappings, torture, and murder. Despite Strassera's pronouncement, Jorge Julio Lopéz, a labor activist who was taken by the military dictatorship (1976-1983) in 1976 and released after three years of being tortured in a clandestine detention center, was disappeared for a second time on September 18, 2006.[3] The second disappearance of Lopéz occurred after he testified against Miguel Osvaldo Etchecolatz, a former police commander whom Lopéz identified in court as his

[1] The reply Melchor Cáceres received when he went to look for his sons, twins Amado Nelson and Arnaldo Darío Cáceres, at the Viejo Bueno garrison in the vicinity of Monte Chingolo, Buenos Aires province (file No. 5281). The twins were aged seventeen, both played in a pop music band. Conadep, *Never Again* (*Núnca Más*): Report of Conadep (National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons), Part II Victims-B. Adolescents Section, 1984.
[2] Amnesty International, *The Military Juntas and Human Rights: Report of the Trial of the Former Junta Members*, *1985* (London: Amnesty International, 1987).
[3] Patrick J. McDonnell, "Dirty War Victim Again Missing," *Los Angeles Times*, November 6, 2006.

chief tormentor thirty years prior.[4] The case of Etchecolatz was among the first to come to trial in 2006 after an Argentine court repealed the presidential pardons and amnesty laws.

A photograph of Lopéz was printed in newspapers across the globe (Fig. 3). His image appeared in the photograph even as he himself was disappeared. Lopéz's second abduction echoed the double disappearance of Argentina's disappeared. First, their bodies were disappeared, then the Argentine Republic turned its eyes away from them in a denial of the nation's painful and veiled history. The dictatorship blinded a population of citizens who witnessed the military operations, including closing off entire neighborhoods, kidnappings, killings, and the dumping of bodies in broad daylight. In the culture of the dictatorship Argentines quickly learned not to see in order to survive.

The continuation of disappearance for over twenty-eight years after the dictatorship ended suggests that the memorials to the disappeared are not simply mnemonic aids to decipher a once-buried past. Rather, they serve as active warnings for the present. This chapter seeks to contextualize sponsorship of memorials to the disappeared by national human rights organizations including: The Madres de Plaza de Mayo (Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, Madres), The Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo, Abuelas), H.I.J.O.S. (Hijos e Hijas por la Identidad y la Justicia contra el Olvido y el Silencio, Children of the Disappeared Against Silence and Forgetting), and neighborhood organizations. In this context, commissioning artworks does not necessarily correlate with a financial exchange; instead, these organizations collaborated with participating artists to create works for the human rights' cause and to make the disappeared present in the public eye. As the memorials discussed in this chapter were constructed, created, and performed in the public sphere, the perpetrators of the crimes of

[4] Etchecolatz was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment in 2006 on charges of homicide, kidnapping, and torture.

disappearance walked freely amongst civil society. The memorials sponsored by human rights organizations aimed to make the citizens see the realities of the country by remapping the territory that the dictatorship hid by design. The commemoration process in Argentina began from below with human rights organizations and community groups who adopted "low" materials, simple, inexpensive, and quotidian, to create their activist memorials. In Chapter Four, I will explore the passage from "low" to "high" materials to create more permanent memorial structures.

This chapter presents a chronological account of the artistic strategies that were used to memorialize the disappeared as the human rights organizations' political foci evolved. The vast majority of public memorials to the disappeared from the 1970s to the 1990s were temporary and ephemeral, and therefore allowed for a changing platform of human rights organizations' demands, which prompted a shifting visual representation of the disappeared. Under the dictatorship, these organizations countered the military's denial of the disappeared and the clandestine detention centers through visual media. Art critic Miguel Briante posited, "Maybe it is because the visual arts are closer to the hand than the mind that they were the first to oppose the order to lose one's memory."[5] Artists working for the cause of human rights countered what Briante dubbed the "laws of forgetting" to remember the disappeared through a visual dialogue in opposition to the dictatorship's censorship of the arts. The use and occupation of public space by human rights organizations under the dictatorship and in relation to the memories of the disappeared is a chronicle of subversive actions accomplished through the display of visual renderings of the disappeared.

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[5] Miguel Briante, "Introduction," in Marcelo. Brodsky et al., *Nexo: Un Ensayo Fotográfico De Marcelo Brodsky = Nexo: a Photographic Essay by Marcelo Brodsky* (Buenos Aires: La Marca, 2001). "Tal vez por eso las artes visuales-gestuales, más cerca de la mano que de la cabeza- fueron las primeras en oponerse a la orden de perder la memoria."

The human rights organizations employed distinct artistic strategies to build a series of commemorative protests, which memorialized the disappeared, called for the action of their return, and later demanded justice and punishment for the perpetrators. To "commemorate" finds its etymology in the Latin *commemorāre, which means* to bring to remembrance and to put on record.[6] The human rights organizations put on record the disappearances in visual form when the official accounts did not acknowledge their existence and the dictatorial government's courts refused the filing of official records, such as writs of habeas corpus. Thus the human rights organizations constructed a politically, legally, and socially informed visual framework for Argentines to understand their past.

Two generations of human rights groups have embraced the arts as a key form of protest and as a memorialization strategy. The first generation, the Madres, was also the first under the dictatorship to protest the disappearance of their loved ones in the 1970s and early 1980s through multiple artistic strategies in collaboration with artists including Guillermo Kexel (b. 1955), Julio Flores (b. 1950), and Rodolfo Aguerreberry (1942-1997).[7] By the 1990s, a younger generation of activists emerged and expanded upon these established strategies. To explore the second generation's memorials, I will focus on H.I.J.O.S. and the organization's work with Grupo de Arte Calljero (Street Art Group, GAC) as well as other art collectives and neighborhood organizations. Distinct artistic strategies embraced by these human rights organizations included documentary photography, guerilla protest art, performance, graffiti, collective public art actions, and urban interventions.

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[6] "commemorate, v.". OED Online, June 2011, Oxford University Press (accessed August 10, 2011).

[7] The Madres split into two factions in 1986. Prior to 1986 they shared common goals and strategies. Since 1986 they have created divergent political platforms and distinct concepts of memorialization.

Each of the artistic tactics listed above lie outside traditional spaces for visual arts – the galleries and museums. At the time documentary photography (and later personal family snapshots), guerilla art, performance, and graffiti were not yet recognized by the official art establishment. These forms or models challenged gallery practice by creating an exhibition in the street in the tradition of the *pre-Processo* (the time period before the dictatorship's Process of National Reorganization) and 1960s Happenings by avant-garde artists like Marta Minujín (b. 1943) and Alberto Greco (1931-1965), as studied by art historian Andrea Giunta.[8] The 1970s under the dictatorship saw a tremendous transition from the earlier decade. Previously, installation and performance art proliferated and was supported by institutions such as the Instituto Di Tella and the Centro de Arte y Comunicación (Center for Art and Communication, CAYC) in Buenos Aires; therefore, collective, political artistic actions were not a new phenomenon in Argentina.[9] The 1970s visual arts expression continued but was repressed and impeded under the 1976-1983 military dictatorship, and photography during this period took on the role of documentation.[10]

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[8] Andrea Giunta, *Avant-garde, Internationalism, and Politics: Argentine Art in the Sixties* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007). For further information on Argentine art before the Processo see Inés Katzenstein, *Listen, Here, Now!: Argentine Art of the 1960s: Writings of the Avant-garde* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2004).

[9] For example, as discussed in the introductory chaper, *Tucumán Arde* (*Tucumán is Burning*, 1968), a collective art action in Rosario and Buenos Aires in conjunction with the CGTA (Confederación General de Trabajo de los Argentinos) trade union offices, adhered to art's ability to affect social change. It attempted to bring attention to the distressing working conditions in the northern province of Tucumán to the general public. *Tucumán Arde* was created under Juan Carlos Onganía's military dictatorship (1966-1970); which attempted to silence these actions.

[10] Sara Facio, *La Fotografía En La Argentina: Desde 1840 a Nuestros Días* (Buenos Aires: La Azotea Editorial Fotográfica, 2008).

Madres (*Mothers)*

The *Processo* infused its message in the lives of its citizens, but it particularly targeted women through print media, posters, and television. According to Diana Taylor, "Under the gaze of the military's strict masculine imagery, motherhood was placed at the forefront of government control and the domestic realm was no longer apolitical. The military's pressure for women to control their children transformed the home."[11] In an open letter to Argentine mothers the military stated:

> We insist: mothers have a fundamental role to carry out. In these criminal times that we live in, before this subversive war that threatens to destroy all, one of the key objectives of the enemy is your child, that is, the mentality of your child. It is up to you, mothers, who wield the most force and authority, who can disrupt this strategy if you dedicate more time than ever to the care of your children.[12]

In addition to this admonition, the junta distributed posters with the question, "Do you know where your child is?" The message was charged with the information that mothers were responsible for their children's actions and that the disappeared were involved in covert acts of terrorism. It also perversely implied that the mothers were responsible for their children's disappearances.[13]

Most of the Madres were previously apolitical and, despite the military's accusation, relied on their image of motherhood as a protected status. Collective protests against the

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[11] Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's "Dirty War"* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 88.

[12] Junta Militar, "Carta abierta a las madres argentinas," *Para Ti*, Argentina, July 5, 1976. "Insistimos: las madres tienen un papel fundamental que desempeñar. En este tiempo criminal que nos toca vivir, ante esta guerra subversiva que amenaza destruirlo todo, uno de los objetivos claves del enemigo es su hijo, la mente de su hijo. Y son ustedes, las madres, con más fuerza y efectividad que nadie, las que podrán desbaratar esa estrategia si dedican más tiempo que nunca al cuidado de sus hijos."

[13] In the 1990s the Madres responded with a poster campaign that read, "Do you know where those who tortured and assassinated our children are? Do you know what positions they hold, what they are involved in?"

dictatorship to show the faces of the disappeared began with the formation of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo and the group's first public march on April 30, 1977.[14] The Madres took to the streets not motivated by a feminist cause, but because the military had blurred the space between the public and the private by pillaging homes and kidnapping children.[15] President of the Asociación Madres, Hebe de Bonafini described the Madres's rationale for entering the public realm, "We made ourselves, our struggle and our pain public and collective and together we went to a public place, The Plaza [de Mayo], so that everyone could see us."[16] Their individual, private losses prompted them to enter into the public sphere.

The government censored the media and, as stated above, did not allow families to file writs of habeas corpus. Therefore, the taking over of public space was paramount to making the disappeared present in the citizenry's daily view.[17] Public space is often equated with a democratic sphere for the people; under the dictatorship, it was one of prohibition, control, and restriction. The junta cleared the streets and plazas and placed them under surveillance; thus Argentines had to relearn the concept of communal space.[18] The dictatorship stopped public gatherings of civil society and political organizations and altered the layout of the Plaza de

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[14] In 1986 The Madres de Plaza de Mayo split into two factions: The Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo (Association of the Mothers of the de Plaza de Mayo, Asociación) and Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora (The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo-Founding Line, Madres-LF). I am addressing events before the group divided and will therefore use the organization's original name in this section.

[15] Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's "Dirty War,"* 198.

[16] Hebe De Bonafini, interview with Juan Gelman and Mara la Madrid, *Ni El Flaco Perdón De Diós: Hijos De Desaparecidos* (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 1997), 55. "Nosotras, nuestra lucha y nuestro dolor, los hicimos públicos y colectivos y juntas fuimos a un lugar público, la Plaza, para que nos viera todo el mundo."

[17] For a discussion on photographs of the disappeared in private, interior spaces see Ludmila da Silva. Catela, *No Habrá Flores En La Tumba Del Pasado: La Experiencia De Reconstrucción Del Mundo De Los Familiares De Desaparecidos* (La Plata: Ediciones Al Margen, 2001).

[18] Marguerite Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 192.

Mayo, a traditional space of protest in front of the Casa Rosada, the seat of government, by restricting pedestrian paths and overlaying the formerly clear pathways with plantings.[19] Through such actions, the government inadvertently mobilized the Madres and initiated their marches. Standing still in one place with a group would have been the equivalent to holding a meeting, which dictatorial law prohibited, so the women had to move around constantly in a circle to avoid arrest. The Madres subverted the military's demeaning and dismissive nickname "The Mad Women of the Plaza" by adopting the name The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo.[20] These previously apolitical women applied non-violent action to call attention to the disappearances, which had so tremendously impacted their private lives.

The Role of Photography

Argentina's disappeared reappeared through the photographic medium. The photographs of the disappeared are one of the most common forms of commemoration and they maintain a prominent place in Argentina's visual culture and collected and collective memory. Although now contested, the photograph is often claimed to represent the so-called truth mechanically, chemically, or digitally. The photograph often functions as a transparent document. Photography's connection with truth is further complicated by the long-standing difficulty in locating the photograph's authenticity. Walter Benjamin wrote about the photographic portrait's auratic qualities, something that he saw as a special exception to his view of photography as a

[19] Memoria Abierta, *Memorias en la ciudad: señales del terrorismo de estado en Buenos Aires* (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 2009), 5. The history of restrictions at the Plaza de Mayo continued under a democratic government. President Carlos Saúl Menem installed police barriers to separate the protesters from the Casa Rosada. In 2001 the barriers came up to the middle of the plaza. It was not until 2005, that the Legislature of the City of Buenos Aires declared the space around the Pyramid of May where the mothers marched, a historic site.
[20] Jennifer G. Schirmer, "'Those Who Die for Life Cannot Be Called Dead:' Women and Human Rights Protest in Latin America," *Feminist Review*, 32 (July 1, 1989): 23.

destroyer of authenticity and tradition. He observed, "The cult of remembrance of loved ones, absent or dead, offers a last refuge for the cult value of the picture. For the last time the aura emanates from the early photographs in the fleeting expression of a human face."[21]

The Official Photograph

The Madres exploited the auratic quality of the photograph and its status as a document and conveyor of truth to demonstrate to the dictatorship and the Argentine and international community that their children had legitimately existed. To protest their disappearances, the Madres carried and wore photographs from official government-issued identification documents at the Plaza de Mayo. This served a dual purpose. First, the official photograph was material evidence of the existence of the disappeared. The government, via the photograph, recognized, witnessed, and recorded the disappeared person through a camera lens. Film scholar Catherine Grant stated, "Identity cards and passport photographs are precisely the generic images the state requires *of* its citizens, to prove their status *as* citizens."[22] The Madres enlarged the ID pictures until they were of a size with family portraiture, giving IDs a different sort of dignity. The human rights organization subverted the official government ID document, which is associated with discipline, and recuperated it as a progressive protest and familial act of love (Fig. 4).

Taylor described the Madres's public protest strategy as turning "their [bodies] into walking billboards, carrying banners, placards, and photographs of their children."[23] In this way,

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[21] Walter Benjamin, Hannah Arendt, and Harry Zohn, *Illuminations*, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968), 226.
[22] Catherine Grant, "Still Moving Images: Images of the Disappeared in Films about the Dirty War in Argentina," in *Phototextualities Intersection of Photography and Narrative*, eds. Alex Hughes and Andrea Noble (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), 71.
[23]Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's "Dirty War,"* 187.

the mothers' bodies became a stand-in for the body of the disappeared through the manipulation, enlargement, and physical donning of the photograph (Fig. 5).[24] Anthropologist Ludmila da Silva Catela posited that the origin of adorning photographs came from the women of Calabria, Italy who wore photos of the deceased and thereby made their mourning process more public than private (Fig. 6).[25]

The official documents revealed nothing of the disappeared's political beliefs or social activism; the black and white photographs did not contextualize the private life of the sitter. With a shift in scale and the addition of movement in the Plaza, the Madres removed the photographs from the condition of their original creation. The official photograph's original purpose as a document was not to arouse compassion. However, as classics scholar Gail Holst-Warhaft pointed out, "It requires little effort to imagine the pain of the mothers. They display it for us graphically, in a way the average mother can understand without being forced to comprehend the danger of the display."[26] The Madres made the images speak by prying them loose of their original body and organization.

The historical relationship between photography and official identification methods dates back to the Paris Commune of 1871. Parisian police functionary Alphonse Bertillon (1853-1914) developed anthropometry (later known as *bertillonage*), a criminal identification procedure that combined the photograph and statistical data. Bertillon standardized mug shots and criminal

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[24] Catela, *No Habrá Flores En La Tumba Del Pasado: La Experiencia De Reconstrucción Del Mundo De Los Familiares De Desaparecidos*.
[25] Ibid. For a detailed study of the use of photographs of the dead in Calabrian ritual see Francesco Faeta, "La mort en images," *Terrain*, 20: 69-81.
[26] Gail Holst-Warhaft, *The Cue for Passion: Grief and Its Political Uses* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), 16.

evidence photographs.[27] The Madres subverted the mug shot by parading official photographs of their children; the blatant display of the photographs was a declaration of their children's unlawful persecution.

Two shifts in the use and perception of the photographic medium by the Madres emerged in the later protest marches of the early 1980s. The Madres now emphasized that they were the mothers of all 30,000 disappeared, not individuals. Grant recorded this change:

> As for photographs, although the Mothers clearly used these initially for their testimonial and evidentiary status, as the physical scale of public demonstrations increased, the direct, personal associations of the photos became imbricated with their spectacular, memorializing effect. The aesthetic emphasis in the campaigns shifted, then from the relatively straightforward indexical function of the photographs ("Here pinned to my body is a picture of *my* daughter who has been 'disappeared': where is she?") toward an even greater *iconic* significance ("Here are *masses* of photos of all the disappeared children of our nation, criminally taken in the prime of their lives: where are they?").[28]

The single photograph of the disappeared was transformed from a personal, individual print to a now symbolic collective portrait of the 30,000 disappeared (Fig. 7). Paul Williams, referring to a large numbers of victims in a mass atrocity, pointed out, "Numbers beyond those we can picture in our minds—perhaps in the area of dozens—default to some enormity where scale is lost and victims become a sheer mass of humanity."[29] The photographs shown collectively counteracted this loss of scale. Madre Luisa Weinschelbaum de Rubino described some of the audience responses to the disappeareds' composite portrait: "When we protested with the photos of our children, held high, some people approached us to look at the faces and they told us that only from seeing them, did they realize that the disappeared were real people, that they were not a

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[27] Jeannene M. Przyblyski, "Revolution at a Standstill: Photography and the Paris Commune of 1871," *Yale French Studies* 101 (2001), 57.
[28] Grant, "Still Moving Images," 68.
[29] Paul Williams, *Memorial Museums: The Global Rush to Commemorate Atrocities* (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2007), 153.

number lost in official history."[30] The realism of the photographs removed the abstraction from the mass number of missing and presented individuals rather than a faceless number.

In addition to emphasizing the disappearances, the Madres aimed to underscore the government's role as perpetrator of disappearance by using the space of the Plaza de Mayo to make their family members appear through the photographic medium. These protests and artistic productions transformed the Plaza de Mayo into a site of living memory of the disappeared that merged Argentine national history with personal testimonies. The Plaza, through the participatory politics articulated in performance and the photograph, carved out a space for the disappeared to remain present through their visual index. The site of the plaza witnessed and sparked a return of the 1960s pre-dictatorship model of collaborative art-making practices that continued into the 1980s and 1990s.

The Other Official Photographs of the Disappeared

As the Madres walked their circular path holding the photographs of their children in public, the authoritarian government circulated another portrait of the disappeared internally. The other official photographs of the disappeared were taken in clandestine detention centers to process detainees, and the government used these same photographs to torment some of the disappeared's family members psychologically. The security police sent members of the Madres pictures of their tortured children in an effort to scare the group into ceasing its activity.[31] The

[30] Luisa Weinschelbaum de Rubino, Stenographic Version, Public Hearing: Monument and Sculptural Group Buenos Aires, Argentina May 22, 1998, 16. "Cuando manifestabamos con las fotos de nuestros hijos en alto, algunas personas se acercaban a mirar las caras y nos decían que sólo al verlas se daban cuenta de que los desaparecidos eran personas reales, que no eran un número perdido dentro de la historia official."

[31] Marguerite Guzman Bouvard, *Revolutionizing Motherhood: The Mothers of the Plaza De Mayo* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1994), 73.

violence of the photographic vocabulary (shoot, capture, crop) is revealed in the mug shots of the disappeared that the dictatorship captured.[32] The camera became a weapon of mental terror since the physical results of the torture sessions were documented by the torturers (Fig. 8).

One of the tasks of detainees was to produce fake identification documents for the paramilitary forces. The Argentine military used the disappeared as slave laborers between 1980 and 1983.[33] Ex-detained-disappeared person Victor Basterra (b. 1941) was a graphic designer subjected to forced labor at *Escuela de Suboficiales de Mecánica de la Armada* (The Navy Mechanic School for Officers, ESMA), the notorious clandestine detention center, where he was imprisoned from August 10, 1979 to December 3, 1983.[34] Basterra was obligated to create false documents used by the repressors. During this time, he secretly made copies of the photographs of both the disappeared and the perpetrators and saved a replica of every portrait that he took or developed, which he later gave to the Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (The Center for Legal and Social Studies, CELS) in August 1984.[35] Basterra described his experience: "I had the misfortune, or the luck for the sake of memory, of having rescued the last photos of these companions. The last photos…and not the last photos taken at a party or in the park. [They were] taken after being tortured."[36]

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[32] Other sinister uses of the photograph by the government included requiring factories to photograph its employees for worker identification cards. The factory management, then handed over these same photographs to the military, who used them to identify which workers it would kidnap.

[33] Claudio Martyniuk, *Esma: Fenomenología De La Desaparición* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo libros, 2004).

[34] Ex-detained-disappeared person refers to those people that were kidnapped by the military and held at ex-CCDs and who were eventually released.

[35] Interview with Victor Basterra, *Página 12*, Buenos Aires, January 4, 2001.

[36] Marcelo Brodsky, *Memory Under Construction: The ESMA Debate*, Colección Lavistagorda (Buenos Aires, Argentina: La Marca, 2005), 3. "Yo tuve la desgracia, o la suerte para la memoria, de haber rescatado las últimas fotos de estos compañeros. Las últimas fotos…Y no las últimas fotos sacadas en una fiesta o en un parque. Sacadas después de la tortura."

Just as the identification photographs were proof of the disappeared's existence, the photographs that Basterra seized from ESMA were proof positive of the dictatorship's crimes.[37] Basterra stated:

> I did not click the shutter, but one day, when I was working in the photography lab, I saw that they had a pile of photographs to burn; it was '83, and already the changes were starting. In the pile I saw my own portrait, my own photo when they had just caught me, the one that they shot the same day that they photographed all of us against the same wall. So I grabbed all the negatives that I could and I hid them between my pants and my stomach, close to my balls.[38]

In his statement, Victor Basterra stressed that he was not the photographer. Instead, he was the image's secondary auteur by retrieving these photographs from the clandestine detention center and bringing them into public consciousness. The dictatorship did not anticipate that these documents would be transformed into evidence of its own actions.

Urban Interventions

Urban Interventions under the Dictatorship

By the early 1980s, Argentines en masse began to follow in the footsteps of the Madres's commemorative protest actions. In 1982, after years of only small pockets of public demonstrations, Argentines took to the streets. The failed attempt to control the Malvinas Islands (also referred to as the Falkand Islands in English) during the war that Argentina instigated against Britain that year, combined with soaring inflation, motivated people to protest against the government. The Madres began Marches of Resistance in September 1981. The driving force

[37] Basterra was kidnapped on August 10, 1979 and released in August 1984.
[38] "Yo no apreté el botón. Pero un día, trabajando en el laboratorio, vi que tenían una pila de fotos para quemar; era el '83, ya se venían los cambios. Y entre ellas vi mi retrato, mi propia foto cuando me acaban de chupar, la que sacaron el mismo día en que nos fotografiaron a todos contra a la misma pared. Entonces metí la mano en la pila y me guardé los negativos que pude agarrar, los escondí entre la panza y el pantalón, ahí los puse, cerca de los huevos." Quoted in Brodsky, *Memory Under Construction: The ESMA Debate*, 4.

behind the Third March of Resistance on September 21-22, 1983 was a challenge to the amnesty laws that the military government passed in order to protect its military members from prosecution before ceding office to a democratically elected government.[39] During this march, before the collapse of the military junta, human rights organizations took over the Plaza de Mayo in an aesthetic gesture of protest through the creation of life-size silhouettes.

The *Siluetazo* (Body Tracings) of September 21, 1983 was a temporary public artwork initiated by the artists Rodolfo Aguerreberry, Guillermo Kexel, and Julio Flores in conjunction with three main patrons: the Madres, Abuelas, and Frente por los Derechos Humanos (Front for Human Rights, FPDH), which was made up of youths who supported the Madres and their cause (Fig. 9).[40] The left-wing political group Intransegencia y Movilización (Intransigence and Mobilization) of which Aguerreberry was a member, also collaborated on the creation of this original portrayal of the disappeared in the form of silhouettes. Flores had participated in Arte Gráfico-Grupo Buenos Aires (1970-1975), a collective that created art in the street and then sold

[39] Inés Vázquez, *Luchar Siempre: Las Marchas De La Resistencia, 1981-2006* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Madres de Plaza de Mayo, 2007), 27. The first March of Resistance occurred on December 11, 1981 and took place at the Plaza de Mayo for twenty-four hours. Activists continuously marched around the Piramide de Mayo to commemorate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Police surrounded the plaza to prevent people from joining in, but many supporters used the subway passage that traveled under the Plaza to participate.

[40] A debate exists as to how to title the image of the silhouettes. Scholars and artists refer to this work using multiple derivatives of the word silhouette, such as: siluetada, silhouettes, etc. I use the term Siluetazo, because it suggests a swift and forceful action. Aguerreberry, Flores, and Kexel shared a studio and wanted to intervene in the 1982 Salón de Objetos y Experiencias sponsored by the Esso Foundation at The Centro Cultural Recoleta (Recoloeta Cultural Center) to show the disappeared and demonstrate the physical space that they were no longer taking up. What was originally conceived for a gallery was taken into public space and transformed from a happening to a collective, guerilla artwork. They were never able to show their work in the art space in part because of the impossibility of fitting 30,000 figures in the gallery and the Salon was cancelled due to the Malvinas War. Instead, Envar "Cacho" El Kadri, an exiled Peronist activist (exiled in 1975 in France) suggested to Aguerreberry, Flores, and Kexel that they take their idea to the Madres.

its work at affordable prices; he channeled this same spirit of disseminating art in the public realm into the *Siluetazo*.[41]

Despite a large military presence, on September 21, 1983 the above-mentioned organizations and artists, along with students and passers-by, created thousands of human silhouettes that were posted all over the Plaza de Mayo and the streets, sidewalks, walls, monuments, and trees of Buenos Aires.[42] Hundreds of protestors painted the silhouettes and used their own bodies as outlines (Fig. 10).[43] Flores pointed out that a danger existed in this art production because a meeting of more than five people was already a reason to arouse the military's suspicion, and the fact that this urban intervention was produced without the dictatorship's spies uncovering the artists' plans provoked the military's ire.[44] Despite police repression, the production and dissemination of the silhouettes lasted until the middle of the night. The project's trajectory included creating a lasting trace of the disappeared's image. A member of Madres exclaimed, "They [the military] are also going to have to disappear the posters."[45] Accordingly, the protestors left the silhouettes on the street and, unlike the photographs, once the commemoration protest action ended, the silhouettes continued to have a presence until they too were taken down and disappeared.

With the *Siluetazo*, the Madres changed their aesthetic strategy from displaying the verisimilitude of their children through the photographic medium to an even less personal abstract silhouette. The silhouettes are an anonymous simulacrum of a collective 30,000

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[41] Juan Carlos Romero (b. 1931) was a founding member of this group.
[42]"30,000 Figuras 'Evocativas,'" *Cronica*, Buenos Aires, September 22, 1983.
[43] For a full history and analysis of the *Siluetazo*'s legacy of representation see Ana Longoni et al., *El Siluetazo*, Sentidos (Buenos Aires: Adriana Hidalgo Editora, 2008).
[44] Julio Flores, interview by author, Buenos Aires, Argentina, September 16, 2009.
[45] "Finaliza La Marcha De La Resistencia Contra La Ley De Amnistía," *El Clarín* (Buenos Aires, September 22, 1983), sec. Politica. "También a los carteles los van a tener que hacer desaparecer."

disappeared, unlike the specific identification photographs. The *Siluetazo* is an index of the disappeared and released the missing from the enclosed frame. This paper metaphor of presence applied figuration as an artistic strategy that the military and passers-by could clearly decipher. The photograph functioned as proof of existence and disappearance, but it was a frozen image and thereby froze the disappeared in time. This static effect lended a morbid quality to the photograph; a drawing, on the other hand, charged an image with life.

The artists, with the help of art students, constructed 1,500 silhouettes as templates to make the image of the body homogeneous.[46] The materials were simple, readily available, and consisted of rolls of butcher paper, paints, colored pencil, and paint rollers. The Madres and Abuelas funded the project and participants spontaneously contributed to the Siluetazo's creation with markers, pens, paper, and other supplies.[47] The silhouettes' images emerged from a combination of intentional and inadvertent techniques such as *frottage* that resulted from rubbing crayons against the pavement's rough texture.[48] The original proposal suggested personalizing each drawing to include dress, physical characteristics, gender, age, etc., however, because an exact list of the disappeared did not exist, the Madres disagreed about the drawings' specifications. Political theorist Eduardo Grüner suggested that the silhouettes were like the chalk outlines that police trace over a dead body. In order to avoid this interpretation the Madres demanded that the silhouettes be placed on the walls as if standing, instead of lying on the ground, as if deceased.[49] In addition, the Abuelas insisted on the drawn presence of pregnant women and children. Aguerreberry traced the silhouette of Kexel's profile with a pillow against

[46] Ibid, 29.
[47] Flores, interview.
[48] Longoni et al., *El Siluetazo*.
[49] Eduardo Grüner, "A invisibilidad estratégica, o la rendención política de los vivos," in Ana Longoni, et al., *El Siluetazo*.

his abdomen to represent the missing mothers, and Kexel's three-year old son modeled for the children's silhouettes.

Although the patrons agreed that the silhouettes would be anonymous, family members of the disappeared, who did not belong to the founding groups, spontaneously personalized the silhouettes through the addition of names and dates of disappearance during the twenty-four hour, open-air workshop. The participation of an estimated 10,000 people (this number changes according to the political leanings of each newspaper) changed the homogenous image when, as the newspaper *El Clarín* reported, "A large number of youths presented themselves to be models of the silhouette drawings."[50] Art historian Ana Longoni pointed out that the action of writing the names on the silhouettes and including a physical characteristic like eyes and a mouth was a way for the disappeared's friends and family to say, "Amongst this crowd of silhouettes is my silhouette, that of my father, mother, or child, that of my friend, or disappeared sibling."[51] A reporter from *El Clarín* recorded the audience response to the figurative strategy, "This novelty [the *Siluetazo*] had a great repercussion among passers-by who confessed that they felt **'watched'** by these figures."[52] After the Third March of Resistance came to a close, the silhouettes continued to appear in the streets of Buenos Aires and in cities in the interior of the country. The re-creation of the silhouettes, like the reproduction of the photographs, insisted to passers-by, members of the armed forces and leaders of the democratic government that the disappeared are enfolded into Argentina's national collective and collected memory despite attempts to disappear them from official history.

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[50] "Finaliza La Marcha De La Resistencia Contra La Ley De Amnistía." "Un gran cantidad de jovenes se presentaron para ser "modelos" de los dibujos de las siluetas."

[51] Ana Longoni, *El Siluetazo*, 30. "Que entre esa multitud de siluetas esté *mi* silueta, la de mi padre, madre o hijo, la de mi amigo o hermano desaparecido."

[52] "Finaliza La Marcha De La Resistencia Contra La Ley De Amnistía." "Esta novedad tuvo una gran repurcusión entre los transeúntes que confesaban sentirse **'mirados'** por esas figuras."

The Madres's turn to drawing as a representational device for the disappeared in this aesthetic commemorative action finds its precedents in the *Otra-Figuración* movement of the 1960s, which adhered to the credo that the artist should make people see themselves and reality. *Otra-Figuración* artists like Luis Felipe Nóe (b. 1933), Rómulo Macció (b. 1931), Ernesto Deira (b. 1928), and Jorge de la Vega (b. 1930) believed that their art should reflect the current political instability in Argentina and emphasized the daily violence inflicted on the nation through drawing as a medium.[53] Along with *Otra Figuración*, The *Siluetazo* can also be placed in the art historical lineage of conceptual art projects like Alberto Greco's (1931-1965) Duchampian *Vivo Dito Incorporaciones de personajes a la tela* (1962) and Luis Pazos's (n.d.) *Una sabana ensangrentada* (*A Blood Stained Sheet,* 1972) in homage to leftist activists killed by a retaliatory government in the 1972 Trelew Massacre.[54]

The *Siluetazo* was based on a European Holocaust memorial in the form of a poster by Polish artist Jerzy Skapski (n.d.).[55] Skapski reproduced his work in the magazine the *UNESCO Courier* in October 1978 to accompany a series of articles on human rights (Fig. 11).[56] The poster depicted twenty-four rows of small silhouettes of men, women, and children in a white outline against a black background. In block lettering at the bottom of the composition's accompanying Polish text reads, "Every day at Auschwitz brought death to 2,370 people, and this is the number of figures represented above. The concentration camp at Auschwitz was in existence for 1,688 days and this is the exact number of copies of this poster printed. Altogether some four million people died at the camp." Flores, Aguerreberry, and Kexel applied Skapski's

[53] For a discussion on Noé's theories on art see Luis Felipe Noé, *Antiestética.* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Van Riel, 1965).
[54] Ana Longoni, "Introduction," in Ana Longoni, et al., *El Siluetazo*, 41.
[55] Flores, interview.
[56] Skapski's work appeared alongside the article by Radhika Coomaraswamy, "A Voice from the Third World," *The UNESCO Courier*, 1978.

conceptual artwork to create the silhouettes on a life-size scale. This appropriation marked the beginning of the human rights organizations' conscious application of Holocaust memorials to call attention to the political genocide that occurred in Argentina.[57]

A model for the silhouettes was also found locally and contemporaneously in José "Gafo" Garófalo's (b. 1964) *30,000 Disappeared* series (Fig. 12). Garófalo spray-painted life-size heads (12 x 7 inches) on the walls of Buenos Aires between 1980 and 1985 with the intent of depicting 30,000 busts. The *NN* scrawled at the bottom of the work stood for *ningún nombre* or no name/unidentified body. Garófalo explained his method of painting the images and the importance of writing 30,000 as the last element to his painting because it was writing the number of disappeared persons that politicized the image. He stated, "The synthesis, abstraction and way of painting were thought to avoid being caught by the police during the action of the painting. First, I painted the circles of the mouth, the head and the zeros. Then the blindfold, the stocks of the "n" and finally [the] number 3. Until then, if the police interrogated me, I could always say that I was just painting graffiti with no political message."[58] Without the support of the media to publicize the disappearances, artists and human rights organizations turned to putting graffiti on public walls, which became a medium and platform for the human rights cause. They created an alternative circuit of information flow through signs. The dictatorship

[57] The second influence was from the exiled Latin Americans living in Europe. The Asociación Internacional de Defensa de los Artistas Víctimas de la Desaparición en el Mundo (International Association in Defense of Artists That are Victims of Disappearance All Over the World, AIDA) was founded in Paris in October 1979. French stage director Ariane Mouchkine (b. 1939) and film director Claude Lelouch (b. 1937) made a series of flags and banners to use in marches in which the disappeared are represented like busts without faces or groups of silhouettes. On November 14, 1981, 10,000 protestors marched to demand the release of 100 detained and disappeared Argentine artists.

[58] Brodsky, *Memory Under Construction: The ESMA Debate*, 162.

recognized the political potency of these actions as is evidenced in Captain Ferrone's comments, quoted in the epigraph to this chapter.

Walls were also commandeered outside of Buenos Aires in the city of Rosario by artist and resistance fighter Fernando Traverso (b. 1951).[59] The resistance under the dictatorship used bicycles as a mode of transport; when a bike was found abandoned on the street it signaled that its rider had disappeared. In the middle of the night, during the years of the dictatorship, Traverso graffitied a black bike for each of his kidnapped comrades to call attention to their absence (Fig. 13). Whereas the *Siluetazo* and Garófalo's work invoked the disappeared through the presence of a stand-in body or body part, Traverso made the disappeared present in the viewer's mind through their absence. His ghostly bicycles without riders continue to haunt the streets of Rosario.[60]

Urban Interventions under the Democratic Government

The *Siluetazo* and graffiti projects during the dictatorship formed the foundation for creative modes of dissent under the democratically elected government. Multiple collective art groups emerged to participate in the human rights organizations' commemorative protest actions and a third evolution of artistic strategies evolved from the guerilla tactics that began under the *Siluetazo* in 1983. When Argentina returned to a democratic government under the leadership of Raúl Ricardo Alfonsín (1983-89), human rights organizations augmented their strategies to encompass additional guerilla art tactics that included graffiti, stenciling, and collective actions in the form of performances and ephemeral public art. They marked the physical sites of

[59] An estimated 350 people were disappeared in Rosario during the military dictatorship.
[60] The metaphor of absence represented through riderless bicycles also appears in the art collective Visual Resistance's *Ghost Bikes* of New York City that began in 2005 as a memorial to bikers that were killed in car accidents.

disappearance to transform them into sites of memory. The full truth behind the disappearances was never resolved under Alfonsín, and families and human rights organizations continually struggled with the transitional government's handling of the issue.

Alfonsín ordered the exhumations of mass graves of the disappeared. However, the exhumations were conducted in a haphazard, disorganized, and unscientific way, which caused further pain to the families and led the Madres and Abuelas to protest the government's actions.[61] At this time, the media finally began to report the disappearances, because the democratic government, unlike the military dictatorship, did not censor the press. However, the Madres viewed the media's publication of photographs of bones and cadavers in disinterred boxes as a government media campaign that aimed to prove the disappeared's death in order to close that dark chapter of Argentine history and avoid the persecution of those responsible for disappearances. The Madres protested this image of the disappeared because the dead body of the disappeared was, for the families, an unacceptable representation.[62] The organization objected to the exhumations by refusing the bones because at this point in the historic trajectory of disappearance, the Madres believed that it was imperative to identify the perpetrators of disappearance instead of the victims.[63] The disgracefully unearthed body of a disappeared person became a site of contention and its future representations by artists working with the human rights organizations evolved into a battle to reclaim the image of the disappeared.

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[61] The Abuelas supported exhumations that allowed for testing to confirm if a child was born in captivity. Equipo Argentino de Antropología Forense (The Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team, EAAF) is a non-governmental, not-for-profit, scientific organization that applies forensic sciences - mainly forensic anthropology and archaeology - to the investigation of human rights violations in Argentina and worldwide. It began in 1984 in an effort to form an alternate method of identifying bodies that respected the wishes of the Madres.

[62] Bouvard, *Revolutionizing Motherhood: The Mothers of the Plaza De Mayo*, 149.

[63] Ibid., 150. The Association of Ex-Detained, Ex-Disappeared Persons supported the Madres's position on exhumations.

The Alfonsín administration passed the Punto Final (Full Stop) Law in 1986 that set a final date of February 22, 1987 for filing suit against the perpetrators of human rights abuses under the dictatorship. The law prohibited further prosecution and trials of military personnel that were not filed by this date, thereby allowing torturers to walk free. On December 11-12, 1985, during the Fifth March of Resistance, which heralded the slogan "Trial and punishment for all guilty parties," El Grupo de Artistas Plásticos contra el Punto Final (Group of Visual Artists against the Full Stop Law) in conjunction with the FPDH demanded a veto of the Full Stop Law.[64] The literal translation of the Punto Final in English is the "final dot." El Grupo de Artistas Plásticos contra el Punto Final organized a workshop in the Plaza de Mayo to construct twenty-seven stencils to paint 30,000 dots, which corresponded to the number of disappeared claimed by human right organizations, on the sidewalk tiles of the Plaza in an ironic gesture to represent the disappeared by the very thing that threatened to erase the memory of the disappeared. This action shared visual allusions and similar production strategies with the *Siluetazo*, but adhered to an aesthetic of bodily absence through conceptual representation to connote the disappeared and protest the law.

Other innovative forms of commemorative protest emerged during the return to democracy to fight the forgetting that, despite the new government, continued to threaten the memory of the disappeared. Performance art, a crossbreeding of art forms, became a key strategy, drawing upon multiple disciplines and media. Traditionally, artists have used performance as a means of confronting the prevailing art establishment.[65] In the case of

[64] Vázquez, *Luchar Siempre: Las Marchas De La Resistencia, 1981-2006*.
[65] Rose Lee Goldberg, *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990).

Argentina, performance was used to create a new paradigm of memorialization through the confrontation of political powers.

Marcha de las máscaras blancas (The March of the White Masks, 1985), organized by Fercho Czarny (b. 1961), artist and founder of the FPDH, Pedro Lanteri (n.d.), and the Madres, was a conceptual performance on April 25, 1985 to commemorate the eighth anniversary of the Madres of the Plaza de Mayo, which terminated at Tribunales, a neighborhood of Buenos Aires where the Argentine Supreme Court is located. The strategy was imported from the protests against Argentine state-sponsored terrorism by The Asociación Internacional de Defensa de los Artistas Víctimas de la Desaparición en el Mundo (The International Association in Defense of Disappeared Artists in the World, AIDA), founded in Europe. The protestors wore white masks that transformed them into expressionless, uniform, unnamed faces to represent the disappeared with live, physical body surrogates.

A year later, on March 24, 1986, the tenth anniversary of the military coup, ex-detained-disappeared political prisoners wearing white, plastic masks marched in reaction to Alfonsín's paralysis in bringing the military to trial. It was the first time that the surviving, formerly disappeared identified themselves in public in a mass demonstration.[66] Along with the masks, some of the participants donned handcuffs and shackles to illustrate their imprisonment and that of the disappeared; others adorned themselves with posters demanding, "Liberty to all political prisoners." They were simultaneously victims of and primary witnesses to the military's policy of kidnapping, torture, and murder. Ex-detainee Susana Barros described some of the audience responses to this march, "People wept, many of them reached out to touch, embrace us, as we walked by. Others stared. I think they were unable to speak. For us, too, it was very hard,

[66] Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture*, 192.

wearing the mask gave you an involuntary sense memory of being hooded."[67] The ex-detainees channeled their own experiences and the physical presence of the disappeared through their own bodies. The protestors performed in public without revealing their individual identities; the mask as a shield had multiple political and aesthetic strategies. Firstly, masking applied the duality of invisibility to make the disappeared visible. In addition, the act of donning a mask turned the surveillance under the military dictatorship on its head. In 1988 the Madres again worked with artists who marched with white masks to represent the disappeared. White masks, like the images of the silhouettes and the photographs, became a recurring visual device to represent the disappeared in public protests.

Performance united with collective participation maintained an integral position in the human rights organizations' visual strategy in seeking justice and keeping the memory of the disappeared alive. A growing number of supporters rallied around the Madres, Abuelas, and other groups, which eventually led to a partial lifting of a collective and collected government and self-inflicted amnesia. The Madres laid the groundwork for tactics that targeted the perpetrators of crimes against humanity that were later adopted by the next generation of human rights groups and artists/activists in the post-dictatorship 1980s and 1990s. For example, in 1984, at the urging of Hebe de Bonafini, the president of the Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo, the art collective Gas-Tar (Grupo de Artistas Socialistas por la Transformación, Socialist Artists for Transformation Group) produced a series called *Participatory Posters* to publicly illustrate the dictatorship's crimes and the Alfonsín's government's effort to reconcile the nation's past through the passage of the amnesty laws.[68] The poster depicted an image of an angry dog that

[67] Quoted in Ibid.
[68] Gas-Tar later changed its name to CAPataco (Colectivo de Arte Participativo Tarifa Común, Collective of Participatory Art-Communal Tariff).

said "No to Amnesty;" Approximately six inches of white space was left at the bottom so that people could add their own ideas and comments. Like the silhouettes, the emphasis was on collective production and realization in public space, outside of the traditional spaces of production and display such as artists' studios and galleries in the tradition of Tucumán Arde.

Along with posters, human rights organizations used graffiti as a democratic and affordable vehicle for conveying messages. In July 1987, the Madres marched to protest a Catholic Mass of reconciliation for the armed forces that was then to be followed by a military parade. On the eve of the march, in an attempt to dismantle the machinery of the dictatorship that continued into the democratic era, the Madres and the organization's supporters painted the names of the military leaders and the word "assassin" on the walls of the streets lining the parade's path.[69] That same year *Behind Bars* posters were created during a military parade on the street. These were large-scale posters with names of perpetrators and names and locations of detention centers on buildings with black prison bars painted over them. Participants hung these images on buildings while the Madres protected them from police by surrounding them with a barrier of white shawls.[70] Targeting the perpetrators through visual forms was a precursor to the second generation of human rights organizations' focus in the 1990s.

Pierre Nora explained that an upsurge of memory is related to the feeling of loss, which creates for some communities a *devoir de mémoire*, or a duty to remember.[71] The expansion of a duty to remember in Argentina was in response to the series of amnesty laws passed under presidents Alfonsín and Carlos Sául Menem (1989-1999), whose official history heralded a

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[69] Security forces physically assaulted the Madres during the march. Bouvard, *Revolutionizing Motherhood: The Mothers of the Plaza De Mayo*, 249.
[70] Ibid, 232.
[71] Pierre Nora, Lawrence D. Kritzman, and Arthur Goldhammer, *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past: [the Construction of the French Past], Vol. 1, Conflicts and Divisions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

rhetoric of national reconciliation. This push for the healing of a nation with untended wounds compounded the human rights organizations' and family members' definitive sense of loss. The hope of finding the disappeared alive had now ceased. Nevertheless, the duty to remember them and assure that they were not subsumed by reconciliation myths created an urgency for the human rights organizations and supporting artists to encourage the public to honor the disappeared through justice and to emphasize the citizenry's duty to remember.

The Second Generation of Human Right Organizations' Commemorative Protests

The goal of the human rights organizations' artistic strategies under the dictatorship was to force the military government to acknowledge and release their unidentified prisoners. The second wave of artistic strategies continued in this same tradition and expanded on contemporary urban interventions to emphasize justice for the disappeared in the form of trials for the unpunished criminals. Performance art in the 1990s in Argentina evolved to combine guerilla graffiti and the appropriation of municipal space as a method to memorialize the disappeared by publicly naming the perpetrators of disappearance and demanding their prosecution. The Madres provided a mnemonic visual model for H.I.J.O.S.'s performance-based art actions of the 1990s to the present.

Escrache is a type of guerilla performance art that revealed and marked the atrocities committed under the military dictatorship. The word comes from *lunfardo* (Argentine slang) and has its origins in the Italian word *schiacciare*, which means to crush, to squelch, and to crack. The word fell out of use until H.I.J.O.S. reclaimed it in December 1996 to name its avant-garde form of commemorative aesthetic protest. *Escraches* "reveal in public, to make the face of a person appear who tries to pass unnoticed" by furnishing information on the identity, address,

and photographs of those responsible for the disappearances and indicating the current whereabouts of the military assassins.[72] Naming the disappeared was linked to those responsible for their disappearance; thus *escraches* fought the pardons and impunity laws signed by Alfonsín and Menem by convicting the perpetrator—if not in a legal court—at least in the public's gaze.

Since its inception, H.I.J.O.S. incorporated neighborhood organizations, family members of the disappeared, and artist collectives, such as Etcétera and Grupo de Arte Callejero (GAC). Etcétera, whose founding member was Federico Zukerfeld (b. 1979), began participating in the *escraches* with H.I.J.O.S. in 1996. GAC, which is comprised of art teachers who use public space as a place for artistic expression, was formed in 1997 and contacted H.I.J.O.S. in 1998 in order to add their creative voices to the human rights cause.[73] The Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo and the Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora supported the *escraches,* but rarely participated in them. GAC worked within the traditions of the human rights groups' aesthetic memory actions and added its own form of commemorative protest to memorialize the disappeared.

Holst-Warhaft asserted, "If care is not taken, if grief is artificially inflamed or prolonged, or if the expected conclusion is never satisfactorily achieved, the temporary chaos of death and

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[72] "Escrache," H.I.J.O.S. http://www.hijoscapital.org.ar/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=21&Itemid=31 (accessed September 3, 2009). "Es poner en evidencia, revelar en público, hacer aparecer la cara de una persona que pretende pasar desapercibida."

[73] The *escrache* board is made up of the following groups: H.I.J.O.S., neighborhood organizations in which the *escrache* is produced, Comisión techo y Trabajo, Socialism Lebertario, GAC, Taller Popular de Serigrafia (Popular Graphics Workshop, TPS), ETC,. Centro Social y Cultural Flores Sur, Colectivo de Ciencia Política, La Tribu, Intimo Teatroitinerante, Cooperativa Chilavert Artes Gráficas, and individuals who are not members of any organization. GAC's members are: Pablo Ares, Violeta Bernasconi, Lorena Bossi, Vanesa Bossi, Mariana Corral, Carolina Golder, Alejandro Merino, Lorena Merlo, Leandro Yazurlo, and Rafael Leona.

mourning can spill over into the society at large and threaten its stability."[74] It was this inflammation of death by disappearance that energized the group's work. In fact, H.I.J.O.S. and GAC, along with other art collectives like Etcetera, harnessed the chaos formed through the inability to mourn by creating a carnivalesque atmosphere at the *escraches*. The first *escrache* was directed at Admiral Emilio Eduardo Massera (1925-2010), who was part of the military junta (along with Jorge Rafael Videla and Orlando Ramón Agosti) that deposed Isabel Martinéz de Perón (1974-1976). The *escrache* took place in front of his apartment, where participants donned theater masks and a sign that read "Free or Imprisoned." As the *escraches* developed, the organizers added theatrical elements with life-size dolls and costumes, and returned to the strategy of masking.[75] The *escraches* were not sullen occasions; instead, they were mobile and noise-filled with 300 to 500 participants who sang, chanted, jumped, and danced. Loudspeakers announced the crimes committed by the dictatorship, *murga* bands played, and giant puppets paraded down the street alongside placards of photo IDs of the disappeared.[76] The performances ranged in theme and subject to reveal torture scenes, repressors in the act of kidnapping a recently born child of a disappeared person, a member of the military at confession with a Catholic priest, and a staged soccer game with the two opposing teams as Argentina vs. Argentina.

H.I.J.O.S. diligently researched the perpetrators and once facts were collected, participants distributed announcements that included a photo of the *escrache* target along with

[74] Holst-Warhaft, *The Cue for Passion: Grief and Its Political Uses*, 6.
[75] The puppets were similar to those that the Frente de Trabajadores del Teatro de Títeres used in the beginning of the 1980s.
[76] Carlos Rice, interview by author, Buenos Aires, Argentina, August 6, 2009. Murga bands are a popular form of musical performance from Argentina and Uruguay that was banned under the dictatorship, so their presence in public space and as a tool for retaliation against individual members of the *Processo* government holds a particular contemporary resonance.

his biography, address, and the location of the performance. The subjects of *escraches* included the notorious intelligence officer Alfredo Ignacio Astiz, military leaders, physicians who participated in torture and U.S. based organizations like the CIA and the School of the Americas, which functioned as a training ground in torture tactics for many of the officers involved in the disappearances. Before the date of the collective gathering, H.I.J.O.S. canvassed the neighborhoods where the human rights violators lived. The organization's members distributed flyers with questions such as: "Did you know that your neighbor was a torturer?" "How do you feel about working with him? Or serving him lunch? Or selling him cigarettes?"[77] The group emphasized that perpetrators of disappearance and crimes against humanity have not been brought to justice.

During the transition to democracy in the 1980s individual actions (mostly from family members of the disappeared or ex-detainees), which involved yelling insults at the perpetrators in public, and in some instances, acts of physical aggression, also served as an *escrache* exemplar. GAC specifically looked to Fercho Czarny for performative direction on how to protest. In the 1980s, Czarny organized a group of friends and colleagues to throw paint at the Chilean embassy while Chile was still under military rule; this strategy of paint as a weapon hurled at a building to leave a public stain of guilt was picked up for use in the *escraches*.[78] GAC co-opted this visually jarring, unsanctioned exploit by throwing red paint against the houses of the military criminals to symbolize their bloodied hands (Fig. 14).

H.I.J.O.S. contrasted its exercise of freedom in the public realm to the repressive and prohibition-filled public space under the dictatorship. Taylor pointed out that H.I.J.O.S. applied

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[77] Quoted in Taylor, "'You Are Here': The DNA of Performance," 151.
[78] "Entrevista a Fercho Czarny: Un *Woodstock* de Protesta," interview by Ana Longoni Buenos Aires, Argentina July 13, 2005, in Ana Longoni, et al., *El Siluetazo*, 125.

strategies inherited from both the Madres and the military. Through the application of surveillance and the psychological intimidation of the targets of *escraches* the organizers and participants stalked their prey to make sure that they were always under surveillance, thus creating an unsafe feeling even when they were in their own home.[79] The disruption of the borders between private and public spaces echoed the military police's home invasions; H.I.J.O.S. used public relations campaigns just as the military did to call attention to the *escrache*'s target. H.I.J.O.S. also looked to other human rights organizations' public works as strategic models. For example, the Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo held popular trials in the plaza where participants dictated the punishments of the perpetrators.[80]

H.I.J.O.S. embraced some of the first generation of human rights organizations' strategies and vehemently rejected others. A significant divergence from the Madres's choice of representational models was the depiction of the body of the disappeared. Although H.I.J.O.S. and GAC shared in the spirit of collective action that emerged from the open-air workshop space of the 1983 *Siluetazo*, H.I.J.O.S. opposed the silhouette as a representation of the disappeared. Carlos Rice, a member of H.I.J.O.S. and son of an ex-detained disappeared prisoner, explained that the children of the disappeared do not want their parents represented as abstractions. He emphasized that the *Siluetazo* revealed nothing about their parents' lives or beliefs.[81] Multiple representations of the disappeared and conflicting ideas of how to depict the missing developed during and after the military dictatorship in what evolved into a competition for the material memory of the disappeared. Despite these competing voices, both generations of human rights

[79] Taylor, "'You Are Here': The DNA of Performance," 163.
[80] Catela, *No Habrá Flores En La Tumba Del Pasado: La Experiencia De Reconstrucción Del Mundo De Los Familiares De Desaparecidos*, 266.
[81] Rice, interview.

organizations embraced, appropriated, and regenerated the photograph as an object of subversion.

Just as the photographs individualized and personalized the disappeared to prove their existence and demonstrate that they were not a nameless mass, H.I.J.O.S. and GAC's publishing of flyers with photographs of the perpetrators established that individuals, as part of a collective, were responsible for the crimes against humanity despite attempts to erase their unlawful acts from Argentine memory. *Escrache* participants hung photos of a targeted perpetrator in restaurants, supermarkets, and along exterior walls all over his neighborhood. The iconicity of the photograph counteracted the dictatorship's effort to disappear its crimes through a shield of misinformation and legal procedures. The *escraches* emphasized the State's refusal to act and in lieu of institutional justice H.I.J.O.S. and GAC "outed" the violators of human rights abuses through non-violent actions to restrict their freedom and put their lives on display as they walked freely in the neighborhood. The collective participants chanted slogans such as, "May the country be your prison" and "If there is no justice, there is *escrache*."[82] The *escraches* brought an awareness of the perpetrators' crimes to a public audience and in some cases directly affected the lives of its targets. Several perpetrators of crimes against humanity under the dictatorship lost their jobs after being publicly denounced by H.I.J.O.S.[83] These public performances called for justice and castigation, which diverged from the goal of state-sponsored memorials, which fostered the peace and reconciliation rhetoric of the Menem era (see Chapter 4 for further discussion on government-sponsored memorials).[84] Austrian writer Robert Musil claimed that

[82] "Que el país sea su carcel." "¡Si no hay justicia, Hay escrache!"
[83] Now that the trials against the military leaders have begun, H.I.J.O.S. is no longer conducting *escraches* directed at the dictatorship; however, H.I.J.O.S. continues to mobilize against current human rights abuses.
[84] In a victory for human rights, Argentina's Supreme Court annulled the Impunity laws in 2005.

there is nothing as invisible as a monument.[85] GAC recognized Musil's assertion and therefore turned to ephemeral public performance art to make the disappeared visible and fight the injustices inflicted on the disappeared by targeting their torturers.

Geographer Derek H. Alderman defined the "scaling of public memory" as "the way an incident's recollection is prompted as people physically move through cities, regions, and nations."[86] H.I.J.O.S. and GAC scaled the memory of the dictatorship and the disappeared by creating physical mnemonic triggers throughout Buenos Aires about Argentina's buried history. Along with the photographs, they mapped and marked the cityscape of unpunished atrocities and reminded the viewer that "You are here" walking amidst torture centers and murderers. GAC emerged from a complex environment in which the tensions of memory and history were strained, as evidenced in the collective's *Street Signs* series. GAC posted road signs in front of former clandestine detention centers that indicated the history of the space under the *Processo* (Fig. 15). The collective's other public works included papering the walls of the city with maps of perpetrators' residences. They also stenciled the streets with phrases like "Justice and Punishment," creating unsanctioned art that brought to light the unlawful detention of the disappeared under the dictatorship. GAC began installing the street signs in February 1998 to indicate the location of ex-clandestine detention centers (Ex-CCD). This work subverted the road sign, which can easily be confused with official government-installed signage. GAC stated, "The road signs use institutional codes to denounce those that these same institutions tried to hide."[87]

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[85] Robert Musil, "Denkmale," in *Gesammelte Werke*, Hamburg, 1957, 480-483.
[86] This term was originally used by Derek H. Alderman in Williams, *Memorial Museums: The Global Rush to Commemorate Atrocities*, 79.
[87] Grupo de Arte Callejero, "Parque de la Memoria: polémica," *Ramona* 13 (June 2001): 44. "La elección de la imagen vial tuvo por objetivo utilizar códigos institucionales para denunciar aquellos que las mismas instituciones pretenden ocultar."

These counter-monuments made the space of the disappeared's captivity visible in the city and urged pedestrians into a new awareness of urban space.

Prior to GAC's installation of the *Street Sign* series through Buenos Aires, Stih & Schnock, a Berlin-based artist group formed by Renata Stih and Frieder Schnock, also used signs so that passers-by would confront the past in the present.[88] In their Holocaust memorial *Places of Remembrance* (1992-93) Stih & Schnock created eighty signs that were to be placed in the Schöneberg district of Berlin (a predominantly Jewish neighborhood before World War II). On the front of the signs were simple images in a Pop Art style that included a loaf of bread on a blue background or a brown radio from the 1930s. Corresponding inscriptions describing the Nazi Nuremberg laws introduced in 1935 were placed on the back, such as "Jews in Berlin are only allowed to buy food between four and five o'clock in the afternoon. July 4, 1940" and "Radios are confiscated from Jews. September 23, 1939." Stih & Schnock's memorial encouraged the viewer to understand her place in the city outside her normal routine. Areas and spaces that are common for people to walk by acquire a historical resonance and presence in an effort to come to terms with the past. Stih & Shnock and GAC's memorial projects emphasized that the quotidian spaces that we occupy may serve as places of remembrance. Simply stated, the place where we remember matters.

Art at Ex-Clandestine Detention Centers

Sociologist Estela Schindel asserted, "As opposed to a war, the disappearance of a person does not leave visible traces in the city. The repressive method of disappearance is destined to leave no sign, its terrifying effects are interjected by city residents, but they dissolve in a city

[88] Karen E. Till, *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 158.

without being noticed in the landscape."[89] In post-dictatorship Argentina, memorials were a device to mark, re-claim, and take-over sites of memory in what became a battle with the government for the territorialization and the visibility of the memory of the disappeared.[90] The Argentine government attempted to disappear the use of the ex-clandestine detention centers in an effort to make them invisible in the urban cityscape and countryside and thus hide its past crimes.[91] Art interventions at sites where the government attempted to dominate memory was an attempt to disrupt the dictatorship's official narrative.

GAC's project of creating visible memorials through subversive objects falls under geographer Kenneth E. Foote's category of designation.[92] Designation denotes that something important happened at the site, which is unveiled as opposed to dedicated. In an attempt to remedy the dictatorship's politically motivated strategy of what Foote termed rectification—the removal of signs of violence and tragedy—and in some instances obliteration—getting rid of the

[89] Estela Schindel, "Las pequeñas memorias y el paisaje cotidiáno: Cartografías del recuerdo en Buenos Aires y Berlín," in *Trabajos de la Memoria: arte y ciudad en la postdictadura argentina* ed. Cecilia Macón (Buenos Aires: ladosur, 2006), 52. "A differencia de una guerra, la desaparición de personas no deja rastros visibles en la ciudad. Método represivo destinado a no dejar rastro, sus efectos atemorizantes son introyectados por los habitantes pero se dilyuen en la ciudad sin fijarse en el paisaje."

[90] Elizabeth Jelin and Victoria Langland refered to the memorials as territorial markers. Elizabeth Jelin and Victoria Langland, *Monumentos, memoriales y marcas territoriales* (Madrid: Siglo XXI de España: Social Science Research Council, 2003), 1-18.

[91] For example, Automotores Orletti was a clandestine detention center in the middle of the working-class neighborhood of Flores in Buenos Aires where mostly foreign disappeared persons were imprisoned. The detention center returned to its original state as an auto garage and then into another complicated layer of human rights violations, invisibility and the repression of memory, the building was sold and converted into a sweatshop where Bolivian illegal immigrants worked.

[92] Kenneth E. Foote, *Shadowed Ground: America's Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 16.

site entirely—human rights organizations first used the visual arts as a means of marking ex-CCDs.[93]

The location of the detention centers were identified by survivors' testimonies. Prior to GAC's planned signs, the clandestine detention centers were originally brought to the attention of passers-by through the use of graffiti and stenciling. Phrases like "Here They Tortured" were scrawled across the exterior walls of the ex-CCDs. Argentine artist Nicolás Guagnini (b. 1966) maintained that there is no place for art inside the ex-CCDs; leaving the rooms bare with just a few quotations from survivors on labels, along with a guide to provide a narrative, elucidates the historical significance of the space.[94] However, almost every ex-CCDs' exterior space that extends into the public visual field in Buenos Aires is marked by artworks that memorialize the disappeared and indicate the sinister use of the space as a torture center under the dictatorship.[95] Williams stated, "We exist in a time when there is great confidence in the idea of physical locations as appropriate repositories for genuine local memory and as loci that will help others gain a tangible sense of an event."[96] The ex-CCDs were spaces where Argentines struggled over the tension between their experience of the past and the contemporary reorganization of their history.

The visual arts played two roles in understanding and revealing the architecture of violence and combating the residual oppression and amnesia that proliferated during the post-

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[93] Ibid, 24. Many of the ex-CCDs were later dedicated when the Instituto Espacio Para la Memoria appropriated the clandestine detention centers beginning in 2000 with ESMA and continuing most recently in 2009 with Automotores Orletti.
[94] Nicolás Guagnini, interview by author, New York, NY, November 15, 2006.
[95] The rooms of the ex-CCDs remain empty of any evidence of torture devices, save for the printed testimonials of the survivors and the guide's verbal information. Andrea Fasani, an ex-detained disappeared person whose husband was disappeared created works that memorialize the disappeared through the experience of torture in a series of ceramic pieces with accompanying illustrations that are exhibited in galleries.
[96] Williams, *Memorial Museum: The Global Rush to Commemorate Atrocities*, 102.

dictatorship era. First, art was used for signaling the buried history of the site. As noted previously, art often came before some of the sites of memory were appropriated by the Instituto Espacio Para la Memoria (Site of Memory Institute), whose mission is to preserve the ex-CCDs in order to integrate these spaces into "urban memory."[97] Secondly, collective mobilization was used to create artworks at the site and encourage community collaboration, which was prohibited under the dictatorship. The works' pedagogical aspirations brought to the fore the use of urban sites in the midst of inhabited neighborhoods in order to explain the spatialization of power under the dictatorship and during the Alfonsín and Menem administrations.

The Navy Mechanics School for Officers (ESMA), one of the most opprobrious clandestine detention centers located in the heart of Nuñez, an upper-class neighborhood in Buenos Aires, was intervened by artist and human rights activist Marcelo Brodsky (b. 1953) before the Instituto Espacio Para la Memoria took possession of the site. Brodsky directly appropriated Holocaust memorials in *Camps II* (2001), a temporary installation posted in front of ESMA (Fig. 16). He borrowed from the memorial installed in 1967 by the Human Rights League of Germany and the Members of the City Parliament of Berlin-Schöenberg. Here Brodsky listed the names of the most notorious concentration camps of his country in order to come to terms with human loss. Brodsky's visual parallel with the Holocaust memorial emphasized that Argentina, under the dictatorship, also experienced a mass genocide. Brodsky, a former exile whose brother Fernando (pictured in Fig. 8) was disappeared by the Argentine military, believes in the therapeutic value of memorials.[98] In yellow lettering on a black background, which echoed the Berlin-Schöenberg memorial, Brodsky listed some of the most infamous locations w that

[97] Instituto Espacio Para la Memoria, "Misión y función," Instituto Espacio Para la Memoria. http://www.institutomemoria.org.ar/institucional/1_institucional.html. (accessed 9/20/2011).
[98] Marcelo Brodsky, interview by author, Buenos Aires, Argentina, July 31, 2009.

should not be forgotten in the Argentine collective consciousness and related the body of the disappeared to the space in which they were entrapped.

Along with the Holocaust memorial paradigm, activist artists in the 1990s and 2000s appropriated historic artistic strategies from the 1970s and 1980s. The *Siluetazo II*, like ghosts of the disappeared, reappeared in December of 2004 to commemorate and conjure the presence of Argentina's disappeared and to demand that the navy vacate the site (Fig. 17). "JUSTICIA YA" (Justice Now) was scrawled across ESMA's gate. Some of the more well-known artists that participated in this project were Kexel, Flores, Adolfo Nigro (b. 1942), León Ferrari (b. 1920), Luis Felipe Noé, and Diana Dowek (b. 1942).[99] The participating human rights organizations expanded to include Asamblea Permanente por los Derechos Humanos (Permanent Assembly on Human Rights), Asociación de Ex Detenidos-Desaparecidos (Association of Ex Detained-Disappeared Persons), Familiares de Desaparecidos y Detenidos por Razones Políticas (Relatives of Disappeared and Detained Persons for Political Reasons), and Fundación Memoria Histórica (Historic Memory Foundation), among others.[100] People living outside of Buenos Aires were able to participate in the silhouette creation as well by submitting their designs via e-mail for artists to recreate in an outdoor workshop in front of ESMA.

The materials expanded from the original *Siluetazo*; the images were created out of used cardboard, brown butcher paper, corrugated paper, and more durable materials such as colored-plastic, metal, and even CDs. The *Siluetazo II* engaged the Madres and other participants who lay

[99] The other participating artists were: Silvia Laborda**,** Jorge Martínez**,** Luis Juárez**,** Marcelo Moreno, Miguel Angel Sanfurgo, Mildred Burton, Munú Actis, López Armentía, Lula Pensado, Alberto Delmonte, and Julián Agosta.

[100] Other organizations that participated in the construction of the silhouettes at ESMA were: Asociación Buena Memoria, CELS, Herman@s de desaparecidos por la Verdad y la Justicia, Liga Argentina por los Derechos del Hombre, Madres-LF, and Movimiento Ecuménico por los Derechos Humanos

on the floor as artists traced their bodies to symbolize the silhouettes of their missing children and to embody their disappeared children through their own physical form. Names of the disappeared were written on the body tracings along with cries for justice such as, "My face is 30,000 faces, my name is 30,000 names."[101] Far from succumbing to an anachronistic political aesthetic, the silhouettes appeared in multiple manifestations and at different sites to function as reoccurring forms of remembrance at the actual space where the disappeared were detained. The echoing of figuration in the form of an abstracted body was also present at ex-CCD El Olimpo. Larger than life-size, white figures were drawn on the ground, which resemble police chalk outlines of murder victims. Although the Madres were against the placement of the silhouettes on the floor in the original expression of the work in 1983, El Olimpo's layout of the white outlines surrounding the entire block of the building revealed to pedestrians the crime of genocide that occurred at the site.

Ex-CCD El Atlético falls under Foote's category of a site of obliteration, in which the government covered up its crime through the razing of the ex-CCD to build a highway.[102] The memory of space contains physically overlaid histories in the original form of a police station, torture center, and then a controversial urban development project. At Club Atlético, a pastiche of memorial paradigms marks the site through figuration, Neo-Expressionism, and landscape design in the form of a park with benches for contemplation, murals and graffiti, and a two-dimensional sculptural installation. The artworks at El Atlético were the product of grassroots organizations and an anonymous artist or group of artists created *Tótem* (1995) on the pillar of

[101] "Mi rostro son 30.000 rostros, mi nombre son 30.000 nombres." Other phrases included "justice and punishment."
[102] Diana Dowek's (b. 1942) *La ciudad y los amantes* (*The City and the Lovers*, 1987-88) paintings of highways recorded the changing landscape of repression under the dictatorship.

the highway that emerges from the ruins of the concentration camp (Fig. 18).[103] The indistinct human figure is again employed to symbolize the disappeared, this time rising out of the rubble of the razed ex-CCD, which, like GAC's street sign series, was installed before the site was officially recognized by the government as a former detention center.[104] This space's active memory is reignited on every anniversary of the military coup through the burning of torches in the shape of a silhouetted-figure, which is adjacent to simple white signs of names of the disappeared on the hillside. Syra Franconetti, a member of the human rights organization Familiares de Detenidos y Desaparecidos por Razones Políticas (Relatives of the Detained and Disappeared Political Prisoners), described this reference to the *Siluetazo*: "This silhouette is lit every March 24 with light that irradiates the disappeared from this [concentration] camp that returns to make themselves present in our memory."[105] Artworks combined with ritualized performance reclaim sites of memory that the government wanted to forget, tear down, and bury.

Baldosas/Sidewalk Tiles

Argentine historian Martin Capparós claimed:

> Our companions became disappeared and in our stories without history we made them disappear a second time, we took their lives from them. We spoke of how they were objects of kidnapping, torture, and murder, and we barely spoke of how they were when they were subjects, when they chose to live destinies that included the danger of death, because they felt they had to do so. Those versions of history were among other things, a way to disappear the disappeared yet again.[106]

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[103] *Tótem* shared visual similarities with Dowek's *Desde el fondo de la tierra* (*From the Depth of the Earth*, 1994) series.
[104] The epilogue of this dissertation discusses the vandalism and re-creation of *Tótem*.
[105] Instituto Espacio Para la Memoria, *Centros Clandestions de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires* (Buenos Aires: Instituto Espacio la Memoria, 2007), 43. Esa silueta se enciende cada 24 de marzo con la luz que irradian los desaparecidos de ese campo que vuelvan a dar su *Presente* en nuestra memoria.
[106] Martin Capparós, "Reappearances" in *Buena Memoria: A Photographic Essay by Marcelo Brodsky* (Buenos Aires: La Marca, 1997), 11.

Baldosas (sidewalk tiles) textually illustrate the fight for social justice of the disappeared and reconstruct their history before they fell victims to the dictatorship and the Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance's (Triple A) covert kidnapping and assassination operations from 1974-76 (Fig. 19).[107] While the photographs show the disappeared person's portrait, they do not reveal his or her political beliefs. *Baldosas*, on the other hand, restore an identity to those disappeared persons who were popular activists through urban intervention, text, and a color-filled palette that contrasts with the grey sidewalk and is intended to draw the viewer into an exercise of memory.[108] The tiles look like official plaques and examples of the texts include, INES COBU STUDIED HERE/ ACTIVIST/ DETAINED DISAPEPARED/ 09-01-1976/ BY STATE TERRORISM/ NEIGHBORHOOD FOR MEMORY AND JUSTICE."[109] Barrios por Memoria y Justicia (Neighborhoods for Memory and Justice, Barrios x Memoria) produces and funds the tiles; it is organized by neighborhood and began as a formalized collective, community-based organization in 1996.[110]

In some instances, sites for the installation of the *baldosas* were selected based on where activists were killed or disappeared. However, Barrios x Memoria also marked spaces where the disappeared lived, organized, protested, and studied so that pedestrians physically walk past the disappeared individual's personal history. Nora proposed that private memory demands that its

[107] Barrios x Memoria y Justicia, *Baldosas x La Memoria*, 1st ed. (Buenos Aires: Instituto Espacio para la Memoria, 2008), 9.
[108] Due to funding constraints Barrios x Memoria uses plastic instead of ceramics to create the floor tiles.
[109] AQUI ESTUDIO/ INES COBU/ MILITANTE POPULAR/ DETENIDA DESAPARECIDA/ 01-09-1976/ POR EL TERRORISM DE ESTADO/ BARRIO X MEMORIA Y JUSTICA.
[110] Barrios x Memoria's precedents are found in the San Telmo neighborhood organization in the early 1990s.

own history be made public; the *baldosas*, by encapsulating the private life of the disappeared in a few sentences, linked him or her to a public space.[111] Barrios x Memoria stated:

> The goal of this activity, represented in the largest quantity of neighborhoods possible, is to leave a mark of our companions amongst the traffic in each of their neighborhoods, because they are our fallen companions and they experienced all possible forms of negation. Their lives were negated when they were kidnapped and they were denied their humanity. They were denied their identity and their rights. They were denied their bodies when they were assassinated and they were denied their social and political activism. They were denied justice. Today we attempt to create just reparations and recognition by rescuing their socio-political values. Through them we try to reflect that activism, their activism, is a living position worthy of imitation.[112]

Like H.I.J.O.S.'s and the Madres's memorial projects, Barrios x Memoria simultaneously memorialized the victims of state-sponsored terrorism, while seeking state-sponsored justice. The *baldosas* marked homes and institutions throughout the neighborhoods in Buenos Aires, which encouraged reflection on the proliferation of the dictatorship's illegal operations in the public sphere and critical reevaluation of the excuse of the collective declaration "We didn't know" by the Argentine citizenry under the dictatorship.

The process of selecting sites and installing the *baldosas* directly involved the cooperation of neighbors that live close to the chosen sidewalk space; Barrios x Memoria sends a letter to people in the buildings close to the sidewalk where the *baldosa* is to be placed. Members of the organization do not want any of the residents to oppose the installation of the *baldosa* for

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[111] Nora, Kritzman, and Goldhammer, *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past: [the Construction of the French Past]. Vol. 1, Conflicts and Divisions*.

[112] Barrios por Memoria y Justicia, *Baldosas x la Memoria*, 221. "El sentido de esta actividad, en la cual promovemos estén representandos la mayor cantidad de barrios posibles, es dejar una huella del tránsito de los compañeros por cada uno de sus barrios, porque son nuestros caídos y tuvieron todas las negaciones posibles. Se los negó cuando los secuestraban y se negó su humanidad. Se les negó su Identidad y sus derechos. Se les negó sus cuerpos cuando los asesinababan, se les negó su inserción social y política, su militancia. Se les negó su Justicia. Hoy intentamos justas reparaciones y reconcimientos, intentamos rescatar esos valores, intentamos reflejar a través de ellos que la militancia, esa militancia, es una actitud de vida digna de imitar.

fear that someone will destroy it, thus physically desecrating the memory of the disappeared person honored by the plaque. Barrios x Memoria's project received varying degrees of acceptance and rejection from family members and neighbors of the disappeared. In one instance, an owner of a home that was formerly inhabited by a disappeared person refused the placement of a *baldosa* near his property and consequently, the organization did not implement the installation.[113] Some family members of the disappeared responded evasively when approached by Barrios x Memoria and others refused to become involved with the project altogether. Even in the late 1990s, they did not want to be identified in the neighborhood as a family of a disappeared person; despite the lapse between the end of the dictatorship and that point in time, the family members kept the disappearance a secret and wanted to maintain their anonymity. Still other families eschewed aggravating old wounds that never healed.[114] The refusal to participate in the creation of a *baldosa* is evidence of the continued tension, shame, and secrecy that is the dictatorship's legacy. Despite these negative responses, many families accepted the idea openly. In some cases, the *baldosas* allowed for the public grief of the relatives of the disappeared, leading to catharsis. For instance, a sister of a disappeared person revealed, "I feel that I socialized a living pain that I kept private for thirty years," and a mother stated, "Now I can return to stepping on this sidewalk."[115] The *baldosas* are sites of remembrance of the individual loss from the political genocide and a space to honor the disappeared as political activists.

The *baldosas*, like Brodsky's *Camps II* and GAC's street signs, are evidence that imported artistic strategies borrowed from genocide memorial paradigms are effective and

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[113] Fanny Seldes, interview by author, Buenos Aires, Argentina, June 17, 2009.
[114] Barrios x Memoria y Justicia, *Baldosas x La Memoria*, 176.
[115] Ibid., 24. "Siento que socialicé un duelo vivido como privado durante treinta años." "Ahora podré volver a pisar esta vereda."

expressive of Argentina's own history. German artist Gunter Demnig (b. 1947) created *Stolpersteine* (Stumbling Stones), in 1996 in Berlin and abroad. The stones are topped with small brass plaques and installed in front of houses where Jews lived before they were deported to death camps during Germany's Nazi regime. The antecedent for the *Stolpersteine* are the *Sarajevo Roses*, a commemorative strategy for the Bosnian War (1992-95) in which the mark from a mortar shell's explosion appears in the sidewalk and is filled in with red resin where a person was killed.[116] It is the artist's hand that creates the stumbling stones in Germany; however, in Argentina family members of the disappeared design the unsanctioned, colorful mosaic sidewalk tiles installed throughout the city. The *baldosas* are centrally situated in most neighborhoods in the Argentine capital, unlike the government sponsored memorials like the Parque de la Memoria (Park of Memory) and the Paseo de Derechos Humanos (Human Rights Walk) in the Villa Lugano neighborhood of Buenos Aires. Yet the fact that they are dispersed throughout various neighborhoods implicitly makes thems subversive of the centralized permanent memorial paradigm. The *baldosas* function as an indexical sign of the disappeared and represent national trauma at a localized site. The tiles, much like the *escraches* and GAC's road sign series, created a new map of the urban environment by installing historical memory markers in the cityscape. The *baldosas* consciously evoked the "official" and the permanent yet also debunked it. However, because *baldosas* are a more permanent form of memorialization, they may prompt the general memorial and public art paradox of invisibility.

[116] Williams, *Memorial Museums: The Global Rush to Commemorate Atrocities*, 78.

Conclusion

Since the inception of commemorative protest art used by the Madres, human rights-authored memorials attempted to bring the disappeared to the very heart of the city–in the public sphere–for passers-by to visualize and experience. Memorials patronized by human rights organizations remap our memory of space and place to re-conceptualize the disappeared as well as the dictatorship. A plurality of artistic strategies emerged to represent the disappeared and as evidenced in public spaces on the body, the sidewalk, streets, and around the exterior of ex-CCDs. These various representations were interlocutors for the disappeared intended to combat the silence that fell upon the nation. A hushed environment did not surround these memorials as is typical of a commemorative space; instead, the memorials sought visual, corporeal and vocal stimuli to counter the forgetting that pervaded Argentina.

The diversity of imagery of the disappeared through performance and site-specific objects obviated a claim for an authoritative history. The memory of the disappeared marched with the activated political body ruptured the official narrative put forth by the Alfonsín and Menem governments. The democratic nature of the production and exhibition of memorials by the human rights organizations countered the dictatorship's authoritarianism and simultaneously functioned as a vehicle to refuse the democratic government's plea for national reconciliation. Human rights organizations stressed that the personal anguish of the disappeared's families is a shared national trauma and often used Holocaust memorials as a model to emphasize the genocide that occurred in Argentina. The collective actions instituted new paradigms of memorials such as undermining the original use of official documentary photographs, as well as creating strategic performances targeting the perpetrators of disappearance.

The human rights organizations' and artist collectives' commemorative protest art in the public sphere, attempted to fold the disappeared back into Argentine collective and collected memory. The memorials to the disappeared endeavor to heal the historic amnesia inflicted upon the Argentine nation during and after the military dictatorship, and preserve the disappeared's image in Argentine society even when Argentine citizens closed their eyes and refused to see and witness the disappearances. These memorials commemorated civilian victims as opposed to soldiers in traditional war memorials. Yet, the disappeared's sacrifice for their country was emphasized by human rights organizations during the post-dictatorship era. The message of memorials dedicated to the disappeared during democracy was to turn the disappeared from victims of political genocide into heroes and harbingers of social change. The aesthetic memorialization protests were part of a matrix of change and the artworks discussed in this chapter shared a common goal: the artists and human rights organizations created these works to challenge and alter the established government order.

Chapter 2:
Institutional Spaces and Memory Formation

No one should have to defend himself for having won a just War and the War against subversive terrorism was a just War.
Dispatch from Admiral Emilio Eduardo Massera October 7, 1985[1]

Introduction

Two years after Argentina transitioned to a democratic government, the defense of the "Dirty War," as the dictatorship termed its 1976-1983 period of crimes against humanity, was of paramount importance to the leaders of the military. Admiral Emilio Eduardo Massera, along with Jorge Rafael Videla and Orlando Ramón Agosti, was part of the 1976 military junta to depose of Isabel Martinéz de Perón, and many consider him the progenitor of the military dictatorship's war against subversion. Massera's defense of the dictatorship's systematic disappearances of Argentine citizens was supported by the Theory of the Two Demons, which developed during the first years of the Alfonsín administration and equated the violence inflicted on the nation by the military dictatorship with the "subversive" political acts of the mid-1970s.

The theory of the Two Demons placed the blame for the political violence that swept the nation entirely on left-wing groups, including the Montoneros and the Ejercito Revolucionario del Pueblo (People's Revolutionary Army, ERP). The theory was born in the writing of Ernesto Sábato's prologue to the Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparación de Personsas (National Commission on the Disappeared, CONADEP) report *Núnca Más*, which asserted that "During the 1970s, Argentina was torn by terror from both the extreme right and the far left."[2] By

[1] Nadie tiene que defenderse por haber ganado una Guerra justa y la Guerra contra el terrorismo subversivo fue una Guerra justa." Descargo de Massera October 7, 1985
[2] National Commission on the Disappearnce of Persons, "Never Again Report" 1984 http://web.archive.org/web/20050214170109/http://www.nuncamas.org/english/library/nevagain/nevagain_002.htm (accessed February 18, 2012).

beginning the official government report on disappearance with a binary of two extremes, Sábato emphasized and even justified the tactics used by the military dictatorship. The extrajudicial kidnappings and murders committed by the dictatorship were framed by the original 1984 CONADEP report as a rationale for the dictatorship's actions. This theory of the Two Demons kept open the divide in Argentine society by portraying the disappeared not as victims of state-sponsored terrorism, but as urban guerilla terrorists who threatened the stability of the Argentine nation. The theory thus complicated and tainted the collective memory of the disappeared.

This chapter takes up the matter of distinct forms of institutional patronage, which have generated new memorial paradigms in Argentina, and analyzes remembering as an institutional act through the study of three distinct types of organizations: a left-leaning newspaper, public educational institutions, and a cultural center. All serve as case studies during the two main phases of Argentina's relationship with remembering and forgetting the disappeared between 1976 and 1998. Each section of the chapter analyzes specific case studies. The first part explores the period of censorship under the dictatorship from 1976-1983 and discusses the subversive artistic strategies of representation that artists applied when depicting disappearance as their subject matter in order to continue showing their work in museums and art galleries. It then turns to roles of institutions in the memorialization process during the decade of politically enforced forgetting (1986-1994), and the memory boom (1995-1998).

Institutions during these time periods became both temporary and permanent sites of memory in order to support the banner of human rights lifted by grassroots organizations such as the Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Linea Fundadora (Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo-Founding Line, Madres-LF), The Asociación de Madres de Plaza de Mayo (Association of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, Asociación Madres), and the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Grandmothers of the

Plaza de Mayo, Abuelas), which all sought to find their disappeared relatives and bring justice and punishment to the perpetrators of crimes against humanity under the dictatorship. The organizations' major protests were centered around the Plaza de Mayo and the streets of Buenos Aires, and were supported by artists and art collectives. During these public manifestations in the post-dictatorship era the Asociación Madres, Madres-LF, and the Abuelas held high the photographs of their disappeared children and artist collectives made the disappeared present in the streets of Buenos Aires through their collaborative actions. Institutions simultaneously promoted the human rights' cause through the visual arts and the material culture of memory.

The institutionalization of a movement, in this case the human rights movement in Argentina, is often considered the beginning of the corruption of the original goals of an organization's work.[3] Following this line of thought human rights organizations like the Madres-LF, the Asociación Madres, and the Abuelas, once coupled with institutions in their fight for justice, would lose sight of their original objectives of countering the government's false official historical narrative and seeking punishment for the perpetrators of disappearance. However, political scientist Mary Fainsod Katzenstein pointed out an alternative model, and in the case of Argentina's cultural and educational institutions, a more apt description of what occurs when a political movement transitions from the outside (the streets) to the inside of institutional spaces:

> The presumed inconsistency between movement politics and institutional politics is based on a frequently drawn linkage of location, form, and content. When social movement actors doing street politics (location) opt for or ally themselves with those who use conventional modes (form) of political activism such as lobbying or voting, a social movement is generally deemed to have crossed the threshold separating protest politics from institutional politics, and the result is presumed to be deradicalizing (content). This location-form-content distinction between movement and institutions invites judgments

[3] Political scientists Frances Fox Piven and Richard A Cloward argued that major historical movements for social change in the U.S. achieved the greatest concessions before becoming organized. Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977).

> that are too readily overdrawn. It is too easy to presume that what occurs on the streets is disruptive and what occurs within institutional contexts is accommodative.[4]

Katzenstein's assertion can also be applied to the human rights organizations' use of public art on the streets. It both disrupted the military's narrative of the dictatorship and attempted to reveal the truth behind the disappearances that were then transformed in representational and display strategies once they entered the institutional realm. Despite the shift in site from the outside, the institutions discussed in this chapter did not convert the artworks dedicated to the disappeared into an accommodative context. Instead, during the post-dictatorship period institutions played a pivotal role in disseminating the memory of the disappeared to a larger public and spreading the human rights organizations' message of social justice. Far from neutralizing the subversive content of the human rights organizations' commemorative artistic protest actions, the institutions discussed below created sanctioned spaces for temporary and permanent memory-markers that in some cases extended beyond sites specifically associated with the disappeared, thus creating new spaces for memory. The post-dictatorship institutions continued to honor and deploy the human rights organizations' commemorative protest art as a model to build upon and expanded the human rights groups' original artistic strategies, while staying true to the organizations' original message of justice and remembrance. The cultural anatomy of protest adopted distinct forms in its aesthetics of resistance, which was shaped by the political and social context of each period discussed below.

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[44] Mary Fainsod Katzenstein, "Stepsisters: Feminist Movement Activism in Different Institutional Spaces," in *The Social Movement Society*, ed. David Meyer and Sidney Tarrow (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998), 196.

Censorship under the Dictatorship: 1976-1983

During the period of censorship, artists used their work to address the unspeakable in allegorical terms and espoused distinct uses of the human figure. This section explores the imagery of disappearance that State museums and private galleries displayed. During this turbulent period government censorship and self-censorship existed side by side.[5] Artist Ignacio Colombres distinguished the period of censorship from the 1960s, when the country was under military dictatorship led by the de-facto president Juan Carlos Onganía (1966-1970), from that under the last military dictatorship that took over in 1976. During the 1960s, the Onganía government censored the visual arts.[6] During the last junta's rule, however, Colombres pointed out that a "sadder, more sordid" censorship took place—that of self-censorship.[7] Raúl Casal, Secretary of Culture under the dictatorship, described the latter government's unofficial stance on censorship:

> There wasn't an official decree [of censorship on the visual arts] like there was for literature or theater, which were at the other extreme. However, there was an intervention in the executive order in the realm of museum directors and the Fondo Nacional de las Artes (National Arts Fund), for example. In general, for professionals in the cultural field, their actions had to be read on individual terms. For the moment, everything indicates that the repressive effects acted upon the individual as citizens, provoking self-

[5] The newspaper *El Clarín* published a list of censored films by the military from May 1981 until 1982 called "Films That We Cannot See." The list included obvious films that the military would not approve of like Costa-Gavras's *Missing*, but also included films as diverse as Sergei Eisensteins's *¡Que viva México!* and John Landis's *Animal House*. The list of censored books included texts by Marx, *The Little Prince* and any other books by Antoine de Saint Exupéry, and Mario Vargas Llosa's *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter.* Eduardo Blaustein and Martín Zubieta, *Decíamos Ayer: La Prensa Argentina Bajo El Proceso* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Ediciones Colihue, 1998), 402.

[6] Censored works under the Juan Carlos Onganía military regime (1966-1970) included Roberto Plate's (b. 1940) 1968 installation that was part of the Instituto Torcuato di Tella's *Experiencia 1968* (*Experience 1968*) exhibition. He created a public toilet where visitors could enter privately. The audience covered the walls of enclosing the toilet with graffiti that was anti-Onganía's government.

[7] Ignacio Colombres, "Las Artes Plásticas Domesticadas," in *Argentina: Como Matar La Cultura* (Madrid: Editorial Revolución, 1981), 199.

> censorship and terror in general. They did preserve spaces of circulation in which artists, critics, gallery owners, and even collectors could create networks and develop an intense activity that took advantage of the minimum opportunity to say things, to think, to join together, to produce.[8]

Despite the restrictions imposed upon the art world, cultural production continued and some of the content even remained the same. But for artists, self-censorship emerged as a strategy of survival. The art scene at this time was sponsored in a large part by the Esso Salon and the Programa Coca-Cola en las Artes (Coca-Cola Program in the Arts). Neither of these funding institutions argued or fought against censorship.[9]

As Casal acknowledged, in Buenos Aires, the visual arts were not as systematically censored as film, literature, and television. In terms of suppression, artist Juan Carlos Distéfano explained, "There was censorship when the work was absolutely explicit, like an installation with a torture room, then that would be directly censored."[10] Therefore, censorship of the visual

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[8] Quoted in María Teresa Constantin, *Cuerpo y materia: arte argentino entre 1976 y 1985* (Buenos Aires: Imago Espacio de Arte, 2006), 28. "No hubo decretos oficiales, como sí los hubo para la literature o el teatro de revista (en el otro extremo). Hubo sí intervención en los cargos directivos del area-directores de museos, Fondo Nacional de las Artes, por ejemplo-, en general por profesionales del campo cultural, cuya actuación deber ser leída casi en terminos individuales. Por el momento, todo indica que los efectos represivo actuaron sobre los individuos como ciudadanos, provocando autocensura y terror generales, pero que se preservaron espacios de circulación y que artistas, críticos y galeristas, e incluso coleccionistas, pudieron crear redes y desarrollar una intense actividad que aprovechaba el mínimo resquicio para decir, para pensar, para juntarse, para producir."

[9] Julio Flores, "Siluetas," in Ana Longoni, Gustavo A. Bruzzone, Rodolfo Aguerreberry, and Fábian Lebenglik, *El Siluetazo*, Sentidos (Buenos Aires: Adriana Hidalgo Editora, 2008), 87.

[10] Juan Carlos Distéfano, interview by author, Buenos Aires, Argentina, November 11, 2009. "Había censura cuando era absolutament explicito es decir exponer una instalación con una camera de tortura pues esta fue censurada directamente." Distéfano and his wife Griselda Gambaro went into exile, because friends of theirs, close to the government, advised them to leave after Gambaro, published the novel *Ganarse la muerte* in 1977, which the Videla administration banned. Many artists were disappeared and others went into exile including Luis Felipe Nóe (b. 1933, exiled in Paris 1976-1987), León Ferrari (b. 1920, exiled in Brazil 1976-1991), and Juan Carlos Distéfano (b. 1933, exiled in Spain 1977-1980). The families of artists like that of Ferrari and Carlos Alonso (b. 1929, exiled in Italy and Spain 1979-1981) were directly targeted; they both had children that the dictatorship disappeared. In some instances, art

arts was not a black and white issue during the dictatorship. For example, the military saw fit to leave DiStéfano's figurative work *El Mudo* (The Mute, 1973) installed at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes (The Museum of Fine Arts, MNBA) in Buenos Aires (Fig. 20). DiStéfano created the work during the democratic rule of Juan Domingo Perón (1946-1955 and 1973-1974) before the 1976 junta arrested government control. Although it did remain in place, *El Mudo* directly referred to the torture of the human body and to the abuses of power. Art historian Gustavo A. Bruzzone described the MNBA under the dictatorship as a "period in which for the museum 'nothing happened.'"[11] DiStéfano explained that the dictatorship either believed that by leaving the sculpture in the MNBA, it took the power away from the work of art or, alternatively, that the dictatorship did not see the visual arts as a threat. However, he also pointed out that his work was not necessarily easy to interpret. For example, DiStéfano described how some of *El Mudo*'s viewers understood the sculpture's subject to be a man eating ice cream.[12]

Despite this negation of power or simple oversight of comprehension of the subject's meaning on the part of the military censors, artist Norberto Gómez (b. 1941) asserted that there were many types of prohibitions and visual resistance within art institutions in response to the military government's censorship.[13] For example, Gómez also chose the torture of the human body as the subject of his sculptural work. Under the dictatorship in the late 1970s, he slowly dissolved his minimalist style from the 1960s to sculpt fragments of the internal body, such as muscles, intestines, and human remains, in polyester resin (Fig. 21). His shift to realism and the

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critics like Fermín Febrer chose self-censorship as well by changing their circle of friends. Distéfano explained, "He walked across the street and passed by without greeting us, acting as if he didn't know us and well it was bad." "Iba por la calle de enfrente pasaba y no nos saludaba siendo recontra conocido y bueno fue feo."

[11] Gustavo A. Bruzzone, "H.I.J.O.S., Glusberg, Arrieta de Blaquier…," *Ramona* 5 (September 2000): 3. "Época en que en el museo "no pasaba nada."

[12] Distéfano, interview.

[13] Norberto Goméz, interview by author, Buenos Aires, Argentina, December 16, 2009.

creation of figural subjects were in direct response to the horrors inflicted on the physical and social body under the dictatorship.

Many artists, including Goméz and Buenos Aires-based painter Diana Dowek (b. 1942), embraced an allegorical artistic strategy to represent the disappeared under the watchful gaze of the military dictatorship. When Goméz and Dowek exhibited their artworks, they sought to convey the repression and the disappearances through a veiled vocabulary in order to avoid the censors and protect themselves from the same fate as their subjects. Beginning in 1978 Dowek's hyperrealist style included wrapping barbed wire around her paintings and painting dolls tightly bound in metal fencing to reflect Buenos Aires's cityscape and the physical oppression of the era (Fig. 22). Describing the progression of her work under state-sponsored terrorism, Dowek stated, "During the entire period of the dictatorship, which was very violent, I worked trying to express what I was experiencing."[14] In 1978 Dowek showed her work at the MNBA while Goméz's works were exhibited in the Arte Nuevo Gallery in Buenos Aires. These exhibitions, along with Distéfano's experience, illustrate the permissive nature of display in Buenos Aires, which differed sharply from the rest of the country.[15] The more established art world in Buenos Aires provided an umbrella of protection.

For example, during an interview, Dowek emphasized, "If I had lived in Rosario, Santa Fe, or in Córdoba [provincial cities in Argentina] I wouldn't be speaking with you. For me it is

[14] Diana Dowek, interview by author, Buenos Aires, Argentina, October 12, 2009. "Durante toda la época de la dictadura que fue muy feroz yo he trabajado tratando de expresar lo que se estaba viviendo."
[15] Dowek also showed her work in the galleries Arte Múltiple in 1977, Galería Martinez and in the Benson Hedges Prize for New Argentine Painting at the MNBA in 1977.

luck that I can be telling my story and that I could do what I did during this period."[16] The government censors and the military junta's "war against subversion" affected the art world in the provinces outside of the capital more directly, as in the case at the mural department of the Universidad Nacional de La Plata (National University of La Plata, UNLP) in the city of La Plata, in the province of Buenos Aires. Murals are traditionally heralded as a democratic art program for the people, and because of their activist subject matter and the collective participation in their creation, the military junta closed UNLP's muralism department in 1976. At the time, this was the only graduate program in Latin America dedicated to this art form. The dictatorship then killed and disappeared the majority of the students studying there, and others went into hiding or exile after being tortured and detained at the ex-clandestine detention center Escuela de Suboficiales de Mecánica de la Armada (The Navy Mechanics School for Officers, ESMA).[17] To describe the forced closure of UNLP's muralism department, the dictatorship applied the words *se extingue*: literally, "to become extinct."[18] As discussed in Chapter One, the dictatorship attempted to thwart collective action and restricted the freedoms traditionally associated with public space. Cristina Terzaghi (b. 1966), professor of mural painting at UNLP's recently reopened department of muralism, explained why this field of study was targeted: "Art

[16] Dowek, interview. "Si yo hubiera vivido en Rosario, Santa Fe o en Córdoba seguramente no hubiera pasado todo esto, no estaría contándote, digamos para mi es una suerte digamos del azar que yo pueda estar contándote esto y que yo haya podido hacer lo que hice en esa época."
[17] María Cristina Terzaghi, interview by author, La Plata, Argentina, October 14, 2009.
[18] The mural department was re-opened in 1996 and has created several murals in honor of the disappeared including a mural to commemorate the La noche de los lapices (Night of the Pencils) when ten high school students were disappeared in 1976 because of their protest against raising bus fares. Terzaghi has also created a kinetic sculpture *El Abrazo* (The Embrace, 1996) in Buenos Aires in homage to the disappeared for the Confederación General del Trabajo (General Confederation of Labor, CGT)

communicates and is charged with knowledge…a mural, which is produced collectively, is dangerous and is even more so because it is located in the public sphere."[19]

In addition to muralism, some military government officials also considered abstract artworks as an enemy of national traditions.[20] The censorship of abstract objects in the provinces outside of the capital is exemplified by Marcelo Bonevardi's (1929-1994) 1978 exhibition at the Museo Provincial de Córdoba (the Province of Córdoba Museum), which remained open only for a few days. When the Minister of Education visited the exhibition, he exclaimed, "This is unintelligible! This painting is *medio*-Marxist!"[21] Karl Marx, of course, was on the list of authors censored by the military dictatorship. As a direct result, the museum immediately withdrew the Bonevardi catalog from circulation and closed the exhibition a few days later.[22] At the time of the exhibition, Bonevardi lived in New York City's Meatpacking District. The imagery in the displayed drawings incorporated large meat hooks that he observed in his neighborhood, also a common site on the streets of his native Córdoba (Fig. 23).[23] Perhaps the Minister of Education and viewers understood these quotidian objects to be an allusion to torture devices. However, Bonevardi shied away from overt political references in his work, as he wanted to leave the interpretation open to the viewer.[24] This abstract allusion to torture was not necessarily the artist's intent, but to the military dictatorship the danger in abstraction lay in the very possibility

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[19] Terzaghi, interview. "El arte comunica, tiene carga de conocimiento, el arte se metaforiza el arte en un mural que es colectivo es peligroso y más en lo público."
[20] Colombres, "Las Artes Plásticas Domesticadas," 189.
[21] Ibid. "¡Pero esto es inintelegible! ¡Esta pintura es medio marxista!"
[22] Ibid., 189–190. Prior to this exhibition Bonevardi exhibited in Galería Bonino, Buenos Aires (1976) and Galería Imangen, Buenos Aires (1977). The catalog of Bonevardi's 1978 Cordóba exhibition was not available in the artist's archives in New York.
[23] Although the catalog of this exhibition was unavailable, Gustavo Bonevardi, the artist's son explained the imagery and showed sketchbooks that were most likely preparations for drawings that were shown in the exhibition in question.
[24] Gustavo Bonevardi, interview by author, New York, NY, January 9, 2012.

of the audience's open comprehension of Bonevardi's drawings. The fact that Bonevardi's works were labeled as Marxist emphasized the difficulty in being able to deduce what the dictatorship considered "subversive works of art" and therefore led many artists to choose a path of self-censorship rather than become targets of the military dictatorship.[25]

Touching on the issue of censorship and the general lack of art production during the military dictatorship, art historian Viviana Usbiaga explained the discrepancies in the art world during military rule:

> On the one hand, in many cases it is the artistic community's own members that declared that nothing relevant existed in the decade that deserves to be remembered. Thus, they fertilized the field of forgetfulness of cultural history. On the other hand, the poor reality of the museum system in Argentina assures that these institutions do not function as a renewed repository of works, that they exhibit an updated patrimony with respect to the dynamics of production in the artistic field…The publishing industry, impoverished during the years under the dictatorship, did not contribute to the production of catalogues or publications that convey the elaboration of an intellectual recuperation.[26]

The self-censorship and censorship prompted Argentine cultural producers to turn away from the avant-garde practices of the 1960s. Some artists chose to stay in Argentina and create allegorical visual responses to the dictatorship. Many artists, including Carlos Alonso (b. 1929), León Ferrari (b. 1920), and DiStéfano, went into self-imposed or forced exile, where they continued to make works of art that referred to the disappeared and the repression under the dictatorship.

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[25] For further reading on the art world under the dictatorship see Constantin and Imago Espacio de Arte, *Cuerpo y Materia: Arte Argentino Entre 1976 y 1985*.

[26] Vivian Usubiaga, "Memoria histórica y memoria pictórica en el arte argentino de la redemocratización," in *Discutir el canon: Tradiciones y valores en crisis* (Buenos Aires: Centro Argentino de Investigadores de Arte, 2003), 77. "Por un lado, en muchos casos son los propios miembros de la comunidad artística los que sentencian que no existió nada relevante en la década como para merecer ser recordado, se fertiliza así el campo de la desmemoria de la historia cultural. Por otro, la pobre realidad del sistema museístico en la Argentina, hace que estas instituciones no funcionen como un repositorio renovado de obras, que exhiban un patrimonio actualizado respecto a la dinámica de producción del campo artístico…La industria editorial, pauperizada durante los años de la dictadura, no contribuyó a la producción de catálogos o publicaciones que vehiculizaran la elaboración de una recuperación intelectual y generan un debate sustancioso al respecto."

Although Usbiaga's description of the art world asserted that it was impoverished under the dictatorship, artists continued to produce creative modes of dissent that also had a basis in conceptualism to express their own experience of repression under the regime and to memorialize the disappeared.

The Decade of Politically Enforced Forgetting: 1986-1994

The Argentine government, under the democratic leadership of Raúl Alfonsín (1983-1989) and President Carlos Saúl Menem (1989-1999), discouraged discourse about the dictatorship during the decade of politically enforced forgetting from 1986-1994. Therefore, very few forms of official memorialization occurred. Geographer Elizabeth Jelin explained that "at the level of state institutions, the first half of the 1990s was a low point in actions and initiatives related to human rights violations during dictatorship in South America."[27] As such, to counteract the disengagement of state institutions with the human rights cause, civil society institutions attempted to support the Asociación Madres, Madres-LF, and Abuelas (among other human rights groups) in order to protest the push toward national reconciliation that the Alfonsín and Menem administrations urged. In this section, I present case studies of two distinct types of institutions: the newspaper and the university. These two spaces functioned on distinct mnemonic levels; both institutions however aided in the understanding of the flourishing of distinct typologies and sites of memorials to the disappeared during this time period. This occurs through the analysis of the pages of a newspaper and the examination of a site-specific anti-monument at the university in the public sphere.

[27] Elizabeth Jelin, Judy Rein, and Marcial Godoy-Anativia, *State Repression and the Labors of Memory* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), xiv.

Página/12: The Newspaper as a Site of Memory

To counteract the politically enforced forgetting beyond the historic human rights organizations' street protests, Estela Carlotto, president of the Abuelas, published photographs of her disappeared daughter Laura Estela whose son was born in captivity and who still had not been found. The photograph appeared on August 25, 1988 in the left-leaning newspaper *Página/12* (*Page/12*), which was founded by journalist Jorge Lanata in 1987 and started with a circulation of 10,000 copies and presently expanded to 51,000.[28] Other families took Carlotto's lead, and what began as a few small, ad-sized memorials per month within the pages of the newspaper turned into dozens and then thousands of media announcements (Fig. 24).[29]

The series of published *recordatorios* (remembrances) in *Página/12* combined historic atrocity and personal memory. The Madres's physical donning of the enlarged official identification photographs had already transformed the photos into objects of subversion as proof of disappearance. The photographs of the disappeared that appeared in the newspaper then became powerful reminders to the public of their subjects' fate and function as a public familial act of love and friendship. The family members and friends of the victims of state-sponsored terrorism created these *recordatorios*, which produce a scrapbook effect within the section of the newspaper in which they are published (Fig. 25). In turn, the readers of *Página/12* shared these collected memories in an individual and collective act of remembering as they flipped through the pages and gazed upon the faces of the disappeared.

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[28] The general manager of *Página/12* is Hugo Soriano and the newspaper's readership tends to be politically to the left.

[29] Fernando Reati, "El monumento de papel: La construcción de una memoria colectiva en los recordatarios de los desaparecidos," in Sandra Lorezano, Ralph Buchenhors, eds., *Políticas de la Memoria: Tensiones en la palabra y la imagen* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Gorla, 2007), 159. A sampling of the numbers of photographs published according to year are as follows: 1988: 20; 1989: 49; 1990: 68; 1991: 140; 1996 (20th anniversary): 335; 1988-2002: 170 announcements.

The *Página/12 recordatarios*, which continue to be printed and circulated as of the writing of this dissertation, relied on the photograph coupled with personal text and facts such as date of disappearance, date and place of birth, and the names of those who created the announcement.[30] Thus, the disappeared become present on the page through an intimate, socially-informed framework for understanding the past. The format, tone, and rate of publications by family members and friends of the disappeared vary, and the series emphasizes the importance of dates in terms of memorials. The years with the most *recordatarios* occur during anniversaries of disappearances and on birthdays of the disappeared individuals. Some families publish *recordatorios* twice a year: once on the date of disappearance and again on the date of birth of their missing loved one. Other families choose to publish *recordatorios* every year on the date of disappearance, while others publish on every major fifth or tenth anniversary.[31]

Many of the photographs that appear in the *recordatorios* are the same official government identification documents that the Madres used in their march around the Plaza de Mayo (see Chapter One). Carlotto explained why many families often print official photographs in *Página/12*: "We did not forget that the children were activists and many worked underground. Therefore, they tried to protect their families and sometimes they destroyed a lot of material in order to avoid the confiscation of the photographs by the security forces, as the photos could then

[30] Many of the photographs are accompanied by slogans that appear in protest marches such as, "Truth and justice," "justice and punishment," "punishment to those who are guilty," and "we will not forget, we will not pardon."

[31] Nicolás Guagnini in a panel discussion at El Museo del Barrio, New York on February 22, 2007 pointed out that French artist Christian Boltanski (b. 1944) had thought of a conceptual project to put the names of the disappeared in the newspaper, but this already existed through the initiative of *Página/12* and the family members and friends of the disappeared.

be used to identify others. For this reason, perhaps the only document that remained was a small document."[32]

Página/12 gives agency to families of disappeared persons to publicly remember their loved ones, who up until this point had been marginalized by the media. In a domestic, familial expression in the public sphere, the ads placed in *Página/12* are a form of personal reportage on what the media left out under the dictatorship and under the transition to democracy—the actual lives of the disappeared persons—and they function as *testimonios*. *Página/12*'s efforts kept the disappeared's memory alive for the collective society during a time when official channels attempted to justify and bury both the crimes of the members of the military and the disappeared themselves. [33]

In order to contextualize the *Página/12* photographs of the disappeared, one must understand the role of the media under the dictatorship. With some exceptions, the mainstream press was complicit with the military dictatorship. The English language newspaper *The Buenos Aires Herald* which had a limited readership due to its English-language subscribers and *La Opinión* (until Jacobo Timmerman, the editor was kidnapped in 1977) were the only newspapers that regularly published lists of names of the disappeared.[34] In May 1978 *La Prensa* published a one-time record of the names of 2,000 disappeared persons with their National Identification

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[32] Reati, "El monumento de papel: La construcción de una memoria colectiva en los recordatarios de los desaparecidos, 168. "No Nos olvidamos de que los chicos tenían una militancia, y muchos estaban en la clandestinidad. Entonces trataban de proteger a la familia, y a veces destruían mucho material para evitar que si las fuerzas de seguridad secuestraban fotografías, pudieran estar señalando personas. Por eso tal vez lo único que quedaba era un documentito."

[33] In 1995 *Página/12* and the publisher Eudeba published the *Núnca Más* report by CONADEP with illustrations by León Ferrari, which became obligatory reading for school children in Buenos Aires.

[34] Blaustein and Zubieta, *Decíamos Ayer: La Prensa Argentina Bajo El Proceso*. For a full account of Timmerman's experience under the dictatorship see Jacobo Timmerman, *Preso Sin Nombre Celda Sin Número* (New York: Random House, 1981).

Numbers (DNI) during the World Cup, which Argentina hosted, placing the country under international scrutiny. Along with the lack of discussion of the disappeared, major newspapers during the dictatorship rarely mentioned the Madres. *La Prensa* generally mentioned the Madres and the human rights campaign only in negative terms. The Madres counteracted this negative publicity by taking out an ad of their own in the newspaper. The initial use of photographs of the disappeared in a newspaper occurred when the Madres's first paid advertisement appeared on October 15, 1977 in *La Prensa* using funds that each family contributed. The notice's headline read, "We do not ask for anything more than the truth." The names of the disappeared were listed alphabetically (at the newspaper's insistence) and were printed with 237 photographs of the disappeared, and the signatures and identity card numbers of each Madre.[35]

What distinguishes the *recordatorios* from these earlier media interventions by the Madres is that the *Página/12* series is individually motivated and not linked to a human rights organization. *Página/12* thus allows individually produced memorials to the disappeared to circulate in the public sphere without having to conform to a specific human rights organization's political agenda. Friends or family members could sign the *recordatorios* but leave out their own names and instead include self-references that are more personal, with notes such as "from mom" or "from dad," as if the *recordatorios* were directly addressed to a still living disappeared person.[36]

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[35] This first ad essentially gave the government a list of targets. Nine of the Madres were kidnapped soon after its publication in a two-day raid that included the kidnapping of two French nuns and Azucena DeVicenti, one of the original founders of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo. More ads followed however including: On December 10, 1977 the Madres took out a full-page advertisement in *La Nación* "A Christmas in Peace" to coincide with International Human Rights Day with a list of names of the disappeared. *La Prensa* August 5, 1978 published an open letter from the Abuelas titled "Appeal to the Conscience and the Hearts" that stated that children had the right to be reunited with their families.

[36] Some *recordatorios* also include the names of the perpetrators of the disappearance.

Scholars have conceived of various terms to refer to the photographs of the disappeared and accompanying text in *Página/12*. Art historian María Angélica Melendi dubbed these works "*Tumbas de papel*" (paper tombs).[37] Melendi suggested that the newspaper pages provided an alternate resting place for the disappeared. However, Melendi's nomenclature neglected that many of the *recordatorios* emphasize the disappeared's life as opposed to functioning as an obituary or death notice. The families producing the works are not looking to create a final resting place for the disappeared because many people continue to view their missing relatives as disappeared, as opposed to deceased. Literature scholar Fernando Reati offered an alternative frame for understanding the *recordatorios* in *Página/12*. He called this new type of memorial a "*monumento de papel*" (paper monument) to allude to an intrinsic paradox, that of the use of an ephemeral newspaper without a concrete physical space that was born not out of the State, but out of its citizens.[38] *Página/12*, through siting the *recordatorios* in its pages, thus created a temporary public space for memory.

The newspaper allowed the individual, personal memories of the disappeared to form part of the collective and collected memories of the Argentine citizenry by appearing in public spaces (within the newspaper) removed from both the site of disappearance and the site of the disappeared's living and work spaces. In this way, the *recordatorios* are anti-monuments, as they negate both a permanent physical space and the heroicizing content of traditional monument construction. The *recordatorios* are public memorials, but because of their portable nature, they enter into the readers' private spheres. These anti-monuments are circulating memorials that transcend fixed spaces of traditional monuments by entering into homes, restaurants, cafes, the

[37] María Angélica Melendi, "Estrategias del arte (y de la memoria) en una era de catástrofes," in Sandra Lorezano, Ralph Buchenhorst, eds. *Políticas de la Memoria: Tensiones en la palabra y la imagen,* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Gorla, 2007), 295-307.
[38] Reati, 159.

street, etc. They can be viewed alone or shared and passed between readers. The act of holding the paper also provides an intimate point of reflection, and the experience of seeing is mediated by the tactile experience of turning the newspaper pages. The ephemeral memorial itself can eventually be disposed of, or cut out and removed from its original site of display and kept as a keepsake and memento.[39] Over the years the continual replication of the photographs of the disappeared, duplicated in the thousands in newspaper editions, perpetuated and preserved the memory of the disappeared amongst a climate of government-induced national reconciliation and civil society's muttering that there must have been a reason for the disappearances. A few years after the beginning of the circulation of the *recordatorios* in *Página/12* a more lasting form of anti-monument began to take shape. Initiated during the decade of politically enforced forgetting, it became one of the first permanent memorial structures dedicated to the disappeared in Argentina.

Universidad Nacional de La Plata

The educational institution of the university also played a major role in preserving the memory of the disappeared for Argentine citizens during the decade of politically enforced forgetting. The Universidad Nacional de La Plata (The National University of La Plata, UNLP) created one of the first permanent memorials to the disappeared. Under the dictatorship, the military specifically targeted UNLP because it was an educational institution; the numbers of those disappeared from the university are particularly distressing. Five percent of UNLP students in the natural sciences and ten percent of students in the humanities were disappeared under the

[39] The *recordatorios* also take on distinct properties once removed from their original site of publication and circulation. For example, contemporary artist Andrea Fasani who was a victim and survivor of state-sponsored terrorism in 2006 began working on an installation project with the *recordatorio* clippings from *Página/12*.

dictatorship.[40] Forty percent of the architecture and urban planning students were killed by the right-wing death squad the Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance (Triple A), which operated under Isabel Perón's administration, and by the paramilitary forces under the leaders of the 1976 junta.[41]

Due to the large loss of student body and faculty under the dictatorship, the UNLP campus emerged as a site for several distinct memorial expressions and proposals.[42] UNLP's psychology department, where Asociación Madres president Hebe de Bonafini's daughter-in-law studied, placed plaques with the names of the university's disappeared in every classroom. The Asociación Madres do not seek permanent, concrete markers of violence to memorialize the organization's members' disappeared sons and daughters. Thus, de Bonafini refused to attend the ceremony because she and her organization want people to commit to continue the disappeared's activist project of social change instead of constructing memorials dedicated to the disappeared. De Bonafini emphatically affirmed, "I want them [the plaques] to say, 'This classroom commits itself to do what María Elena [de Bonafini's daughter-in-law] was doing, to fight for the country the way María Elena did.'"[43] The Asocación Madres wants memorials to the disappeared to be a living commitment to social justice, as opposed to an inert token structure.

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[40] Marguerite Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 179. UNLP has a history of resistance and activism under the military dictatorship. For example, a secretary at UNLP stole the identification photographs of students so that the military could not use them to aid in its kidnapping operations. She kept them at her home and then, when the dictatorship ended, she framed the photographs of those that had disappeared into a photomural and placed it in the student cafeteria.

[41] Ibid. Architecture and urban planning were associated with progressive social reforms.

[42] UNLP was the first university in the country not to hold classes on March 24, the anniversary of the military junta's take over of the government in 1976.

[43] Marguerite Guzman Bouvard, *Revolutionizing Motherhood: The Mothers of the Plaza De Mayo* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1994), 153.

The university also proposed naming a classroom after Hebe de Bonafini's son, who also attended UNLP. De Bonafini refused to accept this offer. In response to the rejected proposal UNLP students invented an alternate strategy of naming and memorialization when they placed de Bonafini's son's name inside a crystal with the promise that the crystal would be smashed when de Bonafini's son's assassins were brought to justice.[44] This type of impermanent, conceptual, and performative memorialization strategy is one that the Asociación Madres supports, as opposed to what it perceives as the hollow gesture of naming spaces after victims of state-sponsored terrorism. The crystal did not monumentalize the disappeared. Rather, it acted as an *aide-mémoire* for the major project that the human rights organizations undertook in the mid-1990s: the need to bring the perpetrators of disappearance to justice.

In this spirit of active memorials, UNLP sponsored the construction of the Monumento a Recuerdo, Memoria y Compromiso (Monument to Remembrance, Memory, and Commitment) through the School of Architecture and Urban Planning. The architects Daniel Betti, and Julio Pueyo, who graduated from UNLP's architecture department in the late 1960s and early 1970s, respectively, spearheaded the movement to create a permanent memorial on the UNLP campus.[45] The winners of the competition, Roberto Saravi, Jorge Raúl García and Daniel Delpino, were announced on November 3, 1994, only two months after the first call for the competition was circulated. The memorial was inaugurated on September 14, 1995, which was the twentieth

[44] Ibid.
[45] The Architects Network was formed in order to organize the construction of the Monument and announce competition for the memorial. Ninety project proposals were received in all.

anniversary of the first Triple A murder of a student from La Plata, Carlos de la Riva. It memorializes him as well as 101 other UNLP students.[46]

The call for entries stated, "It has to propose at a level of ideas, a place, a space or an architectonic element inside the department that constitutes a symbolic milestone that remembers the comrades assassinated by the Triple A, disappeared, and killed during the dictatorship, and those that passed away in exile, linking the collective memory with the participatory and promising a future of development and transformation."[47] The guidelines for the competition also specified that the memorial do the following: "To pay homage in the name of 'Fabiolo' and to all of the companions in the sphere of the department through the creation of a symbolic marker that commemorates them and through the physical realization that symbolizes a living history threading the past with the present."[48] The competition's jury consisted of architect and artist Clorindo Testa (b. 1923), the architects Bucho Baliero (1927-2004), Osvaldo Bidinost (1926-2003), Roberto Gorostidi (n.d.), the artist Edgardo Antonio Vigo (b. 1928), a representative of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo La Plata chapter, and student representative Jorge Fabian Díaz.

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[46] Ludmila da Silva, Catela, *No Habrá Flores En La Tumba Del Pasado: La Experiencia De Reconstrucción Del Mundo De Los Familiares De Desaparecidos* (La Plata: Ediciones Al Margen, 2001), 182.

[47] "Concurso De Ideas: Memoria, Recuerdo y Compromiso," *Arquitectos* (September 1994). "Se debe proponer a nivel de ideas un lugar, un espacio o un elemento arquitectónico que dentro de la facultad se constituya en hito simbólico que recuerde a los compañeros asesinados por la Triple A, desaparecidos y muertos durante la dictadura military y fallecidos en el exilio, que vincule en la memoria colectiva a aquel pasado participativo y comprometido con un futuro de desarrollo y transformación."

[48] Quoted in Catela, *No Habrá Flores En La Tumba Del Pasado: La Experiencia De Reconstrucción Del Mundo De Los Familiares De Desaparecidos*, 183.
"Homenajear en el nombre de "Fabiolo" a todos los compañeros, con la materialización, en el ámbito de la facultad, de una marca simbólica que los recuerde y que su concreción física simbolice una historia viva que enhebre el pasado con el presente."

One of the conditions of the competition was that the entrants had to have studied at UNLP's department of architecture.[49] This marked a contrast in practices between other educational institutions and later government-sponsored memorials. Whereas the UNLP memorial was to be a site–specific work and designed solely by individuals intimately familiar with the space, later memorials outside of the university were designed by artists and architects imported from outside the sponsoring institution.

The memorial is an amphitheater combining a classical architectural structure with a minimalist and earth works aesthetic (Fig. 26). A spiral expands almost thirty-three feet in diameter and each circle of the spiral is sloped at approximately sixteen inches, which allows people to sit and gather around the amphitheater. The memorial gradually spirals downward to about six feet below ground level and the circular construction is made from ceramic blocks separated at intervals by slabs of black granite engraved with names of the disappeared persons and those UNLP students who died in exile.[50] The victims of the Triple A are listed first by date of death; those who were disappeared by the military dictatorship follow.

A marble plaque was posted at the site of the memorial with the following inscription:

> On the twentieth anniversary of Carlos "Fabiolo" de la Riva's assassination, we promise to raise this site, the project selected in the competition Remembrance, Memory, and Promise as an homage to all of the assassinated comrades by the Triple A, disappeared by the military dictatorship, and those who passed away in exile.
> Department of Architecture and Urban Planning Alumni Network (November 11, 1994).[51]

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[49] Architectural teams presented ninety works that included entries from Brazil, the United States, and Argentina. There were over 500 participants in the competition that were professional architects and students. On the anniversary of Fabiolo's assassination by the Triple A, November 3, 1994, the results of the competition were announced and the works by all of the entrants' models and renderings were displayed.

[50] The inclusion of those that passed away in exile is a practice that was generally not adopted by later memorial projects in Argentina.

[51] "En el 20 aniversario del asesinato de Carlos de La Riva "Fabiolo" nos comprometemos a levantar en este sitio, el proyecto seleccionado en el concurso…Recuerdo, Memoria y

A Linden tree, which represents the city of La Plata, is rooted at the center of the Monumento a Recuerdo, Memoria y Compromiso and is planted one level lower than the last name.[52] The creators of the memorial explained its symbolism: "This represents the spiral of horror that drowned us during the years of repression, whereas the hole in the middle symbolizes the emptiness left by those who are no longer with us. But the spiral ends with a tree that represents life, a linden tree that represent the city."[53] Hebe de Bonafini, speaking about the trees planted for the disappeared, asserted, "I have heard that the idea to plant trees—to make a forest— has been circulating. Jewish people have done it. Six million Jews were killed. Among us things are not resolved. Maybe in thirty or forty years we can do that. For now there have to be other initiatives."[54] Although she is opposed to the planting of multiple trees to represent the disappeared, the one symbolic tree at La Plata evades the funerary effect of the forests of memory that proliferate throughout the world in Israel, Oklahoma City, and in the Argentine cities of Rosario and Tucumán, among others.

Compromiso…en homenaje a todos los compañeros asesinados por la Triple A, desaparacidos por la dictadura militar y fallecidos en el exilio. Red ex alumnus F.A.U. 3-11-1994 (November 11, 1994)." 2,000 people attended the inauguration ceremony, which is a sign for how much people needed communal spaces to remember during this period.

[52] There was a debate as to which kind of tree to plant: an oak, gingko, or linden, because each tree had symbolic weight for the residents of La Plata. Oak stands for strength and nobility and is the symbol for UNLP. The gingko is the oldest tree on the planet and is found in the woods of La Plata. Many have been planted at UNLP in honor of deceased professors.

[53] *Él Día*, La Plata, September 15, 1995, Quoted in Catela, *No Habrá Flores En La Tumba Del Pasado: La Experiencia De Reconstrucción Del Mundo De Los Familiares De Desaparecidos*, 189. "Esto representa la espiral del horror que nos inundó durante los años de repression, en tanto que el hueco en el medio simboliza el vacío que nos dejaron quienes ya no están. Pero la espiral termina en un árbol que representa la vida, un tilo por todo lo que representa para la ciudad."

[54] De Bonafini, Hebe, interview by Juan Gelman and Mara la Madrid, *Ni El Flaco Perdón De Diós: Hijos De Desaparecidos* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Planeta, 1997), 56.
"He escuchado que anda por ahí la idea de plantar árboles, hacer un bosque. Los bosques también son medio mortuorios. Los judíos lo hiceieron. De ellos mataron a seis millones. Entre nosotros no están las cosas solucionadas. Quizás dentro de 30 o 40 años se pueda hacer. Por ahora debe haber otras iniciativas."

Saraví explained, "We did not want to make a monument like those to which we're historically accustomed in the West. We did not want to make an object of contemplation, where the viewer looks up, passive and silent, at a massive form on a pedestal. Nor did we want the monument itself to be isolated, a thing alone."[55] The architects wanted the space to be a living monument that was used by its audience—the students, staff, and faculty at UNLP— as a social space and a site for remembering the disappeared and the history of the dictatorship. The creators of the monument stated, "Our dead are an empty brutal hole. We will fill this hole with future generations to conceive of a better world together. We do not appeal to traditional symbolic representations of contemplative elevation; we do not want pedestals. We prefer to make a place to counter forgetting." [56]

Although the Asociación Madres is against the construction of monuments dedicated to the disappeared, the organization supported the completion of UNLP's Monumento a Recuerdo, Memoria y Compromiso, because, despite the name, the UNLP memorial functions as an anti-monument. It does not heroicize and it directly counteracts the dictatorship's goal of closing off public space by creating a gathering place for students and faculty. The UNLP memorial marked a change in the political and psychological landscape at the local and national level by directly addressing the legacy of violence on the UNLP campus.

The charge of the memorial's symbolism resonated beyond the construction of the anti-monument through the occasion of a performative expression at the site. On November 19, 1994 students tore down the wall that had once encircled the university to facilitate the rounding up of

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[55] Quoted in Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture*, 181.
[56] Quoted in Catela, *No Habrá Flores En La Tumba Del Pasado: La Experiencia De Reconstrucción Del Mundo De Los Familiares De Desaparecidos*, 189. "Nuestros muertos son un vacío, un hueco brutal. Lo ocuparemos con las futuras generaciones para concebir, todos juntos, un mundo mejor. No apelamos a la representación simbólica tradicional de elevación contemplativa, no queremos pedestales, preferimos hacer un lugar contra el olvido."

"subversives," and enforced the prohibition of public meetings. This barrier was created beginning in 1966 under the Onganía dictatorship and was expanded under both Isabel Perón and the *Processo*. The memorial's architects took the space that the military dictatorship disrupted and carved out a site for social interaction. The Monumento thus creates a tangible, physical contrast between the visual and spatial social opening during democracy and the closing off and restriction of the public sphere during the dictatorship. The site therefore falls under geographer Kenneth E. Foote's category of rectification, which he defined as a site where the signs of violence and tragedy have been removed.[57]

Daniel Betti described the internal and external process of recuperating individual and collective memory within social, public space: "Remembrance must happen deep inside each one of us in a very personal process, but it must also happen in our physical environment. You cannot talk about 'social' on one side and 'space' on the other. It's a dialectic, in which the two must have equal weight."[58] The transformation of public spaces into social spaces through the construction of a memorial both served to remember those that were lost and counteracted the efforts of the dictatorship to claim public space and thwart group meetings, which it interpreted as subversive acts. Betti emphasized that this work was a collective project just as the human rights organizations' activist memorials were largely based on collective action. The performative act of organizing and building the work is also a form of commemoration that

[57] Kenneth E. Foote, *Shadowed Ground: America's Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 23.
[58] Quoted in Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture*, 179–180.

conforms to the Asociación Madres's goals because these collective actions counter the military dictatorship's efforts at separating people in order to avoid the creation of "subversive groups."[59]

Madre Hereña Sánchez Viamonte expressed her support for the project because it differed from a stagnant model of memorialization: "I truly think that this is an ideal [memorial]. It isn't a plaque or a pyramid or something that says the names [of the disappeared] and nothing else…It makes it a place not only of remembrance but also of reflection. Moreover they are remembered for the names that are there. Truly one reflects, one remembers the 101 names of the students." [60] The Monument seeks to prompt the audience to reconsider the meaning and lessons of the dictatorship's political violence while honoring those students who protested against the physical violence on the body of the disappeared and acknowledging the violence that blurred the nation's collective and collected memory in post-dictatorship Argentina.[61] Hebe de Bonafini explained her approval for this memorial, which is distinct from her past and future reactions to memorials and monuments dedicated to the disappeared:

> I do not approve of putting the names of the disappeared on walls. At the university they installed a marble [slab]. Afterwards people placed flowers and candles there. This is death. They wanted us to say: "They are dead." …Another monument that to me seemed very good was done in the Architecture Department at the University of La Plata. They tore down a wall that was constructed so that the kids could not escape. They tore down a

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[59] Daniel Betti, at the commemoration of the sixteenth anniversary of the Monumento Recuerdo, Memoria y Compromiso La Plata, Argentina, September 14, 2011. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hg154ljl6lQ (accessed November 12, 2011).

[60] Hereña Sánchez Viamonte, mother of "Chueco" Santiago Sánchez Viamonte –disappeared student during the last military dictatorship at the commemoration of the sixteenth anniversary of the Monumento Recuerdo, Memoria y Compromiso, La Plata, Argentina, September 14, 2011. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hg154ljl6lQ (accessed November 12, 2011). "Re-Pienso que es un ideal no es una placa ni un piramide o algo que dice los nombres y nada más acá…hace que sea un lugar no solamente de recuerdo sino también de reflexión. Además de recordarlos por los nombres que están ahí. Realmente se reflexione, se recuerde a las 101 de nombres de los alumnos."

[61] The amphitheater's inaugural ceremony sparked the beginning of the formation of H.I.J.O.S., the next generation of human rights group and therefore, the memorial itself became a catalyst for the social change and calls for justice that H.I.J.O.S. would soon demand (see Chapter One).

> wall, organized a competition and the project that won was constructed in the middle of the courtyard in a kind of centrifuge with a tree in the middle. The kids can sit there to think, to dream, and to write. There will be names, names turning the centrifuge. It is a place of creation, not a static place against a wall. If our children died, it was not in order to be a name on a wall. This [memorial] has to do with life. Something generating, the centrifuge, a refuge, and the tree. Like this, one can be creative. With this type of thing I am in complete agreement.[62]

The memorial functioned as a vehicle for coming to terms with human loss through the construction of a living memorial.[63] The paradigm created by a single educational institution combined naming, an amphitheater, a spiral form, and spaces for gathering, along with a tree, to create a pastiche of memorial strategies within one anti-monument. Despite Saravi's assertion of wanting to move away from western paradigms of memorialization, a dialogue with a minimalist aesthetic, which was rapidly becoming the norm in global memorialization projects, is clearly visible within this public sculptural work. UNLP was the first educational institution to spearhead the construction of permanent memory markers dedicated to the disappeared in Argentina during a time when the nation was being pushed from above to reconcile its past.[64]

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[62] Quoted in Gelman and Madrid, *Ni El Flaco Perdón De Diós: Hijos De Desaparecidos*, 55. "No aprueba para nada esto de poner los nombres de los desaparecidos en las paredes. En la Universidad pusieron un mármol. Después la gente pondrá flores y velas. Eso es la muerte. Ellos quieren que nosotros digamos: "Están muertos". Flores al río, placas en las paredes… Otra que me pareció muy Buena se hizo en Arquitectura de La Plata. Tiraron abajo un muro que se había construido para impedir a los pibes escapar. Se tiró el muro, se llamó a un concurso y lo ganó un proyecto para construir en medio del patio una suerte de centrífuga con un árbol en el medio. Los pibes podrán sentarse allí, a pensar, a soñar, a escribir. Habrá nombres, nombres dando vueltas en esa centrífuga. En un lugar de creación, no es un lugar estático o contra la pared. Si nuestros hijos murieron fue por no ser un nombre en una pared. Esto tiene que ver con la vida. Algo generador, la centrífuga, y un amparo, el árbol. Así podrá haber creatividad. Con este tipo de cosas estoy totalmente de acuerdo."

[63] Not all of UNLP's departments are supportive of the memorialization process on campus. For example, in 1996 the dean of UNLP's law school blocked the installation of the art collective Grupo Escombros's proposed mural *Promesa*, which was designed in homage to seventy-eight law students that were disappeared.

[64] For a discussion on other memorials dedicated to the disappeared in the city of La Plata see Diego Díaz, "El Mapa De La Memoria," *Puentes*, 7 (July 2002): 34–39.

A shift in consciousness and conscious-raising activities also occurred at this time in effort to counteract President Menem's language of national reconciliation. The theory of the Two Demons was no longer widely accepted as a truthful historical narrative of events under the dictatorship because of investigative journalists such as Horacio Verbitsky who uncovered the horrors of the dictatorship's actions so that many Argentine citizens began to recognize that terrorism committed by the State was not a just response to internal terrorist threats.[65] Citizens started to seek an understanding of and to come to terms with their nation's difficult past. This period of politically enforced forgetting eventually shattered with the rise of the Memory Boom in Argentina.

The Memory Boom 1995-1998

The institutional silence and the silencing of institutions during the decade of politically enforced forgetting began to wane in the mid-1990s when a force of cultural and educational institutions began to counter the military's narrative of its rule and practices. This upsurge of memory in part coincided with the coming of age of the children of the disappeared. The desire to uncover and understand the truth behind the military's human right violations was sparked when navel officer Lieutenant Commander Adolfo Scilingo publicly confessed in 1995 to the military's systematic practice of torture and disappearing the bodies of its victims.[66] The conversations within the nation switched from discussion of guerilla groups' terrorist and subversive actions in the 1970s and early 1980s to the dictatorship's crime of genocide. Much of

[65] Horacio Verbitsky, *The Flight: Confessions of an Argentine Dirty Warrior* (New York: New Press: Distributed by W.W. Norton, 1996). See also "Dura réplica de Alfonsín," *La nación*, Buenos Aires, May 26, 2006 for coverage on the 2006 edited and updated prologue for the CONADEP *Núnca Más* Report.
[66] Ibid.

Argentine society could no longer accept the official history of the military junta's rule as put forth by the military itself and was not interested in embracing the democratically elected Argentine government's national reconciliation projects.

Several exhibitions and memorials spearheaded by institutions that did not traditionally take part in the human rights struggle under the dictatorship began to take form during the Memory Boom. This section investigates distinct strategies of exhibiting memorials to the disappeared during this time period, and analyzes the art exhibition as memorial through two distinct institutions: a high school and a cultural center. These institutions created a secure space to discuss and learn about the disappeared for a generation that was raised under the decade of politically enforced forgetting.

Colegio Nacional de Buenos Aires

In October 1996 photographer and human rights activist Marcelo Brodsky, with the support of the Argentine Historical and Social Memory Foundation and the Madres de Plaza de Mayo Línea Fundadora, inaugurated *Puente de la memoria* (Memory Bridge) at the Colegio Nacional de Buenos Aires (National High School of Buenos Aires).[67] Brodsky, who was in exile in Spain and whose brother was disappeared by the paramilitary police during the dictatorship, returned to Argentina to a country that he believed still denied its turbulent past.[68] The exhibition marked the first time that the Colegio Nacional de Buenos Aires recognized its ninety-eight students who disappeared under the dictatorship. In 1997 *Puente de la memoria* was later

[67] Artist Viviana Ponieman (b. 1956) originally titled a public, collective action *Puente de la memoria*, which is discussed in the Epilogue. She granted permission to the organizers of the Colegio Nacional de Buenos Aires exhibition to use the same title.
[68] Marcelo Brodsky, interview by author, Buenos Aires, Argentina, July 31, 2009.

expanded and turned into the traveling exhibition *Buena Memoria* (Good Memory).[69] Both versions of the exhibition relied on the quotidian photograph as a tool for memorialization.

Marcelo Brodsky used his own personal photographic archive to explore state terrorism.[70] He joined photography with text to capture memory and write the photograph's subject into history. These photographic memorials are collected pieces of personal memory in artistic shape that form part of Argentina's national history and function as a pedagogical tool for interpreting the past for a new generation unfamiliar with the history of the dictatorship. Brodsky's original target audience for the exhibition was the generation that grew up during the democratic era and whose formal and often informal education did not include a discussion of the dictatorship and the practice of disappearance.

The personal family photograph was not initially used in public marches; however, this type of photograph became a public vehicle of memorialization during the Memory Boom in the 1990s in order to bring to light how the disappeared lived before their memory was eclipsed by tragedy and historic denial. Brodsky memorialized the disappeared through distinct depictions of the disappeareds' temporal relation to their kidnapping. To remind the viewer of the randomness of the dictatorship's violence, he linked his individual memory to the photographs of the disappeared. This is in contradiction to the formality and impersonal nature of his *Camps II* installation at ESMA. Brodsky's project specifically interwove his own personal story with the

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[69] Between 1997-2007 *Buena memoria* was shown 120 times in twenty-six countries as a one-person show such as *Marcelo Brodsky-Buena memoria* at the Sprengel Museum, Hanover Germany (May 7-August 31, 2003) and as a part of group shows including *The Disappeared* (*Los Desaparecidos*) at El Museo del Barrio, New York, NY (February 23-June 17, 2007). A full list of institutions that exhibited *Buena memoria* is available on Marcel Brodsky's website at http://www.marcelobrodsky.com/intro.html.

[70] Brodsky went into exile in Spain after paramilitary forces failed a kidnapping attempt. He now resides in Buenos Aires and is a member of the Commission for the Monument to the Victims of State Terrorism, Buenos Aires and on the Board of Directors of Buena Memoria, a non-governmental human rights organization.

fate of the disappeared through an enhanced photograph of his class of 1967 at the Colegio Nacional de Buenos Aires. Through brief notes written in crayon, he told the fate of each of his classmates, two of whom were disappeared (Fig. 27).[71] The photo essay and exhibition of *Puente de la memoria* and *Buena memoria* include thirteen photos of different sizes hung on the wall and eight enlarged images of his former classmates. Brodsky referred to these photos as a transmittance of experience; I add that they sustain memory from one generation to the next.[72] Brodsky captured the lives of the disappeared before their disappearance in the space that they once inhabited by memorializing them not at a gravesite, but at a site where they once lived.

Brodsky took contemporary photos of each of the participating classmates in front of the enlarged black and white image of their class photo. He added descriptions to each one of the sitters on the surface of the enlarged photograph and placed a red "NO" sign over the two students out of his class of thirty-two that were killed by the military. His text illustrated the work and included explanations of the present and future of the sitters: "Pablo was killed by an incurable disease. Ana went to live in Israel twenty years ago. Her first child speaks Spanish, the second a little bit and the third only speaks Hebrew. They killed Claudio in a military confrontation."[73] As comparative literature scholar Marianne Hirsch wrote:

> It is precisely the utter conventionality of the domestic family picture that makes it impossible for us to comprehend how the person in the picture was, or could have been, annihilated. In both cases the viewer fills in what the picture leaves out: the horror of looking is not necessarily in the image but in the story the viewer provides to fill in what has been omitted.[74]

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[71]Marcelo Brodsky's brother, Fernando Brodsky was also disappeared by the dictatorship.
[72] Marcelo Brodsky, *Buena Memoria: A Photographic Essay by Marcelo Brodsky,* (Buenos Aires: La Marca, 1997), 57.
[73] "Pablo murió de una enfermedad incuable; Ana se fue a vivir a Israel hace 20 años. Su primer hijo habla castellano bien. El segundo, a medias, el tercero solo hable hebreo; A Claudio lo mataron en un enfrentamiento."
[74] Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 21.

Brodsky goaded the viewer to look at these innocent lives mixed with their futures in exile, future illnesses, and future disappearances and deaths by the hands of the State.

This exhibition was soon expanded when it was shown in the photography gallery of the Teatro San Martín (San Martín Theater), then one of the major photography exhibition spaces in Buenos Aires. It included audience response from the *Puente de la memoria* exhibition with the current students' images reflected in the photographs of the disappeared (Fig. 28). One of the photographs is of Juan, a fourth year student, who stated, "There was a photo exhibit showing the disappeared when they were still alive: dancing, camping with their class. These pictures allowed me to really identify with the disappeared."[75] Sebastían, from the graduating class of 1993, explained his reaction to the work: "What I had never felt, until that moment [of viewing the photographs] was the feeling of reliving the pain by means of a space of my own: the school. These pictures of the disappeared students in the same classrooms or courtyards that I enjoyed made me feel a part of that history."[76]

In the second version of this exhibition Brodsky included images from his own family photo archive. Brodsky described his motivation:

> It was at this point that I decided to include a chapter on my brother to the exhibition and to the book: I had to work on the disappearances and I could only go deep enough into them by connecting in my own personal, family experience, one missing at our table, my brother Fernando, who in fact had not gone to the same school. It did not matter at that moment. I focused on him and in his story as a way of humanizing the names, as an emotional way of communicating from the guts, to the new generations of viewers. So it was then that I researched my family photo files, which I have as the photographer in the family, found these original black and white prints from my personal album as a teenager, or from our "old photography box" which I still keep.[77]

[75] Quoted in Brodsky, 62
[76] Ibid, 57.
[77] Marcelo Brodsky, email message to author, February 20, 2012.

In his work, Brodsky shared original personal images of his brother Fernando Brodsky, whom the military dictatorship disappeared in 1977. The family photographs that Brodsky appropriated are quotidian images. Brodsky's photographs strategically eschew technical virtuosity or avant-garde photographic techniques in order to embrace the simplicity and banality of the family photograph to engage the viewer.

In his narratives, Brodsky amplified the family picture and disrupted the temporal narrative, subverting the lineal progression of a family album. The impact of the image changes when linked with explanatory text. Brodsky altered the meaning of the candid, un-posed, lackluster snapshot *Fernando at the Party* through the inclusion of the following description: "Fernando is near our family's dining-room table in our house in Caballito [a neighborhood in Buenos Aires], with his eyes closed. The family party floats around him…the backs of the guests remind me a little of the way people turned their backs on what was happening around them during the worst years of the military dictatorship" (Fig. 29).[78]

Accompanying the photograph *Fernando in Our Room* Brodsky wrote, "Fernando Rubén Brodsky, my brother, was kidnapped on August 14, 1979 and is still missing."[79] The sentences transformed the commonplace family snapshot into a contemplation of life, death, existence, and disappearance. Although Brodsky's images have been part of exhibition installations, it is through the book as memorial that the familiar family snapshots were most intimately reproduced. *Buena Memoria* mimiced a family photo album or scrapbook and reveals page by page the lives of Fernando and other intimates of Brodsky who have disappeared. The manuscript format allows the viewer to contemplate the images in her own personal, private

[78] Marcelo Brodsky, *Buena memoria=Good memory*, 84.
[79] Ibid, 79.

space.[80] Brodsky's family photographs relied on the disappeared person as the photograph's subject to evoke the past existence and the present absence of the disappeared. In a similar activist pedagogy, the Centro Cultural Recoleta (Recoleta Cultural Center) also located in Buenos Aires sought to reach out to the younger generation in a project of commemoration and reparation.

The Exhibition as Memorial: Identidad at the Centro Cultural Recoleta

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Right to Identity asserted, "Where a child is illegally deprived of some or all of the elements of his or her identity, State parties shall provide appropriate assistance and protection with a view to speedily re-establishing his or her identity."[81] Seven years before this document was written, while Argentina was transitioning from a dictatorship to a democratic Republic, the Argentine author Julio Cortázar (1914-1984) made a statement to the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Matters of the United Nations:

> If disappearance of an adult sows the horror and the pain in the hearts of their neighbors and friends, what should we say to parents and grandparents in Argentina that continue searching —photographs in hand —for these little ones that were torn away by blows, bullets and insults? My thoughts return to Dante and I return to thinking that in his atrocious hell there is not one child; but the hell created by the Argentine military, which is responsible for the disappearances, is full of tiny shadows and of silhouettes that with each passing moment become more similar to smoke and to tears.[82]

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[80] Ibid.

[81] *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.* Ratified by Argentina in 1990.

[82] Julio Cortázar, *Argentina: Años De Alambradas Culturales,* (Barcelona: Muchnik, 1984), 141. Cortázar delivered his speech in November 1983. "Si la desaparición de un adulto siembra el espanto y el dolor en la corazón de sus prójimos y amigos, ¿qué decir de padres y abuelos que en la Argentina siguen buscando, fotografías en mano, a esos pequeños que les fueron arrancados entre golpes, balazos e insultos? Vuelvo a pensar en Dante, vuelvo a decirme que en su atroz infierno no hay ni un solo niño; pero el de los militares argentinos responsables de las desapariciones está lleno de pequeñas sombras, de siluetas cada vez más semejantes al humo y a las lágrimas."

There are over 300 documented cases of children born in captivity, and the members of the military themselves would often become the adoptive parents of these disappeared children. The Full Stop Law that was passed under Alfonsín in 1986 did not extend its protection to the trafficking of babies and children. Thus, the Abuelas were able to bring suit against a group of generals who led the military's systematic kidnapping of children. The Abuelas demanded:

> Regarding our grandchildren, we ask that the fate handed to each and every one of the disappeared children in the Argentine Republic since 1975 be clarified, as well as the fate of the babies born in detention camps where their young mothers were taken while pregnant, and that these children be reintegrated with their family members, and all their rights respected: the right to life, the right to maintain their true identity, and the right to live with their legitimate family.[83]

On November 19, 1998, The Centro Cultural Recoleta (The Recoleta Cultural Center, CCR), a municipal institution and the main exhibition and cultural event center of the City of Buenos Aires, inaugurated the exhibition *Identidad* (*Identity*) in response to the Abuelas's plea.[84] The idea for this exhibition developed after the CCR director Teresa de Anchorena observed how many young people were attending exhibitions there. Anchorena thought that some of the missing grandchildren for whom the Abuelas were searching could be among the CCR's audience.[85] The question that sparked the *Identidad* exhibition was, "These people's [the disappeared's] children are alive. Where are they?"[86] The hoped-for attendees of the exhibition were the children born in captivity at clandestine detention centers across Argentina and those children who were kidnapped alongside their parents. In 1998 these same missing children would

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[83] Declaration of Principles and Affidavit of the Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo, July 21, 1982.
[84] In 1984, under the Alfonsín administration, cultural centers were instituted throughout the country.
[85] "El llamado de la sangre," *La República*, Buenos Aires, December 5, 1998.
[86] Eva Grinstein, "El Arte, en busca de los hijos," *El Cronista*, Buenos Aires accessed Centro Cultural Recoleta exhibition files, May 15, 2009. "Los hijos de estas personas viven. ¿Dónde están?"

be about nineteen to twenty-five years old, the same age that many of their parents had reached when para-military forces kidnapped them.[87] They may have looked like their parents or possessed similar facial characteristics and shared what author Fabian Lebenglik called a "biological memory."[88]

Teresa de Anchorena, in conjunction with the Abuelas, convened thirteen artists to participate in the *Identidad* exhibition, including Carlos Alonso (b. 1929), Nora Aslan (b. 1937), Mireya Baglietto (b. 1936), Remo Bianchedi (b. 1950), Diana Dowek, León Ferrari, Rosana Fuertes (b. 1962), Carlos Gorriarena (b. 1925), Adolfo Nigro (b. 1942), Luis Felipe Noé (b. 1933), Daniel Ontiveros (b. 1964), Juan Carlos Romero (b. 1950), and Marcia Schvartz (b. 1955). All of the above-mentioned artists had previously created works of art with subjects related to the period of state-sponsored terrorism. They hoped their work would help the children of the disappeared access their biological memory through this post-dictatorship project.

The exhibition expanded into two conjoined galleries (the Cronopias exhibition space and Sala Jota) and displayed 173 domestic and official photographs of the disappeared whose children were also disappeared. The photographs were black and white and faded. Each image of the victims of state-sponsored terrorism was interspersed with a mirror of the same dimensions as the photograph, reflecting the audience's own visage. The work linked together alternating photographs to create a pattern of mother-mirror-father, and each was hung on a white wall in a

[87] At that point in time, sixty children had been restituted. "El llamado de la sangre," *La República*, Buenos Aires, December 5, 1998.
[88] Fabian Lebegnglik, "La eloquencia de los espejos," *Página/12*, Buenos Aires in Centro Cultural Recoleta exhibition files (accessed May 15, 2009).

horizontal row at eye-level.[89] The artists assembled the installation with minimal elements and they left an empty space above and below the images on the walls (Fig. 30).

The *Identidad* exhibition constructed and communicated meaning by combining the photograph of the disappeared person with explanatory text. A label under each image provided some basic facts about the subject of the photographic portrait, including the sitter's age, date of transfers from Clandestine Detention Centers, and the last known place that witnesses had seen them. Next to each summation was the phrase, "Child who was born or was due to be born on…." with the approximate dates that could possibly help discover the children's whereabouts.[90] At the end of the exhibition were photographs of babies and children that were kidnapped and disappeared, a list of children that were found and restituted to their biological families, and a list of those children that were found to have been assassinated.

The artists also included other elements beyond the photographs and mirrors, such as a text from The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. In another gallery, a video of recorded testimony from seven victims of dictatorial repression, taken from the book *Botín de guerra* (*Spoils of War*) by Julio Nosiglia, played in a loop.[91] Additionally, the artists included an interactive element. Visitors could anonymously leave information that they thought would be useful to the Abuelas in an acrylic box located in the gallery at the beginning of the exhibition. Inside the box were also many comments and messages of support dedicated to the Abuelas. This exhibition was an aesthetic gesture of solidarity with the Abuelas, and an information gathering and dissemination campaign dedicated to the recovery of the disappeared children.

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[89] In 1998 the Abuelas documented 194 reported cases of mothers who were disappeared while pregnant, but they were only able to obtain 173 photographs for the exhibition.
[90] "Niño que nació o debió nacer en…"
[91] Julio E. Nosiglia, *Botín De Guerra* (Buenos Aires: Cooperativa Tierra Fértil, 1985).

Identidad was a collective work in terms of both its production and patronage. The Centro Cultural Recoleta and the Abuelas paid for the enlargement of the original family and official identification photographs for the installation. The exhibition proposal initially consisted of distributing some photographs of the disappeared to each artist so that he or she could make an individual work on the theme of disappearance. However, the artists decided to make a collective work and at the behest of Daniel Ontiveros to result in a particular conceptual form of installation.[92] Dowek explained, "They [The Abuelas] wanted to find their grandchildren and we gave them the image."[93] Adolfo Nigro described the process of creating *Identidad*, "There were a lot of meetings that advanced the project very slowly until we were able to define that we wanted to hang the photographs so that they possessed a continuity like a mural that marked a path…Then arose the idea to place the photographs in a straight line at eye-level so that the dialogue was direct…All of the decisions were absolutely reached by consensus."[94] León Ferrari explained the importance of the collective action, "There exists two roads, on one you use art to say things or you use those things to make art. If we would have worked separately with the photos, we would have only made an art exhibition."[95] Dowek provided a personal account of the process of hanging *Identidad*, "We cried while we made it I tell you, we cried while we were

[92] Daniel Ontiveros, interview by author, Buenos Aires Argentina, December 17, 2009.
[93] Ibid. Ellas [las Abuelas] querían encontrar a sus nietos y nosotros le dimos la imagen."
[94] Adolfo Nigro, "Del testmionio al arte," *El Clarín*, Buenos Aires n.d. 1998 CCR exhibition files (accessed April 15, 2009). "Hubo muchísimas reuniones en las que se avanzó muy lentamente hasta que llegamos a definir que queríamos montar las fotografías en continuidad como un mural que marcara un recorrido…Se planteó la idea de una forma recta a la altura de la mirada para que el diálogo fuera directo…todas las decisiones fueron absolutamente consensuadas."
[95] Ferrari quoted in Eva Grinstein, "El Arte, en busca de los hijos," *El Cronista*, Buenos Aires, 1998 Centro Cultural Recoleta exhibition files (accessed May, 14, 2009). "Existen dos caminos, o se usa el arte para decir cosas, o se usan las cosas para hacer arte. Si hubiéramos trabajado por seperado, con las fotos, hubiéramos hecho solamente una muestra de arte."

hanging the exhibition with Nóe, with Mr. Ferrari, Adolfo Nigro, and Juan Carlos Romero, we cried, we cried. It was truly very emotional and it was very touching."[96]

The installation's pedagogical and activist aspirations are revealed through an intimate, close encounter with the photographic objects. The image of worn photos and the mirrors melded the past and present by representing the disappeared parents through the photograph while the mirrors reflected the visitor's own face, which attempted to prompt the viewer to question, "Could I have been disappeared? Am I this missing child?" The empty space of the mirror represented the grandchildren, but it was filled with the face of the viewer who may have been the *desaparecido con vida* (living disappeared). This pictorial device placed the viewer in the role of the disappeared person with a hidden identity. The audience member completed this collective artwork when she was reflected amongst the disappeared parents and by looking in the mirror, also inserted herself into this family history. Curator Eva Grinstein, in her review of the *Identidad* exhibition, explained:

> More than an artistic exhibition, the exhibition is more akin to a vital experience given that the only form to view the images is actively participating in a path around the perimeter of the rooms that present a series of photographs—portraits of young men and women who were kidnapped, that were contributed by their relatives and used as primary source material in the work of the artists.[97]

Mirrors as a representational device of the disappeared as an interactive, reflective element were used a year before the *Identidad* exhibition in Colombian artist Oscar Muñoz's (b.

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[96] Dowek, interview. "Llorábamos mientras la hacíamos te digo, llorábamos mientras estábamos armando la muestra con Nóe con don Ferrari, Adolfo Nigro y Juan Carlos Romero, llorábamos llorábamos era realmente muy emocionante, nos tocó mucho."

[97] Eva Grinstein, "El Arte, en busca de los hijos," *El Cronista*, Buenos Aires, 1998, Centro Cultural Exhibition Files (accessed May 15, 1998). "La exposición está planteada, más que como una muestra artística, como una experiencia vital, dado que la única forma de apreciar las imágenes es participando activament en un recorrido por el perímetro de las alas, que presentan una serie de fotografías, retratos de los jóvenes, hombres y mujeres secuestrados, fueron aportados por sus familiares, y oficiaron como material prima para el trabajo de los artistsas."

1951) work *Aliento* (*Breath*, 1996-97, Fig. 31). Muñoz also removed the photograph of Colombia's disappeared from their site of original creation. He used obituary photographs from the newspaper and etched them onto circular reflective steel plates. The visitor first viewed her own visage in the small round plates hung at eye-level. The work was activated when the audience member breathed on the steel, which made the photograph of the disappeared appear. Muñoz stated, "The idea of the portrait also interests me because it extracts individuals from a formless universe. It is said that those killed by violence in Colombia are faceless and without identity. Paradoxically, I think that never before has the portrait had more evocative and cult power."[98] Although *Identidad* differed in the vehicle for representing the absence and presence of the disappeared from Muñoz's work, the installation did have its own optically jarring elements. As explained by Adolfo Nigro, "[The exhibition produces] a multiplied optical effect that seems to suggest they were many, we are many, and every time we are more."[99]

The interspersed frozen portraits of the disappeared and the mirrors created what Lebenglik described as a "horizontal family tree."[100] However, it is an incomplete horizontal family tree that visually created a time-line effect of those lost and to those children whose identity was taken from them. Geographer Elizabeth Jelin, in dialogue with historian John R. Gillis, stated, "The ability to recall or remember something from one's own past is what sustains identity. The relationship is one of mutual constitution in subjectivity, since neither memories nor identity are 'things' or material objects that are found or lost."[101] The exhibition attempted to

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[98] Laurel Reuter and Lawrence Weschler, *Los Desaparecidos* (Milano; Grand Forks; New York, N.Y.: Charta; North Dakota Museum of Art; Distributed by D.A.P./Distributed Art Publishers, 2006), 102.
[99] Nigro, "Del testmionio al arte." "Un efecto óptico multiplicador que parece sugerir: eran muchos, somos muchos y cada vez somos más."
[100] Lebegnglik, "La eloquencia de los espejos."
[101] Elizabeth Jelin, Rein, and Godoy-Anativia, *State Repression and the Labors of Memory*, 14.

come to terms with the identity of the Argentine nation by recognizing the history of disappearance, and more specifically aimed to reconstitute the identity of the disappeared babies and children.

In regards to the exhibition the Abuelas declared, "We hope that by seeing these faces of these youths, full of life, illusions and a future, that many people will be moved to contribute, like many others, the necessary pieces of information to complete all of these puzzles, to make real the reunion of the blood of our blood."[102] This commemorative-activist exhibition took the painful past of the dictatorship and melded it with the hope that the missing grandchildren could still be found and recover their identity, and that the nation would also learn of its history under the dictatorship.

The title *Identidad* addressed a particular global current of concern in the 1990s about identity. In the Argentine case, the term refered to recovering the identity of the kidnapped children and included an understanding of the disappeared and the atrocities committed under the military dictatorship as part of every Argentine citizen in the form of national identity.[103] The exhibition encompassed the subject of official government identity, personal identity, and national identity. The display of individual parents and their missing children functioned as an allegory for the Argentine nation's buried history, and was a product of the Memory Boom's project of coming to terms with the past. Recovering the identity of the missing children became entangled with national identity. Estela Carlotta explained, "If we do not recover those hundreds

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[102] Asociación de Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, *Niños Desaparecidos, Jovenes Localizados: En La Argentina De 1976 a 1999* (Buenos Aires: Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo: Temas, 1999), 19. "Ojalá que el mirar estos rostros jóvenes, llenos de vida, de ilusiones, de futuro, mueva a muchas personas a aportar, como tantas otras, los datos necesarios para completar todos los rompecabezas, para hacer realidad el reencuntro con la sangre de nuestra sangre."

[103] *Identidad* traveled to the United States when it became part of the *Disappeared* exhibition curated by Laurel Reuter out of the North Dakota Museum of Art in 2006.

of kids from the slavery and debasement of ignoring their own history, we could never go back to call ourselves Sovereign People anymore."[104] Pablo Baler, reporting for the *Buenos Aires Herald*, entreated, "Let's hope that at least one person would recognize him or herself in one of these reflections, as the biological son of one of these innumerable couples. Let's also hope that at some point all of us would recognize ourselves as the biological sons of our own history, because although we did not die or disappear, we sure find ourselves among the victims."[105]

Identidad created a new paradigm in the representation of the missing grandchildren. The installation explored the conceptual framework of the absence versus the presence of the disappeared body, and of photography to make the disappeared grandchildren present in the photograph and in the viewer's mind. This conceptual frame provided information and allowed the audience to reflect on the history, memory, and present effects of the dictatorship's state-sponsored terrorism. Due to the so-called "Scilingo effect," the CCR, as a cultural institution, was able to back the truth-value of the assembled photographs of the disappeared parents and the story they told in the *Identidad* installation.

The conceptual roots of *Identidad* can be found in the Madres LF exhibition *Exposición por la identidad del detenido-desaparecido* (Exhibition for the Identity of Detained-Disappeared Persons) in the Centro Cultural San Martín (San Martín Cultural Center, not to be confused with the Teatro San Martín, which is a separate institution) in Buenos Aires in 1997. Members of the Madres LF handmade collages on poster-sized stock board to visually display excerpts from the lives of their disappeared children and publicly display their children's identity beyond simply

[104] Pablo Baler, *Buenos Aires Herald*, Buenos Aires, 1998 Centro Cultural Recoleta exhibition file (accessed May 14, 2009).
[105] Ibid.

being one of the victims of state-sponsored terrorism.[106] The posters included both intimate and public archival documents, such as photographs of the disappeared and their families, poems dedicated to the victims, summaries of their life, and report cards, juxtaposed with writs of habeas corpus that the relatives presented to judges during the dictatorship.

Other visual and conceptual elements that influenced the *Identidad* exhibition included the Abuelas's previous representational devices for their missing grandchildren. Developing representation strategies for the missing children was challenging because the Abuelas and other family members lacked the photographs of the children born in captivity. Thus, the grandmothers signified their disappeared grandchildren in public through text on large banners that read, "Where are the hundreds of imprisoned babies born in captivity?"[107] The Abuelas also used the technique of collage to incorporate photographs of their missing children and hang them on the walls that lined the route of protest marches, in a diffusion similar to the 1983 *Siluetazo* (see Chapter One). Additionally, the organization posted and distributed photographs of kidnapped children who were not born in captivity, which resulted in the identification and return of many of these children to their biological families.[108] As of August 2011 the Abuelas have located 105 stolen children.[109]

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[106] The exhibition was on display during the events around the Chilean ex-dictator Augusto Pinochet's arrest and the investigations that began under the Spanish judge, Baltasar Garzón.
[107] "¿Donde están los centenares de bebes nacidos en cautiverio?"
[108] In August of 1979 the Abuelas in collaboration with the Brazilian human rights organization, Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in the Southern Cone (CLAMOR), recovered Victoria and Anatole Julien Grisonas (ages 4 and 6) of Uruguayan parents who had taken refuge in Argentina and then were kidnapped. The children were found in Valparaíso, Chile. A couple had adopted them two years prior, but the couple was unaware of their origins. Chicha Mariani, a member of Abuelas, sent a photograph of the children to CLAMOR's bulletin upon which a Chilean woman recognized the children and helped to restore their identity.
[109] Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, "Historia de Abuelas," Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, http://www.abuelas.org.ar/institucional.php?institucional=historia.htm&der1=der1_hist.php&der2=der2_inst.php (accessed August 30, 2011).

Another antecedent to the exhibition was the display of original government identification documents that the Madres used in protest marches around the Plaza de Mayo beginning in 1977. The exhibition was modeled after the Madres's public use of their disappeared children's iconic official identity photographs and relied on this same documentary aesthetic. The photographs were blown up in a large scale to move the official identification photograph into a critical, social commentary. The repetition of viewing photographs of the disappeared did not dull their effect because there were constant changes in the display practices and spaces of the disappeared persons' photographic portraits. For example, in the case of *Identidad,* there was an alternate relationship to the photographs of the disappeared and physical movement. That is the performance and ritual to activate the disappeared's memory changed. The highly sensitive issue of display needs to be addressed when the photographs, which eventually became associated with street protests, were brought indoors and institutionalized. The photographs moved from the outdoor marches of the Madres and the Abuelas into the interior of the gallery space. This transfer of loci from a wallet (in the case of I.D. documents) to the street (as a form of activist commemoration), to the cultural center (as a form of a memorial exhibition) functioned as a mobile *lieu de mémoire*. The photograph is released from the site-specificity to which more permanent monuments are linked. In the gallery space the movement that activated the photograph came from the viewer/participant, as opposed to the circumambulations of the Madres.

Identidad highlighted how artists supported by an institution can directly effect change within the human rights' cause. The exhibition functioned as a memorial, pedagogical tool, and agent of change. It made a direct impact on people's lives. Some of the audience members of

Identidad began to question their own identity and as a result three disappeared grandchildren were reunited as adults with their biological families.

The artists discussed here who exhibited during the Memory Boom all capitalized on the unique properties of the photograph. The adaptability of the photographic medium allowed for the creation of multiple aesthetic strategies to allude to the corporeal absence of the disappeared, which created a counter-narrative to the official history put forth by the military government. The artists, by removing the photographs of the victims of state-sponsored terrorism from their site of protest, forged new spaces within the gallery in which to emphasize the auratic qualities of the photograph and to extend the human rights organizations activist project to a new audience: that of the exhibition visitor.

Conclusion

Institutions are responsible for ephemeral and permanent markers of memory in Argentina. The Centro Cultural Recoleta, the Colegio Nacional de Buenos Aires, and *Página/12* created ephemeral, temporary memorials based on the photographic image. The Universidad de La Plata, however, created a more permanent form of memorialization that was able to respect both of the Madres organizations' tenets on how to memorialze the disappeared. The institutions did not deradicalize the content of the memorials to the disappeared. They did however, alter the ritual of memorializing the disappeared and changed and expanded the spaces in which to commemorate the disappeared and put forth an alternative historical narrative. The media, cultural, and educational institutions discussed above support the human rights organizations' cause and sought memory and justice for the disappeared. The CCR and *Página/12* memorials were not site specific. The two projects at educational institutions, the UNLP and the Colegio

Nacional de Buenos Aires, were site specific because they memorialized where the disappeared once studied, as opposed to their imprisonment or disappearance. The UNLP was among the first institutions to create permanent memory-markers and used the memorial to obliterate the dictatorship's legacy in controlling movement in public space.

By exhibiting commemorative projects within their space, institutions created new paradigms in activist memorials. They did not simply remember the disappeared in monumental form, but actively engaged in seeking justice and rectifying the falsified history that the military junta put forth. They shared the political, historical, activist, and educational concerns of the historic human rights organizations in Argentina and offered a space for didacticism, paying homage, and remembering. In addition, the memorials sponsored by institutions were not derivative of previous forms. They created new memorial paradigms without losing the original mission of the human rights organizations. Moving the visual arts in the service of the memory of the disappeared from the outside in diminished neither their emotional impact nor their mission to keep the memory of the disappeared alive. The institutions did not serve as agents towards national amnesia, nor reconciliation, but instead were firmly committed to the human rights cause through collective actions. The institutional spaces became sites of resistance against the historical narrative put forth by the military and the ruling democratic presidents, creating spaces of rupture to counter the official history.

Chapter 3:
Competing for Memory: Government Patronage and the Parque de la memoria

Now things are really going well because we put all the subversives
in body bags, take them out on boats, and throw them into the sea;
it's what we should have been doing from the beginning.
-A minister in Argentina's cabinet at the Mau Mau Night club
(Buenos Aires, 1977), from the ANCLA News Agency[1]

Introduction

Retired Argentine navy office Francisco Scilingo first broke the Argentine military dictatorship's pact of silence in 1995. In Scilingo's confession, he described the Argentine Navy's systematic disposal of its prisoners, during the military dictatorship. The Navy injected its prisoners to render them unconscious. The detainees were then transported by plane over the Atlantic Ocean where military personnel threw their live prisoners out of the aircraft.[2] The murky, brown waters of the River Plate, a tributary of the Atlantic Ocean, became a burial ground for thousands of people. The river is intricately tied to national identity through Argentine history and commerce and now is a sacred space for relatives of the disappeared who believe that the River Plate is a probable site of the remains of their loved ones.

The Parque de la memoria (Park of Memory) now under construction in Buenos Aires is located along the River Plate and directly associates its memorial to the disappeared with the site of the Riviera (Fig. 32). Sociologist Elizabeth Jelin and historian Victoria Langland addressed the difficulties in memorializing historic trauma, "If speaking and saying is difficult, the endeavor to mark a physical space seems to be more difficult and more complex. At the same time, it is easier because in many cases there are traces, ruins, and remains; there is a materiality

[1] Quoted in Horacio Verbitsky, *The Flight: Confessions of an Argentine Dirty Warrior*, trans. Esther Allen (The New Press, New York, 1997), 81.
[2] Ibid.

that speaks for itself."[3] The difficulty that the Parque de la memoria and the citizens of Argentina faced is that there is no physical site of the remains, no ruins, no known site of death or burial, and no traces of most of the disappeared.

The Parque de la memoria signaled a new paradigm in public art and memorialization practice. It was the first sculpture park dedicated to memory. The mission of the park was to memorialize the victims of state-sponsored terrorism. The emphasis was on the memory of the disappeared and those who survived them and on the surface it purported to tell a different story than the official history, the one that is the Argentine culture's authoritative explanation of the past.[4] However, there were multiple memories that competed for Argentina's collected memory. This chapter explores the competition for memory that emerged with the conception and construction of Buenos Aires' Parque de la memoria. Within this contest for and context of memory, the park's memorial function has surrounding issues that include the role of public art in urban planning and development, the government's control over the memory of the disappeared, and the disparity between the artists' intention in public art projects and the audience's understanding of their work.

History of the Construction of the Parque de la memoria

Ground for Parque de la memoria was broken in 2001. It is an artificial and deliberately fabricated site of memory that covers forty-one acres and is located in the Costanera Norte

[3] Elizabeth Jelin and Victoria Langland, "Las marcas territoriales como nexo entre pasado y presente," in *Monumentos, Memoriales, y Marcas Territoriales* (Madrid: Siglo XXI de españa editores, 2003), 2. "Si hablar y decir es difícil, los emprendimientos que intentan marcar el espacio físico parecen ser al mismo tiempo más fáciles y más complejos. Más fáciles porque en muchos casos hay rastros, ruinas y restos; hay una materialidad que puede hablar por sí mismo."
[4] Daniel Abramson, "History's Critique of Memory," *Harvard Design Magazine* (Fall 1999): 1.

(Northern Riverside) region of the city of Buenos Aires. The government of the City of Buenos Aires was the funding patron of the park and the Buenos Aires City Parks Commission was charged with maintaining it.[5] The Parque de la memoria upon completion will have an information center that will serve as an exhibition space and a learning center and display one monument and seventeen sculptures in homage to the disappeared. Art historian Harriet F. Senie defined site-specific public sculptures as, "The work that an artist makes for a particular space. The work of art may be linked to that space through formal references, e.g., shape or color, or by embodying references to the history or nature of the site."[6] The works of art at the Parque de la memoria are site specific because they took into account one of the histories of the river.

Government patronage in Argentina for the Parque de la memoria is complicated. A coalition of human rights organizations petitioned the city on December 10, 1997, the International Day of Human Rights, to construct a monument to the disappeared. The eight historic human rights organizations that support the construction of the park were: Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo), Familiares de Desaparecidos y Detenidos por Razones Políticas (Relatives of the Disappeared and Detained for Political Reasons), Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora (Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, Founding Line, Madres-LF), the Movimiento Ecuménico por los Derechos Humanos (Universal Movement for Human Rights, MEDH), Servicio de Paz y Justicia (Peace and Justice Service, SERPAJ), Centro de Estudio Legales y Sociales (Center for Legal and Social Study, CELS), Asamblea Permanente por los Derechos del Hombre (Permanent Assembly for Human Rights, APDH), and Liga

[5] Although the park is city funded, one must keep in mind that Buenos Aires is Argentina's national capital, and can therefore be regarded as an expression of a national memorial.
[6] Harriet F. Senie, *Contemporary Public Sculpture: Tradition, Transformation, and Controversy* (New York: Oxford University Press 1992), 139.

Argentina por los Derechos del Hombre (Argentine League for the Rights of Man, LADH).[7] They formed part of the Pro-Monument Commission, which also included legislators, and members from the City Government and the University of Buenos Aires. The legislature approved a law to construct the park eight months later on July 21, 1998.[8] Fifty-seven legislators out of sixty voted in favor of the park.[9] The two members of parliament that opposed the monument did not want to memorialize "terrorists."[10]

The proposal for the Parque de la memoria came at a time when the hope for the disappeared still being alive no longer existed. Therefore, the involved human rights organizations changed their strategy and their demand from "make them appear alive" to memorialize their lives. In a 1998 public hearing on the Parque de la memoria Commission member Gabriel Patricia Alegre stated, "If we cannot make them appear alive like all of the times that we demanded, we can return to bring them all of the times that we can through their names, their victories, their photographs, and what they did."[11]

Government patronage due to its provision of land and funding, allowed the monument

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[7] Asociación Civil Buena Memoria and Fundación Memoria Histórica y Social Argentina also formed part of the coalition. Hijos por la Verdad Histórica (not to be confused with H.I.J.O.S.) requested to join the Pro-Monument Commission in 1999. The Commission stated that the organization could not join because they would have to modify Law 46 in order to incorporate a new organization. Hijos por la Verdad Histórica was permitted to be present at the meetings and collaborate with the Commission's work.

[8] Law 46 of the Legislature of the City of Buenos Aires.

[9] Patricia Tappatá de Valdez, "El parque de la memoria en Buenos Aires," in *Monumentos, Memoriales, y Marcas Territoriales*, Jelin, Elizabeth and Victoria Langland, eds. (Madrid: Siglo XXI de españa editores, 2003), 97.

[10] Stenographic Version, Public Hearing: Monument and Sculptural Group Buenos Aires, Argentina May 22, 1998, 48.

[11] Gabriela Patricia Alegre, Stenographic Version of the Public Hearing on the Monument and Sculptural Group, Buenos Aires, Argentina, May 22, 1998, 6. "Si bien ya no podemos hacerlos aparecer con vida como tantas veces reclamamos-podemos volver a traerlos todas las veces que podamos a través de sus nombres, sus victorias, sus fotografías y los que ellos hacían."

conceived by human rights organizations to be built. Photographer Marcelo Brodsky, one of the original activists for the monument, emphasized that government sponsorship was imperative for the park because it would be impossible for the coalition of human rights organizations to raise millions of dollars for the project and they needed access to public land.[12] Brodsky defended the coalition's governmental alliance, "This was the only possible way to create a public monument and works of art next to the river. The public character of the park involves the State (in this case the City) taking on the responsibility for what has occurred, honoring and remembering the dead without tombs, giving them a place by paying for the cost of the works."[13] The coalition of human rights organizations perceived the construction of a monument to the disappeared as part of the State's obligation and viewed it as the first step in rectifying the Full Stop and Due Obedience Laws and the presidential pardons passed under former democratic governments.[14]

In order to contextualize the competing memories at the Parque de la memoria, it is necessary to provide a brief background on the origin of the park. The government folded in the coalition's request for a monument with an initiative of its own. The site of the park developed out of disagreement between the Universidad de Buenos Aires (University of Buenos Aires, UBA) and the City of Buenos Aires over which entity owned the area of land along the Costanera Norte. The construction of a park was the resolution to UBA's and the City's

[12] Marcelo Brodsky, interview by author, Buenos Aires, July 31, 2009.
[13] Marcelo Brodsky, "Génesis y evolución de una idea," *Ramona* 9, no. 10 (December 2000), 7. "Esta era la única vía possible para contar con un monumento público y obras de arte junto al río. El carácter público del Parque implica que el estado (en este caso, la Ciudad) assume su parte de responsabilidad en lo ocurrido, homenajeando y recordando a los muertos sin tumba, dándoles un lugar, asumeindo el costo de las obras."
[14] Stenographic Version, Public Hearing: Monument and Sculptural Group Buenos Aires, Argentina May 22, 1998, 17, 29, 35.

discord.[15] As a result the municipal government initiated the first major urban competition in the city of Buenos Aires, the "Buenos Aires and the River" project, in order to reconnect the port city to its link with the River Plate through the riviera. This initiative introduced the construction of a park in the land that had been under dispute between UBA and the city.[16] The objective of the park was to integrate the isolated City University campus into the urban context of Buenos Aires.[17] The park is located where the river begins at the city's northern-most border. Since the beginning of the twentieth century in Buenos Aires, parks have functioned as an intermediary between the river and the urban metropolis and the Parque de la memoria followed in this tradition of transitional space. Architect and historian Graciela Silvestri pointed out that the government, from the beginning, was more preoccupied with promoting the competition for the revitalization project than the human rights coalition's monument project to memorialize the disappeared.[18]

Two competitions emerged from "Buenos Aires & the River": one for the park and monument, and one for the sculptures. The "Competition for the Ideas for an Architecture Project in the City University Area" grew out of the Buenos Aires and the River Project in August 1998. The project for the park was selected among fifty-four presentations in the competition sponsored by the City and the University of Buenos Aires's Faculty of Architecture, Design, and Urbanism (FADU/UBA).

The competition guidelines for the park's design emphasized the importance of the monument having direct contact with the river in order to link the burial place of many of the

[15] Ibid.
[16] Tappatá de Valdez, "El parque de la memoria en Buenos Aires," 99.
[17] Alberto Varas, interview by author, December 12, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
[18] Graciela Silvestri, "El arte en los límites de la representación," *Punto de Vista* 68 December 2000, 20.

disappeared within the urban landscape.[19] The development is a prolongation of the Costanera Norte and is the end-point of a three-kilometer long river walk. It includes three parts: a sixty-four acre nature park which takes the form of two butterfly wings; the Plaza de Concordia, which forms the body of the butterfly; and lastly an insertion of significance inside a much larger space, the thirty-four acre Parque de la memoria.[20]

The State, at one time denied the atrocities that occurred under the dictatorship, now involved itself in a national memory project by creating a site of memory. Pierre Nora defined site of memory (*lieu de mémoire*) as any entity such as a memorial, museum, or cemetery that "has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community."[21] The purpose of sites of memory is "to stop time, to block the work of forgetting," and create "a will to remember."[22] The construction of the Parque de la memoria highlighted the complicated relationship between forgetting and remembering through a site of memory created by the Argentine government.

Agricultural engineer Fernando González, designed the Parque de la memoria's landscape, which includes flowerbeds, grass, benches, lighting and "paths with small spaces for contemplation."[23] The plants, autochthonous and natural elements such as bushes and grass,

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[19] Legislatura de la Ciudad Autonoma de Buenos Aires Anexo 1 Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora Archive, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
[20] In 1998 the original name for the park was Parque de la Paz (Peace Park). It was modified to its current name, Parque de la memoria, under the influence of the 1995-1998 Argentine memory boom. Estado de Situación by Comision Pro Monumento a Las Victimas del Terrorismo de Estado, September 18, 1998, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora Archive, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
[21] Pierre Nora, ed., *Les Lieux de mémoire* (seven volumes) (Paris: Edition Gallimard,1996), xvii.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Parque de la memoria Informe interno 01-Equipo Técnico a Comisión de Producción Re.: Etapa 1-Análisis y conformación de espacios y usos. Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora

combine with formal elements of the concrete tiles on the ground.[24] The park becomes greener and more natural, as one moves further away from the street and closer to the river, but continues to have a Brutalist aesthetic sensation due to the rough concrete and large modernist block benches and floor tiles (Fig. 33).[25] The park attempted to find a balance between the natural landscape and the city, to create a new urban modernity.[26]

The architectural firm Varas-Lestard-Baudizzone, with the associated architects Eduardo Cajlde, Alberto Farji, Mariana Villelabeiti, Daniel Gombinsky and collaborators Nicolás D'Angelo and Pablo Wolff won the "Competition for Ideas on the Ciudad Universitaria" in 1998, which was organized by the government of the City of Buenos Aires and UBA (Fig. 34).[27] They wanted to construct a collective memory through architecture and urban planning and create a place of active memory.[28] Architect Justo Solsona defined active memory as a memory that lives in the daily life of the people and that for this very reason does not require grand

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Archive (accessed October 15, 2009). "Recorridos con espacio reducidos de espera y contemplación."

[24] The architectural firm worked with agricultural engineer Fernando González for the foliage at the park. The grasses sway in the wind and they used the oak marsh tree (*roble de los pantanos)* because its leaves change red in autumn. They also have tubular metal frameworks for clinging plants like jasmine, to add a scent to the air. They chose uniform plantings so that they would not complete with the sculptures.

[25] Brutalism as an architectural style was adopted in Argentina in the 1960s and 1970s and was derived from the architecture of Le Corbusier. Le Corbousier designed the Curutchet House in La Plata, Argentina (1948-1953) and became part of a lasting dialogue amongst Argentine architects. The use of concrete in the park is curious, because although austere, it can also evoke public projects that the dictatorship itself had built during the 1970s.

[26] "Paisaje urbano: Parque de la Memoria," *Revista Jardín*. http://www.revistajardin.com.ar/nota.asp?nota_id=1111446 (accessed October 27, 2009).

[27] The Varas-Lestard-Baudizzone firm and accompanying architects won the initial competition, but later the firm changed to Alberto Varas Studio, which took sole charge of the project. None of the members of the winning architectural team had previously designed a memorial, but they had particpated in the design of buildings and large-scale public spaces. Approximately fifty entries for the competition were receieved.

[28] Justo Solsona, "Concurso Nacional de Ideas," Parque Público Costanera Norte, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora Archive, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

reminders. Instead, the architects sought the ability to suggest active memory through their monument design.[29]

UBA and the city government originally considered the construction of monuments dedicated to three different themes: the victims of state terrorism (the disappeared), the Paseo del Monumento a la Paz y a la Convivencia dedicated to the victims of the AMIA (Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentinata, Israeli Argentine Mutual Association) Jewish community center terrorist attack in 1994, and to the Just Among Nations, people who saved Jews during World War II.[30] The people whom the project proposed to memorialize were either victims of State terrorism, victims of the AMIA bombing, or WWII heroes.[31] The park from its initial conception conflated heroes and victims in its memorialization strategy.[32]

Despite the different histories, all of these monuments were to share actual physical space within the Ciudad Universitaria project.[33] Art historian Viviana Usbiaga stated, "This overlap of moments keeps the symbolic severity of a burial of the victims of terrorism in the river-tomb with the remains of the other national tragedies that continue to be unpunished. The graphic

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[29] Ibid. "Una memoria que habita en la vida cotidiana de la gente, y que por eso mismo no requiere de grandes gestos recordatraios sino de la sutileza capaz de ser sugerida por los caminos del arte." Although the architects' intention was to suggest active memory in some instances they avoided it completely as will be explored later in this chapter.

[30] On July 18, 1994 a suicide bomber linked to Hezbollah, the Lebanese based organization attacked AMIA's headquarters. He drove a car packed with explosives into the building, which killed 200 people and injured another 250 people.

[31] After the terrorist attack, the rubble from the AMIA building was brought to the Costanera norte and according to Brodsky, this action added another dimension to the government's rationale for choosing to construct the memorial there. Brodsky, interview.

[32] Construction of the AMIA and Just Among Nations Monuments as of the writing of this text, has not yet started.

[33] Varas, interview. The Monument to the Victims of the AMIA Bombing is supposed to be located to the Northwest of the Monument to the Victims of State Terrorism. AMIA has not agreed on a monument design yet.

stratum of multiple pains, complicates the representation of memory and its effects."[34] This doubling of memory created a space of contradiction, in which several distinct tragedies were united. The disappeared were victims of Argentine military forces that were charged to protect their own citizens. Associating imported terrorism to Argentina through the AMIA memorial blurs the memory of distinct crimes. Grouping foreign inflicted terrorists acts in Argentina with State terrorism masked the fault of the Nation State in turning against its own people. The mixed camouflage of atrocities functioned as a strategy of diversion.

The artistic commemoration process of the disappeared in Argentina began in terms of political power from low to high. Grass-roots human rights organizations formed by family members of the disappeared and concerned citizens first created ephemeral memorials (see Chapter One). The shift from low to high materials culminated with the democratic government's response to the crisis of how to memorialize the disappeared amidst an aging population of witnesses. The government, as a patron with more funds, shifted its artistic strategy to focus on the contemporary global public art world and changed from the human rights organization's memorials that were generally produced from temporary materials to more lasting structures. Argentina's relationship to contemporary public art is the inverse of that of the United States. Public art in the U.S. in the 1960s and 1970s took the form of large-scale sculptural works in the public realm and then shifted to a community-based model, such as *Sculpture Chicago*

[34] Vivian Usubiaga, "Memoria histórica y memoria pictórica en el arte argentino de la redemocratización," in *Discutir el canon: Tradiciones y valores en crisis* (Buenos Aires: Centro Argentino de Investigadores de Arte, 2003), 79. "Este solapamiento de momentos guarda la contundencia simbólica de un entierro de las víctimas del terrorismo en el río-tumba con los restos de otra tragedia nacional que aun sigue impune. La superposición estratigráfica de duelos multiples, no hace sino complejizar la representación de la memoria y sus efectos."

(1992-1993).[35] Argentina on the other hand, began with a community-based model in public art that shifted in the 1990s with government patronage to a model of large-scale sculptural works. Another pendular swing occurred between the local and the global; Argentine government patronage focused on global models beyond the Holocaust memorials that the artists supporting the human rights cause had embraced in the 1980s and 1990s.[36]

Precedents for government-sponsored memorials

There are a few precedents for the Parque de la memoria's government patronage in Argentina. Artist Laura Filippi's *Gloria* was erected in Buenos Aires in 1987, just four years after Argentina's return to democracy.[37] The sculpture was the first national monument in Argentina dedicated to the disappeared.[38] It was located in Plaza Amadeo Sabatini in the central neighborhood of Caballito and was funded by the Municipality of the City of Buenos Aires. The monument–an eight foot tall column–bore the inscription: "*A Gloria desaparecida*" (To Disappeared Gloria/Glory). It was dedicated to Gloria Kehoe Wilson, a writer who was

[35] Mary Jane Jacob, Michael Brenson, and Eva M. Olson, *Culture in Action: A Public Art Program of Sculpture Chicago* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995).
[36] We see a shift from local to global in the art world under government patronage; however, I do not mean to imply that there was not an international artistic effort to protest the dictatorship. French artists in conjunction with exiled Argentines, Uruguayans, and Chileans produced art works, protests, film, and performances that protested the dictatorship and memorialized the disappeared in the 1970s.
[37] Filippi studied under surrealist artist Roberto Aizenberg (1928-1996), who also contributed to memorials to the disappeared in Argentina.
[38] H.A., "En el país hay dos monumentos dedicados a los Desaparecidos," *La Maga: Noticias de Cultura*, Buenos Aires, April 1993, 13. *La Maga* printed this article to correct the mistake in José Pérez Kerco, "Inauguraron un monumento dedicado a los Desaparecidos durante la última dictadura militar," *La Maga: Noticias de Cultura* Buenos Aires, March 10, 1993, 25. The article incorrectly stated that the monmument *Memoria sin tiempo* was the first national monument to the disappeared. This mistaken exclusion stressed the invisibility of monuments. During my research, I was unable to uncover a photograph of *Gloria*, which was located at the intersection of Colpayo, Canelajas, & Felipe Vallese Street.

disappeared in June 1977 when she was twenty-one years old. Gloria, in this monument, was symbolic of all of the disappeared and their truncated lives. Filippi used the artistic strategy of classical architectonic forms, which diverged from the conventional figural strategy used by the human rights organizations. A 1993 article from the Argentine cultural journal *La Maga* indicated, at the time of publication, that the monument was in disrepair.[39] *Gloria*, the first official government-sponsored monument to the disappeared in Argentina, by June 2009 had been removed from the public sphere, which brings into question the future maintenance for public art dedicated to the disappeared and the government's responsibility in its preservation.

The first extant monument to the disappeared in Argentina is located outside the capital in Villa María in the province of Cordóba, a city with approximately 80,000 citizens. Armando Fabre's (n.d.) *Memoria sin tiempo* (Timeless Memory) was dedicated on February 27, 1993 (Fig. 35).[40] The monument, created a decade after the end of the dictatorship, was a sundial with seven rocks collected from different streams in the area with the title engraved upon it. Each rock represents one of the seven disappeared persons from the town of Villa María.[41] The artistic strategy of the sundial, a device that measures time through the positioning of the sun, was

[39] Ibid.

[40] Mexican theater director Jesusa Rodríguez and the Argentine Liliana Felipe, the sister of Ester, one of the disappeared persons from Villa María started the project. Luis Mónaco, Eduardo Requena, Elda Francisetti, María Viola, Eduardo Valverde, and Aldo Apferlbaum also worked on constructing *Memoria sin tiempo*.

[41] José Pérez Kerco, "Inauguraron un monumento dedicado a los Desaparecidos durante la última dictadura militar," 25. Villa María Mayor Miguel Angel Vegalia of the Radical Party stated at the inauguration, "This clock that we decided to name *Timeless Memory* is a sculpture made by the strength of the artists and is a reminder of those youths that died and never returned. It was made so that all of the residents of Villa María and all of the inhabitants of the country, remember the brutality of the Proceso at every moment, and so that future generations know that they always have to say never again." "Este reloj que decidimos llamar *Memoria sin tiempo* no es sólo una escultura hecha por la fuerza de varios artistas, es también el recuerdo para aquellos jóvenes que murieron y nunca llegaron, para que, tanto los habitantes de Villa María como los de todo el país, recuerden a cada instante la brutalidad del Proceso, y que las generaciones venideras sepan que siempre hay que decir nunca más."

symbolic and functional and endeavored to preserve an everlasting memory of the disappeared in stone.[42]

In addition to the above-mentioned memorials, there was another model for the creation of the Parque de la memoria, found closer to its actual site. The conception of a green space and park in relation to the dictatorship originated with President Saúl Carlos Menem (1989-1999) and the ex-Clandestine Detention Center the Escuela Superior de Mecánica de la Armada (Navy Mechanics School for Officers, ESMA). In June 1998, Menem issued a decree to demolish the former detention center and make a Park of Reconciliation that would serve as a "monument to national reconciliation and national unity."[43] Menem's rhetoric of reconciliation permeated Argentine society during the decade of politically enforced forgetting from 1986-1995.[44] The motto of reconciliation in Menem's oratory sought to reunite the country after the divisive trauma of the dictatorship. In effect, however, reconciliation functioned to conceal the dictatorship's crimes against humanity, which was exemplified by Menem's presidential pardons of the military junta leaders. Menem's attempted demolition of ESMA ventured to destroy evidence of the dictatorship's crimes that was firmly rooted in Buenos Aires's cityscape.

Menem's proposed park fell under geographer Kenneth E. Foote's category of obliteration, which he defined as "effacing all evidence of tragedy to cover it up or remove it

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[42] Elvio Omar Toscano, "El espacio de la Junta Municipal de Historia: Ciudad de la memoria," *El Diario*, Villa María Córdoba, December 29, 2008. The city council in Villa María, through city ordenance 4.786, declared this small town in Córdoba the "City of Memory" on March 22, 2001, on the twenty-first anniversary of the military coup.

[43] "Argentina to Demolish Former Torture Center," BBC News, January 8, 1998, World: Americas online edition http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/45661.stm (accessed August 15, 2009).

[44] A week after Menem announced his proposal to convert ESMA into a space of national reconciliation, he suggested that the ex-clandestine detention center become a monument to the national flag. Vicente Muleiro, "Derechos Humanos: El presidente desautorizo a Corach desde Pinamar: sigue la polémica por la ESMA," *La Nación*, Buenos Aires, February 13, 1998.

from view."[45] Judge Osvaldo Guglielmino issued a ruling that halted the demolition of ESMA and saved it from obliteration. In 2002, the government handed over ESMA to the Instituto Espacio Para la Memoria (Institute for Memory), which houses an archive on the dictatorship and will incorporate a museum into the complex.[46]

Sociologists Mario Di Paolantonio and Vikki Bell suggested that the proposal to construct the Parque de la memoria was "an attempt to counter the politics of reconciliation wielded by Menem in the late 1990s."[47] However, some human rights organizations argued that the construction of the park was in fact a continuation of the reconciliation rhetoric, in new form. The Asociación de Ex Detenidos Desaparecidos (Association of Ex-Detained Disappeared Persons, AEDD) rejected the park altogether because it was sponsored by the government. AEDD emphasized that democratic governments passed the Final Stop and Due Obedience Laws, and handed down presidential pardons to the military junta leaders. The organization would have supported the project if it had been propelled by students, a neighborhood association, or a union, but opposed the endeavor because it "condemns those who make up the parties that have denied justice in the past and in the present. They disguised their complicity with "tributes" to our comrades."[48] Members of the AEDD believed that the most effective

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[45] Kenneth E. Foote, *Shadowed Ground: America's Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 24.
[46] "El destino final de los Desaparecidos: Investigarán si hubo sepultures en la ESMA," *El Clarín*, Buenos Aires, September 3, 1998. Judge Guglielmino also ruled that the translocation of office files from ESMA to a location outside of Buenos Aires should be stopped so that any potential evidence against the perpetrators of the dictatorship's crimes could be saved in order to provide information about the fate of the disappeared.
[47] Vikki Bell and Mario Di Paolantonio, "The *Haunted Nomos*: Activist-Artists and the (Im)possible Politics of Memory in Transitional Argentina," *Cultural Politics* 5, no. 2 (July 2009): 159.
[48] La Asociación de Ex Detenidos Desaparecidos, "Un Homenaje de Jusitica," Announcement, 1999, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora Archive, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

monument to the disappeared would be the annulment of the Final Stop and Due Obedience Laws, and abolishing the presidential pardons.[49]

Memorials and Urban Renewal

From the first stone laid, government involvement in the park was the subject of debate and controversy. In a meeting of the Pro-Monument Commission on March 17, 1999, a quorum voted that the corner stone of the park would be inscribed with the sentence "The Monument to the Victims of State Terrorism will be built here as a vindication of their struggle and their ideals."[50] However, the legislative and executive powers of the City of Buenos Aires censured the text for the more benign phrase, "The Monument to the Victims of State Terrorism will be built here."[51] This textual exclusion negated many of the disappeared persons' agency in seeking social justice. What began as a congenial relationship between government and participating human rights organizations quickly transformed into a struggle for whose agenda would be recorded in stone.

Servicio Paz y Justicia (Service Peace and Justice, SERPAJ), one of the human rights organizations that supported the construction of the park, led the way in publically accusing the

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"Repudiamos que quienes integran partidos que han denegado la justicia con actos en el pasado y el presente, disfracen su complicidad con "homenajes" a nuestros compañeros."

[49] Inés Vasquez, "¿Parque Justicia?," *Ramona* 9, no. 10 (December 2000): 8.

[50] "Aquí se construirá el Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado como reivindicación de su lucha y sus ideales."

[51] Adolfo Pérez Esquivel to the members of the Comisión Pro Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado, March 24, 1999, Dr. De la Rúa Argentina, Presidentes de Bloques de la Legislatura, medios de prensa, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora Archive. "Aquí se construirá el Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado."

assembly members of censorship. A letter from SERPAJ stated:

> This stone is the promise of a monument to remember the victims of state terrorism. However, it was not possible for the Commission that organized it to come to an agreement over what it is that it wants to remember. Only silence remained upon the smooth stone…The missing plaque on this stone that tries to establish a permanent memory by crossing generations, omits speaking of struggles, of the feeling of their lives and their deaths. In this misunderstanding between politicians and human rights organizations, the politicians shipwrecked the phrase that buried in the earth's wound, would remember the victims in "vindication of their ideals and struggles."[52]

Under public pressure the government gave into SERPAJ's demands and the stone was placed in the Parque de la memoria on March 24, 1999, the twenty-third anniversary of the military coup, amidst the presence of government officials, members of human rights organizations, and students and representatives from UBA.[53] Soon after, an anonymous vandal destroyed the corner stone and the Commission decided against rebuilding it.[54]

The difficulties in forming a permanent, public space for the memorial to the disappeared was in part due to linking the site of memory to urban planning. Points of contention around the park's objectives extended to many of the government leaders of Argentina who used the disappeared as a political platform, while simultaneously ignoring the country's economic plight that increased the homeless population. The past in terms of a memorial's creation is always a reflection of the present. The land prior to the Parque de la memoria's construction was a

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[52] Ibid. "Esa piedra es la promesa de un monumento para recordar a las víctimas del terrorismo de Estado, pero no fue possible para la comisión que lo organiza ponerse de acuerdo sobre qué es lo que se quiere recordar. Sobre la piedra lisa quedó silencio…La place que falta, en esa piedra que intenta fundar un recurdo permanente que atraviese las generaciones omite hablar de luchas, del sentido de sus vidas y de su muertes. En ese malentendio entre políticos y organismos de Derechos Humanos que hizo naufragar la frase que hundida en la herida de la tierra recordaría a las victimas en 'reivindicación de sus ideales y sus luchas.'"

[53] On that day the Asociación Madres, H.I.J.O.S., and the AEDD held a protest to counter the construction of the site. Elizabeth Jelin and Victoria Langland, *Monumentos, Memoriales y Marcas Territoriales*, 106.

[54] Minute No. 14 of the Comisión Pro Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado, May 26, 1999 and October 13, 1998, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora Archive.

shantytown and dumping ground.[55] There were over 325 people living in the settlement known as *La Aldea* (the small village) for over ten years. A file initiated by the Área de Gestión de la Ribera (Management of the Riviera) in 2003, included a report from the Attorney General of Buenos Aires, which recommended that the people vacate the area that was destined to become the Parque Ciudad Universitaria-Parque de la memoria.[56] Art historian and urban theorist Rosalyn Deutsche stated:

> Confident that the dominant forces producing today's city represent the collectivity-while members of displaced social groups are mere individuals-and, despite references to "social change," that such forces are immutable, interdisciplinary urban design teams-which now include public artists-fashion the mental and physical representations of New York's ascendancy. To do so, they must suppress the connection between redeveloped spaces and New York's homelessness.[57]

Although Deutsche referred specifically to New York City, the same connection between urban renewal and homelessness was evident in Buenos Aires. Evicting homeless people from the site disappeared one history in favor of another.[58] Many of the disappeared fought for social justice; moreover, the guidelines from the Commission Pro-Monument stated that the sculptural works should reflect "the disappeareds' struggle for liberty and social justice."[59] Concealing the history of Villa Aldea was an inappropriate action to commemorate the disappeared, especially in light

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[55] "Habrá un corredor de parques costeros de 70 ha en Núnez," *La Nación*, Buenos Aires, July 15, 2006.
[56] City of Buenos Aires File 79.676/01, 2003, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora Archive.
[57] Rosalyn Deutsche, "Public Art and Its Uses," in *Critical Issues in Public Art: Content, Context and Controversy*, eds. Harriet F. Senie and Sally Webster (New York: Harper Collins, 1992), 168.
[58] On July 13, 2006 the government finished the transfer of all of the people in the settlement. They were moved to Pilar, San Martin, Misiones, Paraguay, Entre Rios, Salta, Derqui, Satiago del Estero, and other provinces. City of Buenos Aires Law 341 in accordance with order 303/06 provided financial compensation for their move.
[59] Comisión Pro Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado, 12. "Ideales de libertad y justicia social por los que lucharon."

of the dictatorship's violent attempt in eradicating *villas* during its rule.[60]

Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo del Estado (Monument to the Victims of State Terrorism)

Despite this contradiction, the park's construction continued. Baudizzone-Lestard-and-Varas Studio and the associated architects Claudio Ferrari and Daniel Becker, the architects that won the park competition also designed the Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo del Estado (Monument to the Victims of State Terrorism, MVTE).[61] The monument, from its inception, was part of a rivalry for control of public space, history, and memory. It was also part of the global surge in the construction of architectures of memory, which are physical constructions that are built to encourage the audience to remember.[62] Visitors enter the dark gray, granite MVTE at the bottom of an artificially constructed hill from the city side until they come up to the river, as if it were a wound cut into the Earth (Fig. 36). Sunken ramps in the hill prevent the viewer from seeing the river until arriving at the top of the path. Claudio Ferrari stated that the space expressed the impossibility of pain, and was an open scar. He emphasized that there was nothing to see where the disappeared are being remembered.[63]

The MVTE is modernist and minimalist. Minimalism, an art movement from the 1960s, is characterized by an impersonal austerity, plain geometric configurations, and industrially

[60] For more on the military dictatorship's policy on eradicting shantytowns see Eduardo Blaustein, *Prohibido Vivir Aquí: La Erradicación De Villas Durante La Dictadura* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Punto de Encuentro, 2006).
[61] The project is now directed only by Alberto Varas.
[62] Comisión Pro Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de estado, Minute No. 1, March 28, 2001, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora Archive, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
[63] María José Melendo, "Arte público en tiempos de memoria: reflexiones sobre una controversia," *Foros* Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics, 2007, 8.

produced materials.[64] Minimalist artists often created simple modular and serial arrangements.[65] The MVTE is a sequential arrangement of four walls and its precedents are found in the United States in sculptor, Richard Serra's (b. 1939), *Twain* (St. Louis, Missouri, 1982). *Twain* incorporated small open spaces placed between slabs and depended on human activity within its walls. The sculpture is static, like the MVTE; however, movement activates the work in the same relation to audience and object that the MVTE necessitates. The use of a minimalist monument is not new; models for this form in memorials began with Maya Lin's (b. 1959) Vietnam Veterans Memorial (VVM, 1982) in Washington D.C.

Argentine writer José Pablo Feinman commented on the power of Lin's Vietnam Veteran's Memorial and its influence on the construction of the MVTE, "Some imagined a promenade that penetrated into the river with an inscription on its walls of the names of the disappeared. The powerful image of the Vietnam Memorial of Washington D.C. took over all others. It is one of the most moving monuments ever constructed. The *sumatoria* of the names have a visual power which the statistics lack."[66] Perhaps minimalism became a strategy of choice for the Argentine official commemoration of the disappeared because like the Vietnam War in the U.S., the dictatorship had not ended the nation's public debate.

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[64] Christopher Want, "Minimalism," in *Grove Art Online*. *Oxford Art Online*, http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T058397 (accessed December 23, 2010).

[65] Although a discussion of gender in relation to Minimalism is out of the realm of this dissertation, a parallel argument may be explored through Anna Chave's revisionist study. Anna Chave, "Minimalism and the Rhetoric of Power," *Arts Magazine* (January 1990): 44–63.

[66] José Pablo Feinman, *La Sangre Derramada: Ensayo Sobre la Violencia Política*. (Buenos Aires: Seix Barral Los Tres Mundos, 2003), 117-118. "Algunos imaginaron un Paseo que penetrara en el río y la inscripción en sus murallas de los nombres de los desaparecidos. Así, la poderosa imagen del *Vietnam Memorial* de Washington se adueño de todos. El *Vietnam Memorial* es uno de los más conmovedores monumentos jamás construidos…Lo sumatoria de los nombres tiene un poder visual del que carecen las cifras."

The Commission's argument that government patronage implied that the government was therefore taking responsibility for its actions under the dictatorship is questionable in part because of the chosen artistic strategy for the monument. The participation of the State at first appeared to remedy the former governments of Raúl Alfonsín's and Carlos Menem's project of national reconciliation. Menem's attempt at obliteration and conception of national reconciliation in words sounded quite divergent from the Parque de la memoria. However, upon further investigation, the government-patronized memorial itself added another layer onto the national reconciliation narrative through its minimalist artistic strategy.

Cultural discourse has turned to Minimalism as a new paradigm in monument construction. Minimalism, as a style, removes an explicit narrative. The VVM memorialized U.S. soldiers, but excluded the Vietnamese from the account as well as the conflict at home over the war. Furthermore, the Minimalist artistic strategy eliminated the government from the equation of culpability. As in the focus on the dead soldiers in the VVM, the attention on the disappeared in the MVTE eradicated concentration from the perpetrators themselves, as well as the silent citizenry.

Historians Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terrence O. Ranger argued that official monuments are symbolic attempts by the State to proclaim a historic continuity and transmit a feeling of national unity and stability, even when that stability does not represent the reality of the historic moment.[67] Due to the nature of the offense of a government that committed crimes against humanity on its own people, the Committee could have used Holocaust memorials as the human rights organizations often relied on for memorial vocabularies instead of the VVM. The human

[67] E. J. Hobsbawm and T. O. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

rights groups' agenda to align the memorials of the disappeared to Holocaust memorials as is the case with works like the *baldosas* (sidewalk tiles, see chapter one) was derailed by the State. At the public hearing on the Parque de la memoria, Ms. Lanzilloto, from the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, emphasized that Nazi ideology destroyed entire societies and that the genocide by the Nazi regime was comparable to the Argentine dictatorship's genocide in Argentina.[68] This comparison of Argentine history with the Holocaust was lost on the monument's form because Holocaust memorials such as Stih & Schnock's *Places of Remembrance* (Berlin, 1992-93) explicitly implicated the German National Socialist government. Sociologist Eviatar Zerubavel asserted that remembering is more than a spontaneous personal act. It is regulated by social "Rules of Remembrance" which tell us what we should remember and what we should forget.[69] Government patronage in the Parque de la memoria codified the rules of remembrance through the artistic strategy of minimalism in Argentina precisely because the minimalist monument served as an aesthetic method of removing the naming and culpability of the perpetrators, which induced its own form of forgetting.

The over forty audience response interviews that I conducted at the Parque de la memoria in 2006 and 2009 highlighted that minimalism, although effective in some monuments, needs to be re-examined as an artistic strategy for memorializing the disappeared in Argentina. When the same artistic vocabulary as the VVM is employed in Buenos Aires, the majority of audience members asserted that the coldness emitted from the MVTE was not an appropriate form to evoke the disappeared's memory. A couple in their late 40s believed that the monument was oppressive and that the disappeared should be remembered in a more hopeful manner. The steady

[68] Stenographic Version, Public Hearing: Monument and Sculptural Group Buenos Aires, Argentina May 22, 1998.
[69] Eviatar Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 84.

universalization of minimalism in contemporary monument construction across the globe needs to be questioned and reconsidered as a paradigm for memorials.

The VVM also served as a model for listing the names of the disappeared on the monument. A law passed by the Legislature of the City of Buenos Aires contained the characteristics that the Monument must have and emphasized the importance of naming the disappeared in the memorialization process:

> The Monument must contain the names of the imprisoned-disappeared and assassinated people which are present in the National Commission on Disappearance of People (Co.Na.Dep.) report, checked and updated by the Human and Social Rights Undersecretary belonging to the National Interior Ministry; those of which who were later denounced before the same organization, or provided jointly by Human Rights Organizations. In addition, it will be provided with a space that will allow the incorporation of the names of those prisoners missing or assassinated during the period mentioned in article 1, which could be denounced in the future.[70]

Lin borrowed the idea of naming the deceased in stone from Sir Edwin Lutyen's (1866-1944), Thiepval memorial dedicated to the soldiers who died the Battle of Somme (1916) during WWI. The power of naming in stone in public memorials, not just individual grave markers, crossed the Atlantic from Europe to the United States. It then traveled to the Southern Cone with the construction of the Memorial del Detenido Desaparecido y Ejecutado Político (Memorial to the Disappeared Detained and Politically Executed) in the Santiago General Cemetery in Chile in the 1990s (see Chapter Four) and with the construction of the MVTE in Buenos Aires.

This emphasis on naming originated in this Circum-Atlantic dialogue and found its origins with the human rights organization the Madres de Plaza de Mayo, which used embroidery to protest the disappearances. Beginning in 1977, the mothers stitched the names of their disappeared children on handkerchiefs, and wore them as headscarves. They used

[70] See Appendix 2, Law No. 46 Article 2 of the Legislature of the City of Buenos Aires.

embroidery, a traditional craft associated with women, to bolster their political struggle against the military dictatorship.

The human rights organizations that supported the park wanted a wall with the names of the disappeared to embody the victims themselves.[71] Members of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo Línea Fundadora emphasized that the monument was the only place that they had to mourn. María Adela Antokoletz whose brother was disappeared, stated that at the park, "We can place a flower or pray for our disappeared, since we do not know where they are."[72] They believed that the names on the monuments removed the disappeared from their N.N. (John/Jane Doe) status and thus counteracted the dictatorship's goal of forcing its victims to fall into anonymity. The naming process and the act of creating a monument to the victims was strongly linked in 1999 to a continued search for justice. The law for the construction of the monument encouraged people to come forward with previously undenounced cases of disappearance.[73] The names, date, and age of disappearance were listed on individual stone bricks. The dates begin in 1974 with the emergence of the Triple A, death squadrons operating under Perón before the military dictatorship. The names included on the monument are from The National Commission on Disappearance (CONADEP) report, a government task force formed under Alfonsín's presidency, The Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team's (Equipo Argentino de Antropólogos

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[71] Luisa Weinschelbaum de Rubino, Stenographic Version, Public Hearing: Monument and Sculptural Group Buenos Aires, Argentina May 22, 1998, 16. "Sólo pedimos un muro que lleve cada uno de los nombres; que so corporice a las víctimas. Así estarán presentes, para que nunca más ocurra algo semejante."

[72] María Adela Antokoletz, interview by author, November 15, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina. "En ese lugar podremos ir a colocar una flor o a rezar por nuestros desaparecidos, ya que no sabemos dónde están."

[73] Comisión Pro Monument a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado, "Informe sobre lo Actuado," July 2000, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora Archive, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Forenses, EAAF) findings, and cases presented in a law which established the figure of "absent by forced disappearance" before December 10, 1983, and the Presumption of Death Because of Disappearance Law.[74] The Subcommittee for the Nomination of Victims and Tributes also requested lists of the disappeared that were included in commemorative acts at high schools, university, professional associations, unions, neighborhood associations, and human rights organizations.[75] The victims recorded on the monument were killed in military confrontations or were murdered by the State. The names also included those whose subsequent deaths were caused by threats and parapolicial persecution and Argentines murdered in Chile during the dictatorship there.

The MVTE displays 30,000 bricks of porphyry stone, native to the Patagonia region of southern Argentina, which explicitly represented the disappeared as a group, while representing the individual through inscribed names. 8,875 names to date have been inscribed on the name bricks, which are organized by year of disappearance and then alphabetized. The majority of the individuals represented were disappeared in their 20s although there are also disappeared persons as young as 15, 16, and 17. The Commission required that the name bricks' position be within arm's reach.[76] None of the monument's audience members that I interviewed specifically articulated the tactile aspect of the name bricks; however, I observed many people passing their fingers along the stone. The bricks' physicality encouraged audience members to interact with the monument, thereby layering a somatic experience in remembering the disappeared.[77] The

[74] Law 24.411/94 of the Legislature of the City of Buenos Aires.
[75] Memorandum by Subcomisión Nómina de Víctimas y Homenajes, September 22, 1998, Madres de Plaza de Mayo- Línea Fundadora Archive, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
[76] Minutes of the Comisión Pro Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado, September 10, 1998 and October 13, 1998 Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora Archive.
[77] Minutes of Comisión Pro Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de estado, Minute No. 1, March 28, 2001, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora, Archive.

monument asks its audience to remember through vision combined with movement to invoke the disappeared's presence. The Parque de la memoria staff requested that visitors abstain from leaving anything at the monument (unlike the VVM); however, people placed fake red roses in the cracks next to some of the name bricks and other visitors stuck decals with political affiliations next to the names (Fig. 37).

The very action of inscribing names in stone in Argentina gave rise to several conflicts. The first discord stemmed from the debate about the number of disappeared. Human rights organizations have consistently asserted that 30,000 people disappeared by the hand of the military government. However, the Argentine Ministry of Human Rights recorded 13,000 disappeared persons and many scholars supported the latter finding. The discrepancy in numbers finds its source in the human rights organizations' argument that many families continued to be either afraid or ashamed to come forward about the disappearance of a loved one. Comparative literature scholar Andreas Huyssen contended that, "Many name plaques will remain empty, nameless, thus commemorating, if indirectly, the voiding of identity that always preceded disappearance."[78] However, graphically the monument created the opposite effect. The act of listing the names of the disappeared, in which the confirmed cases of disappearance was far less than 30,000 functioned as a visual demonstration of the official government's assertion that the 30,000 number linked to the disappeared was an exaggeration on the part of the human rights organizations. Huyssen also argued, "The park project, sponsored by the city of Buenos Aires, is one of the first major instances in which public memory of the terror is given permanent shape in

[78] Andreas Huyssen, "El Parque De La Memoria: The Art and Politics of Memory," *Revista Harvard Review of Latin America* (Winter 2001), http://www.drclas.harvard.edu/revista/articles/view/513 (accessed January 23, 2009).

an urban setting in Argentina."[79] In this observation, Huyssen overlooked the complexity of adopting a permanent shape for public memory. Although the government-funded park's intent was to bring national unity and recognition to the relatives of the disappeared, it instead widened a pre-existing schism.

Juanita Pergament, a member of the Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo (Asociación Madres) believed that monuments and the Parque de la memoria specifically articulate official memory. She has been a part of the human rights struggle from the time that her son was disappeared by the military in the 1970s. Pergament's protest against the construction of monuments for the disappeared is the public stance of the Asociación Madres.[80] Its members did not want the names of their children placed on the MVTE because they do not believe in monuments to the disappeared. Instead, the Asociación Madres advocates for memorials in forms of cultural centers, books, and educational activities and has formed Espacio Cultural Nuestro Hijos (Cultural Center of our Children, ECUNHI) on the grounds of ESMA to promote the visual and performing arts.[81] In a letter addressed to the Commission the Asociación Madres declared:

> The Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo exhausted all possible mediations to avoid having the names of our children placed on the monument that the same people that pardoned the murderers and in many cases aligned themselves with them want to raise in the Costanera. If it were necessary we would use picks, hammers, and chisels to erase the engraved names from this monument, that for us offends our dear revolutionaries that opposed the economic plans of hunger and misery that those who raise said, Parque de la memoria apply today. We want to clarify that erasing the names of our children from the monument is not a violent act; violence and arrogance are used by those who without

[79] Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*, Cultural Memory in the Present (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003), 96.
[80] Juanita Pergament, interview by author, Buenos Aires, Argentina, April 17, 2006.
[81] These alternative memorial forms are similar to art historian Andrew M. Shanken's argument for living memorials in the United States post-WWII. Andrew M. Shanken, "Planning Memory: Living Memorials in the United States During World War II," *The Art Bulletin* 84, no. 1 (March 2002): 130–147.

> authorization, decided to put the names of all of the disappeared on this monument.[82]

The Pro-Monument Commission issued a press release in response to the Asociación Madres:

> The great majority of the victims of State terrorism were fighters for the people and for this reason their names and their struggle belong to our people and the organizations that arose from its heart. Also, the maintenance of memory is not the patrimony of anyone in particular and all legal initiatives to preserve memory is a constructive contribution to those that joined all those that want to really construct a world in which life, liberty, truth, and justice are a heritage for all.[83]

Claiming the disappeared as national patrimony, obscured the line between personal bereavement and public, national loss. In addition, a letter from the Madres-LF to the Asociación Madres stated that the government law specified that the monument *had* [my emphasis] to contain the names of the detained-disappeared that appear in the CONADEP report. Applying a law passed by the government as a justification for keeping the names of the disappeared

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[82] Asociación de Madres de Plaza de Mayo to Pro-Monument Commission, July 23, 1999, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora Archive, Buenos Aires, Argentina. "La Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo se dirige a la opinion pública para informarle que agotados todos los medios posibles e imposibles para evitar que los nombres de nuestros hijos estén en el monumento que quieren levantar en la Costanera los mismos que perdonaron a los asesinos y que en muchos casos se alianzaron con ellos. Si fuera necesario usaremos picos, martillos y corta fierros para borrar los nombres grabados en ese monumento que para nosotras ofende a nuestros querídos revolucionarios que se oponían a los planes económicos de hambre y miseria que hoy aplican los que levantan dicho Parque de la Memoria. Queremos aclarar que borrar cómo sea los nombres de nuestros hijos del monumento, no es violencia; la violencia y la prepotencia la emplean los que sin autorización deciden poner los nombres de todos los desaparecidos en ese monumento."

[83] Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, Asamblea Permanente por los Derechos Humanos, Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales, Familiares de Desaparecidos y Detenidos por Razones Politicas, Liga Argentina por los Derechos del Hombre, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora, Servicio Paz y Justicia, Fundación Memoria, Buena Memoria, Press Release July 23, 1999. Print. "Las víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado fueron, en su gran mayoría luchadoras del campo popular y por eso mismo sus nombres y su lucha pertenecen a nuestro pueblo y las organizaciones que surgen de su seno. Asimismo el mantenimiento de la memoria no es patrimonio de nadie en particular y toda iniciativa tendiente a preservarla es un aporte constructivo al que sumarnos todos los que de verdad queremos construir un mundo en el que la Vida, la Libertad, la Verdad, y la Jusiticia sean patrimonio de todos."

children of the members of the Asociación Madres on the monument was the direct result of the government's inability to understand the nuances of constructing a permanent site of memory about a contentious past.[84] The dictatorial government took away the lives of the disappeared and the Alfonsín and Menem administrations prevented the implementation of institutional justice against the perpetrators of disappearance. Deciding how the disappeared should be memorialized added another layer of government control over the fate of the disappeared.[85]

The complexities of this debate can best be understood by considering historian Brian Ladd's discussion on the criticism surrounding the building of a memorial to German Jews killed in the Holocaust. The critics feared that the completion of the memorial would "mark the end of all performative aspects of remembrance."[86] Ladd contended that the critics exaggerated. However, this fear pervaded in Berlin as well as Buenos Aires and should not be disregarded. The Asociación Madres also worried that the construction of monuments will close a dialogue on the dictatorship.[87] When asked about her personal views on the public space of the Parque de la memoria, Pergament vehemently avowed, "We have to carry memory within ourselves. We do

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[84] Madres de Plaza de Mayo to Sra. Hebe de Bonafini, Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo, August 17, 1999, Madres de Plaza de Mayo, Línea Fundadora Archive, Buenos Aires, Argentina. "En su artículo 2°, la Ley especifia que "El Monumento deberá contener los nombres de los detenidos-desaparecidos y asesinados que constan en el informe producido por la Comisión Naional sobre Desaparición de Personas (CONADEP)."

[85] The opposing argument questioned what happens when the mothers themselves pass away. "They [the Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo] do not realize that when they disappear, the books will remain, but one thing is books and the other is stone." "No se daban cuenta que cuando desaparezcan iban a quedar los libros, pero una cosa son los libros y otra cosa es la piedra." Alberto Varas, interview.

[86] Brian Ladd, "Center and Periphery in the New Berlin: Architecture, Public Art, and the Search for Identity," *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 22, no. 2, (May 2000): 17.

[87] For a closer look at the debate over the Parque de la memoria see *Ramona* 9, no. 10 (December 2000), which published a series of articles on the park written by artists, art critics, curators, and members of human rights organizations.

not want monuments; we do not want to speak about death."[88] She asserted that the visual arts should not record the deaths of the disappeared, because the abducted people continued to be disappeared, as opposed to deceased. For Pergament and her organization, memorialization and reparation serve only to disguise the crimes of the military dictatorship.[89]

Global Presence at the Park: The Sculptures

The competing voices over government patronage extend beyond the monument to the sculptures as well. In June 1999 artists including Diana Dowek (b. 1942), Oscar Smoje (b. 1939), Juan Carlos Romero (b. 1931), Ana Eckell (b. 1947), Daniel Ontiveros (b. 1963), Adolfo Nigro (b. 1942), Rosana Fuertes (b. 1962), among others, joined the AEDD and the Asociación Madres, in buying advertising space in the Buenos Aires newspaper *Página/12* to proclaim their grievances against the construction of the park and implored artists to carefully consider their participation in the park:

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[88] Pergament, interview. "La Memoria tenemos que llevar en nosotros. No queremos monumentos. No queremos hablar de la muerte."

[89] While Asociación Madres members did not want their children's names on the monument because they refused to take part in a government-sponsored memorial, there were others who wished to have certain names on the monument omitted. Amorosa Brunet de González, Ruth and Estrella Brunet de González, and Héctor Vitantonio were members of the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (People's Revolutionary Party, ERP) and were among the individuals listed on the MVTE. They kidnapped and held Colonel Argentino del Valle Larrabure hostage on August 11, 1974. 372 days later, he was found dead with evidence on his body of torture by electric shocks. In 2008, the Federal Justice Department in a city of Rosario court declared that Larrabure's assassination was a crime against humanity. Arturo Larrabure, the colonel's son stated, "There is a lack of justice that the terrorists have a monument." Despite the fact that the ERP members who participated in Larrabure's kidnapping were disappeared, they did not easily fit into the monument's narrative of victim/hero. A monument in the form of a traditional portrait bust of Larrabure was dedicated on November 22, 1996 in Plaza Mitre in Buenos Aires. Larrabure, as a victim was transformed into a hero in this artistic strategy traditionally relegated to political leaders and men of letters. "Denuncian un homenaje a los asesinos del coronel Larrabure," *La Nación*, Buenos Aires, August 21, 2008. "Es una falta de justicia que los terroristas tengan un monumento."

> We believe that the principal and most lasting tribute to our disappeared continues to be justice and the struggle to obtain it, not the tributes agreed upon by those responsible for so many murderers who enjoy their freedom. In moments that they call upon artists to present works to integrate with this monument, we exhort that the artists independently reflect on their sincere desire to pay homage to the profound significance of a memory that prefers not to remember those who raised their hands [to vote in favor of the impunity laws]. We call upon visual artists, members of the jury, relatives of the disappeared, and society at large to refuse this new act of hypocrisy and to generate actions that express and demand justice for our people.[90]

Despite this plea, many artists supported the Madres-LF and the other participating human rights organizations' efforts to construct a public space to remember and mourn the disappeared. In addition, some participants also viewed the park as part of a government reparations process that they viewed was an obligation of the State.[91]

Huyssen studied how national and global memory intersected at the park. He examined the field of art and the expanded geographical and political field in relation to memory and situated the Parque de la memoria in terms of a global culture of memory.[92] He argued, "Memory politics, indeed, seems as much a global project as it is always locally or nationally inflected.

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[90] "Homenaje de Justicia," paid advertisement in *Página/12*, Buenos Aires, June 19, 1999. The full list of names included: Diana Dowek, Carmen D'Elia, Fernando García Oelgado, Adolfo Nigro, Jeanette Betancourt, Oscar Smoje, Alícia Díaz Rinaldi, Ana Eckell, Alfredo Saavedra, Daniel Ontiveros, Rosana Fuertes, Juan C. Romero, Viviana Sasso, Alicia Zárate, Moníca García, Juan Alfonsín, Teresa Volco, Hilda Paz, Aníbal Cedrón, Mariana Perata, Lucy Murias, Nora Menghi, Florencía Carecimbe, Norberto Martínez, Anabela D'Alesandro, Fernando Fazzolari, Sandra Mutal, and Fernanda Carrizo. "Creemos que el principal y más perdurable homenaje hacía nuestros desaparecidos sigue siendo la justicia y la lucha por conseguirla, no los homenajes acordados con los responsables de que tantos asesinos gocen de libertad. En momentos en que se convoca a los plásticos a presentar obras para integrar este monumento exhortamos se reflexione, independientemente del deseo sincero de homenaje por parte de los artistas, sobre el significado profundo de una memoria que prefiere no recordar los brazos en alto de los que hicieron la impunidad. Llamamos a los artistas plásticos, miembros del jurado, familiars de desaparecidos y a la sociedad en general a rechazar este Nuevo acto de hipocresía y a generar acciones que expresen el reclamo de justicía de nuestro pueblo."

[91] Stenographic Version of the Public Hearing on the Monument and Sculptural Group, Buenos Aires, Argentina, May 22, 1998, 8-9.

[92] Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*, 95.

Memory projects may construct or revise national narratives (South Africa, Argentina, China), but those narratives are now invariably located in a space somewhere between the global and the local."[93] This space between the global and the local in national narratives and memory projects was evident in the selection committee's choice to hold an international competition for the Parque de la memoria's sculptures. Argentina has a well-developed tradition of the arts. In addition, many of Argentina's leading contemporary artists lived through the dictatorship in exile or faced severe censorship or imprisonment while remaining in the country. Despite Argentina's strong artistic heritage, thriving contemporary art scene, and the internationally renowned Argentine artists who were directly affected by the dictatorship, the law called for an international competition for the sculptures in the Parque de la memoria, "Outside the mentioned contest, to select sculptures of Argentine and *foreign* [my emphasis] artists, on the base of its prestige and artistic trajectory and its commitment with the defense of Human Rights, in order to integrate the multi-sculptural group."[94]

This law prompts the question, does art transcend geo-political boundaries when addressing a specific national trauma? Two issues regarding the relevancy of the international art world and the potential prestige that foreign artists lend to the Parque de la memoria are particularly important to explore. On the one hand, imported artists who are unfamiliar with Argentina's history and culture may not be the most appropriate constructors to reframe Argentine history and memory into permanent forms of public art and they even serve as a deliberate distraction from the actual memory that is being commemorated at the park. On the

[93] Ibid, 95-96.
[94] Law 46 Article 5f of the Legislature of the City of Buenos Aires July 21, 1998 see Appendix 2.

other hand, the international contemporary art world may make the international public aware of Parque de la memoria and Argentine history.

The competition for the sculptures in the Parque de la memoria was held in 1999. The call for participation was disseminated in: cultural affairs offices in embassies and chancelleries, tourism offices, museums, cultural centers, UBA, and Argentine and foreign universities, art schools, international organizations, the media and town halls. Along with the international competition, the Commission proposed that the jury be comprised of members of human rights organizations, from cultural and art institution and should include at least two foreigners, one Latin American and the other European, thus highlighting the desire for international publicity for the park.[95] The competition jury consisted of: Cuban art critic Llilian Llanes (b. 1947), English curator David Elliot (b. 1949), Brazilian art historian Paulo Herkenhoff (b. 1949), U.S. specialist in public art François Yohalem (n.d.), Argentine curators Marcelo Pacheco (n.d.) and Fabián Lebenglik (n.d.). The artists on the jury were Ennio Iommi (b. 1937), Carlos Alonso (b. 1929) and the representatives of the human rights organizations were president of the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo Estela Carlotto (b. 1930), and Nobel Prize for Peace winner Adolfo Pérez Esquivel (b. 1931) from SERPAJ.[96]

The first meeting of the jury took place on July 5-8, 1999. 338 sculptural projects were received from Argentina and 277 projects were submitted from abroad. The guidelines for the sculptural works as outlined by the Commission Pro Monument to the Victims of State

[95] Estado de Situación by Comision Pro Monumento a Las Victimas del Terrorismo de Estado, September 18, 1998, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora Archive, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
[96] The alternate list of jurors was: artists, Roberto Matta, Eugenio Dittborn, Cildo Meireles, curators Marí Carmen Ramírez, Carlos Basualdo, French art critic, Jacque Leenhardt, and arhitects César Pelli and Rafael Vignoli.

Terrorism stated:

> The artists must keep in mind from the moment of conception of the artwork that on the one hand there is a necessity to remove the disappeared and murdered persons from anonymity and away from that uncertain number that does not say anything about the history of each of the disappeared. On the other hand, the artist must keep in mind the importance of reflecting on the disappeared's struggle for liberty and social justice.[97]

Part of the jury's methodology was to look at proposals without the names of the artists (see Appendix 3 for the jury's voting record). The jury grouped the works into four categories: using the River Plate as part of the project, spaces as metaphor for memory (interior space, construction, journey, sensation, making spectator a dynamic participant in the artistic experience), terrain-modifying by physical or natural means, and reformulating monumentality though volume and material using contemporary language.[98] Members of the jury also sought projects in which the spectator occupied a central and active position and emphasized "metaphorical, symbolic, and poetic approaches."[99]

The jury judged the works on content and aesthetic criteria and edited the sculptural plans for subject matter and design. They selected eight Argentine and eight international artists: Claudia Fontes (b. 1964, Argentina), Rini Hurmkans (b. 1954, Holland), Marie Orensanz (b. 1936, Argentina), Grupo de Arte Callejero (formed 1997, Argentina), Nuno Ramos (b. 1960,

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[97] Comisión Pro Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado, 12. "Los artistas que aquí convocamos a concurso deben tener en cuenta, en el momento de la concepción de la obra, por un lado la necesidad de sacar a los desaparecidos y asesinados del anonimato y de ese número incierto que nada dice de la historia de cada uno, y por otro la importancia de reflejar sus proyectos y los ideales de libertad y justicia social por los que lucharon."

[98] "Jury Proceedings: First Meeing," in *Concurso De Esculturas "Parque De La Memoria": En Homenaje a Los Detenidos-desaparecidos y Asesinados Por El Terrorismo De Estado En La Argentina = Sculpture Prize "Parque De La Memoria: in Homage to the Kidnapped-dissappeared and Murdered by the State Terrorism in Argentina,* (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 1999), 20.

[99] Ibid, 21.

Brazil), Marjetica Potrc (b. 1953, Slovenia), Dennis Oppenheim (1938-2011, U.S.), Germán Botero (b. 1946, Columbia); the four honorable mentions were: Per Kirkeby (b, 1938, Denmark), William Tucker (b, 1935, Egypt, lives U.S.), Nicolás Guagnini (b. 1966, Argentina lives U.S.), Clorindo Testa (b. 1923, Italy, lives Argentina). The invited artists by the Commission Pro-Monument for the Victims of State Terrorism were: Norberto Gómez (b. 1941, Argentina), Juan Carlos Distéfano (b. 1933, Argentina) Roberto Aizenberg (1928-1996, Argentina) Leo Vinci (b. 1931, Argentina), Jenny Holzer (b. 1950, U.S.) and Magdalena Abakamowicz (b. 1930, Poland).[100] The Commission emphasized that it invited artists based on a criteria of the quality of their work and their commitment to defend human rights and stressed that the artist hail from countries that played a role in denouncing human rights violations in Argentina.[101] The Commission originally had hoped that foreign States would donate sculptures to the park to defray costs and elevate the artistic level of the Parque de la memoria by placing it in an international public art circuit. Foreign governments however refrained from donating any financial contributions to the park.[102]

The sculptural works installed thus far are: William Tucker's abstract sculpture *Victory* (2001), Dennis Oppenheim's architectonic metaphor for a prison *Monument to Escape* (2001), Roberto Aizenberg's geometric, tripartite figural sculpture *Untitled* (2003), Nicolás Guagnini's kinetic sculpture *30,000* (2009), and Grupo de Arte Callejero's (GAC) road signs *Carteles de la memoria* (Signs of Memory, 2009, Figs. 38-42). They share a negation of traditional

[100] Clorindo Testa was a member of the jury for the Monumento a Recuerdo, Memoria y Compromiso (1994) at the Universidad de La Plata.
[101] Minutes of the Subcommittee concursos y aspectos artísticos October 21, 1998 and October 28, 1998, Madres de Plaza de Mayo Línea Fundadora Archive, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
[102] Estado de Situación by Comisión Pro Monumento a Las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado, September 18, 1998, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora Archive, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

monumental sculpture and DiPaolo and Bell pointed out that the sculptures in the park have an "anti-monument sensibility."[103] Social anthropologist Estela Schendel defined anti-monuments as, "Works that before representing, realize the impossibility of doing so, open proposals that make explicit the emptiness instead of definitive objects that closes that emptiness."[104] An anti-monument embraces destruction and creates an alternative memory rather than enforcing official historical accounts. This type of memorial negates the heroic narrative that is attached to traditional forms of monuments such as equestrian statuary and is an antonym for glory, honor, and triumph. It serves as a symbol for indignity and is a mark of past atrocities instead of victories. Although the works shared an anti-monument aesthetic, they diverged in their relationship to the site. James E. Young asked whether it is "possible to enshrine an antimemorial impulse in monumental forms."[105] In the case of the park, anti-monuments in the service of official history, further distanced this possibility.

Egyptian-born, British sculptor William Tucker's *Victory* was part of a series that Tucker started in the 1970s while working in New York City (Fig. 38). *Victory* was temporarily exhibited in the Doris C. Freedman Plaza in New York in 1983 and in London's Hyde Park the following year (Fig. 43).[106] *Victory* in New York, although intended as a single-freestanding sculpture was transformed when the Public Art Fund (PAF) inserted the work into the public

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[103] Vikki Bell and Mario Di Paolantonio, "The *Haunted Nomos*: Activist-Artists and the (Im)possible Politics of Memory in Transitional," 161.
[104] Estela Schindel, "Las ciudades y el olvido," in *Puentes* (July 2002): 28. "Obras que antes que representar dan cuenta de la imposibilidad de hacerlo, propuestas abiertas que explicitan el vacío y no objetos definitivos que lo sellan."
[105] James Edward Young, *At Memory's Edge: After-images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 10.
[106] The Public Art Fund (PAF), a New York based non-profit arts organization funded and produced Tucker's New York version of *Victory*. It was on display for six months (April 12, 1983-October 1983) at the opening of Central Park on Fifth Avenue.

realm. As seen in PAF's photographic documentation from the piece's installation, *Victory* unintentionally became a kind of street furniture; the work's audience used the piece as if it were a bench (Fig. 44).

Tucker altered his piece significantly for the Parque de la memoria. Although the work continued to have the same form, Tucker changed the materials from wood and fiberglass to concrete. In this version he added a trench in the ground that shadowed the truncated triangle and evoked images of a grave. The inauguration of *Victory* at the park on September 6, 2001 added a performative aspect to the geometric sculpture. The artist dug *Victory*'s form into the earth at the site and poured the concrete into the earth-mold. This action represented the burial and the concealment of truth about the disappeared during the dictatorship, especially in relation to their identities. After the concrete dried, Tucker lifted the sculpture out of its cast with a crane. When Tucker exhumed the geometric form from the earth, he left a mark on the ground to symbolize the recuperation of memory and the recovery of the disappeared's identity (Fig. 38).[107] The performance that Tucker linked to *Victory*'s installation offered a symbolic narrative of the history of disappearance in abstract form; however, the performance was not part of a readily apparent reading when viewing *Victory* at the park.

Tucker claimed that he originally created this work to allude to the political strife in both Northern Ireland and in Latin America. In his artist statement Tucker asserted the following:

> The invitation to participate in a project to build a commemorative monument for the victims of State Terrorism in Argentina gave me at last the possibility of proposing it [*Victory*] for a public theme and permanent location. It is a project that has had "no place" for the past fifteen years, and whose form reflects the horror but also the hope of that time. The optimistic title may seem ironic or inappropriate for such a fractured and ambiguous structure, but I think that the very fact that it is incomplete alludes to the victims' truncated by terror; the strength and resistance of the shape that, despite being

[107] Parque de la Memoria guide, interview by author, November 6, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

> threatened, suggests both the courage of the victims and the restitution over time of decorum and justice.[108]

Tucker's ironic title could be construed as offensive to the bereaved.

Senie in reaction to curator Mary Jane Jacob's public art project, *Places without a Past* (1991) in which twenty-three international artists explored Charleston, South Carolina's history stated, "The practice of importing artists to address local history is problematic even if their work appears to encompass social concerns."[109] Senie's caution about the importation of artists to address local concerns is relevant to the Parque de la memoria and to Tucker's sculpture specifically. Tucker's postmodern strategy of irony to commemorate the disappeared was problematic for the *Parque de la memoria*'s audience and *Victory* exemplified the gap that exists between artistic intention and public understanding.

The audience response to Tucker's sculpture was one of confusion. The title of the work is placed on a granite marker at ground level (Fig. 45). The viewers did not understand the irony of the title and found the work confusing, insulting, and alienating. They questioned what kind of victory Tucker was celebrating when 30,000 people died. A film student thought that perhaps Tucker implied a victory over memory, but then quickly added that the shape of the sculpture did not connote this interpretation. *Victory* although it was re-commissioned and slightly altered was not originally conceived for its now permanent location. The disparity in audience response and Tucker's intent perhaps originated in what architectural historian Miwon Kwon termed the

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[108] "Artist Statement by William Tucker," Parque de la memoria, http://www.parquedelamemoria.org.ar/victoria.php (accessed March 3, 2007).
[109] Harriet F. Senie, *The Tilted Arc Controversy: Dangerous Precedent?* (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 85.

nomadic practice of site-specificity as embodied in *Victoria*.[110] The visitors that I interviewed felt that Tucker's artwork was inaccessible and uninteresting in relation to the other three sculptures then currently on view.

Oppenheim's sculpture *Monument to Escape* is composed of three architectural cell-blocks piled up in a unit to simulate the idea of passage and escape. Oppenheim added large red-glassed units for visual effect because he felt that red is a serious color and amounts to a feeling of anger and hostility (Fig. 39).[111] Oppenheim, an artist that participated in the U.S. Land Art Movement of the 1960s, became aware of the competition through a brochure. He was in Argentina in 1971 before the last military dictatorship and drew upon his experience to create *Monument to Escape*.[112] Oppenheim asserted:

> Often when your artwork is postured to pay lip service to a political idea, it fails in terms of formal aspects. Sculpture in this sort of strange hybrid between sculpture and architecture wants to be free from any kind of pressure to also carry with a certain pre-existing content…If that content somehow comingles with the content that you want to suggest, because of the site and a situation like this, then it's the best deal.[113]

Oppenheim's sculpture attempted to convey the physical sensation of confinement through an architectural metaphor. *Monument to Escape* provided a somatic experience for the audience by

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[110] Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002), 43. Kwon explained nomadic art practices in public art, "While some artists regress into the traditional argument of authorial inviolability in order to defend their site-specific practice, others are keen to undo the presumption of criticality associated with such principles as immobility, permanence, and unrepeatability. Rather than resisting mobilization, these artists are attempting to reinvent site specificity as a *nomadic* practice."

[111] Dennis Oppenheim, interview by author, June 17, 2010, New York, NY.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Ibid.

inviting the audience to interact with its walls in order to convey a feeling of entrapment.[114] The viewer becomes a participant by entering the structure.

In his proposal for the park Oppenheim wrote, "My subject is liberation and escape, rendered through cell blocks as physical enclosures. Otherwise mute and ineffective, in this case, cellblocks are subjected to upheaval and become abstract sculptural form, turned and twisted, loose of function."[115] Once inside, the work is disorienting. The participant is confronted with barred windows and high, slanted, unscalable walls. Instead of the sole sensation of being enclosed or imprisoned, Oppenheim allowed the viewer to flee through open spaces. He kept the cells from functioning as prisons and voided the prison wall's purpose. Due to this interactive element many audience members found the work successful. However, Oppenheim did not intend to create a sculptural work in which "people perform it in the way they choose." Instead, he wanted it to be "succinct with its nature" because "back in the days when you did sculpture you didn't necessarily want it to be played with. That kind of thing would be a lot more part of the current expanded notion of public art."[116]

Oppenheim, as a foreigner, creating somewhat permanent works about the dictatorship had detractors.[117] Argentine artist Juan Carlos Distéfano opposed importing international artists

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[114] Cab drivers and passers-by refer to *Monument to Escape* as "las casitas" (the little houses).
[115] Dennis Oppenheim, Written Proposal For the Parque de la Memoria Sculpture Prize, The City of Buenos Aires, Argentina, Dennis Oppenheim artist files, New York, NY (accessed June 17, 2010).
[116] Oppenheim, interview.
[117] Oppenheim described other issues of importing foreign artists. He installed his work during the economic crisis in Argentina in 2001. From 2001-2003 work on the park had ceased due to the economic climate. When Oppenheim signed his contract, the Argentine peso was pegged one to one with the U.S. dollar. However, during the crash the peso's devaluation by up to four to one to the U.S. dollar caused problems because Oppenheim's contract was in Argentine pesos. He was paid US$38,00 but was originally supposed to receive US$160,000. The artist was never able to recuperate the funds because there was no clause in the contract to dollarize the debt. His artist fees were US $20,000. He attempted to obtain the remaining payment due to him; however,

to the Parque de la memoria who have no relation to Argentina's period of state terrorism. He questioned, "What does Oppenheim know of imprisonment or escape?"[118] This criticism was compounded by the fact that the sculptures by Tucker and Oppenheim, both foreign artists, were placed in the park before those of participating established Argentine artists like Norberto Gómez, or Distéfano. This called attention to the government's desire for international recognition and appeared to be part of a plan for Argentina to attract visitors through the growing global, thanotourism trade.[119]

The foreign artists did not engage directly with the art historical strategies that human rights organizations traditionally employed to memorialize the disappeared. The Argentine artists represented in the park, on the other hand, created works with a historic connection to the human rights movement's chosen artistic strategies for memorializing the disappeared. Surrealist artist, Roberto Aizenberg's *Untitled* was the third sculpture erected in the Park (Fig. 40). Aizenberg's posthumous sculpture was based on an artist's sketch and was constructed under the supervision of Alberto Díaz and with the advice of Distéfano, a colleague and friend of Aizenberg, and the artist's heirs, Antonio Belaústegui and Tania Waisberg. Aizenberg's partner, Matilde Herera's children, Martín, José, and Valeria were disappeared and Aizenberg dedicated his work to them. The sculpture is three outlines of large-scale geometric figures that are close to thirteen feet tall in laminated bronze. The viewers simultaneously perceive the monumental figures and looks through them at the riverscape. The use of the human figures was more geometric, but was still

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when he saw so many children protesting in the streets of Buenos Aires, he decided that it was a lost cause. Oppenheim, interview and Minute No. 8 of the Commission Pro Monument to the Victims of State Terrorism, September 4, 2002, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora Archive, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

[118] Juan Carlos Distéfano, interview by author, November 11, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

[119] For a discussin on thanatourism in Argentina see Brigette Sion, "Absent Bodies, Uncertain Memorials: Performing Memory in Berlin and Buenos Aires" (PhD diss., New York University, 2008).

aligned with the human rights organizations' historical reliance on the figure for their commemorative protest actions such as the *Siluetazo* (1983, see Chapter One).

The fourth installed sculpture, Nicolás Guagnini's anti-monument, *30,000* linked the photograph and the monument (Fig. 41). Guagnini stated that he would only create one work about his father, Luis Guagnini, a journalist who was kidnapped and disappeared by the dictatorship in 1977. He manipulated and re-used the I.D. photograph of his father that his grandmother carried with her in demonstrations at the Plaza de Mayo.[120] Guagnini transformed the photograph, the preferred medium to respond to the atrocity of human rights organizations, into an ironic sculpture by incorporating a portrait into a traditionally non-figurative style.

Guagnini based the memorial to his father and Argentina's disappeared on the non-figurative artistic movements of Venezuelan kinetic art and Brazilian Neo-Concretism.[121] Guagnini used modern industrial materials such as stainless steel like the Argentine and Venezuelan kinetic artists of the 1950s and 1960s. He altered the traditional relationship between spectator and artwork from passive to active in a similar strategy to Argentine artist Julio Le Parc (b. 1928), Venezuelan Kinetic artist, Jesús Rafael Soto (1923-2005), and Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel (GRAV). Guagnini, like the Brazilian Neo-concrete artists, strove to create an art that was interactive and included multiple sensory experiences, which was an element that the jury for the sculpture competition sought. Guagnini's monument consists of twenty-five straight rectangular prisms with square bases that form a cube. The participant's action activates the black and white sculpture. As the spectator moves around the cube, she begins to perceive fragments and even repetitions and distortions of the realistic, photographed face, which appears

[120] Nicolás Guagnini, interview by author, November 15, 2006, New York.
[121] Ibid.

and disappears. The viewer witnesses and controls Luis Guagnini's visual presence, disappearance, and reappearance (Fig. 46).

Guagnini encompassed his personal history, the history of Argentina, the history of the photograph, and the history of Latin American art. He revealed his personal history through his father's public photograph, just as Aizenberg revealed his personal history through the sketch of his three disappeared step-children. However, Guagnini engaged national history by coupling the portrait of his father with the title *30,000* (the estimated number of disappeared persons by human rights organizations in Argentina), thus transforming his father's indexical portrait into a symbol for the entire generation of the disappeared.

Grupo de Arte Callejero (GAC)'s *Carteles de la memoria* (*Memory Signs*, 1999) also based its work on participants' movement, in which fifty-eight road signs narrate the history of Argentina chronologically from the 1970s to the present (Fig. 42). Underneath each sign is a board with text that provides information presented about the signs' symbols. This artistic strategy first emerged when GAC posted street signs to indicate the locations of former torture and detention centers in the 1990s (see Chapter One). The efficacy of the signs in the original context was the interventionist quality and surprise guerilla features that confronted unwitting passers-by with information about the disappeared and the dictatorship in the guise of official street signage. GAC's signs' significance changed when official government patronage brought them to the outskirts of the city.

GAC has been heavily criticized by critics and artists for its transition from guerilla street art collective, to participant in galleries and international biennials.[122] However, it was this type

[122] Graciela Taquini, interview by author, July 20, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

of participation in the international art world that the Commission sought out. GAC was aware of these criticisms and the group defended its involvement in the Parque de la memoria:

> Overall, this group comes form protesting through direct intervention in public spaces with a methodology that rejected institutionalism. However, in the group the idea of presenting a work that emphasizes the feeling of denunciation prevailed. Accordingly, our work considers the last dictatorship, not as a temporal fracture. Instead it relates it to previous events and fundamentally highlights the current institutions' roles (including the city government) in the Due Obedience and Final Stop Laws, and Pardons, that permit those responsible for state terrorism to enjoy their own liberty.[123]

Despite this defense, the site affected the content. The meaning of GAC's work changed considerably when removed from its proximity to former detention centers and perpetrators' homes. The institutionalization of these symbols of the human rights movement at a government-constructed site of memory devalued their power as a political tool that sought institutional justice.

The Parque de la memoria as Political Platform

The Parque de la memoria opened under Mayor Aníbal Ibarra (2000-2006). When Ibarra's term ended Jorge Telerman (2006-2007) took over and did not comply with the Ibarra administration's original sponsorship of the park, nor its projected funding. This lack of financial commitment placed the human rights organizations working with the government in a bind. They

[123] Grupo de Arte Callejero, "Parque de la Memoria: polémica," *Ramona* 13 (June 2001): 44. "Frente al conflicto que implicaba la participación en un concurso en donde había un apoyo explícito del Gobierno de la Ciudad. Sobre todo para un grupo que venía manifestándose a través de la intervención directa en espacios públicos, con una metodología que rechazaba todo lo que se gestionara desde la institución. Frente a esta situcaión, en el Grupo prevaleció la idea de presentación del trabajo recalcando el sentido de denuncia, a su vez, tomando la última dictadura no como un hecho recortado temporalmente, sino relacionándolo con acontecimientos previos y fundamentalmente haciendo evidente la responsabilidad de las actuales instituciones (incluyendo el mismo Gobierno de la Ciudad) en las leyes de Obediencia Debiad, Punto Final e Indulto, que permiten que los responsables del terrorismo de Estado gocen de total impunidad."

could not complete a project as large as the Parque de la memoria without public lands and government funding; the Commission Pro-Monument had to protest and demand for the project's completion. The minister of Public Works under Telerman Juan Pablo Schiavi, although promising to accelerate the construction, created a lag time by leaving a bid for the MVTE name bricks open. The Commission pleaded with Telerman, to continue with the construction of the park.[124] The delays caused by an unresponsive government had an impact beyond the slow building of the Parque de la memoria. Many of the mothers and relatives of the disappeared are aging and they want to live to see the completion of the park. To protest and to rectify the nameless monument, the Madres de Plaza de Mayo-LF and the Abuelas hand painted the name bricks with stencils and black spray paint on August 30, 2006. The human rights organizations, although working with government sponsorship, resorted to the historic strategies of graffiti art and stenciling to record the names of the disappeared.

The completion and maintenance of the park was also subjected to the city government's politics. Under mayor Mauricio Macri's (2007-present) Pro (Propuesta Republicana) conservative government, construction of the park had slowed and vital elements of the park were neglected, such as functioning light bulbs. In November 2009, some of the name plaques on the MVTE were already damaged at the edges. Macri, by stalling the park construction asserted his conservative political beliefs. [125]

Zerubavel contended:

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[124] "Reclamo para que no se demoren las obras en el Parque de la Memoria," *Página/12*, Buenos Aires, August 31, 2006, El país section.

[125] Minute No. 11 of the Commission ProMonument to the Victims of State Terrorism, November 6, 2002, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora Archive, Buenos Aires, Argentina. The Coca-Cola corporation attempted to capitalize on the park by sending a proposal to the Commission to erect a public advertisement in the entrance plaza of the Parque de la memoria in 2002. The commission refused.

> Numerous medals, plaques, tombstones, war memorials, Halls of Fame, and other commemorative monuments (and the fact that we make them from stone or metal rather than paper or wood) serve as evidence that we purposefully design such future sites of memory well in advance. Like souvenirs, class yearbooks, and antiques, such objects have a purely commemorative value for us, and we design them strictly for the purpose of allowing future generations mnemonic access to their collective past.[126]

In the case of the Parque de la memoria, the government selectively edited this collective past. While some human rights organizations and artists fought to maintain the memory of the disappeared in a central location, the government transformed historical memory and trauma into an urban planning project and relegated them to a peripheral space. The strategy of constructing memory projects at the edge of the city extended to other memorial-urban planning developments like the *Paseo de los Derechos Humanos* in the Parque IndoAmericano located in the underprivileged Buenos Aires neighborhood of Villa Lugano, far outside of the city center.[127] The government appeared through these projects to unearth a buried history, but then proceeded to relegate it to a marginalized fringe in the city's geographic fabric.

Nevertheless, the Parque de la memoria does have an audience (albeit small), which includes human rights organization members, foreigners, and Argentines of all ages. The park is a place where family and friends of the disappeared have a space to mourn and remember their loved ones who do not have tombs. The general public's reasons for coming to the Parque de la memoria are quite different from the members of human rights organizations that commissioned the space. The Parque de la memoria linked recreation with the memory of the disappeared. This form of recreational, reconciliatory remembering created a space for memory that equated leisure activity with the present and the future. Many audience members stated that the biggest asset of the park is the low attendance. People used the park for skateboarding, bike riding, walking their

[126] Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology*, 94.
[127] The Parque InodAmericano is approximately 173 acres.

dogs, playing on sculptures (especially Oppenheim's and Tucker's works), sun bathing, and picnicking (Fig. 47). The park's Commission wanted to make sure that there were not excessive prohibitions at the Parque de la memoria; however, a gap existed between respecting the memory of the disappeared and the freedom to engage with public space at the audience's choosing.[128] For example, a seven-year-old boy from Buenos Aires said that the space is good, but that it is "bad that people cannot skateboard on the monument."[129]

Some audience members were unaware of the park's content. A couple in their 30s, picnicking by the reflecting pool in front of the MVTE did not know that they were sitting next to a monument dedicated to the disappeared.[130] The audience's reactions in some instances illustrated Nora's idea; the construction of a monument to the disappeared in many ways has relegated them to the past and the disappeared themselves, like the fate of monuments in general, was rendered invisible. Most audience members did not understand the relationship between the MVTE and the sculptures in the park. Some of the issues that audience members had with the park are common concerns with public art in general. The sculptures were too abstract for most visitors and they had negative responses to the works and used descriptive adjectives like "ugly." In addition, Alberto Varas (b. 1943) through the MVTE intended to create an atmosphere of austerity; however, members of the Parque de la memoria's audience read the austerity of the

[128] Minute No. 11 of the Commission ProMonument to the Victims of State Terrorism, Production Team, December 11, 2001, Madres de Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora Archive, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
[129] Parque de la memoria visitor, interview by author, November 9, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
[130] The commission is currently running a third competition for signage at the park. The use of signs may clarify any confusion about the intention for the use of the space. There are however, signs on the entrance to the park explaining the significance of the park and guides are supposed to engage with visitors as well.

MVTE as oppressive.[131]

The park's aesthetic and function should not be dismissed altogether. Some audience members found comfort in the park and left small traces of their grief and their thoughts. One hung a note on the park's fence (Fig. 48). Although the Parque de la memoria is not yet completed the note's message, "We are still waiting for them," is an indicator that like the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, people will find a personal space within the public park to mourn and to hope.[132]

The Parque de la memoria responded to complex needs and multiple memories: the disappeareds' families' right for a place to mourn, the national obligation to pay homage to the disappeared, and the government's aspiration to address the past through built monuments as opposed to institutional justice. Nevertheless, the Parque de la memoria is a physical space of struggle between as well as within "mnemonic communities" over the social legacy of the past.[133] Competing voices at the Parque de la memoria are a symptom of the difficulty in giving aesthetic shape to a contested history within Argentina's public, collected memory.

[131] Varas, inteview.
[132] "Todavia los esperamos." The Spanish verb *esperar* can be translated to English as to wait and to hope.
[133] Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology*, 98.

Chapter 4:
Memory Construction in Chile: A Comparative Analysis

We've kept our recent past hidden; we've concealed it.
It's as if history might accuse us and that dear friend helps no one.
-Chilean archaeologist Lautaro Núnez speaking to director Patricio Guzman in *Nostalgia for the Light.*[1]

Introduction

The Chilean national flag flew at half-mast in army facilities on December 11, 2006 to pay homage to General Augsto José Ramón Pinochet, who died at ninety-one years old in a hospital surrounded by his family. Pinochet's supporters who held a vigil outside of the hospital wept at the news of his death and chanted "Viva Pinochet!" [2] Hernán Guillof, president of the Pinochet Foundation, assured Pinochet devotees that, "Once passions subdue, [Pinochet] will be given his place in history as architect of our nation."[3] As followers grieved Pinochet's death, thousands took to the streets in protest of his life and the crimes he committed as the engineer and leader of Chile's seventeen-year military dictatorship (1973-1990).

After Argentina returned to Democracy in 1983, Chile remained under dictatorial rule. As Argentines struggled with the shape of their own collective and collected memory about the disappeared and the dictatorship, groups of artists and human rights organizations rallied to protest in solidarity against Chilean military rule.[4] The Argentine art collective Colectivo de arte

[1] Patricio Guzmán, *Nostalgia for the Light*, DVD, Directed by Patricio Guzmán, Atacama Productions, Blinkerfilm Produktion,Westdeutscher Rundfunk, and Cronomedia Santiago, 2010.
[2] Pascale Bonnefoy, "Joy and Violence at Death of Pinochet," *New York Times*, December 11, 2006, sec. A.
[3] Quoted in Ibid.
[4] Other actions by Argentines and exiled Chileans include the formation of a silhouette of a pregnant woman out of 2,000 candles in front of Buenos Aires's landmark Obelisk on March 9, 1987, coupled with circulating flyers that stated, "There are as many lights as men that were assassinated. 2,000 candles, the sign will be the same, a silhouette of a woman that will give

participativo tarifa común (Collective of Participatory Art Common Fare, CAPaTaCo) produced *Velas x Chile* (*Candles for Chile*, September 11, 1986) on the thirteenth anniversary of the military coup. The project consisted of a large figural silhouette formed by candles in front of the Chilean embassy in Argentina. CAPaTaCo marked Chile's disappeared persons with a figural paradigm of absence recalling the *Siluetazo* (Buenos Aires, 1983) by Julio Flores, Rodolfo Aguerreberry, and Guillermo Kexel sponsored by the human rights organizations the Madres de Plaza de Mayo and the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, among others (see Chapter One).

This chapter investigates the memorial strategies dedicated to the disappeared and politically executed persons in Chile under Pinochet's dictatorship, and analyzes memorials that are sponsored by the government, the Catholic Church, and human rights organizations during the post-dictatorial era in order to compare and contextualize Argentine and Chilean memorialization strategies from a broader geo-political perspective. This study is by no means a survey of Chilean memorials; instead, it focuses on case studies of two major government-sponsored memorials in the form of a monument and an ex-clandestine detention center that was transformed into a park. The analysis of these memorials is framed by commemorative projects created by family members who belonged to human rights organizations under the dictatorship and during the post-dictatorial era.[5] In order to comprehend the commonalities and unique

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birth [to give birth in Spanish *dar a luz* is directly translated as to give light], a burning flame to help the Chilean people in the Chilean night of Pinochet. CAPaTaCo worked with Unión Mujeres Exilada Chilena (Union of Exiled Chilean Women UMECH), Chile Democrático (Democratic Chile) Comité Argentino de Solidaridad con Chile (Argentine Committee in Solidarity with Chile, CASCHI), and Frente Universitario de Solidaridad con Chile (University Front in Solidarity with Chile, FUSCH). For a discussion and description of art works produced in Argentina that memorialize the disappeared in Chile see María Isabel Munczek, "Intervenciones Artistico-Politicas Urbanas En Argentina 2000-2005" Masters Thesis, Instituto Universitario Nacional De Arte, 2005.

[5] As of 2009 there were approximately 170 memorials (including plaques) in Chile. For a photographic survey of Chilean memorials dedicated to the disappeared see Alejandro Hoppe,

divergences between the built memorials in each country it is imperative to understand the distinct and shared histories of each nation under dictatorial rule and during their transition to democracy. The memorials in each nation share a common commemorative subject and often share similar forms. However, differences do exist in each nation's public memorials, and they developed because of the distinct relationships and transitions from dictatorship to democracy. The divergence in memorialization strategies is most apparent in the sites where each nation chose to construct its markers of memory. As an Uruguayan protestor explained, "In Argentina there was truth and justice; in Chile, truth without justice; in Uruguay there was neither truth nor justice."[6]

Operation Condor

The number of disappeared persons perpetrated by the right wing military dictatorships in the Southern Cone comprised 300 in Uruguay, 2,607 in Chile, and an estimated 30,000 in Argentina.[7] Operation Condor, a plot fomented by the United States in the Cold War climate in order to combat the perceived subversive threat of Communism, was a web of espionage, murder, and severe human rights abuses, conducted through a secret program of police cooperation across South American borders including Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia. These Southern Cone neighbors all shared the detrimental experience of

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Memoriales En Chile: Homenajes a Las Víctimas De Violaciones a Los Derechos Humanos (Santiago de Chile: FLACSO, 2007).

[6] Quoted in Diego Sempol, "Ni Verdad, Ni Justicia," *Puentes* 2 (December 2000): 54. "En Argentina hubo verdad y justicia; en Chile, verdad sin justicia; en Uruguay, ni verdad ni justicia."

[7] Human Rights Watch Americas, "Essential Background," Human Rights Watch, http://www.hrw.org/doc?t=south_america (accessed October 10, 2007). Although Human Rights Watch estimated the number of Chile's disappeared to be in the 2,700s, other scholars estimated that the disappearances were closer to 3,500-4,500 and the number of political detentions was around 150,000-200,000 people.

the United States's intervention in their economy and politics as well as U.S.-learned tactics of torture, political repression, assassination, and intelligence maneuvers to deter leftist "subversives."[8] Realpolitiks, politics imposed by means of physical violence, political extortion, or economic suppression, became the modus operandi for the Argentine and Chilean dictatorships. Some countries were more supportive and fervent about the operation than others. A cable from the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) explained, "Members of Operation Condor showing the most enthusiasm to date have been Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile."[9] Upon their return to democracy, all three countries' governments encouraged their population to forget the human rights abuses committed through state-sponsored terrorism.

The Military Dictatorship in Chile

On September 11, 1973 Pinochet (1973-90) led a military coup in Chile that overthrew the democratically elected Socialist president, Salvador Allende (1970-73).[10] The military junta ordered the bombing of La Moneda, the presidential palace in Santiago, prompting Allende to commit suicide after delivering a final farewell address on the radio.[11] Some Chileans saw the coup as a moment when Chile reached its salvation and finally passed through a trauma that

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[8] Cezar Mariano Nilson, *Operación Cóndor. Terrorismo de Estado en el Cono Sur* (Lholé-Lumen: Buenos Aires, 1998). Many of the officers in the Argentine, Uruguayan and Chilean militaries were educated at the notorious School of the Americas at Fort Benning, Georgia. As in Argentina, the Chilean military also looked towards Nazi methods and French government tactics applied in French Algeria.

[9] Chile and the United States: Declassified Documents Relating to the Military Coup, 1970-1976, FBI, Operation Condor Cable, September 28, 1976, George Washington University, http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB8/ch23-02.htm (accessed April 21, 2012).

[10] Allende was a leader of the Unidad Popular (Popular Unity, UP) party. He won the presidential elections on September 4, 1970 and became Latin America's first Marxist Socialist president.

[11] Other members of the Chilean military junta were César Mendoza, Admiral José Toribio Merino, and commander of the armed forces General Gustavo Leigh.

erupted before the military took control of the government.[12] However, there was a grim reality with this new power structure: the Pinochet government closed the Chilean parliament and censured the media.[13] Moreover, the Chilean military, like the Argentine dictatorship, heralded itself as the true protector of national values, claimed that it was fighting an internal enemy, and therefore responded with forced disappearance and torture. Several thousand citizens became torture victims. There were over 82,000 documented political arrests, and 200,000 people were either forced into exile or decided to subject themselves to self-imposed exile for safety reasons.[14]

In 1978 Pinochet passed the Amnesty Law drawn up by Minister of Justice Mónica Madariaga and granted amnesty to all those who "as principals or accessories, committed criminal offences under the state of siege between 11 September 1973 and 10 March 1978."[15] The law benefitted those who committed crimes against humanity and their accomplices, and in 1990 the Supreme Court upheld the Amnesty Law's constitutionality.[16] Minister of the Interior Sergio Fernández described the passing of this law as "the beginning of national reconciliation."[17] National reconciliation in Chile became an unofficial policy for covering up the dictatorship's human rights violations. To justify the disappearances Fernández coldly

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[12] Steve J. Stern, *Remembering Pinochet's Chile: On the Eve of London, 1998* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 105.
[13] Chile, like Argentina, also experienced mass killings of workers and students prior to the Pinochet dictatorship, but it was not until Pinochet's government that Chile experienced this kind of state-sponsored terrorism on a nationwide, mass scale.
[14] Stern, *Remembering Pinochet's Chile: On the Eve of London, 1998*, xxi.
[15] Quoted in Jennifer G. Schirmer, "'Those Who Die for Life Cannot Be Called Dead:' Women and Human Rights Protest in Latin America," *Feminist Review*, 32 (July 1, 1989): 18.
[16] Human Rights Watch Chile, "Why Chileans Won't Prosecute Pinochet," Human Rights Watch, November 12, 1998, http://www.hrw.org/news/1998/11/11/why-chile-wont-prosecute-pinochet (accessed September 12, 2009).
[17] Derechos Chile Ayer y Hoy, "Cronología Principales eventos durante y después de la dictadura," http://www.derechoschile.com/espanol/acerca.htm (accessed May 7, 2010).
"el comienzo de la reconciliación nacional."

explained, "We were in a war and we are practically in a process of war. In any war people disappear and no one asks and no one gives explanations."[18] Despite the dictatorship's efforts to re-formulate historically the reality of life under Pinochet's rule, family members continued to demand information about their disappeared loved ones. In response to this insistence by relatives, and in an effort toward national appeasement, in June 1978 the Ley de Muerte Presunta (Law of Presumed Death) was passed in order to offer compensation for relatives of the disappeared.

It was not until 1989 that Pinochet agreed to relinquish power and La Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia (The Coordination of Parties for Democracy) negotiated the handing over of government rule. This transition of government control was not the end of Pinochet's political influence. Before leaving office, he named himself senator for life and remained Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces during the first years of the government transition (1990-98). Three years prior to his resignation as Commander-in-Chief, Pinochet asserted, "It is better to remain quiet and forget. It is the only thing that we should do. We have to forget. And this is not going to happen by opening cases, sending people to prison. *For-get*: this is the word, and for this to happen, both sides need to forget and continue working."[19]

The call for forgetting by the dictatorship was echoed in the appeal for national reconciliation under Chile's transition to democracy. Patricio Aylwin Azócar (in office 1990-

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[18] Ibid. "Estábamos y estamos prácticament en un proceso de guerra. En cualquier guerra la gente desaparece y nadie pide, ni nadie da explicaciones."

[19] Quoted in Azun Candina Polomer, "El día interminable. Memoria e instalación del 11 de Septiembre de 1973 en Chile (1974-1999), in Elizabeth Jelin and Azun Candina, *Las Conmemoraciones: Las Disputas En Las Fechas "In-felices"* (Madrid: Siglo XXI de España Editores: Social Science Research Council, 2002), 11. "Es mejor quedarse callado y olvidar. Es lo único que debemos hacer. Tenemos que olvidar. Y esto no va a ocurrir abriendo casos, mandando a la gente a la carcel. *Ol-vi-dar*: ésta es la palabra, y para que esto ocurra los dos lados tienen que olvidar y seguir trabajando."

1994) was the first democratically elected head of state following the Pinochet regime. He too sought to foster national reconciliation in Chile, specifically through the establishment of the Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación (National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation), more commonly known as the Rettig Commission. Aside from the Rettig Report – which showed a bias through the inclusion of the phrase "national reconciliation" in the title – the Aylwin government executed very few notable public acts concerning the nation's history under the dictatorship. In addition, just as in Argentina, the Chilean military claimed that the disappeared were not disappeared at all, but had just left the country voluntarily, had killed one another, or were killed in military confrontations.[20]

Groups of ex-political prisoners and human rights organizations mobilized to work against Pinochet's decree of forgetting in order to preserve the memory of the disappeared and the harsh realities of dictatorial rule in Chile.[21] Lorena Pizarro, president of the Chilean human rights organization Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos (Organization of Relatives of the Detained Disapepared, AFDD), emphasized that "the fundamental thing is how we arrive at truth and justice. This is the work that neither the government nor the armed forces

[20] Margarita Romero, *Reflexiones de Margarita Romero durante su visita a Memoria Abierta*, Memoria Abierta (paper presented at Memoria Abierta, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2006). Margarita Romero was the vice-president of the Corporation Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi, an ex-clandestine detention center that was converted into a memorial park and which will be discussed later in this chapter.
[21] Ibid.

have taken on."[22] In 2008 she also emphasized that many bodies continued to be unidentified or misidentified.[23]

Ricardo Froilán Lagos Escobar's administration (2000-2006) took steps forward in recognizing the human rights abuses that occurred in Chile. In 2000 his administration created the Comisión Nacional sobre Prisión Política y Tortura (National Commission on Political Prison and Torture), commonly referred to as the Valech Report, which was designed to clarify the statistics on the number of persons who were imprisoned, tortured, and disappeared, documenting over 1,100 torture centers and 38,254 prisoners beyond the Rettig Report.[24] It was not until the Valech Report was publically circulated that the broader public in Chile began to recognize the realities of the dictatorial era.[25] All the while organizations like the Comité Pro Paz (Committee for Peace) and the ecumenical human rights group of the Catholic Church Vicaría de la Solidaridad (Vicariate for Solidarity, officially formed in 1976) continued to promote human rights in Chile. The earlier demand by human rights organizations of "They took them away alive, we want them back alive," turned to "Truth and justice" after the realization that the disappeared would not return.[26]

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[22] "Familiares de víctimas borran nombres de falsos desaparecidos," *Soitu* January 3, 2009 http://www.soitu.es/soitu/2009/10/29/info/1256773051_107888.html (accessed April 6, 2009). "Lo fundamental es cómo logramos verdad y justicia. Esa es la tarea que no han asumido ni en el Gobierno ni en las Fuerzas Armadas."

[23] María Laura Carpineta, "El falso desaparecido conmueve a Chile," *Página/12*, Buenos Aires, November 24, 2008, El mundo section.

[24] Chile, Comisión Nacional sobre Prisión Política y Tortura, *Informe De La Comisión Nacional Sobre Prisión Política y Tortura,* (Santiago, Chile: Ministerio del Interior, Comisión Nacional sobre Prisión Política y Tortura, 2005).

[25] Margarita Romero, *Reflexiones de Margarita Romero durante su visita a Memoria Abierta*.

[26] Gabriela Zuñiga Figueroa, "Untitled" (paper presented at the Memoriales y Democracia Conference for FLACSO, Santiago, Chile, 2007). "Vivos se los llevaron, vivos los queremos" changed to "Verdad y justicia."

As the human rights organizations called for justice, Pinochet continued to live his life in his native country with immunity from prosecution. However, during a 1999 visit to London Pinochet was arrested for his violations against human rights and was detained there under the legal principal of universal jurisdiction. He was released in March 2000 due to medical reasons. Upon his return to Chile, the courts had compiled his numerous cases of crimes against humanity. However, Pinochet was never tried. As the Uruguayan protestor stated, Chile never saw justice in the form of punishment for Pinochet and the other perpetrators in the crimes against humanity committed against the Chilean people. When Pinochet died in 2006 Chile remained an internally divided nation. The news of Pinochet's death prompted the country and the international community to engage in rival rituals of mourning or spontaneous celebrations. These reactions to the aged leader's passing exposed the vast gulf that continued in the Chilean society's view of the military dictatorship.

Chilean Memorials of the Disappeared under the Dictatorship

Pierre Nora contended that memorials are constructed to make up for a lack of unity in the modern national state.[27] His observation is especially relevant to the Chilean context because of the country's divisions over Pinochet's rule. The same is true for Argentina, and the two nations shared official government-sanctioned and unsanctioned memorial strategies. Just as in Argentina, during the dictatorship Chilean artists embraced conceptual practices in order to avoid censorship, and the relatives of the disappeared also used the tactic of carrying photographs of their loved ones in official public spaces in order to prove the existence of their disappeared

[27] Pierre Nora, Lawrence D. Kritzman, and Arthur Goldhammer, *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past: The Construction of the French Past. Vol. 1, Conflicts and Divisions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

relatives. Chilean scholar Ariel Dorfman traced the practice of first holding aloft photographs of disappeared persons to June 1977, when Chilean women whose relatives had been arrested by the secret police went on a hunger strike in front of the regional offices of the United Nations in Santiago.[28] In 1979 relatives of the disappeared pinned photographs of their missing loved ones to their clothing and chained themselves to the fence in front of the National Congress Building in Santiago.[29] Women in Chile, akin to the human rights organizations in Argentina, turned to the visual arts to create multiple protest strategies that augmented marching with the photographs of the disappeared. [30]

Circulating Textiles: The Arpilleras

In the 1970s the Madres de Plaza de Mayo (Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, Madres) circumambulated the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires carrying photographs of their disappeared children and wearing white handkerchiefs that symbolized diapers to protest their children's disappearance. The members of the Madres embroidered batiste cloth with the names of their disappeared children and the date of their kidnapping. In 1984 the group changed the embroidered text to simply read, "Bring them back alive." They also sewed messages such as, "Where are they?" in Spanish, French, and other languages in order to attract international aid

[28] Ariel Dorfman, "The True 'Desaparecidos'," *The Chronicle Review* (September 2003), http://chronicle.com/free/v50/i02/02b00701.htm (accessed March 5, 2008).
[29] Marjorie Agosín, *Scraps of Life: Chilean Arpilleras: Chilean Women and the Pinochet Dictatorship* (Trenton, NJ: Red Sea Press, 1987), 7.
[30] Just as in Argentina, artists and art collectives used conceptual art practices and performance to protest the dictatorship. Art collectives such as CADA created conceptual performance works to challenge the dictatorship and memorialize both the disappeared and the loss of the socialist safety net of the Allende government. For more information on CADA see Robert Alan Neustadt *Colectivo Acciones de Arte*, *CADA Día: La Creación De Un Arte Social* (Santiago, Chile: Cuarto Propio, 2001). In addition, Nelly Richard coined the term the *escena de las avenzadas* to describe the cultural production of the 1970s in Chile. For more information see Nelly Richard, *Margins and Institutions: Art in Chile Since 1973* (Melbourne: Art & Text, 1986).

for their cause.[31] While the Madres marched adorned in their cloth headscarves, Chilean women who were relatives of the disappeared also turned to textiles to protest the disappearances in the international arena.

In the 1970s and 1980s Chilean women who were relatives of disappeared husbands and children created *arpilleras,* sewn cloth collages on burlap backing (Fig. 49). These women initially gathered "to cry together" to share their common grief. [32] A sympathizer donated cloth to the group thinking that the participants could use it to design necklaces. Instead, the women decided to craft images of their disappeared relatives and narrate their own socio-economic condition through cloth and needle. The fabric appliqué works vary in size and often have figures that are stuffed so that they are three-dimensional against a flat colorful ground. The stitching of the collage works is large and easily visible, and many of the scenes include Chile's mountainous landscape in the background. The closest Chilean analogue to the *arpilleras* is singer-songwriter and visual artist Violeta Parra's (1917-1967) work. However, Parra's artistic practice focused on the technique of embroidery as opposed to the construction of a cloth collage.

The Vicaria de la Solidaridad sponsored *arpillera* workshops where more than 250 women participated throughout Chile. [33] The Church as a sponsor of aesthetic protest art differed from the Argentine case of patronage of memorials to the disappeared, and exemplified the discrepancies in the official national stances of the Catholic Church in Argentina and Chile.

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[31] Roberto Amigo, "Aparición con vida: Las siluetas de los detenidos Desaparecidos," in Ana Longoni, et al., *El Siluetazo*, Sentidos (Buenos Aires: Adriana Hidalgo Editora, 2008), 209. The handkerchief was first used in September 1977 during a religious procession from Buenos Aires to the city of Luján so that members of the Madres could identify each other during the march.
[32] Winnie Lira Letelier, interview by author, Santiago, Chile, October 22, 2009. "Llorar juntas."
[33] *Arpillera* is translated from Spanish to burlap or sacking because many of the works used flour and potato sacks as the ground for the composition. The *arpilleras* were initially uniform in size (14″ x 18″).

Whereas the Catholic Church's leadership in Argentina supported the dictatorship as a purveyor of Christian values, the Catholic Church in Chile openly fought to combat the human rights violations under Pinochet. The patronage of the *arpilleras* by the Church accomplished two goals. It enabled the participating women to augment their income through folk art and to create portable protest documents of their lives under the dictatorship.

Participants learned to express themselves through this textile testimonial even though this type of craft did not originally exist in Chile.[34] The *arpilleristas* (*arpillera* artists) recorded images of their search for the disappeared and created imagined scenes of acts of torture in the political prisons where their loved ones were held in order to share the experience and plight of those who were disappeared and in order to create evidence of disappearance, which was denied by the military (Figs. 50 & 51).[35] Anita, an original member of the group, declared, "I started to make *arpilleras* based on my grief and my anguish. It was a way we found of alleviating our pain because we could tell our story and at the same time denounce what happened to us."[36] Because the government blocked habeas corpus and other official means of denunciation, this group turned to cloth counter-narratives to record their personal and national experience in transportable form.

The dictatorship censored the display and dissemination of the *arpilleras*. However, a network of European human rights organizations that aided Chilean exiles began to distribute

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[34] Lira Letelier, interview.
[35] Other women who were not relatives of the disappeared but who found themselves impoverished as a consequence of the Pinochet administration's policies also created *arpilleras* about soup kitchens, living in poverty, and their daily-lived experience under the dictatorship.
[36] Quoted in Agosín, *Scraps of Life: Chilean Arpilleras: Chilean Women and the Pinochet Dictatorship*, 15.

and sell them.[37] The sale helped the women financially and circulated their message abroad.[38] Director of the Fundación Solidaridad (Solidarity Foundation) Winnie Lira Letelier recounted a conversation that she had with a United Nations worker stationed in Chile to assist in the country's transition to democracy in the 1990s. He explained the impact that the *arpilleras* had on the Chilean human rights' cause abroad, stating, "I feel that the *arpilleras* have done more to denounce the dictatorship in Chile than all of the documents that I handle here."[39] In this way the *arpilleras* functioned as a form of political resistance and for the dictatorship became what the Santiago newspaper *La Tercera* deemed "seditious craftwork."[40]

A 1980 newspaper article in *La Segunda* reported on the subversive nature of and threat by the artisanal textiles after customs officers at Santiago's main airport confiscated a bundle of them:

> The sender and the recipient of the subversive material discovered yesterday in Puahuel Airport Customs do not exist. This was the result of deployed actions by security organizations aimed at finding the origin of these items, which were mostly handicrafts and which were to be shipped to Holland and West Germany. They were directed at discrediting our country abroad… hand-written messages were found on the majority of the *arpillera* pictures, which had a brief explanation of the represented figures.[41]

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[37] Eugenio Dittborn (b. 1943) created his *Airmail Paintings* series in the early 1980s as a form of correspondence art that also circulated from Chile to Europe. For more information on Dittborn see Eugenio Dittborn et al., *Remota: Pinturas Aeropostales = Airmail Paintings* (Chile: Pública Editores, 1997).

[38] The declaration forms declared that the bundle contained sweaters, and the home address that the *arpilleristas* used for the return to sender label was fake. Some of the *arpilleras* destined for Europe had embroidery stating, "No tengo para uniformes" and "No pude pagar la matrícula." "I don't have money to purchase uniforms," and "I can't pay for school enrollment costs."

[39] As recounted by Winnie Lira Letelier, in Lira Letelier interview. "Yo siento que las arpilleras han hecho más para denunciar la dictadura en Chile que todos los documentos que llevo."

[40] "Espectacular hallazgo de artesania sediciosa," *La Tercera*, Santiago de Chile, April 16, 1980.

[41] "Con datos falsos era enviado al extranjero el material subversivo," *La Segunda*, April 16, 1980. "Tanto el remitente come la dirección a la que iba dirigido el material subversivo que quedó al descubierto ayer en la Aduana del Aeropuerto de Puahuel, son inexistentes. Este fue el resultado de las acciones desplegadas por organismos de seguridad, tendientes a dar con el origen de estos artículos que en mayoría están compuestos por tapices de artesanía, cuyo destino era Holanda y Alemania Federal, en los culaes se grafican aspectos recientes, encaminados a

The Chilean authorities immediately blamed the Church for the production and shipping of the textiles. In an open letter Juan de Castro Reyes, an Episcopal vicar, boldly responded to the accusations that the Church was involved: "Hunger, unemployment, Tres Alamos [a prison camp], and the disappeared are not products of the imagination; they are not invented. Unfortunately they exist. The contents of the handmade products are nothing more than a legitimate expression by Chileans and the experiences of their authors."[42]

Despite the allegations, the Church continued to sponsor the workshops so that the *arpilleristas*, like the Madres de Plaza de Mayo under the Argentine dictatorship, were able to publicize their plight through creative, collective action because they did not have the media, and legal, democratic government channels through which to appeal. In addition, memorialization strategies in Chile, as in Argentina, began with the use of "low" materials, craft, domesticity, and "feminine" materials. A shift from portable, ephemeral works to more permanent monumental forms also occurred in Chile during the post-dictatorial era.

Post-Dictatorial Chilean Government Sponsorship and Memorial Construction

During the post-Pinochet period the Chilean government created monuments dedicated to the victims of disappearance and to politically executed people. Two official government sites, both located in the Chilean capital, are the focus of this discussion on contemporary Chilean

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desprestigiar a nuestro país en el extranjero…En la mayoría de los cuadros de arpillera fueron encontrados unos mensajes, escritos en forma manual, los culaes llevaban una breve explicación de las figuras representadas."

[42] Juana de Castro Reyes, "Vicaria niega que patronice tarea artisanal politizada," *La Segunda*, Santiago de Chile, April 13, 1980. "El hambre, la cesantia, Tres Alamos, los desaparecidos no son productos de la imaginación; no son inventados. Lamentablemente existen. El contenido de los productos artesanales no es más que una expresión legítima de chilenos y de las vivencias de sus propios autores."

memorialization practices: the Monumento a Detenidos Desaparecidos y Ejecutados Políticos (Monument to Detained Disappeared and Executed Political Prisoners, MDDEP), which was the first memorial dedicated to the disappeared in Chile that was financed with government funds and an ex-clandestine detention and torture center Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi (Park for Peace Villa Grimaldi), which was the first Chilean torture and detention center that was opened to the public. Each memorial gave visual form to what cultural theorist Nelly Richard described as "the experience of the post-dictatorship," which "welds together individual and collective memory around figures of absence, loss, suppression, and disappearance."[43] Argentina's and Chile's recent pasts are connected through the Condor Plan, the history of dictatorial rule, and the practice of disappearance. However, the countries' post-dictatorship eras saw the formation of distinct demands by human rights organizations and, despite Argentina's earlier return to democracy (six years prior to Chile), the Chilean government became more immediately involved with the construction of monuments dedicated to the disappeared.

Monumento a Detenidos Desaparecidos y Ejecutados Políticos, Santiago General National Cemetery

A walk through Santiago's General Cemetery reveals the nation's haunted past of disappearance. On September 9, 1990 construction of a mausoleum for the uncovered remains of the detained-disappeared began on the cemetery grounds.[44] The municipality of Santiago donated

[43] Nelly Richard et al., *Cultural Residues: Chile in Transition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 18.

[44] The Santiago General Cemetery was created in 1821 by order of the Chilean independence leader Bernardo O'Higgins. The cemetery covers 212.5 acres of land. For a discussion of the Santiago General Cemetery as a space of social memory see Alexander Wilde, "Avenida De La Memoria: El Cementerio General De Santiago y La Historia Poltítica Reciente De Chile," *A Contra Corriente: Una Revista De Historia Social y Literatura De América Latina* 5, no. 3 (Spring 2008): 134–169.

the space for the mausoleum, and the government provided the funds for its erection.[45] The disinterred bones came from Patio 29, a site at the cemetery where the dictatorship dug mass, anonymous graves to dispose of its victims.[46] The disappeared were buried in graves marked with small metal crosses painted with *NN* (Ningún Nombre, no name/John/Jane Doe). In 1982 the military attempted to cover up the mass murder by disinterring the corpses from Patio 29 and grinding some of the bodies into chicken feed following the dictatorship's "politics of hiding crimes."[47] A decade later, the remains of 126 bodies that had not been re-disappeared by the military in 1982 were moved to the crypts in the memorial wall.[48] On the mausoleum adjacent to the wall there are 400 niches for the remains of the detained and disappeared persons who were politically executed; as of April 2008 only 185 niches were used for human remains. There is a vast discrepancy between the number of niches in the wall and the estimated 1,000 bodies that have never been found or identified because of the military's tactics of disappearance.[49] This incongruity in numbers causes a gap in the contemporary understanding of the trace of the disappeared. The official burial of the bodies of the disappeared at the memorial site was intended on the part of the government to induce a sense of closure, although the lack of bodies suggested that family members' loved ones continued to be disappeared. Additionally, burying the disappeared together in niches is reminiscent of the mass graves that the dictatorship created. While in this case the disappeared are named, laying them to rest as a group diminished their

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[45]"Construyen Mausoleo para Desaparecidos," *El Mercurio*, Santiago de Chile, September 8, 1990.
[46] In 2006 the government declared Patio 29 a national monument.
[47] Wilde, "Avenida De La Memoria: El Cementerio General De Santiago y La Historia Poltítica Reciente De Chile," 159. "política de ocultamiento de los crimenes."
[48] Teresa Meade, "PUBLIC HISTORY - Holding the Junta Accountable: Chile's 'Sitios De Memoria' and the History of Torture, Disappearance, and Death," *Radical History Review*, 79 (2001): 123.
[49] Wilde, "Avenida De La Memoria: El Cementerio General De Santiago y La Historia Poltítica Reciente De Chile," 161.

individuality. They became permanently memorialized by the circumstances of their death, as opposed to being celebrated for the lives they lived prior to becoming victims of state-sponsored terrorism.

Paul Williams noted, "Although they [the bodies] moved a short distance, the act of exercising control over their physical locations was vital for families...Their reburial in a public memorial space reflects a desire that the unnatural and historically significant nature of their deaths is socially recognizable."[50] Alternately, historian Teresa Meade asserted that the transfer of the bodies was a careful balancing act in which the government fulfilled its duty to memorialize the disappeared without exposing the details of the government's culpability.[51] This same government strategy that Meade mentioned in relation to the mausoleum is also one that the Ministry of Interior employed with the 1994 inauguration of the Monumento a Detenidos Desaparecidos y Ejecutados Políticos.

The planning stages for the MDDEP began in 1990 under the Aylwin government, through the initiative of a group of family members of the disappeared and the human rights organizations Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos, Agrupación de Familiares de Ejecutados Políticos de Chile (Association of Family Members of Politically Executed Persons of Chile), and Fundación Memorial de Detenidos Desaparecidos y Ejecutados Políticos (Memorial Foundation of the Detained-Disappeared, and Politically Executed Persons).

The MDDEP, located near the entrance of the national cemetery, was designed by the painter, architect, and former director of the Chilean Museum of Fine Arts Nemesio Antúnez (1918-1993), the muralist Claudio Di Girólamo (b. 1929), and the sculptor Franciso Gazitua (b.

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[50] Paul Williams, *Memorial Museums: The Global Rush to Commemorate Atrocities* (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2007), 82.
[51] Meade, "PUBLIC HISTORY - Holding the Junta Accountable: Chile's 'Sitios De Memoria' and the History of Torture, Disappearance, and Death," 126.

1944).[52] The memorial is a marble wall with inscribed names on a foundation of rocks from which small streams of water flow into a fountain (Fig. 52).[53] In front of the memorial are two large, white, figural disembodied heads of a man and woman that are actual portraits of two disappeared individuals. At the top of the memorial wall, text by author Raúl Zurita reads, "All my love is here and it has stayed close to the rocks, to the sea, to the mountains."[54] The wall is divided, with names of the disappeared on the left, and names of those who were politically executed on the right. Over 4,000 names are recorded on the stone with the date of their disappearance or execution. In the center of the wall "Salvador Allende Goseens, President of the Republic" appears in large print.[55] Visitors can view the memorial from the plaza or walk down steps to view the MDDEP from the bottom of the wall. The work is set back from the plaza and is bordered by water, keeping the inscribed names out of arm's reach.

The government did not hold a public competition for the construction of the monument. As Gazitua explained:

> We were selected by Sola Cierra [Henríquez] who was president of the AFDD. She called us because we had been politically committed to the AFDD. Perhaps we were also selected because the majority of Chilean artists still had not returned from exile. There couldn't be a public competition because Pinochet was still the commander-in-chief of the army…We did the best that we could.[56]

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[52] The government did not hold a public competition for the construction of the monument.
[53] The wall is thirty meters wide, four meters tall, and forty centimeters thick. The original plan for the memorial included a waterfall and lights, but there were technical difficulties in installing water pumps for the cascade.
[54] "Todo mi amor está aquí y se ha quedado pegado a las rocas, al mar, a las montañas."
[55] The identifying signage for the memorial was small and located off to the right side of the wall.
[56] Francisco Gazitua, email message to author, June 7, 2012. "Nosotros fuimos elegidos por Sola Cierra quien presidia la Agrupación nos llamó por que habíamos estado desde hace años comprometidos con la Agrupación quizá también por que la mayoría de los artistas chilenos todavía no regresaban del exilio, no pudo haber concurso publico por que Pinochet todavía era comandante en jefa del ejercito… Hicimos lo mejor que pudimos."

In a ritualistic act at the inauguration of the MDDEP, a representative from Agrupación de Detenidos Desaparecidos y Ejecutados Políticos from each region of Chile poured water in the memorial's fountain as a symbol of purification. Attendees included politicians and affiliates of human rights organizations. A member of parliament, Juan Pablo Letelier, the son of the assassinated foreign secretary of state Orlando Letelier, explained that the memorial functioned as a milestone so that future generations would not forget what happened.[57] The undersecretary of the interior, Belisario Velasco, who chaired the foundation responsible for the design and construction of the monument, held a distinct view of the MDDEP. He asserted that the "government recognizes the immense pain of the relatives who have been looking for their family members for so many years and who deserve to have a space where they can pray for them. Furthermore, this memorial is raised so that these deeds never repeat themselves in Chile. In this way we see it as a monument to *reconciliation* [my emphasis] for Chileans."[58] The Chilean newspaper *El Mercurio* also contended that the monument served as a tool of both remembrance and reconciliation for all Chileans.[59] As seen in the Argentine case, with the Monumento a Victimas del Terrorismo del Estado (Monument to the Victims of State Sponsored Terrorism, MVTE) in Buenos Aires, the construction of a monument dedicated to the

[57] "Inaugurado Monumento a Detenidos Desaparecidos," *El Muercurio*, Santiago de Chile, February 27, 1994, El Pais section. Orlando Letelier and his aide, U.S. citizen Ronnie Moffitt, were assassinated by a car bomb in Washington D.C. in 1976 as ordered by DINA, the Chilean secret police. Letelier's remains were repatriated to the Santiago General Cemetery in 1992.
[58] Carolina Vivanco, "En el Cementerio General Inaugurado memorial de detenidos desaparecidos," *Cronica*, Santiago de Chile, February 27, 1994. "El gobierno reconoce el inmenso dolor de los deudos, que han buscado a sus familiars por tantos años, y que merecen tener un lugar donde rezan por ellos. Este memorial se levanta, además, para que los hechos ocurridos nunca se repitan en Chile. En ese sentido, creemos que es un monumento a la reconciliación de los chilenos."
[59] "Inaugurado Monumento a Detenidos Desaparecidos," *El Muercurio*, Santiago de Chile, February 27, 1994, El Pais section.

disappeared and sponsored by the government was part of a project toward national reconciliation which allowed the perpetrators of crimes against humanity to avoid prosecution.

Beyond Velasco's remarks on the MDDEP as a symbol for national reconciliation, he also claimed that the MDDEP "does not have a funerary characteristic, instead it has to construct itself in a hymn to life, in an expression of love, in a sign of respect and of tolerance that should exist for all the children that share the same land, even though their dreams and ideals are not the same."[60] His assertion that the monument was not funereal in nature was misleading. The chosen material of marble with names engraved on the surface of the stone did have allusions to tombstones. Moreover, site specificity played a decisive role in Chile's government-sanctioned memorial precisely because placing the memorial in a cemetery associated the disappeared with death and burial, as opposed to disappearance. This placement strategy contrasted with the location of the MVTE in Argentina, which was connected through its site with the possible place of death (the River Plate), but did not make a direct connection to burial because members of human rights organizations considered the Argentine victims of state-sponsored terrorism as disappeared as opposed to deceased.

Despite the discrepancy in sites the MDDEP and the MVTE share the basic memorial paradigm of a wall with inscribed names.[61] Both the MVTE and MDDEP find their origins in the minimalist form of Maya Lin's Vietnam Veteran's Memorial (VVM, 1983). The artistic strategy of minimalism, as discussed in the previous chapter, appears to have become a favored choice

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[60] Carolina Vivanco, "En el Cementerio General Inaugurado memorial de detenidos desaparecidos." "No tiene el carácter de funerario, sino que debe constituirse en un himno a la vida, en una expression de amor, en un signo del respeto y de la tolerancia que debe existir para todos los hijos que comparten el mismos suelo, aunque sus sueños y ideales no sean los mismos."

[61] The Parque de la memoria where the MVTE is located includes figural sculptural works on its grounds like the MDDEP's site.

for government-sponsored memorials because it lacks and therefore erases an apparent narrative.[62] This erasure, like the words of Velasco, shielded the Chilean government from direct responsibility for the disappearances because the focus on memorializing the disappeared removed the government from the discourse about the disappearances. Chile added another layer in the veiling of the military's culpability by associating the site of the memorial with a cemetery and thereby projecting the image of the disappeared as deceased, thereby attempting to close the history of human rights abuses perpetrated by the government.

Audience Responses to the MDDEP

Although the MVTE and MDDEP follow the paradigm of a minimalist monument, the audience responses and behaviors, and the rituals around the monuments reveal particularities in each county's individual relationship to the history of human rights abuses and dictatorial rule. For example, audience members at the MDDEP left personal effects and other mementos at the wall (Fig. 53). The practice of leaving items related to loved ones at a memorial site is common at Lin's Vietnam Veterans Memorial and differs from the customs at Buenos Aires's MVTE,

[62] Uruguay also relied on a minimalist aesthetic in its official commemoration to the disappeared in the monument Memorial a los Ciudadanos Detenidos Desaparecidos (Memorial to the Detained-Disappeared Citizens*,* MCDD, 2001) in Montevideo's Vaz Ferreira del Cerro Park. It, too, is based on the international memorial paradigm of a wall with inscribed names. The competition for the design of the memorial began in 1999, and the winning design was awarded to the architects Marta Kohen, Rubén Otero, visual artist Mario Sagradini, agronomic engineer Rafael Dodera, Pablo Frontini, and Diego López de Haro. Like Argentina and Chile's government-sponsored monuments to the disappeared, Uruguay has placed its official memorial to the disappeared far outside the city center. However, the site for the MCDD does have historical significance and associated the disappeared with where they lived and fought. The neighborhood where the MCDD is located was a stronghold for the Tupamaros (also known as the National Liberation Movement), a 1960s and 1970s urban guerilla organization that many of the disappeared had joined. This justification for the site emphasized where the disappeared lived. However, a site closer to the center of the city would also have been a more publicly accessible marker of the memory of the disappeared.

where the curators of the Parque de la Memoria requested that visitors abstain from leaving items at that wall. This prohibition stemmed from the desire for the MVTE supporters to disassociate the memorial from customs that occur at a cemetery in order to avoid the conflation of the space of memorialization with a place of death.[63] However, visitors to the MDDEP left an abundance of objects–many of them with Catholic iconography–along the rocks and at the bottom of the monument wall. Items placed by the monument included fresh flower arrangements in vases, signs for political organizations such as the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (The Revolutionary Left Movement, MIR), a group that was particularly targeted under the Pinochet government, and photographs of the disappeared and politically executed prisoners.[64]

There are three types of visitors to the monument: passers-by who come to the cemetery to visit the gravesites there, relatives or friends who have a direct connection to the disappeared, and those who are seeking more information about the dictatorship and the disappeared. The majority of the monument's audience falls under the first category; many of them looked briefly at the monument and then continued to walk or drive by.[65] The people who came specifically to visit the MDDEP shared motives in seeking a public place of remembrance. One visitor explained that her sister was disappeared, but she was not on the list of the disappeared and therefore her name was not represented on the monument. She lamented that there were too many documents to fill out and too much paperwork to gather, in part due to the fact that the

[63] Florencia Battiti, interview by author, Buenos Aires, Argentina, August 12, 2009.
[64] MIR is a left-wing movement founded in Chile in 1965. Miguel Enríquez Espinosa, one of the leaders of the MIR, was assassinated by DINA in 1974.
[65] All audience response interviews, unless otherwise noted, were conducted by the author at the Santiago General National Cemetery on October 24-25, 2009. The MDDEP's audience ranged in age from three to about seventy and the majority of the audience members were from Santiago.

body of her sister still had not been recovered.[66] For this woman, the MDDEP served as the only public site of remembrance and therefore, she and her relatives leave flowers at the monument because they do not have a gravesite or any other physical place to remember her sister's death.

Other visitors sought documentary information, such as two teenage cousins who visited the monument annually because their uncle had been disappeared. They explained that their mothers did not speak about the disappeared and they had to seek information about the history of disappearance outside of their family. For these boys the memorial served as a didactic tool. Their motivation for visiting the site highlighted the silence about the disappeared in the private sphere that persists throughout the Chilean nation despite the construction of public monuments. Several other youths also visited out of an interest in knowing more about Chile's past under the dictatorship. One teenager complained that in high school the instructors neglected to teach about the dictatorship and the disappeared because they were reluctant to share their political views.[67] He drew a visual and contextual parallel between the MDDEP and the VVM (having seen it in a film) and asked if people really could get close to the VVM. This ability for audience members to engage directly with the VVM represented a vast distinction between the two minimalist works, which many visitors lamented. They criticized the physical distance between the MDDEP and the viewer, and their inability to have direct physical contact with the names of the disappeared. The tactile experience of the memorial is an aspect that the Pro Monument Commission in Argentina included in its proposals for the MVTE and it was important to the memorial's visitors in Buenos Aires. Along with the physical distance that separated the visitor

[66] The exclusion of this visitor's sister's name illustrated the complication in proving how many people were disappeared in Chile because, like in Argentina, some people have not officially recorded their relative's disappearance.

[67] He did however emphasize that he learned about the dictatorial era from television programs and had therefore come to the conclusion that Pinochet was neither that "good or that bad."

from the MDDEP, there were other concerns and confusions regarding the monument. One audience member said that the people listed on the monument are just identified as disappeared instead of as people. Other audience members emphasized what was missing from the monument. For example, several visitors stated that they would add photographs of the people who are listed on the wall so that they could see an image of their relatives. Their desire for this addition speaks to the memorial power of the photograph, which human rights organizations in Chile and Argentina capitalized on starting in the 1970s.

Some audience members expressed concern over maintenance issues. The flowers and plants at the site were dry, shriveled, and decaying. The water from the fountain, which was meant to be a symbol of purification, was green and murky, which unintentionally visually manifested the impossibility of cleansing the dictatorship's crimes against humanity. Gabriela Zuñiga Figueroa, whose husband was disappeared in 1974 and who was the president of AFDD in 2009, articulated trepidation for the monument's upkeep in part because the cemetery is located in the Commune of Recoleta where the *alcalde*, the leading elected official, Sol Letelier González (2008-2012) was part of the Unión Democrata Independiente (Independent Democratic Union, UDI), a right-wing political party that supported Pinochet's dictatorship.[68] The maintenance of public monuments is often dependent on changing leaders of local, state, and federal governments. Newly elected leaders who are in charge of the construction and maintenance of a memorial may not be supportive of the memorial's message and may thereby neglect the site or may not prioritize funding for art in the public sphere. This has also been a dilemma in Buenos Aires at the government-sponsored Parque de la memoria, which, under the Propuesta Republicana (PRO) right-wing Mauricio Macri (2007-present) administration, saw a

[68] Gabriela Zuñiga Figueroa, interview by author, Santiago, Chile, October 22, 2009. A commune in Chile is the smallest administrative subdivision of government.

great slowing and cut-back of funds for the project that was originally initiated and supported by mayor Aníbal Ibarra's administration (2000-2006).[69]

Other visitors expressed dismay at the monument's placement. For example, a man in his forties thought the monument itself was "magnificent" but that it was half-hidden, despite its location at the entrance of the cemetery. Two middle-aged women expressed an opposing position on the location of the monument, because in the past when they tried to visit the cemetery on September 11 (the anniversary of Pinochet's military coup and Allende's death) they could not enter due to the crowd in front of the MDDEP.[70] However, they pronounced that the monument was "honorable" but also emphasized that it was missing the names of the police and military members that were killed by "them" [the disappeared]. Their opinions on the necessity of the police and military members' inclusion, when it was by their hand that their victims were disappeared, exposed the continued acrimonious divide in Chilean society towards Pinochet and the military dictatorship. Peculiarly, and unknown to the above-mentioned visitors, some names of military officers were included on the list of disappeared and politically executed on the MDDEP.

Carving Names in Stone

As explored in the case of the MVTE, there are fundamental issues with carving the names of the disappeared in stone in order to make permanent markers of memory. Despite the interviewees' lament above regarding the missing names of military and police officers, there

[69] Gabriela Zuñiga Figueroa, "Untitled" (paper presented at the Memoriales y Democracia Conference for FLACSO, Santiago, Chile, 2007).
[70] The two women also emphasized the misbehavior of some who attended the commemoration activities in the cemetery during the anniversary of the military coup through the vandalizing of military leaders' tombs and causing what they perceived as general chaos and disorder.

were over 100 names of police officers and members of the military involved in perpetrating disappearance placed on the memorial wall during a restoration and addition of more names of the disappeared.[71] Dozens of names of military and ex-agents were erroneously listed in the Rettig Report as victims of political violence and were then incorporated onto the Memorial del Detenido Desaparecido y Ejecutado Político. The AFDD supposedly reviewed all of the names before approving them for the monument. The group asserted that it could have possibly committed some errors, but that it would have been impossible for the organization to have consented to incorporating such notorious names, including the "Joint Commander Roberto Fuentes Morrison, the fearsome 'Wally', or other oppressors who were ex-agents that appeared inscribed on the monument."[72] Groups of relatives of the victims of the military regime emphasized that they "did not want the names [of their relatives] intermixed with their murderers."[73] Conversely, some of the relatives of military members or civilians who worked with the dictatorship and were incorporated into the monument sardonically emphasized that they were "not interested in this honor."[74] Whether the military members' names were incorporated by mistake or by design, the error emphasized the remaining division amongst factions in Chile. As a consequence, the memorial continued to expose and reflect the rift that the

[71] "El Memorial de la Discordia," *La Nación*, Santiago de Chile, April 7, 2004, País section.
[72] Ibid. "Comando Conjunto Roberto Fuentes Morrison, el temible "Wally", o el de otros ex agentes represores que figuran inscritos."
[73] Ibid. "No quieren que los nombres de los suyos se entremezclen con sus victimarios." Among the names erroneously listed on the Rettig Report were five of Pinochet's guards, head of the army Roberto Rosales Martínez, Miguel Guerrero Guzmán, Cardenio Hernández Cubillos, and Gerardo Rebolledo Cisternas, and the head of the Carabineros Pablo Silva Pizarro. In addition, the ex-agent of the joint military forces Guillermo Bratti Cornejo, and commander of the army Nelson Gonzálex Ulloa.
[74] Ibid. "No les interesa ese 'honor.'" The widow of Simón Yévenes, the assassinated director of the Unión Demócratica Independiente (UDI), was particularly vocal in her opposition to the inclusion of her husband's name among the list of executed prisoners and disappeared persons.

dictatorship caused in contemporary Chilean society, instead of functioning as a reconciliatory tool as the government intended.

Just as demoralizing for family members of the disappeared was the fraud committed by those whom the Chilean media referred to as the "false disappeared." This group of impostors (four have been discovered thus far) took advantage of the financial reparations that the state offered to the family members of the disappeared. People like Santiago de Germán Cofré lived in Mendoza, Argentina for thirty-five years, while his family in Chile claimed that he was disappeared and collected financial compensation from the government. As a result, his name was listed on the MDDEP because of his fictitious status as a disappeared person.[75] In 2009 the AFDD symbolically painted white over the names on the MDDEP who were falsely treated as disappeared.[76] The MDDEP's list of names exemplified the complication in Chile of honoring the disappeared through naming and respecting the memory of the victims of state-sponsored terrorism. Those disappeared who do not have their names recorded in stone (as is the case of the visitor's disappeared sister), will be left out of the official history, and some may well be included in a false history of disappearance. These exclusions and corrupted inclusions illustrate the complexity in creating official, permanent sites of memory.

[75] María Laura Carpineta, "El falso desaparecido conmueve a Chile," *Página/12*, November 24, 2008, El mundo section. In 1992, María del Carmen Cisterna, Cofré's wife, reported in front of the Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación (National Commission of Reparation and Reconciliation) that her husband was one of the disappeared from the dictatorship and she demanded compensation. The commission approved providing her compensation.
[76] The names were Emperatriz Villagra, Germán Cofré, Edgardo Palacios, and Carlos Rojas. Rojas's name was the first to be eliminated from the list of names on the monument.

Site Specificity in Chilean (Un)Official Commemoration

As in Buenos Aires, Chile's major monuments dedicated to the disappeared are not located in the center of the city. AFDD had an accord with the Aylwin government to have two state-sponsored memorials dedicated to the disappeared and assassinated political prisoners. The original plan included building a monument in the General Cemetery as well as a memorial to the disappeared in the center of Santiago to make the memory of the disappeared visible beyond the confines of the burial ground.[77] Zuñiga Figueroa explained that after building the memorial in the cemetery, the government provided pretexts about the impossibility of placing a memorial in the center of Santiago, which included a lack of civic space and difficulties in negotiating with municipalities.[78]

To remedy the geographic isolation of the MDDEP the collective Rearme (Rearmament), a group of academics comprised of social psychologists and historians that studied memory, space, and aesthetics, organized a march in 2005 to bring the MDDEP to the center of the city.[79] To accomplish this goal, Rearme "proposes to advance the diversification of the languages of commemorations, putting in practice the immanent relation between aesthetics, art, and social discourse."[80] Rearme introduced the idea of reversing the traditional route of the annual September 11 human rights march that human rights organizations and individual activists followed to commemorate the anniversary of the Chilean military coup. Instead of marching from the Plaza de los Héroes (Plaza of the Heroes), by the Casa de la Moneda in the center of the

[77] Zuñiga Figueroa, interview.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ingrid Jaschek, "Saquemos la política del cementerio: Entrevista con Isabel Piper Shafir," *Puentes* 25 (December 2008): 36-41.
[80] Acción Rearme 2006 Blog, posted on September 6, 2006, http://colectivorearme.blogspot.com (accessed October 18, 2009). "Nos proponemos avanzar en la diversificación de los lenguajes de las conmemoraciones, poniendo en práctica la relación inmanente entre estética, arte y discurso social."

city, to the MDDEP, at the Santiago General Cemetery on the capital's outskirts, the proposed march began at the cemetery and finished at the Casa de la Moneda. This adjustment in the path of pilgrimage shifted the trajectory so that the march initiated at an intimate place of memorialization and moved to the public political sphere at the very center of the city.

Psychologist Isabel Piper Shafir participated in Rearme's project and explained that the original route of the march moved from power to death and defeat.[81] For example, people sang enthusiastic songs by Chilean performers Violeta Parra and Víctor Jara along the original route, but as they neared the cemetery these songs changed to sadder and more religious tunes.[82] The Asamblea por Derechos Humanos (Assembly for Human Rights) supported the idea, but the organization opposed the performance occurring on September 11 because the group did not want the anniversary of the coup appropriated.[83] Regardless, Rearme resolved to march on September 11, but the collective decided to wait for the first group of marchers originating at the Casa de la Moneda to arrive in the cemetery and then invited them to walk back to the center of the city with them. An estimated 1,000 citizens joined MarchaRearme's "counter-commemoration."[84]

Along with changing the traditional route of the march to call attention to the disappeared and the politically executed persons in the center of the city, the collective took life-size photographs of portions of the MDDEP. Participants adopted this political performance action

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[81] Ingird Jaschek, "Saquemos La Política Del Cementerio: Entrevista Con Isabel Piper Shafir," 38.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid., 40. For a discussion on the changing meaning of September 11 in Chile see Azun Candina Polomer, "El día interminable. Memoria e instalación del 11 de Septiembre de 1973 en Chile (1974-1999)."
[84] Katherine Hite, "Chile's MarchaRearme and the Politics of Counter-Commemoration," *E-Misférica After Truth* no. 7.2, (2011), http://hemi.nyu.edu/hemi/en/e-misferica-72/hite (accessed March 4, 2011).

and paraded the visual appropriation of the monument throughout the streets of Santiago in order to re-construct a life-size photographic version of the MDDEP in the center of the city. Rearme reversed the pilgrimage route and incorporated the list of names of the disappeared and politically executed through the photographs with the intention to "remember the dead and afterward take power…Symbolically…We think of it as a change in the appropriation of space that would permit the rescue of those who died as political subjects, displacing them from the place of victims to a place of politics."[85] By transferring the list of names of the disappeared and executed political prisoners through the replication of the MDDEP into two-dimensional, flattened photographic copies, Rearme brought traces of the dead from the periphery to the center of the Chilean metropolis and to the heart of economic and political power. This action was in the spirit of the relatives who marched with photographs of the disappeared in the 1970s in politically charged public spaces to prove the existence of their missing loved ones. Over two decades later, Rearme attempted to break the hegemony of the government's control over sites of memory through geographically carving out new routes of memory and by transporting the image of a permanent memorial into a temporary, central public display.

Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi

Communications scholar Estela Schindel stressed the difference in the cases of Chile and Argentina through the geography of disappearance. The military began holding prisoners at The National Stadium in Santiago on the day of the coup, making the stadium the first detention

[85] Ingird Jaschek, "Saquemos La Política Del Cementerio: Entrevista Con Isabel Piper Shafir," 39. "Recordamos a los muertos y después vamos y tomamos el poder…Simbólicamente...Lo pensamos como un cambio en la apropiación del espacio que permitiera rescatar a los que murieron en tanto sujetos politicos, desplazándolos del lugar de las víctimas al lugar de la política."

center in Chile; this gave a geographic location for and became a central symbol of the killings by the State.[86] Along with the National Stadium, the Chilean military ran more than 1,100 secret detention centers from 1973-1990, which ranged from a navy ship, police stations, office buildings, military bases and expropriated resorts and houses like that of the three-acre Villa Grimaldi in Santiago.[87]

Memorializing torture sites in Latin America first took place in Chile with Villa Grimaldi, a Directorate of National Intelligence (DINA) detention center where the Brigada de Inteligencia Militar (Military Intelligence Squad) installed the Terranova Barracks. DINA operated at the site from 1974-1978, during which 4,500 prisoners were held, 229 were killed, and where the military tortured children and the elderly alike.[88] In 1980 the Chilean military completely abandoned Villa Grimaldi. General Hugo Salas Wenzel, a member of The National Intelligence Council (CNI), the successor of DINA, sold Villa Grimaldi to his relatives in 1987.[89]

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[86] Estela Schindel, "Las ciudades y el olvido," in *Puentes* (July 2002): 27. The National Stadium detained between 7,000-20,000 prisoners and was closed in November 1973. There is no concurred upon statistic for how many people were killed and disappeared at the site. The National Stadium was renamed Víctor Jara Stadium in 2003 in honor of the singer, composer, and theater director who was held there in 1973 and disappeared by the Chilean military.

[87] As with ex-clandestine detention centers in Argentina, torture sites in Chile were first marked and identified as such by graffiti.

[88] Margarita Romero, *Reflexiones de Margarita Romero durante su visita a Memoria Abierta*. Londres 38 is another ex-clandestine detention center where approximately ninety-six people were executed and disappeared. The military handed the site over to the Instituto O'Higginiano, which originally changed the street number from 38 to 40 in an effort to remain unidentified and to erase the history that occurred at the site. In a similar strategy of Argentina's *baldosas* (sidewalk tiles), Londres 38's site has a series of black and white tiles mixed into its cobblestone street with the names of those who were disappeared at the site. The tiles echo the building's interior flooring, which were identifiable by many of the ex-detained in their testimony, because they had been able to see the black and white tiles when they peeked under their blindfolds.

[89] CNI replaced DINA in 1977.

The Salas family members then leveled the torture center in order to build condominiums.[90] Villa Grimaldi, once under control of the Salas family, fell under geographer Kenneth E. Foote's category of obliteration, which "results from particularly shameful events people would prefer to forget–for example, a mass murder."[91] The Chilean government originally succeeded in covering up its past crimes through the razing of Villa Grimaldi, much like the government-sponsored destruction of the clandestine detention center El Atlético in Buneos Aires, which the military administration leveled in order to build a highway.[92] This act of obliteration in the Chilean context was part of a complex web of cover-ups by CNI and former DINA officials.

Providentially, the Chilean press got wind of the conspiracy to cover up the history of the site and to profit commercially from the space of murder and mass torture. Journalists uncovered the sinister history at the then obliterated detention and torture center in order to prevent the construction of the condominiums and to salvage the now sanctified space where Chilean citizens were tortured and executed by the State.[93] This effort by civil society to reclaim Villa Grimaldi as a site of memory prompted the Chilean government to transform Villa Grimaldi into Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi (Park for Peace Villa Grimaldi).

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[90] Teresa Meade, "Holding the Junta Accountable: Chile's "Sitios de Memoria" and the History of Torture, Disappearance, and Death" *Radical History Review* 79 (Winter 2001), 127. In 1975 most prisoners were housed at Villa Grimaldi.

[91] Kenneth E. Foote, *Shadowed Ground: America's Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 7.

[92] The Uruguayan government, like Argentina and Chile, also attempted to erase the sites of memory of the dictatorship. For example a Montevideo jail that held political prisoners was transformed into the Punta Carretas Shopping Center in 1994 in what geographer Elizabeth Jelin described as an effort to "destroy the building in order to prevent the materialization of memory." Elizabeth Jelin, "Memorias En Conflicto," *Puentes* (August 2000): 11. "Destruir los edificios, para no permitir la materialización de la memoria."

[93] Pedro Aleandro Matta, "Historic Memory and Memorials in Chile's Post Dictatorship," in the conference: Learning and Remembering: The Holocaust, Genocide and State Organized Crime in the Twentieth Century, Germany (March 12-15, 2003), 3.

Members of parliament Laura Rodríguez and Andrés Aylwin petitioned Congress to create the Parque Por la Paz Villa Grimaldi in 1991. Two years later the Ministerio de Vivienda (the equivalent to the U.S.'s Department of Housing and Development) approved the re-appropriation of the Villa Grimaldi site, which was inaugurated in 1997. Since 1996 the park has been run by the Asociación Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi (Park for Peace Villa Grimaldi Association), a private non-profit entity.[94] This time period during which the Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi was being established, was wrought with contradictions because Pinochet's crimes against humanity continued to go unpunished while the park was under construction.[95] The goal of the recuperation of Villa Grimaldi was "the rescue and transformation of a site that experienced pain and suffering and [to] convert it into a monument to life, in a park for Peace."[96] Over 5,000 visitors access the park annually and thirty to forty percent of those who visit are students.[97] In a model that differs from the tours at ESMA, El Olimpo, and other ex-clandestine detention centers in Buenos Aires, the tour guides at the Santiago site are former detainees and torture victims of Villa Grimaldi, which provides a living oral memorial that accompanies the visual forms.

The transformation of Villa Grimaldi by the landscape architect Ana Cristina Torrealba (now director of the Corporación Parque por la paz Villa Grimaldi), architects José Luis Gajardo

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[94] After the appropriation of Villa Grimaldi, the Chilean government declared many of the ex-clandestine detention centers national monuments, which protected them from destruction and sale. The Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi is a member of International Coalition of Sites of Conscience and has a collaborative agreement with the Argentine human rights organization Memoria Abierta.

[95] Pinochet's status as senator for life shielded him from prosecution for human rights abuses in Chile.

[96] Margarita Romero, *Reflexiones de Margarita Romero durante su visita a Memoria Abierta*, Memoria Abierta. "El rescate y transformación de un sitio que vivió el dolor y el sufrimiento para convertirlo en un monumento a la vida, en un parque por la Paz."
Government officials did not attend the dedication ceremony.

[97] Lelia Perez Valdes, interview by author, Santiago, Chile, October 21, 2009.

and Luis Santibañez from a detention center into a park with gardens, sculptures, and benches was an attempt to cleanse the site of the violence that the disappeared and detained suffered there (Fig. 54). Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi is a composite site consisting of brick plaques; trees; gardens; pathways; The Monumento Rieles (Rail Monument), a minimalist cube that houses artifacts of the dictatorial era; enlarged photographs of the disappeared at the entry to the park; Homenaje a Militantes (Homage to the Politically Active), a series of ground-level memorials dedicated to political groups; and floor stone mosaics that mark the specific buildings of torture within the detention center (Fig. 55). The mosaics are made from the rubble of the torn down buildings at the site.[98] The multiple exhibition and artistic strategies include a prominent role for nature in the memorialization process. The designers replaced the exotic trees originally planted on the site with native species.[99]

In 1998 the Muro de los Nombres (Wall of Names, Muro), a monument engraved with the names of those that were disappeared at Villa Grimaldi, was added to the grounds (Fig. 56). The Muro shares an analogous memorial strategy with the MDDEP. However, the Muro allows for the audience to engage in physical contact with the wall, and its site changes the content of the memorial. Standing in front of the Muro, Leila Perez Valdes, a former detainee at Villa Grimaldi, explained that, "The memorial at the cemetery [the MDDEP] is raised up and inaccessible. The wall here is accessible; it's a wall that you can touch."[100] The importance of the

[98] President Michelle Bachelet (in office 2006-2010) visited Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi in October 2006. She and her mother are survivors of Villa Grimaldi.
[99] Villa Grimaldi Corporación Parque por la paz, "Parque por la Paz," Villa Grimaldi Corporación Parque por la paz. http://villagrimaldi.cl/parque-por-la-paz/ (accessed June 10, 2012). Although the trees are not labeled as such, informational pamphlets are available at the entrance to Villa Grimaldi and the Villa Grimaldi website explains the inclusion of the native species plants.
[100] Peres Valdez, interview. "El memorial del cementerio está en alto, inaccessible. El muro acá es accessible. Es un muro donde tu puedes tocar."

somatic experience in memorialization was expressed by the audience at the MDDEP, and the Corporación Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi understood visitors' need to have physical contact with the names of the disappeared, which enhanced the commemorative experience with a tangible, physical connection. Additionally, the site affects the content of the memorials. The MDDEP's location in a cemetery associates the disappeared with death, while the Muro's location of an ex-clandestine torture and detention center associates those who are memorialized with the physical space of disappearance. Nevertheless, neither of the memorials link the disappeared with the way that they lived.[101] To remedy this exclusion of the details about the lives of the disappeared, family members of the disappeared and ex-detained prisoners inaugurated the Sala de Memoria (Hall of Memory), where they installed personal objects and photographs specific to individual victims of state-sponsored terrorism (Fig. 57).[102] This model of victim curatorship was also followed at the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Santiago (opened in 2010).[103]

In addition, Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi prompted the audience to remember events that took place there through a re-creation of what the architects named "paradigmatic places."

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[101] As is the case with every memorial, one must ask the question, what is left out? Perez Valdes was kidnapped and tortured while she was pregnant. As a result of the physical abuse that she suffered by the hands of DINA agents, she lost her child. For Perez Valdes, what is excluded from the Muro is the name of her unborn child. For Perez Valdes and other prisoners, this loss of life is an omission that continues to be unrecognized. It is important to note that Perez Valdes's reflection on the exclusion of her unborn child's memorialization is a reflection on her own personal loss and not a political statement on the rights of the unborn child. Conversely, Michael Arad's National September 11 Memorial in New York addresses the issue of those who were killed while pregnant by inscribing the name of the victims along with "and her unborn child."
[102] In 2002 the Teatro por la Vida (Theater for Life) was added to Parque por la Paz in order to develop culture at the site.
[103] Paulina Faba Zuleta, "Curating the Years of the Dictatorship in Chile (1973-1989): The Villa Grimaldi and the Memory and Human Rights, Museums" (paper presented at Curating Trauma: Displaying the Unspeakable From Memorials to Global Representations of Victims, NYU CNRS Transitions Center, New York, NY, May 14, 2012).

These re-built structures are based on the testimonies of the survivors and include the tower where the Cuartel Terranvoa held prisoners in solitary confinement and conducted interrogations through torture.[104] They also reconstructed a one-by-one-meter cell that housed four prisoners.[105] These structures were rebuilt for pedagogical purposes. Peres Valdez emphasized that if the cells were not reconstructed, the audience, especially the young audience who is accustomed to viewing television, would not understand the space simply through imagination. She justified the rebuilding of these sites of torture by asserting that visitors need the physical image of the cell to comprehend the history of the site viscerally and intellectually.[106]

Preserving sites of torture is imperative to negate the covering-up of the dictatorship's past crimes. However, rebuilding the physical spaces of torture to maintain memory for future generations in essence perpetuates the spaces supported by the military's torture and killing apparatus. Chile's reconstruction of sites of torture highlights a difference between memorialization strategies in Argentina and Chile. The ex-clandestine detention centers in Argentina remained as they were when the Instituto Espacio para la memoria appropriated the sites. Even those spaces that were leveled by the government, such as Club Atlético in Buenos Aires, have not been reconstructed. Instead, the sites are mediated through artworks on the exterior walls and gates (see Chapter One). Rebuilding sites of torture even as a didactic project at a site of memory is problematic because sites of memory should remain dedicated to memory,

[104] Romero, *Reflexiones de Margarita Romero durante su visita a Memoria Abierta*, Memoria Abierta.
[105] There are not many photographs of Villa Grimaldi when it functioned as a DINA clandestine detention and torture center, therefore these sites are re-constructed based on survivors' testimonies.
[106] Perez Valdes, interview.

and should not be reconverted into sites of trauma through rebuilding spaces of torture devised by the Chilean dictatorship.[107]

Moreover, designers of memory spaces need to take into account opposing memories and meanings that exist side by side at the same location. The complications and conflations of memory at Villa Grimaldi were exemplified most clearly through the Jardín de las Rosas (The Rose Garden), a recuperation of a rose garden found at the original site of Villa Grimaldi and which remained intact until the Salas family demolished the buildings and surrounding landscape. The replanted garden honors women who were victims of state-sponsored terrorism by planting a rose bush and adding the honorees' names on a round plaque that is elevated by a stick in the ground (Fig. 58).[108] The garden was replanted because "some women who had been blindfolded, smelled the aroma of these roses that reached them in the middle of their pain and utterly defenseless state."[109] For many of the survivors the roses' scent was a "message of

[107] The Holocaust Museum in Houston, Texas experienced a similar quandary when it placed a railroad car for human transport used by the Nazis at the entrance to the museum. The car was an actual artifact (not a reconstruction) of World War II and was refurbished to its original condition by the museum. Holocaust survivors did not want to re-live the traumatic experience of forced transport and many survivors refused to re-enter the car. Alexis Grant, "Holocuast Museum Houston Marks Anniversary with Boxcar Exhibit," *Houston Chronicle,* March 5, 2006. http://www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/article/Holocaust-Museum-Houston-marks-anniversary-with-1663375.php (accessed Augst 8, 2011).

[108] The gendering of memorials and dedicating sites specifically to women that were disappeared in Chile also includes the *Mujeres en la Memoria* (Women in Memory, 2006) on the main avenue of Alameda, which honors 190 women (seventy-two detained-disappeared, and 118 executed political prisoners). The Ministry of Public Works, in conjunction with the Nemesio Antúnez Commission and the Ministry of the Interior's Human Rights Program, Comité Pro Monumento a las Mujeres Víctimas de la Represión (Comittee Pro Monument for Women Victims of the Repression), the Salvador Allende Foundation, and the Corporación Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi organized the public competition. The architects of the work, Emilio Marín and Nicolás Norero used glass, stones, and lights. There were not any visitors at the site and the memorial had graffiti on it. Zuñiga Figueroa, who visited the memorial previously commented that "It looks like a shower curtain." Zuñiga Figueroa, interview.

[109] Villa Grimaldi Corporación Parque por la Paz, "Jardín de las Rosas," Villa Grimaldi Corporación Parque por la Paz, http://villagrimaldi.cl/parque-por-la-paz/jardin-de-las-rosas

beauty."[110] At the same time, this seemingly benign gesture of re-creating a garden disregarded the memory that other detainees held. For example, for Peres Valdez, the smell of the roses brought back dreadful recollections of the members of the military who repeatedly threw her into the sharp-thorned rose bushes as a form of torment.[111] The reconstruction of sites of memory of horrific events for pedagogical purposes needs to be weighed against the possible re-traumatization of survivors.

Historian Teresa Meade also noted another aspect of Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi's inherent contradictions: despite the decorative signs, it was unclear if the park's visitors understand the history that is commemorated there.[112] This incongruity was highlighted during a research visit in October 2009, when different groups behaved in ways that were not necessarily congruent with the gravity of the site's history. Despite the markers of violence at Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi, some visitors' responses at the park made it doubtful as to whether they comprehended the meaning of the events that occurred at Villa Grimaldi. For example, a group of high school students sang "Happy Birthday" to one of their classmates at the behest of their teacher. Another group of students came to the park to film a reenactment of a torture scene. Students huddled together in 1970s-style suits, sunglasses, and fake moustaches. Their teacher directed them to act as the victims, covered in fake blood, while others performed the role of the torturers inside the reconstructed tower.[113] This conduct may be a result of a generational divide. For these students, the history of the dictatorship is not as immediate as those who lived through

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(accessed October 21, 2010). "Algunas mujeres al estar vendadas, percibían con más fuerza los aromas de estas rosas que llegaban a ellas en medio del dolor y la indefensión."

[110] Perez Valdes, interview. "Mensaje de hermosura."

[111] Ibid.

[112] Meade, "PUBLIC HISTORY - Holding the Junta Accountable: Chile's 'Sitios De Memoria' and the History of Torture, Disappearance, and Death,"132.

[113] Perez Valdes opted to quickly remove herself from the scene rather then watch the re-enactment.

it. According to Peres Valdez, these kinds of behaviors were not uncommon. However, she suggested that everyone has to deal with the memory of the dictatorship in her own way.[114] Perplexing actions by audience members at the Parque de la Memoria in Buenos Aires also are prevalent (such as sunbathing) and contradict the solemnity of memorialization and call attention to the gap between artistic intention and public understanding, and to the chronic partition in Argentine and Chilean society between the disappeared, politically executed and torture victims, and the history of dictatorial rule.

Memorial de Paine

Later composite memorial sites dedicated to the disappeared have been established outside of Santiago, such as the Memorial de Paine (Paine Memorial). Family members of the disappeared from the small city of Paine, located twenty-eight miles south of Santiago, initiated a grass-roots project to create a large-scale multipart memorial with the collaboration of the Chilean government. Seventy people were disappeared in Paine, which had the largest number of disappeared persons in proportion to its total population in Chile.[115] Paine is an agricultural zone in which most of the residents traditionally worked on the land of large hacienda owners. In 1960 the Chilean government initiated an agrarian reform program to improve the life of farm workers. This process intensified in the early 1970s under Salvador Allende's Popular Unity government, which expropriated lands from wealthy landowners, causing internal discord between the workers and the proprietors. This small city became a contentious area that echoed the tensions in the national sphere between socialist reformers and the economic elite. Upon

[114] Perez Valdes, interview.
[115] Thus far twenty-two bodies out of the seventy disappeared persons from Paine have not been found. The remains of the forty-eight other victims, which were discovered in common graves, were returned to their families for private burials.

Pinochet's rise to power in 1973, the landowners joined forces with the military police and persecuted the Paine citizens who were sympathetic to the Allende government.[116]

Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos de Paine (Group of Relatives of Detained Disappeared Persons from Paine, AFDD de Paine) emphasized that, along with the disappearances, an entire community was destroyed through the military's use of fear and terror tactics.[117] The AFDD de Paine came together in 2000 to begin discussions on creating a memorial in honor of the detained, disappeared and executed citizens of Paine. Juan Leandro Maureira, the President of the AFDD de Paine, described the mission:

> Our work has been-and continues to be to defeat this fear and invisibility with a culture of life and with the conviction that we must fight so that what took place in Paine and in Chile never occurs again. Part of this effort is to recognize, seek justice, preserve memory, and develop a culture of human rights so that we as a society will never again tolerate or accept such violence and cruelty.[118]

To take steps toward this objective, AFDD de Paine held a public competition that the Nemesio Antúnez Commission along with the department of the Ministry of Architecture and Public Works organized.[119] According to the guidelines of the competition, the work should "remember

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[116] *Paine: Un Lugar Para La Memoria Libro, Guía Del Memorial: Paine: A Land for the Memory*, segunda (Santiago de Chile: Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos de Paine, 2009). Some of the laborers were kidnapped by the military while they were at work and at their homes. Others voluntarily presented themselves at local police stations to openly declare themselves as Allende supporters with the understanding that if they reported themselves to the police that they would then be released. These citizens were also never heard from again. Still, others were directly executed in public.

[117] Ibid, 9. The AFDD de Paine is an autonomous organization separate from AFDD in Santiago.

[118] *Paine: Un Lugar Para La Memoria Libro, Guía Del Memorial* (Santiago de Chile: Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos de Paine, 2009), 4.

[119] The Nemsio Antúnez Commission, under the Ministry of Public Works, was created in 1994 in order to adhere to Law 17.236, Article 6 (passed in 1969) that stated that buildings and public spaces need to gradually incorporate artworks. Members of the jury included Ivannia Goles, National director of Architecture of the Ministry of Public Works (MOPTT), Claudio di Girólamo, Director of the division of culture at the Ministry of Education, Natacha Molina, program director of Human Rights for the Ministry of the Interior, Juan Leonardo Maureira,

the sacrifice of people during the military regime and vindicate the good name of its victims of human rights violations. In this sense, it will be a work that constructs part of the national patrimony, and will be a shaper of commemorative public space." [120]

The winning plan was completed in 2006 by the Chilean sculptor Alejandra Rudoff (b. 1960) and the Chilean architectural firm Iglesis Prat Arquitectos Limitada, which was established in 1978 by Jorge Igles Guillard (b. 1954) and Leopoldo Prat Vargas (b. 1944).[121] The entire memorial is 1,500 square meters and has a small plaza at the center of the memorial where people can gather (Fig. 59). It is a mix of media and imagery that includes small white quartz stones covering the ground that generate a shuffling, crunching sound when visitors walk through the memorial, with the intent to "mark an interruption of silence" traditionally associated with memorial spaces.[122] Rising from the quartz gravel are 930 towering wooden poles of different heights that echo the Paine landscape of the Andes mountain range and represent the inhabitants of Paine.[123] The site consists of memorial paradigms of a park (on a smaller scale

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President of the Agrupación de Detenidos Desaparecidos y Ejecutados de Paine, Nemesio Antúnez Commission, José Balmes, National Art Prize, Viviana Díaz President of the Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos de Chile, human rights lawyer Andrés Aylwin, and the artists Lotty Rosenfeld, Guillermo Núñez, and Hernán Puelma. Some of the entries for the competition included global paradigms in memorial culture such as plaques and waterfalls.

[120] Programa de Derechos Humanos, Programa de Obras y Artes, Ministerio del Interior, Ministerio de Obras Públicas, DD.HH Cuaderno Uno/Lugares Para la Memoria May 2005 http://www.arquitecturamop.cl/Paginas/default.aspx (accessed January 7, 2012)
"Destinada a recordar el sacrificio de personas durante el régimen militar, revindicando el buen nombre de las víctimas de las violaciones a los derechos humanos. En este sentido, será una obra que constituye parte del patrimonio de la nación, en tanto conformadora de espacio público conmemorativo".

[121] President Michelle Bachelet and the mayor of Paine, Patricio Achurra attended the memorial's inauguration on May 25, 2008.

[122] *Paine: Un Lugar Para La Memoria Libro, Guía Del Memorial*, 12.

[123] Although because of its location near a highway exit, car and airplane traffic dominated the soundscape. The AFDD hoped that the site of the memorial close to the highway will provide two distinct types of audience members: those driving on the highway and local foot traffic.

than Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi and the Parque de la memoria), a topographic woods, and raised floor mosaics.

The mosaics take the place of the seventy missing poles that would have formed 1,000 shafts into "spaces of absence" to symbolize the seventy disappeared and executed members of the Paine community (Fig. 60).[124] Many of the widows of disappeared men originally proposed to create a place to remember and illustrate the deaths of their husbands, but others wanted a space where the lives of their relatives were emphasized instead of their demise. Thus, the memorial at Paine narrates the past existence of the disappeared through their hobbies, dreams, personal projects, favorite objects, shared treasured moments spent together as a family, and other personal histories.[125] The participating families wished to remember the disappeared not just as fatalities under the dictatorship, but to reclaim their names and identities from solely being associated with the titles that the Pinochet military applied to its victims, such as "subversives," "political delinquents," and "subhuman." The Memorial de Paine gave the family members a space in the public sphere to reclaim the personal identity of their loved ones.

Artists like art teacher José Luis Toledo helped family members with the mosaic technique, and the memorial site, while under construction, became a meeting place for families to talk about their disappeared relatives in a public space.[126] The mosaics are grouped according to relatives and friends, so that family members could work together and visit the site together. Visitors are handed a pamphlet with an easy to read map with numbered mosaics that correspond to the person who is memorialized. This grouping is distinct from the alphabetical organization of names at the MDDEP, MVST, and Villa Grimaldi's Muro. Conceptually the placement

[124] *Paine: Un Lugar Para La Memoria Libro, Guía Del Memorial*, 12.
[125] Sara Ramirez, interview by author, Paine, Chile, October 23, 2009.
[126] Each family attended a six-month workshop to learn how to create the mosaics.

decision at Paine counteracts the bureaucratic effect of memorializing the disappeared through year of disappearance and/or alphabetical order. Grouping the disappeared according to their family and friends humanizes their memory. This type of organization of a memorial that commemorates a larger number of people may pose problems and place the family members and friends of the disappeared in a position of re-traumatizing them through reenacting the search for the disappeared loved ones' names; however, the memorial's scale at Paine embodied the memory of the disappeared as both individuals and as part of a larger community.[127]

The process of constructing the mosaics at the memorial site enabled gatherings and the fostering of ties amongst the family members of the disappeared. As they built the memorial mosaics they became aware that remembering did not always have to be a painful act. The guidebook on the Paine memorial produced by the Agrupación Paine stated, "As each family gave form to their mosaics, the new generations of children, nephews, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren could discover those whom the dictatorship never allowed them to meet."[128] For example, Ingrid Camus Rodriguez shared her experience and ideas behind the mosaic dedicated to her father, who was disappeared the year she was born: "We were going to be in his memory, so we included my mom and their children [in the mosaic]."[129]

The mosaics are closer to the aesthetic of Chilean immediate roadside memorials known as *animata*, which are small chapels decorated with flowers that indicate the place where fatal

[127] Michael Arad used a similar strategy in The National September 11 Memorial, New York, in what he termed "meaningful adjacencies."
[128] *Paine: Un Lugar Para La Memoria Libro, Guía Del Memorial*, 5.
[129] Ingrid Camus Rodriguez, interview by author, Paine, Chile, October 23, 2009. "Nosotros ibamos estar en el recuerdo de él por eso incluimos mi mama y los hijos."
Her brother, who Camus Rodriguez said rarely spoke about their father, included an image of their dog, because he connected their pet to the memory of their father.

roadside accidents took place.[130] Although on a different scale and at a different kind of site, the Paine memorial also shares artistic strategies with the Argentine mosaic *baldosas* (sidewalk tiles, see Chapter One). Both memorial forms referred to the way the disappeared lived and family members of the disappeared created the tile designs by hand, thereby ritualizing the production of the memorials and adding a personal connection to the individual that is commemorated in the works. The style of naïf art in the Paine mosaics also evokes the *arpilleras*, which heralded an innovative form of Chilean protest art under the dictatorship. The Memoral de Paine drew upon the human rights organizations' protest aesthetic that first came from the lived experience of the families of the disappeared as opposed to contemporary, global current of a minimalism in memorialization strategies. Artworks created by the family members keep the memory of the disappeared alive through personal, lived experience, and avoided the monolithic official narrative (or lack thereof) that obscures the message in minimalist memorials.

Richard reminded us that:

> Tribunals, commissions, and monuments to human rights regularly quote memory (they mention her) but leave aside from their diligent wording all the wounded substance of remembrance: the psychic density and the magnitude of the experience, the emotional wake, the scarring of something unforgettable that resists being submissively molded into the perfunctory forms of judicial procedure or inscription on an institutional plaque.[131]

The Memorial de Paine attempted to divorce itself from being "submissively molded." For example, Sara Ramirez, a native of Paine whose father was disappeared in 1973, affirmed that the memorial served to close a gap in her own memory because she and her family "did not have a record, we did not have memory, we did not remember our fathers…There are families that

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[130] Sebastian Brett, et al., *Memorialización y Democracia: Políticas De Estado y Acción Civil* (Santiago Chile: Agencia Canadiense para el Desarrollo Internacional, la Oficina para los Andes y el Cono Sur de la Fundación Ford, la Fundación Heinrich Boll, el Goethe Institute, National Endowment for Democracy, Open Society Institute, June 20-22, 2007), 21.
[131] Richard et al., *Cultural Residues: Chile in Transition*, 18.

have nothing, they do not have remains, nothing, therefore this [the Paine Memorial] is the only thing that allows them to remain close [to the memory] for the family of the disappeared." [132]

Despite the catharsis the memorial created for the families who were missing disappeared relatives, not all of the responses to the memorial have been positive, and the future of the site remains in question. Ramirez explained that the surrounding communities do not value the memorial because they do not have a culture of memory. Some passers-by misunderstood the site and believed that the memorial was a cemetery and that the mosaics were actually headstones with bodies buried beneath them. Still other citizens complained about investing so much money in something "so ugly."[133] Along with the memorial's detractors, political scientists Katherine Hite and Cath Collins emphasized that the Paine memorial continued to struggle to gain governmental funds to complete the planned project and maintain the site. The original design included a cultural center and meeting place, but instead the government installed a trailer that emitted a "temporary and precarious feel."[134] The meeting place was integral to the design, as Maureira indicated: "The Memorial for the Disappeared and Executed Prisoners of Paine is not just an homage to the victims of the Dictatorship. It is also a meeting place and a space for the community to develop a culture of Life and Human Rights, as well as an emphasis on Not

[132] Ramirez, interview. Ramirez's father, believing that the government would not harm him, went with five other men to present themselves before commune officials. All of the men were disappeared. "No teniamos registro, no teniamos memoria, no teniamos recuerdo de nuestros papas… Hay familias que no tienen nada, no tienen restos, nada, entonces esto es como lo único que queda cerca para la familia de los desaparecidos."
[133] Ibid. Parking spaces are not obvious at the memorial and therefore visitors often unknowingly park illegally. A neighbor who was vehemently against the memorial often called the police in these instances to deter visitation of the memorial.
[134] Katherine Hite and Cath Collins, "Memorial Fragments, Monumental Silences and Reawakenings in 21st Century Chile," *Millenium: Journal of International Studies* 38, no. 2 (2009): 391.

Forgetting."[135] Despite the original government funding, the future of the Paine memorial is unstable and is in danger of eventually meeting the same fate as smaller memorials dedicated to the disappeared of Paine, such as a plaque with the names of the disappeared and mural dedicated to their memory, which are both in a state of deterioration.

Conclusion

As Lautaro Núnez observed, the fear that history might accuse those living in the present is a trepidation that continues to exist throughout the Southern Cone. Making the disappeared visible in public space through the construction of official memorials is tempered by an attempt to appease a memory of a violent past. The tension between burying history and building memory has taken multiple aesthetic strategies that include the embrace of minimalism, an affinity for nature, and outsider art forms. This pattern also emerged in Argentina, and shaped the content of official and unsanctioned memorial construction.

Distinct histories call for diverse memorialization strategies. Nevertheless minimalism and building memorials outside of the city center have become dominant paradigms in form and site in official commemoration in the Southern Cone countries discussed in this chapter. Comparing memory projects in Chile and Argentina through the analysis of the visual material culture of memory reveals that official forms of memorial construction in this geopolitical zone have followed the global impulse toward a minimalist paradigm of memorialization, despite the fact that the height of the minimalist movement occurred over four decades prior to the construction of the memorials. Although the minimalist form suggests parallels between Chile

[135] *Paine: Un Lugar Para La Memoria Libro, Guía Del Memorial*, 12.

and Argentina's built memory cultures, the debates and problems surrounding memorial construction differ, as does the message conveyed according to their site.

Grassroots-initiated memorials in Chile attempted to remedy the monolithic narratives of the State through the creation of portable and permanent memorials that revealed personal stories and testimonies of those who lived through the dictatorship, as a torture survivor (as in the case of Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi) or a family member of a disappeared relatives (in the *arpilleras* and the Memorial de Paine). In Chile memorial construction highlighted the valorized status of victims' families. These constructors of memory are themselves victims of state-sponsored terrorism and, like the rest of the Chilean citizenry, continue to live with the dictatorship's legacy of human rights abuses. The efforts by the family members revealed the trace of the lives of the disappeared through visual form in the public sphere instead of focusing on their deaths. Moreover, despite the sponsors' intentions, the memorials discussed in this chapter exposed the divisions within Chile that have not been reconciled.

Conclusion

Midnight, our sons and daughters
Were cut down and taken from us
Hear their heartbeat we hear their heartbeat
In the wind we hear their laughter in the rain we see their tears
Hear their heartbeat, we hear their heartbeat
-U2 "Mothers of the Disappeared"[1]

On April 20, 2010 Reynaldo Benito Antonio Bignone, the last de-facto president of Argentina's military junta (1982-83), was convicted of crimes against humanity that he committed against fifty-six people at the Greater Buenos Aires Clandestine Detention Center The Campo de Mayo, where he was second in command (1976-78). The Argentine court found Bignone guilty of participating in eleven counts of unlawful entry and armed robbery, and fifteen counts of illegally depriving citizens of their freedom, which were aggravated by threats.[2] Bignone was among many of the surviving architects of Argentina's period of state-sponsored terrorism who were brought to trial after 2005, when the Argentine Supreme Court struck down the Full Stop Law (1986) and the Law of Due Obedience (1987) passed under President Raúl Alfonsín's administration. The amnesty laws had formerly blocked prosecutions of crimes against humanity committed by members of the military dictatorship.[3]

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[1] U2 "Mothers of The Disappeared" *Joshua Tree* Album 1987. This song was originally written in honor of the Comite de Madres Monsignor Romero (Committee of Mothers Monsignor Romero, Comadres), an organization comprised of mothers whose children were kidnapped by death squads during the Salvadoran Civil War (1980-1992). U2 also performed "Mothers of the Disappeared" in Buenos Aires's River Plate Stadium in 1998, where the band invited The Madres de Plaza de Mayo to join its members on stage.
[2] "La Justicia condenó a Reynaldo Bignone a 25 años de prisión común," *La nación*, Buenos Aires, April 20, 2010.
[3] There were two exceptions to human rights abuses that could still be tried before the Supreme Court overturned the Amnesty Laws: rape, and the theft of babies born to mothers who were disappeared. These crimes were exempt from the Due Obedience Law. For more details on the Argentine Supreme Court's ruling see Human Rights Watch News, "Argentina, Amnesty Law

In the first decade of the 2000s, the disappeared reappeared at the trials of the military leaders who ruled during Argentina's last dictatorship. The same official photographs that the Madres de Plaza de Mayo had worn and carried in their protest marches in the public sphere beginning in 1977 were present at Bignone's trial.[4] Laminated, enlarged photographs of each of the disappeared who had been unlawfully detained and killed at the Campo de Mayo occupied the first few rows of chairs in the courtroom, and attendees of the trial held photographs of the disappeared in a sign of solidarity (Fig. 61). This symbolic gesture filled the courtroom with the absent presence of the disappeared and the photographs, which had functioned as a document of proof of the existence of the missing under the dictatorship, at last moved from the outside in a space of official denial and exclusion to the inside of the judiciary system. The photographs were finally transformed into sanctioned evidence and became part of a delayed process of endeavoring to right the decades of political neglect through prosecuting those responsible for human rights violations under state-sponsored terrorism.[5] Through the photographic memorial, the faces of the disappeared silently confronted their torturers, kidnappers, and murderers as victims and witnesses.

Museum studies specialist Paul Williams argued that, "It is not future generations who are asking for a concrete memorial. Rather the memorial is a product of our desire *that they*

Struck Down," Human Rights Watch, June 15, 2005. http://www.hrw.org/news/2005/06/14/argentina-amnesty-laws-struck-down (accessed June 15, 2005).

[4] I was able to observe the Bignone trial in November 2009 as an invited guest of members of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo Línea Fundadora.

[5] While the photographs memorialized the disappeared during the trials, Hijos por la Identidady y Justicia Contra el Olvido y el Silencio (Children for Identity and Justice Against Forgetting and Silence, H.I.J.O.S.) and the art collective Grupo de Arte Callejero (GAC) ceased performing *escraches*, unsanctioned public performance protests targeted at perpetrators of the dictatorship, because the government finally began trying those responsible for the disappearances. However, H.I.J.O.S. continues to produce *escraches* against current violators of human rights abuses that are not necessarily directly connected to the dictatorship.

should know what we felt to be important…Our willingness to disregard this lag [delayed memory syndrome—a lag of fifteen years] may acknowledge not the magnitude of recent events, but our fast-emerging belief in the political and cultural benefits of swift memorialization."[6] The swiftness to memorialize the disappeared in Argentina is most certainly a product of our international, contemporary society's memory boom. However, the rapidness in memorialization that occurred in Argentina and Chile also has its roots within the human rights organizations' and cultural institutions' application of the memorials as a protest tool. These sponsors of memorials sought to demonstrate against the political genocide that occurred in each country, and to seek justice for the perpetrators of disappearance when (prior to 2005) prosecutions were habitually denied within the political system.

Since the inception of commemorative protest art used by the Madres de Plaza de Mayo in the 1970s, human rights-authored memorials brought the disappeared to the very heart of the city—in the public sphere—to engage passers-by. The diversity of imagery of the disappeared through documentary photography, performance, conceptualism, and site-specific objects countered the dictatorship's official narrative and obviated a claim for an authoritative history. The division within the Madres organization revealed distinct strategies of memorialization by some of the most vocal promoters of human rights. The Madres de Plaza de Mayo Línea Fundadora sought to reshape public space around the dictatorship's destructive history, while the Asocación Madres de Plaza de Mayo, rejected the majority of monuments dedicated to the disappeared, instead attempted to construct socio-political spaces through the sponsorship of

[6] Paul Williams, *Memorial Museums: The Global Rush to Commemorate Atrocities* (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2007), 179.

universities, cultural centers, and social justice projects to commemorate the ideology that many of the victims of state-sponsored terrorism shared.[7]

This study asserts that the rapidness of the development of cultural institutions' commemorative practices through the creation of temporary and permanent *lieux de mémoire* was also in response to the inaction on the part of the government in regards to enforced disappearance. The cultural institutions discussed in this dissertation acted in a manner contrary to the traditional expectations when grassroots-created art dedicated to the memory of the disappeared and conceived for the public in the streets, moved indoors. The artworks displayed within the cultural institutions did not transform their message into an accommodative agenda. Instead, the memorials sponsored by these institutions continued to align themselves with a human rights message and embraced an activist role in educating the public about disappearance in an effort to disentangle the military's official history from lived memory.

In turn, the hastiness of government-sponsored memorial creation found its origin in the governmental aspiration to control the account of the dictatorship through visual form. The government continued to use the disappeared for its own gains, as in the case of the Parque de la memoria, which was a part of a larger urban renewal project. As discussed throughout this dissertation, site-specificity created the content and conveyed the meaning of the memorials. The

[7] The dictatorship still maintains some hold on human rights organizations and Argentine society in terms of commemorative anniversaries. The dates that Argentina commemorates the disappeared are those that were forced upon the nation by the dictatorship. For example, March 24, the day the military junta took power in 1976, is one of the largest public commemorations to take place during the year, as opposed to the international Human Rights Day, which takes place every December 10. For more on anniversaries and commemoration see Federico Guillermo Lorenz, "De Quién Es El 24 De Marzo? Las Luchas Por La Memoria Del Golpe De 1976," in *Las Conmemoraciones: Las Disputas En Las Fechas "In-felices,"* eds. Elizabeth Jelin and Azun Candina (Madrid: Siglo XXI de España Editores: Social Science Research Council, 2002), 53–100.

government took advantage of the memory of the disappeared and relegated the officially-sanctioned memorials dedicated to the victims of state-sponsored terrorism to the outskirts of the city. Along with peripherally located official sites, the governments in Argentina and in Chile both embraced a minimalist model of monument building that is part of the new global paradigm on memorial construction precisely because minimalist forms are open to a variety of interpretations. It is for this reason that minimalism is becoming the new monolithic representation of international and local traumas.

Over the course of starting this project, conditions changed. Negotiating current events is challenging and it is too early to speculate about the effects of the latest developments in the human rights cause on the future of the memorials. However, the meaning and the purpose of the Argentine memorials will most likely transform in light of the current trials and legal justice measures. The nature of research in memorial studies is constantly shifting, in part because the audience's perception of art in the public realm can be altered according to events taking place in the present moment. In Argentina, as the justice system's position in the history of disappearance evolves, new questions arise for future research. What role will memorial sites adopt now that they no longer need to function as activist tools for promoting institutional justice, or as instruments for endorsing national reconciliation? Will the audience's interpretation of the memorials dedicated to victims of state-sponsored terrorism change in light of the prosecutions of those responsible for disappearance? Sadly, as is the case with Holocaust survivors, there are an increasing number of elderly witnesses and victims of state-sponsored terrorism who are

passing away. What task will the built memorials occupy with the departure of a generation who lived through and witnessed the direct effects of dictatorial rule?[8]

Despite the memory boom that took the form of memorial and museum construction, literary works and scholarly research in Argentina and around the world, the cries for *Núnca más* (Never Again) have not been heeded on an international scale. Therefore, when studying memorials to the disappeared in Argentina, it is imperative to recognize that disappearance is not relegated to Argentina, the Southern Cone, and Latin America, nor is it consigned solely to our past. The countries of Lebanon, Cyprus, Cambodia, Congo, Iraq, Iran, Sri Lanka–and the list goes on–have all experienced forced disappearances. Moreover, state-sponsored violence and disappearance is a tragic global phenomenon that continues to this day. Governments have not ceased disappearing people, and even the United States was culpable in denying *habeas corpus* to its prisoners.[9]

Today, other nations have adopted artistic strategies with origins in Argentina's family-based, grassroots human rights organizations for protesting disappearance. For example, in March 2011 in Cairo, in the midst of Egypt's Arab Spring, family members held aloft official passport photographs of their missing relatives outside of the Secret Police Head Quarters.[10] I conclude writing this dissertation at a time when the My Right to Know Campaign organized by

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[8] Other avenues for future research on memorials dedicated to the disappeared in Argentina include an expanded discussion on memorials in the provinces outside of the Greater Buenos Aires area.

[9] In 2006 President George W. Bush passed the Military Commissions Act, which did not allow for Guantanamo Bay prisoners to file writs of *habeas corpus*. The U.S. Supreme Court struck down the section of the Military Commissions Act that denied *habeas corpus* to prisoners and their families in 2008.

[10] Hannah Allam, "New Day in Egypt: Protesters Sack State Security Offices," *McClatchy Newspapers,* Washington D.C., March 5, 2011. http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2011/03/05/109887/egyptian-protesters-storm-state.html (accessed March 5, 2011).

the Families of Lebanese Victims of Enforced Disappearance in Syria also emphasizes the status of motherhood and displays official photographs of disappeared loved ones.[11]

The Argentine memorials dedicated to the victims of state-sponsored terrorism have become models for international protest and memorialization strategies. They are pedagogical tools and instigators of debates and discussions that extend far beyond Argentina's borders. It is for these reasons that it is imperative that efforts continue to be made and finances continue to be allocated to safeguard and document memorials dedicated to the disappeared because these memorials do not just look backwards; they are not merely symbolic. They are collected pieces of personal memory in artistic shape that form part of Argentina's national history—a history that had been buried by a nation that in many cases did not possess the bodies themselves to bury. As the human rights organization H.I.J.O.S. reminded us, "We are all children of the same history."[12] In the world's current political climate, where disappearance continues to be a common occurrence, it is our generation's task to combat the second disappearance of the disappeared. We must continue to look at, interact with, and analyze memorials to the disappeared, and we must remember so that disappearance will be part of our history and part of our collective and collected memory, but will no longer exist in our present or our future.

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[11] In addition, in March 2012 two Turkish journalists, Adem Özköse and Hamit Coşkun, were disappeared in Syria. In manifestations against their disappearances, demonstrators in Istanbul held aloft photographs of Özköse and Coşkun in the public sphere to draw attention to the reporters' plight. For more on this story see Committee to Protect Journalists, "Two Turkish Journalists Believed Detained in Syria," Committee to Protect Journalists, March 15, 2012. http://cpj.org/2012/03/two-turkish-journalists-believed-detained-by-syria.php (accessed Marc 16, 2012).

[12] This message appeared on stickers produced and distributed by H.I.J.O.S c. 2009. "Todos somos hijos de una misma historia."

Epilogue

Hero, I said, no one
will erect
on the soil
of some public plaza
your inspiring statue,
no one.
Instead, amid
somber official laurels
will be installed
a mustached man
in frock coat or with sword,
a man who killed
a peasant woman
in the war,
a man who
with a single
bloody shell
demolished
a school for
little girls,
a man who usurped the
Indians'
lands
-Gabriel García Marquez[1]

Art historian Dario Gamboni asserted, "Encouragement of the arts, a feature of enlightened government, is presumed to dissipate the ignorance that foster the destruction of art."[2] The Argentine military dictatorship was far from an enlightened government and subsequently, as discussed in Chapter Two, censored the creative arts under its rule. During the post-dictatorship, this disruption of the visual arts continued through supporters of the dictatorial government, who vandalized memorials dedicated to the disappeared and the human rights cause. However, the individuals and groups acting in solidarity with the dictatorial regime were

[1] Gabriel García Márquez and Miguel Littín, *Clandestine in Chile: The Adventures of Miguel Littín* (New York: H. Holt, 1987), v.
[2] Dario Gamboni, *The Destruction of Art: Iconoclasm and Vandalism Since the French Revolution* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 1997), 13.

not the only destructive forces to alter politically charged art in Argentina's post-dictatorship era. This epilogue analyzes strategies of vandalism of memorials to the disappeared adopted by those in society who continued to side with the military dictatorship, and discusses the artists and human rights organizations that used graffiti and other vocabularies of defacement on official public monuments to further their cause in the public realm.[3] Despite the opposing ideologies of these distinct sectors of the political spectrum, the aesthetic goal as a result of their damaging action was the same: the alteration or removal of an original artwork with ideological content. An analysis of the above-mentioned parties' choice of targets for property destruction and the methods of vandalism used for promoting their causes provides a deeper understanding of the struggle over the memory of the disappeared that was fought in the public realm.

Sociologist Stanley Cohen provided a useful definition and classification of distinct types of vandalism. Cohen stated that vandalism occurs when "property destruction is used as a conscious tactic: to revenge, or draw attention to a specific grievance, to gain publicity for a general cause, to challenge symbolically, or insult a particular individual or group, etc."[4] Cohen organized acts of vandalism into separate categories that fall under a larger rubric of ideological vandalism, which transpires when "the rule is broken as a means towards some explicit and conscious ideological end."[5] Dictatorial government supporters' and human rights organizations' acts of destruction each fall under this larger category. According to Cohen, ideological vandalism "appeals to an explicit and articulated set of beliefs."[6] This epilogue explores the

[3] Vandalism in the form of *escraches* was addressed in Chapter One. This epilogue examines works of art beyond those created by H.I.J.O.S. and Grupo de Arte Callejero.
[4] Stanley Cohen, "Property Destruction: Motives and Meanings," in *Vandalism*, ed. Colin Ward (New York and Cincinnati: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1973), 39.
[5] Ibid., 35.
[6] Ibid, 39.

beliefs expressed through visual forms of distinct actors in Argentina in the following case studies that took place in the 1990s and the first decade of 2000.

Tótem

The former police station and ex-Clandestine Detention Center (ex-CCD) El Club Atlético in Buenos Aires was demolished by the military junta in 1977 in order to construct the Autopista 25 de Mayo, a major highway that runs through Buenos Aires. Out of the rubble of the ex-CCD, Grupo Tótem, comprised of an anonymous group of artists, created the installation sculpture *Homenaje a los desaparecidos* (Homage to the Disappeared*,* 1995), which is also referred to as *Tótem* (Fig. 62). In the metal sculpture
faceless human figures overlap upon a vertical highway support beam that juts out from the wreckage of El Atlético. The figures appear to be crawling out of the rubble, with exaggerated bent arms and legs in a gesture of escape. *Tótem* shares visual allusions with the *Siluetazo* (1983), one of the first collectively drawn public artworks dedicated to the disappeared (see Chapter One).

The sculpture itself had two prior versions made out of wood, which were destroyed in 1996 and 1997.[7] This was part of several violent attacks upon memorials dedicated to the disappeared at Club Atlético that took place in the 1990s. For example, in July 1996 approximately 500 people gathered at Club Atlético on a *jornada por la memoria* (day for

[7] María Rosa Gómez, interview by author, Buenos Aires, August 25, 2009. Gómez is a researcher at the Instituto Espacio para la Memoria. For an instructive analysis on *Tótem* and its relationship between space and democratic practices and how geography, architecture, trauma, and memory interact within Argentine national identity see literature scholar Silvia R Tandeciarz, "Special Topic: Cities - Citizens of Memory: Refiguring the Past in Postdictatorship Argentina," *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America.* 122, no. 1 (2007): 151.

memory), organized and mobilized by the neighborhood association of San Telmo, where the ex-CCD is located. Participants made a papier mâché tree on which they hung photographs of victims of state-sponsored terrorism. A firebomb placed at night by an anonymous individual or group destroyed the tree and the memorial.[8] The effect of the firebomb on the memorial darkly paralleled the violence inflicted on the body of the victims of state-sponsored terrorism.

In August 1997 human rights organizations and residents of San Telmo created a plaque that listed the names of the perpetrators of disappearance and torture at Club Atlético in an effort to keep the names of the perpetrators from becoming subsumed by invisibility in a time when institutional justice had not been realized. Participants also collectively re-created the sculptural totem and re-installed it on a highway pillar. The following night, a group, presumably supportive of the government, or perhaps consisting of the repressors themselves who had worked at El Club Atlético, tore down the sculptural work and covered the plaque with the names of the repressors with paint.[9] In this way, vandalism evolved into another instrument of suppression. It attempted to hide the names of the perpetrators of crimes against humanity from the public and to conceal the memorials that functioned as physical markers indicating that the site was where state-sanctioned torture and assassination occurred under the dictatorship. The anonymity of the vandals echoed the procedures of the dictatorship's faceless perpetrators.

Puente para iluminar la memoria (A Bridge to Illuminate Memory)

Another incidence of the destruction of public works dedicated to the disappeared occurred the same year that *Tótem* was firebombed. Artist and human rights activist Viviana

[8] Elizabeth Jelin and Susan Kaufman, "Layers of Memories: Twenty Years after in Argentina," in *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration*, ed. T.G. Ashplant, G. Dawsom, and M. Roper (London: Routledge, 2008), 97-98.
[9] Ibid.

Ponieman (b. 1956) conceived of and organized *Un Puente para iluminar la memoria 1976-1996* (A Bridge for Illuminating Memory *1976-1996*, March 23-25, 1996), a collective urban intervention that memorialized the disappeared and commemorated the twentieth anniversary of the military coup (Fig. 63). The Central de los Trabajadores Argentinos (The Argentine Workers' Central Union, CTA) funded the project. Guillermo Kexel who was part of the group that created the *Siluetazo* participated with thirty-four other artists in creating individual canvases to collectively memorialize the disappeared.[10] They hung uniformed-sized paintings dedicated to the disappeared on the lampposts lining the Avenida de Mayo, the main thoroughfare that converges with the Plaza de Mayo.[11] The lights from which the works hung illuminated the paintings at night. An estimated 100,000 people marched along the route lined with the painted memorials. The goal of the urban intervention was to create a bridge between the generation that lived through the dictatorship and the younger generation, and to strengthen ties between artists and human rights organizations.[12]

In the very early morning of March 26, 1996, the participating artists came to retrieve their work, but the series of memorials had already been taken down. These artworks commemorating the victims of state-sponsored terrorism and remembering the military dictatorship were themselves disappeared. The municipality collected the canvas memorials and

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[10] Other participating artists included: Munu Actris, Sofia Althabe, Eduardo Brickles, Borovio, Rodolfo Cavilla, Monica Christiansen, Juan C. Diotti, Juan Doffo, Muriel Frega, Girofio, Gonzalez Perrin, Graciela Henriquez, Osvaldo Jalil, Guillermo Kexel, Juan Carlos Lasser, Adriana Leibovich, Jorge Meijide, Ariel Mlynarcewicz, Mirta Narosky, Esther Nazarian, Juan Padron, G Pardo, Hilda Paz, Jorge Pietra, Felipe Pino, PLA, Hilda Prados, Laura Prados, Raul Ponce, Marcelo Rodriguez, Virginia Rodriguez Anca, Pedro Roth, Daniel Santoro, Scaviglia, Elsa Soibelman, Mariana Szulman, Cristina Terzaghi, and Carlos Vighi.

[11] All the works were a standard 4 x 2 meters.

[12] Viviana Ponieman, interview by author, Buenos Aires, November 4, 2009. Ponieman has continued to expand on *Puente para iluminar la memoria* and it has had multiple visual manifestations in the form of exhibitions at cultural centers and through artist talks.

deposited them in the city dump, claiming that its workers were unable to identify the difference between the artworks and the advertising flyers that were adhered to the lampposts.[13] The government action highlighted the varying degrees of government responsibility for vandalism of memorials dedicated to the disappeared. The participating painters and human rights groups perceived this as a violent action and a renewed act of disappearance.[14] Kexel stated, "It's pathetic that a minority or majority in a culture could consider our works trash. No one wants to take responsibility for anything. Moreover, it is consistent with an attitude that has continued for many years to disappear all of the popular protests' traces."[15] This effort to keep the streets cleared of visual references to the disappeared and the crimes of the dictatorship in the mid-1990s was in line with President Carlos Saúl Menem's politics of national reconciliation, in which the crimes of the military and the history of disappearance were cast aside in official history in order to encourage the nation to move on from its corrupt past. One of the tactics that the government chose in the 1990s to cover up the history of disappearance was to discard visual manifestations that countered the official history and its push toward national reconciliation.[16]

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[13] Ibid.

[14] Aritsts León Ferrari, Luis Felipe Noé, Carlos Gorriarena, and Aníbal Cedrón did not participate in the original act, but they publicly showed their support of the artists and human rights organizations.

[15] Obras de arte destruídos: Recodando el golpe del '76," Telenoticias, Buenos Aires, March 26, 1996. http://www.viviponieman.com.ar/video.html (accessed November 4, 2009). "Me parece patético que parte menoro, mayoro de una cultura como pudiera hacer nuestra obra sea consideraba basura. Nadie quiere serse responsible de nada. Además es coherente con un actitúd que ya lleva muchisimos años de hacer desaparecer la huella de toda manifestación popular."

[16] A similar destructive action occurred a year later, on March 23, 1997, at the Plaza San Martín in the city of La Plata. A day before the March 24 anniversary of the military coup The Madres and supporters hung 600 photographs of the disappeared in the plaza with twine. The next morning, the municipal trash collectors removed the portraits and disposed of them. Julio Alak (in office 1991-2007), the mayor of La Plata, stated that he did not order the photographs to be thrown out but that the employees were ordered to clean the plaza of political propaganda. *Página/12*, Buenos Aires, March 25, 1997 quoted in da Silva Ludmila da Silva Catela, *No Habrá*

The Madres's Handkerchiefs

The Madres de Plaza de Mayo (Madres) and supporters of the organization ritualistically circumambulated the Plaza de Mayo every Thursday afternoon beginning in 1977. The Madres marked the ground around the Piramide de Mayo in the square with stenciled white abstracted handkerchiefs, so that the group's presence would remain at the site even when they themselves were not marching there (Fig. 64).[17] The handkerchiefs, worn by the Madres, symbolized the diapers of their disappeared children in order to emphasize the members' status as mothers. As a result, the white handkerchiefs became a symbol of the Madres and the group's struggle for human rights. The Legislature of the City of Buenos Aires passed a law in 2005 that declared the area that surrounded the Piramide de Mayo, "in which one finds the painted handkerchiefs that identify the Madres de Plaza de Mayo" a historic site.[18] This legalizing gesture was part of a shift in official government conduct towards the Madres and human rights, perhaps most notable with the Argentine Supreme Court's decision to overturn the Amnesty Laws that same year.

Cecilia Pando and her political organization, the Asociación de Familiares y Amigos de los Presos Políticos de la Argentina (Association of Relatives and Friends of Political Prisoners in Argentina, AFyAPPA), held a different view of the handkerchief stencils and the Argentine human rights struggle in general. It is central to stress that the name of the AFyAPPA is

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Flores En La Tumba Del Pasado: La Experiencia De Reconstrucción Del Mundo De Los Familiares De Desaparecidos (La Plata: Ediciones Al Margen, 2001), 136.

[17] Diana Taylor, "El espectáculo de la memoria: trauma, performance y política," The Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics, 2004. http://hemi.nyu.edu/cuaderno/politicalperformance2004/totalitarianism/WEBSITE/texts/espectaculo_de_la_memoria.htm (accessed October 4, 2010). In 1987 Support Group painted white handkerchiefs on the ground of the Plaza de Mayo for the twenty-four hour march on Human Rights Day. Marguerite Guzman Bouvard, *Revolutionizing Motherhood: The Mothers of the Plaza De Mayo* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1994), 143.

[18] City of Buenos Aires, Law 1653, "Espacio en el cual se encuentran pintados los pañuelos que identifican a las Madres de Plaza de Mayo."

misleading; the political prisoners to which the organization's monicker refers to are the members of the military and personnel from the security forces who committed crimes against humanity and who were prosecuted by the civil justice system. One of the organization's slogans is "a plaza without discrimination and justice without impunity for the terrorists."[19] The AFyAPPA began marching around the Plaza de Mayo in 2006 and have continued its protest on the first Tuesday of every month. In 2009, members of the AFyAPPA stenciled black ribbons with horizontal blue and white striped ends (the colors of the Argentine national flag) over all of the handkerchiefs in the plaza (Fig. 65).[20] Blue and white text that read, "Victimas del terrorismo" (Victims of terrorism) accompanied the stencils. During the action Pando spoke into a megaphone and claimed that the Madres were themselves terrorists, and that the mothers of the disappeared used justice as a tool for revenge.[21] The malicious nature of Pando's effort fell under Cohen's category of vindictive vandalism, which he defined as "the use of property destruction as a form of revenge."[22] The black ribbon stencils were a flagrant visual sign for the AFyAPPA's antagonism towards the Madres. This action of covering up the handkerchiefs and writing historically skewed remarks on human rights abuses in Argentina underscored the divide about the dictatorship in Argentina.[23]

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[19] "Una Plaza sin discriminaciones y una justicia sin impunidad para los terroristas." The terrorists that Pando referred to were victims of the military dictatorship and the guerilla group members active in the 1970s.

[20] "Pando, denuncianda por daño agravado," *Página/12*, Buenos Aires, May 8, 2009. http://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/elpais/1-124559-2009-05-08.html (accessed May 3, 2010). The year before, in March 2008, the organization stenciled the Plaza de Mayo with the same ribbons, but did not cover up the handkerchiefs.

[21] AFyPPA 2009 "En nombres de las victimas del terrorismo decimos ¡Presente!," Plaza de Mayo March 4, 2009," http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=21Vxbgg8i8E (accessed April 2, 2010).

[22] Cohen, "Property Destruction: Motives and Meanings," 44.

[23] Despite Pando's efforts, the handkerchiefs were restored.

Roca

Gamboni stated that we have to distinguish "between the motives and methods of destroyers of art who are politically and economically as well as culturally dominated and those of politically and economically powerful but culturally dominated iconoclasts."[24] This distinction is important to draw when analyzing the strategies and targets of vandalism that human rights organizations adopted. The Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo (Asociación Madres) began a campaign to call for the removal of the memorial dedicated to President Julio Argentino Roca (in office 1880-1886 and 1898-1904) in 2004. Roca is best-known for his 1879 Conquista del desierto (Conquest of the Desert), which was a military effort to dominate the Tehuelche and Araucanian Indians of the Patagonian region of Southern Argentina, and resulted in the genocide of these indigenous peoples. The National Commission on the Monument to Lieutenant General Roca installed *The General Roca National Monument* in Buenos Aires in 1941 by José Luis Zorrilla de San Martín (b. 1891, Fig. 66). It is a traditional equestrian-style monument with two allegorical figures: war in the front and agriculture behind it. The sculpture is located only a few blocks away from the Plaza de Mayo at the intersection of two diagonal streets, and faces the plaza. It heralds Roca's military might and is typical of the masculine military imagery associated with nineteenth and early twentieth-century monuments throughout the Americas. The celebratory statue, in the very center of the city, masks the brutality of Roca's historical legacy.

Roca's violent history became the starting point for the chronological narrative of the disappeared. Anthropologist Carlos Masotta analyzed the shift of the military figure in Argentine national discourse during the 2000s. Masotta asserted that Roca's Conquest of the Desert was

[24] Ibid, 24.

previously heroicized and perceived as an origin myth of Argentine national identity.[25] However, this historical understanding changed when literary figures such as Osvaldo Bayer and the Asociación Madres equated the Conquest with genocide.[26] Beginning as early as 1983 they historically linked Argentina's genocide of the Indians with the political genocide of the 1970s and early 1980s, and compared Roca to General Videla, one of the leaders of the military junta.[27] Masotta explained the nature of this chronological inconsistency, "The anachronistic communication not only produces readings of the past, but also of the present. Through Roca one also thinks of the last dictatorship."[28]

This revisionist history has transformed the heroic equestrian statue of Roca, and the monument has taken on a new significance with the intervention of stenciling and graffiti (Fig. 67). The graffiti on the monument declared the governmental historic connections, with text such as "Roca genocida" (Roca committed genocide) and "Roca=Videla." In this visual overlaying of historical loss, the repressors of genocide are equated and a historical link is established between the disappeared and the Patagonian Indians.[29] In 2004, during a March of Resistance, human rights organizations created a parallel photographic intervention. Protestors covered the pyramid in the middle of the Plaza de Mayo with portraits of the disappeared and covered the Roca

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[25] Carlos Masotta, "Imágenes recientes de la 'Conquista del Desierto". Problemas de la memoria en la impugnación de un mito origen," *Runa: Archivo para las ciencias del hombre* no. 26 (2007): 225-245.
[26] Osvaldo Bayer, "La historia está para aprender," *Página/12*, Buenos Aires, May 9, 2004.
[27] Carlos Masotta, "Imágenes recientes de la 'Conquista del Desierto."
[28] Carlos Masotta, "Fantasma de Roca. Fronteras de la memoria argentina entre la civilización y el genocidio," in Enrique Rodrigues-Moura and Doris Pany, *Von Wäldern, Städten Und Grenzen: Narration Und Kulturelle Identitätsbildungsprozesse in Lateinamerika*, *Atención*, Bd. 8/9 (Frankfurt am Main; [Vienna]: Brandes & Apsel; Südwind, 2005), 107. "La comunicación anacrónica no sólo produce lecturas sobre el pasado sino también sobre el presente. A través de Roca también se piensa la última dictadura."
[29] David Viñas was the first author to write on the connection between the disappeared and the natives of Patagonia. David Viñas, *Indios, ejército y frontera* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 1982).

monument a few blocks away with photographs of indigenous people from Patagonia. The defacement-intervention by the human rights organizations transformed the traditional military monument into an anti-monument to bolster their cause in the public sphere. The art collective Grupo de Arte Callejero (GAC) also engaged with the conversion of the Roca monument into an anti-monument through a stencil depicting a silhouetted figure falling off a bucking horse.

The antecendent of the 2004 campaign for the removal of the Buenos Aires statue of Roca was found in the City of San Carlos de Bariloche in the Río Negro Province.[30] There, an equestrian monument of Roca by Emilio Sarniguet (b. 1887) was installed in 1940 in the main plaza (Fig. 68). In 1997 civil society groups demanded the removal of the Roca monument. The National Commission on Monuments, Museums and Historic Places stated that the elimination of the statue was impossible because it was a national monument.[31] The Bariloche sculpture then became a public forum for graffiti against human rights abuses in Argentina and around the world.[32] The supporters of human rights in Argentina applied tactical vandalism, which Cohen explained has "the end in mind of drawing attention or gaining publicity for a particular cause…The author is putting across a particular message which, perhaps because of the absence of, or lack of faith in, other channels, he has decided to do in this illegal way. The choice of method and target is deliberately made and the consequences of the act are deliberately

[30] In 2004-2005 a group of activists led by the group Awka Liwen (Mapuche for Dawn Rebellion), supported by the mobilization of the Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo and the writer Osvaldo Bayer, demanded the removal of the monument.
[31] Carlos Masotta, "Fantasmas de Roca. Fronteras de la memoria argentina entre la civilización y el genocidio." Another Roca monument was erected in 1941 in Río Gallegos in the Santa Cruz Province to commemorate his presidency rather than his military service.
[32] Gilda Santarsiero, "Roca, el monumeto más atacado," *La nación*, Buenos Aires, March 26, 2006. http://www.lanacion.com.ar/791975-roca-el-monumento-mas-atacado. (accessed December 9, 2010).

assessed."[33] This use of tactical vandalism challenged the hegemonic historical narrative of Roca as a hero of the Argentine Republic and called attention to the human rights cause in the public sphere. The campaign to remove the Roca monument was denied in both cities, but the visual interventions on the monument are, in the end, more powerful symbols that served to tell the history of genocide that occurred in the country.

As García Marquez explained in his affecting poem, it is the "mustached man in frock coat or with sword…a man who usurped the Indians' lands," a military man such as Roca, that has been traditionally heroicized and officially monumentalized in the public sphere. The Asociación Madres and its supporters, through the use of defacement, attempted to highlight the practice of constructing traditional monuments to military leaders who are often perpetrators of violent acts and crimes against humanity. Covered in graffiti, the figure of Roca no longer looks heroic nor idealized, and the graffiti, stenciling, stickers, and interventions on the statue effectively bring a revisionist history to the very center of the city. The call to remove the monument and the covering of the monument with text revolutionized the national memory of Roca, and attempted to reconstruct the national historical narrative of native indigenous peoples and victims of state-sponsored terrorism.[34] Resorting to public art as a means for disseminating messages was part of the human rights organizations' historic strategies from the 1970s onward.

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[33] Cohen, "Property Destruction: Motives and Meanings, 43."

[34] On March 24, 1995 in a similar recognition of the legacy of heroicizing militarism in the public sphere, the city of La Plata branch of H.I.J.O.S covered the national, patriotic monuments in the Plaza San Martín and Plaza Italia with black cloth, and naming the day "the national day of disgrace." In addition, the alteration in the meaning of the Roca monuments in Bariloche and Buenos Aires also extended to another type of official memorial: that of the street sign. In 2004 Grupo de Arte Callejero (GAC) changed the street sign named for Roca by covering it with the unsanctioned name of native peoples in Buenos Aires. The crossing out of Roca's name on street signs also took place in the city of Rosario.

Human rights organizations vandalized symbols of national patrimony in order to enlighten passers-by about Argentina's history of repression and violence.

The use of vandalism by distinct groups was reflective of broader socio-political circumstances within Argentina at the time the acts were committed. Human rights organizations used vandalism to reveal history and human rights abuses, and to mark sites of memory like clandestine detention centers. While the Argentine government and supporters of the dictatorial era turned to vandalism to conceal their crimes, human rights organizations used vandalism to reveal those crimes. The factions siding with the junta continued the dictatorship's procedure of anonymity when carrying out the vandalism in the 1990s, just as the dictatorship used methods of disappearance that also erased the identity of the perpetrators of disappearance.

When the government committed destructive actions against artworks dedicated to the disappeared in the 1990s, it avoided responsibility for its actions, just as it circumvented implementing institutional justice at the time. However, the human rights organizations publicly acknowledged and owned their acts of vandalism with the purpose of challenging official history and questioning the values of a nation through its built national icons. Despite the clearly distinct messages of human rights organizations and the supporters of the dictatorship, each group shared the same motivations for their conscious application of ideological vandalism. They brought attention to their political cause in the public sphere and attempted to shape and control the narrative of the dictatorship and the history of the disappeared through the destruction and defacement of art in the public realm.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Timeline

1966-1976 Events Leading up to the 1976-83 Military Dictatorship

1966 Juan Carlos Onganía's military regime is in power (in office 1966-70)
1973 Juan Perón returns from exile and becomes president (in office 1973-74).
Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance (Triple A) is formed
1973 Chilean military *coup d'etat*
1974 Isabel Martinez de Perón becomes president after Juan Perón's death.

Art with References to Totalitarianism Before the Last Military Dictatorship

1968 *Tucumán Arde* (Tucumán is Burning), Buenos Aires and the City of Rosario
1972 Luis Pazos's, *Monumento al prisionero político desaparecido* (Monument to the Disappeared Political Prisoner) for a Centro de Arte y Comunicación (Center for Art and Communication, CAYC) exhibition.
1973 Juan Carlos Distéfano's *El Mudo*, installed at the Museo Nacional de Buenos Aires

1976-1983 Process of National Reorganization (*Processo*)

1976 On March 24 the military junta led by Navy Admiral Emilio Eduardo Massera, Army General Jorge Rafael Videla, and Air Force Brigadier General Orlando Ramón Agosit depose Isabel Perón
The military censors the media and the artworld and begins a systematic repression of forced disappearance
1977 Madres de Plaza de Mayo forms

Human Rights Organization Sponsored Memorials

1977 Mothers of disappeared begin marching with photographs of the disappeared in the Plaza de Mayo, Buenos Aires.
1970s Fernando Traverso, *Urban Interventions in the City of Rosario*
1980-85 José "Gafo" Garófalo's, *30,000 Disappeared* series
1983- *Siluetazo*, Plaza de Mayo, Buenos Aires by Rodolfo Aguerreberry, Guillermo Kexel, and Julio Flores

Cultural Institution Sponsored Memorials

1976 Military junta closes the Universidad de La Plata's mural program
1978 Diana Dowek exhibits at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes
Norberto Goméz exhibits at Arte Nuevo gallery
Marcelo Bonevardi's exhibition at the Museo Provincial de Córdoba is closed at the behest of the Minister of Education

1983-1985 Transition to Democracy

1983 Raúl Ricardo Alfonsín is elected president (in office 1983-89)
1984 Alfonsín's administration begins exhumations of the bodies of the disappeared
1985 Trial of the military juntas

Human Rights Organization Sponsored Memorials

1984 *Participatory Posters* by Grupo de Artistas Socialistas por la Transformación (Gas-Tar)
1985 El Grupo de Artistas Plástico contra el Punto Final create 30,000 dots in the Plaza de Mayo
Marcha de la mascaras blancas (March of the White Masks) organized by Fercho Czarny and Pedro Lanteri
1986 Ex-detained disappeared persons march with white masks on the tenth anniversary of the military coup

Government Sponsored Memorials

1987 Laura Filippi, *Gloria*, Buenos Aires

1986-1994 The Decade of Politically Enforced Forgetting

1986 The Madres de Plaza de Mayo split into two groups: Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo and Madres de Plaza de Mayo Línea Fundadora
Punto Final (Full Stop) Law Passes
1987 Law of Due Obedience Passes
1989 Carlos Saúl Menem is elected president (in office 1989-99)

Human Rights Organization Sponsored Memorials

1986 CAPaTaCO *Velas x Chile*, September 11, Buenos Aires
1987 Madres and supporters put graffiti on walls with the names of military leaders with the word "assassin" to protest the Catholic Mass of reconciliation
Madres hang *Behind Bars* posters during a military parade

Cultural Institution Sponsored Memorials

1988 Estela Carlotta, president of the Abuelas, publishes the first *recordatorio* (remembrance) in the newspaper *Página/12*, Buenos Aires
1994 The competition begins for the Monumento a Recuerdo, Memoria y Compromiso at the Universidad de La Plata

Government Sponsored Memorials

1993 Armando Fabre*'s Memoria sin tiempo*, Cordóba,

1995-1998 The Memory Boom

1995 Lieutenant Commander Adolfo Scilingo publicly confesses to the military's systematic practice of torture and disappearing the bodies of its victims
H.I.J.O.S. is formed

Human Rights Organization Sponsored Memorials

1995 *Tótem*, ex-CCD El Atlético, Buenos Aires
1996 H.I.J.O.S. and Etcétera begin *escraches*
Barrios x Memoria is founded
1997 *Un Puente para iluminar la memoria* March 23-25, Buenos Aires, organized by Viviana Ponieman
1998 Grupo de Arte Callejero begins participating in the *escraches*

Cultural Institution Sponsored Memorials

1997 *Puente de la memoria* exhibition at the high school, Colegio Nacional de Buenos Aires, organized by Marcelo Brodsky
Madres de Plaza de Mayo Línea Fundadora exhibition *Exposición por la identidad del detenido-desaparecido* (Exhibition for the Identity of Detained-Disappeared Persons) opens at the Centro Cultural San Martín
1998 *Identidad* exhibition opens at the Centro Cultural Recoleta in Buenos Aires

1999-Present

2003 Nestór Kirchner elected president (in office 2003-07). He runs on a platform of human rights.
2005 Argentina's Supreme Court overturns Amnesty Laws
2006 The disappearance of labor activist Jorge Julio Lopéz
2010 Reynaldo Benito Antonio Bignone, the last de-facto president of Argentina's military junta (1982-83), is convicted of crimes against humanity
2012 Jorge Rafael Videla is convicted of crimes against humanity

Human Rights Organizaton Sponsored Memorials

2001 *The Camps II*, Marcelo Brodsky, temporary installation in front of ESMA
2004 *Siluetazo II*, on the gates of ESMA (see p. 73 for a list of participating artists and human rights organizations)

Government Sponsored Memorials

2001 William Tucker, *Victory*, Parque de la memoria, Buenos Aires
Dennis Oppenheim, *Monument to Escape,* Parque de la memoria, Buenos Aires
2003 Roberto Aizenberg, *Untitled*, Parque de la memoria, Buenos Aires
2007 Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorism de Estado, Parque de la memoria, Buenos Aires inauguration
2009 Nicolás Guagnini, *30,000*, Parque de la memoria, Buenos Aires
Grupo de Arte Callejero *Carteles de la memoria*, Parque de la memoria, Buenos Aires

Appendix 2: Law 46 of the Legislature of the City of Buenos Aires

Article 1º - It will be destined, on the coast line of the Río de la Plata, a space that will be affected for its use as a public promenade where a monument and a group of sculptures will be located in tribute to the imprisoned-disappeared and assassinated people by State terrorism during the decades of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, until the recovery of the State of Right. The exact location and the conditions of the design are specified in the Annexed I, which is an integral part of the present Law.
Article . 2º -The Monument must contain the names of the imprisoned-disappeared and assassinated people which are present in the National Commission on Disappearance of People (Co.Na.Dep.) report, checked and updated by the Human and Social Rights Undersecretary belonging to the National Interior Ministry; those of which who were later denounced before the same organization, or provided jointly by Human Rights Organizations. In addition, it will be provided with a space that will allow the incorporation of the names of those prisoners missing or assassinated during the period mentioned in article 1º, which could be denounced in the future.
Article 3º - The Commission for the Monument to the Victims of the State Terrorism will be created. This commission will be integrated by:
a. The First Vice-president of the Legislature,
b. Eleven (11) congressmen, respecting direct relationship with the parties represented in the Legislature,
c. Four (4) government employees, designated by the Government of the City of Buenos Aires, representing the areas which are involved in the fulfillment of the present Law,

d. One representative designated by the University of Buenos Aires (UBA), and

e. One representative of each one of the of each one of the Human Rights Organizations, detailed in Annexed II, which is an integral part of the present Law.

Article 4º - A public contests will be called for the selection of the disappeared name listed on a Monument, as for the sculptures that will integrate the multi-sculptural group.
Article 5º - The attributions of the Commission created in article 3º
a. To participate in the contest "Ideas for the Development of the Ciudad Universitaria Area of Ciudad de Buenos Aires", according to the agreement signed on March 19, 1998, Resolution number 016-SPUyMA-98, in which it concerns to the fulfillment of the present Law,
b. To participate in the design, within the winning integral project mentioned in interjection "a", in reference to the Monument and the sculptures implementation
c. To approve the integral project and to supervise the execution of the work (promenade, monument, sculptures),
d. To establish the bases of the contest mentioned in article 4º,
e. To designate the juries for such contest,
f. Outside the mentioned contest, to select sculptures of Argentine and foreign artists, on the base of its prestige and artistic trajectory and its commitment with the defense of the Human Rights, in order to integrate the multi-sculptural group,
g. to receive new denunciations on lengthy-disappear and assassinated people, and to evaluate its inclusion in the list,
h. to dictate its Internal Regulation,

i. to ask for legal, artistic and technical advising,
j. to make all other conductive action to the fulfillment of the present Law,

Article 6º - The Commission must report quarterly to the Legislature about its performance, through the Human Rights, Guarantees and Non-discrimination Commission.
Article 7º - The Commission will conclude its activities three months after the definitive inauguration of the park.
Article 8º -The expenses demanded to the fulfillment of the present law will be computed as follows:
a. Regarding the public promenade, the budgetary item of the General Expenses Budget and Resources Calculation of 1998 Exercise; 30,16,01,2,1,4,2 "Buenos Aires and the River" - Constructions and to 35,20,02,2,1,4,2 Project "Parque Ciudad Universitaria",

b. Regarding the Monument and the multi-sculptural group, the Executive Power will consider the amount of the withdraw for the fulfillment of the present Law and will send to the Legislature, if needed, the project of budgetary modification, established for the jurisdiction of Culture Secretariat's 1998 Exercise.

Article 9º - - The promenade that contains the multi-sculptural monument will be inaugurated on March 24, 1999, by the City Head of Government, congressmen, representatives of Human Rights Organizations, relatives of the victims, etc.
Transitory clause:
The Executive Power will honor an agreement with Universidad de Buenos Aires with the intention of deciding the anticipated use of the land that will hold the park and the construction of the monument and the multi-sculptural group of the present law.

Appendix 3: Parque de la memoria Jury Voting Record

The second Jury meeting took place on November 25-27, 1999 (Paulo Herkenhoff was absent). The jury selected eight winning works and four honorable mentions.
Unanimous votes were made for the works of: Claudia Fontes, Dennis Oppenheim, GAC, Marie Orensanz, Marjetica Potrc, Rini Hurkmans, Nuno Ramos.
7 votes in favor and 2 votes against (David Elliot and Enio Iommi) Germán Botero
7 votes in favor and 2 abstentions for 1st honorable mention Per Kirkeby. (David Elliot and Enio Iommi abstained because both thought the work should have won).
Unanimous vote selected the following honorable mentions:
2nd William Tucker,
3rd Nicolás Guagnini,
4th Clorindo Testa.
The jury recommended that the four works that received honorable mention should also be built at the Park.
Artists that were shortlisted, but whose projects were not built:
Cristina Piffer, Claudia Contrestas, and Hugo Vidal (Argentina); Fabián Marcaccio (Argentina), Jan Fabre (Belgium), Jenny Watson (Australia), Julio Le Parc [i](Argentina), Julio Pérez Sanz (Argentina), Luiz Antonio Vallandro Keating (Brazil), Marina Papadópoulos (Argentina), Martha Niklaus (Brazil), Pablo García Reinoso (Argentina), Pedro Paulo Domingues (Brazil); Roberto Bogani, Santiago Botzzola, Ramiro Gallardo and Andrés Gorini (Argentina).

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Gustavo Bonevardi, January 9, 2012, New York, NY.
Marcelo Brodsky, July 31, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Juan Carlos Destéfano, November 11, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Diana Dowek, October 12, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Andrea Fasani, October 17, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Luis Felipe Nóe, December 5, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
León Ferrari, December 7, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Carlos Filomia, December 15, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Julio Flores, September 16, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Norberto Gómez, December 16, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Nicolás Guagnini, November 15, 2006, New York, NY.
Carmen Lapaco, October 17, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Winnie Lira Letelier, December 22, 2009, Santiago, Chile.
Daniel Ontiveros, December 17, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Dennis Oppenheim, June 17, 2010, New York, NY.
Leila Perez Valdes, October 21, 2009, Santiago, Chile.
Juana Mollier Pergament, Buenos Aires, Argentina March 23, 2006 & December 21, 2009.
Viviana Ponieman, November 4, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Hector Puppo, December 15, 2008, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Sara Ramirez, October 23, 2009, Paine, Chile.
Aida Sarte, October 17, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Fanny Seldes, Barrios x memoria, June 18, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Cristina Terzaghi, October 17, 2009, La Plata Argentina.
Graciela Taquini, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Alberto Varas, December 27, 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Gabriela Zuñiga Figueroa, October 23, 2009, Santiago, Chile.
Forty-six Audience Response interview at the Parque de la memoria, March 27, 2006 & throughout 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
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