

BOOK REVIEW ESSAY

Spaces, Sites, and the Art of Memory

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This essay reviews the following works:

Sites of Memory in Spain and Latin America: Trauma, Politics, and Resistance. Edited by Aída Díaz de León, Marina Llorente, and Marcella Salvi. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015. Pp. vi + 177. ISBN: 9781498507806.

La consagración de la memoria: Una etnografía acerca de la institucionalización del recuerdo sobre los crímenes del terrorismo de Estado en la Argentina. By Ana Guglielmucci. Buenos Aires: Antropofagia, 2013. Pp. 398. ISBN: 9789871238996.

Art from a Fractured Past: Memory and Truth-Telling in Post-Shining Path Peru. Edited by Cynthia E. Milton. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014. Pp. xi + 307. ISBN: 9780822355304.

Ni tan elefante, ni tan blanco: Arquitectura, urbanismo y política en la trayectoria del Estadio Nacional. By Valentina Rozas Krause. Santiago, Chile: RIL Editores, 2014. Pp. 342. ISBN: 9789560100641.

Memorials in Berlin and Buenos Aires: Balancing Memory, Architecture, and Tourism. By Brigitte Sion. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015. Pp. xix + 129. ISBN: 9780739176306.

Throughout the Americas, we are witnessing the ways deep memories of violence are resurfacing for new kinds of debate, understood both as unaddressed wounds of the past and as constituting instances of violence in the here and now. Activists in Argentina and Chile are pushing the connections among memories of the violent repression under dictatorship, neoliberal transformation, and social inequality and marginalization today.¹ In El Salvador, scholars and politicians argue about whether and how to relate memories of the country's 1980s civil war, US imperialism, and Salvadoran refugees to today's violent crises.² Analysts of the Mexico-US border are drawing from intergenerational family memories to make visible the early twentieth-century killings of Mexican-descended US citizens in southern Texas during the Mexican Revolution in relation to contemporary border policing.³ US lawyers and researchers in Alabama are linking memories regarding twentieth-century lynching and racial terror to twenty-first-century state-sponsored incarceration and brutality.⁴

Latin America-centered memory studies now occupy a vast and growing multidisciplinary terrain. Once inseparable from studies of human rights and transitional justice, memory scholarship now also explores the politics and representations of violent memories in relation to the present, as conveyed through art, performance, memoirs, novels, national foundational myths, architecture, urban landscapes, and more. Many worry that conceptualizing such disparate phenomena under the grand umbrella of memory in fact empties

¹ See particularly the efforts of *Londres 38* in Santiago, <http://www.londres38.cl/1937/w3-channel.html>; and *El Ex-Centro de Detención, Tortura, y Desaparición El Olimpo* in Buenos Aires, <http://www.exccdolimpo.org.ar/>.

² This debate was explicitly addressed in the recent conference, "From War to Politics: An International Conference on El Salvador's Peace Process," King Juan Carlos Center, New York University, April 1, 2016.

³ Monica Muñoz Martínez, "Recuperating Histories of Violence in the Americas: Vernacular History-Making on the US-Mexico Border," *American Quarterly* 66, no. 3 (2014): 661–689, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/aq.2014.0040>.

⁴ See the work of the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Alabama, <http://www.eji.org/>.

memory as an explanatory concept, which is a fair concern. Yet memories are the underlying grammar of identity, and violent memories do not go away, no matter how silent or buried they can be, both figuratively and literally. While politicians are increasingly recognizing the symbolic value of proactive stances on memory, memory scholarship often delves into and operates from the margins of power and in the interstices of political institutions.

Indeed, memory studies today are largely the domain of a generation of Latin American scholars who as young people either directly experienced repression in their countries or grew up imagining, if not feeling, the atrocities in the midst of pregnant silences and coded conversations, at home as well as in public.⁵ This generational dimension characterizes Holocaust memory scholarship as well, and Latin America memory studies are quite influenced by Holocaust studies. What in general distinguishes Latin America memory studies, however, is the explicit infusion of the political across the field's disciplinary approaches, as so much of the violence of the twentieth century, certainly, was a reaction to distinct reformist and revolutionary projects, including an assertion of the rights of the politically and socially disenfranchised. Foundational to Latin American memory studies is sociologist Elizabeth Jelin's intellectual spearheading of this new generation in the late 1990s, through the Social Science Research Council and Argentina's Instituto de Desarrollo Económico y Social. Jelin's project began, in no small part, in order to rebuild a Southern Cone social science academy devastated by the rightist political repression. The Latin America memory boom thus is centrally linked with politicized struggles, both individual and collective. In addition, while memory studies tend to center on leftist experiences and the consequences of right-wing military repression, a number of studies also focus on memories from the right and from "perpetrators"⁶ and on victimization at the hands of left revolutionary groups as well as the military. The latter includes studies from Peru, like Cynthia Milton's edited volume discussed below.

The five books reviewed here all fit within the rubric of sites of memory, if we understand "sites" to mean artistic and textual representations as well as physical sites. The books span disciplines and geographies, reaching both far back in time and across the region. Two of the texts include memory work from Spain and Germany as well as the Mexico–United States border. Three books are close, multidisciplinary studies of the institutionalization of major memorial sites in Santiago, Buenos Aires, and Berlin.

In *Art from a Fractured Past: Memory and Truth-Telling in Post-Shining Path Peru*, editor Cynthia Milton has gathered leading anthropologists, artists, literary theorists, musicologists, and historians, whose contributions compose a fascinating and coherent collection. Together they explore representations of the violence of the past three decades or more through Peru's rich traditions in the visual and performing arts and the humanities. Milton provides a substantive framing introduction that traces Peru's internal armed conflict (1980–2000), the fitful and ongoing coming to terms with past violence, including the Peruvian truth commission (2001) as a controversial linchpin, and a very thoughtful analysis of the power and limits of memory art as healing, or perhaps as affect-producing for wider audiences. As Milton writes, the essays explore the potential of artistic expression in ways that mere words or statistics may not. Milton's introduction demonstrates both deep knowledge and appreciation of Peru's artistic wealth across disparate regions of the country, and she and her co-contributors upend neat classifications that conventionally separate "folkloric," "popular," "high" and "low" art, arguing that this risks reproducing "the very hierarchies that are at the root of Peru's injustices" (16). Indeed, violence mediated by deep divisions of race and class surface significantly in the volume's essays, testifying to the basic fact that the large majority of the victims were the indigenous and poor of the Andes. It was arguably not until visible attacks in Lima and on the upper middle class, starting in 1992, that society as a whole began to appreciate the enormity of the country's internal armed conflict.

Milton's own first chapter, "Images of Truth: Rescuing Memories of Peru's Internal War through Testimonial Art," is compelling. Here Milton analyzes NGO-sponsored art contests in the highlands and in Lima to illustrate how "artist-witnesses" tap into older, established Peruvian artistic traditions as well as contemporary

⁵ For generational lenses on this phenomenon, see Daniela Jara, *Children and the Afterlife of State Violence: Memories of Dictatorship* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); Mariana Achugar, *Discursive Processes of Intergenerational Transmission of Recent History: (Re)Making Our Past* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); Gabriela Fried Amilivia, *State Terrorism and the Politics of Memory in Latin America: Transmissions across the Generations of Post-Dictatorship Uruguay, 1984–2004* (New York: Cambria, 2016); and Susana Kaiser, *Postmemories of Terror: A New Generation Copes with the Legacy of the "Dirty War"* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

⁶ Steve J. Stern analyzes what he has termed "salvation memories" in *Remembering Pinochet's Chile: On the Eve of London, 1988* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004). See also the important studies by Leigh Payne, *Unsettling Accounts: Neither Truth Nor Reconciliation in Confessions of State Violence* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); Michael Lazzara, ed., *Luz Arce and Pinochet's Chile: Testimony in the Aftermath of State Violence* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); and Valentina Salvi, *De vencedores a víctimas: Memorias militares sobre el pasado reciente en Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Biblos, 2013).

ones. Community participation in the contests is high, and community artists find voice and perhaps some catharsis as they render drawings and paintings that document both intimate and collective violence.

The volume benefits from a member of the renowned *retablista* family—the artist, journalist, and anthropologist Edilberto Jiménez Quispe—with translated excerpts from his *Chungui: Violencia y trazos de memoria*. They are Jiménez's drawings and interpretations of one community hit particularly hard by violence, in collaboration with that community's citizens. Anthropologist María Eugenia Ulfe's chapter provides an instructive history and analysis of the origins and evolution of *retablos* (altarpieces) as an art form that has existed in creative tension with colonialist dominance over centuries.

Racism is an explicit theme in the volume's "Part Two: Telling Stories of Political Violence." Through his analysis of acclaimed novelist Alonso Cueto's novel *La hora azul*, literary theorist Víctor Vich argues that Cueto ultimately dismisses any thought of reconciliation in the face of such tremendous class and race difference, expressed through the characters' graphic confrontations and paternalistic racism over generations. In a different literary-artistic vein, the excerpt from artists Luis Rossell, Alfredo Villar, and Jesús Cossio's graphic novel *Rupay: Historias de la violencia política en Perú, 1980–1984* depicts the racist claims regarding the killings of Peruvian journalists in Uchuraccay, Ayacucho. The excerpt demonstrates the intricacy and sophistication of a visual frame, the detail allowed a close viewer, as the artists reveal the complexity of the case. Historian Ponciano del Pino's interview of Ayacuchan filmmaker Palito Ortega Matute also addresses the racist dimensions of military violence in the Andes, as well as the deep abyss between the truth commissioners and the victims, as symbolic of what is seemingly ungraspable for centralist *limeño* power. Ortega is clear that while his movies have brought wide acclaim, he makes them for fellow *ayacuchanos*.

The final section of *Art from a Fractured Past* focuses on performance: sociologist Ricardo Caro Cárdenas on commemorative rituals in Sacsamarca, anthropologist Cynthia M. Garza on the powerful works of the famed theater troupe Yuyachkani, and ethnomusicologist Jonathan Ritter on songs of testimony from rural Ayacucho. Each chapter is as strong as the rest. Caro relates the fluidity of commemorative performances to ongoing tensions, silences, and quests for recognition and resources in one Andean community. Garza captures the profound contributions of the Yuyas over decades of respectful work within indigenous communities, and the theater company's provocative challenges to audiences around the country. Ritter relays the intricate meanings of testimonial composers. Historian Steve J. Stern provides an instructive afterword that relates art and memory of Peru to broader traditions in both post-Holocaust and Latin American art criticism. As a whole, the volume beautifully coheres to privilege creativity and the deep structural and conjunctural violence that marks Peru, past and present.

Under the necessarily broad title, *Sites of Memory in Spain and Latin America: Trauma, Politics, and Resistance*, coeditors Aída Díaz de León, Marina Llorente, and Marcella Salvi have produced a slim but strong collection of essays predominantly from the humanities. Like most collections on memory in Latin America to date (including this review), the volume favors analyses focused on memories of violence in Chile and Argentina under dictatorship, but there are also fascinating essays that take readers into colonialism and its reinventions in Peru, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic, and into gender-, race-, and class-based violence on the Mexican border and in Venezuela in the context of late twentieth-century neoliberalism. There are also chapters on literature, translation, and the exhumed and yet-to-be-exhumed dead in Spain.

Like *Art from a Fractured Past*, this volume benefits from a magisterial introduction by Díaz de León that addresses the use of memory across the disciplines, creating a coherence enjoined in the fragmentations across time, space, politics, power, coloniality, race, and gender. Díaz de León emphasizes the reterritorialization through translations of subaltern testimony, poetry, and texts, exemplified in the volume by the contribution of translator Steven F. White. In "Exile and Erasure: A Poetic Reconstruction of the Spanish Past in Antonio Crespo Massieu's *Elegía en Portbou*," Marina Llorente enacts this poetic reterritorialization across borders, time, and the struggle against European fascism. Marcella Salvi's chapter, "Everything Is Coming to Light," shows how novelist Carmen Martín Gaité and other Spanish writers "unbury the silenced past" (51). Martín Gaité does so not through a neat, singular story of heroic loss but rather through contradictory memories that convey deep discomfort—perhaps an answer to why such silences persist.

Women and gendered memories are importantly represented in the volume. Liliana Trevizán's "Performing Memory and Democracy in Chile" captures the resonances that women protagonists brought to antidictatorial struggle: democratic practices involving inclusion, flexibility, generosity, morality, and antiauthoritarianism. In "Depoliticization, Historical Memory, and Resistance to Obliviousness: The Case of Femicide and the Cotton Field Memorial in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico," Martha I. Chew Sánchez and Alfredo Limas Hernández locate femicide squarely within global production regimes and the cross-border violence characteristic of the resulting social and economic insecurity. The Cotton Field Memorial to victims of femicide represents a site of activism as well

as mourning, even as families also recognized the memorial as a poor, even offensive, response to atrocity and loss. Sella A. Chew's "The Memory of Black Womanhood in Mexico: La Mulata de Córdoba" resurrects a contribution to the national foundational narrative and reminds us that racism is not solely a characteristic of the elite.

The three remaining books are close studies of the institutional armature and politics facilitating major memorial sites in Argentina, Chile, and Germany. Using distinct disciplinary approaches (urban studies and architecture, anthropology, and performance studies), each examines the messy, ongoing processes of establishing the sites of historic conscience that are widely visited today. Together the texts provide a real sense of what goes into memorialization battles worldwide—battles over a commemorative site's purpose, design, narrative, naming, chronology, audience, and more. Ana Guglielmucci's and Valentina Rozas Krause's books address what Southern Cone memory activists have termed the "recuperation"—or as Guglielmucci has also termed it, "the consecration"—of "sacred sites," former clandestine sites of torture, death, and disappearance. Brigitte Sion makes a comparative study of the commemorative architectural and artistic projects of the Parque de la Memoria in Buenos Aires and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin. In addition, both Guglielmucci and Rozas have participated in different ways in the sites they analyze—Rozas as an architect who ultimately forms part of a successful design team for the grounds of the site, and Guglielmucci as a former staff person on the Human Rights Board for the city of Buenos Aires, a body charged with developing the legal and bureaucratic decision-making norms over time in relation to sites of historic conscience in the city. This makes for perhaps more complicated but rich "insider" relationships to the sites.

Ni tan elefante, ni tan blanco: Arquitectura, urbanismo y política en la trayectoria del Estadio Nacional is Rozas's impressive, ambitious study of the origin and evolution of Chile's National Stadium, the country's largest stadium complex and host to its major sports and cultural events, from Americas Cup soccer to the 55,000-strong audience at the 2016 Rolling Stones concert. The stadium is also undeniably associated with the repression of the dictatorship.⁷ The *New York Times* characterized the stadium as "perhaps the most infamous sports arena in the world."⁸ Indeed, during his concert, Mick Jagger referenced its repressive history, as have many major rockers who have performed there, including Bono, Bruce Springsteen, Sting, and others. In accepting the trophy during the Americas Cup victory in 2015, Chilean soccer star Jean Beausejour said, "In a place where there was death, today we brought some happiness to Chile."⁹

As an architect and urban planner, Rozas places the stadium's repressive past within a much broader examination of the stadium as the product of a "truncated modernist" and functionalist imagination in the 1930s, followed by decades of mass use in the ever-expanding city of Santiago. Rozas plays on the Chilean architectural and cultural elite's initial claims that the stadium design would prove to be a "white elephant," disproportionate to the city's needs and stylistic energies. Yet Rozas shows how this claim proved unfounded. She also reveals how the successful 1937 design was modeled in good part on Nazi aesthetics and beliefs regarding the national political imperative to marry sports, education, and the "invigoration of the race" (40). This included founding the official National Defense of the Race and Exploitation of Free Time (Defensa de la Raza y Aprovechamiento de Horas Libres).

Rozas does a meticulous analysis of National Stadium plans and projects through several decades, as much of the approved design for the massive sixty-four-hectare grounds as well as the Coliseum remained incomplete. She convincingly argues that attempts to improve on the original design would only contribute to the deterioration of the physical plant, even as the stadium played an increasingly important role in presidential politics. No government used the stadium to appeal to the masses more than Salvador Allende's Popular Unity administration (1970–1973), and Rozas argues that Augusto Pinochet's functionalist use of the stadium as a center for detention, torture, and death had also to do with symbolically upending Allende's use of the stadium.

⁷ An additional iconic Chilean site that has similarly contradictory associations is La Moneda presidential palace. For an important analysis of La Moneda's evolution, see María Chiara Bianchini, *Chile, memorias de La Moneda: La (re)construcción de un símbolo político* (Madrid: Ediciones Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2012). For an introductory, eminently readable, and sensitive treatment of memorial making in Chile, see Peter Read and Marivic Wyndham, *Narrow but Endlessly Deep: The Struggle for Memorialisation in Chile since the Transition to Democracy* (Acton, Australia: Australian National University Press, 2016).

⁸ David Waldstein, "In Chile's National Stadium, Dark Past Shadows Copa América Matches," *New York Times*, June 17, 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/19/sports/soccer/in-chiles-national-stadium-dark-past-shadows-copa-america-matches.html>.

⁹ "En un lugar donde hubo muerte hoy dimos una alegría a Chile: El lateral nacional dedicó el triunfo a todas aquellas personas que sufrieron la dictadura chilena," *La Tercera*, July 7, 2015, <http://www.latercera.com/noticia/deportes/copa-america/2015/07/3117-637370-9-beausejour-en-un-lugar-donde-hubo-muerte-hoy-le-dimos-una-alegria-a-chile.shtml>.

Rozas devotes ample space to literature on architecture and modernity, including a provocative exploration of Pinochet's use of the stadium through Zygmunt Bauman's theorizing on the relationship among space, state, modernity, and the Holocaust. She also takes readers on a long ride through the literature on memory, memorialization, monumentalization, and museums while also comparatively showcasing Chile's Museum of Memory and Human Rights and the General Cemetery's Patio 29 memorial (in which Rozas herself was a lead designer). The book ends, in part, with a description of the green landscaping project that brings coherence to the stadium's grounds, a work in progress in which the author is also a planner.

Regarding the fraught politics surrounding the designs and outcomes of the multifaceted National Stadium memorialization project, Rozas argues that the government decision to favor the representation of survivors, pushed by a group of ex-political prisoners, rather than a broader "professional" concern for the ongoing dynamics of the stadium-going public, led to a less appropriate use of space. She claims the memorialization process at the stadium has tended to privilege Tzvetan Todorov's conceptualization of "literal" over "exemplary" memory. It is interesting that, according to Rozas, the decision to preserve and thereby memorialize section eight stadium seating—as wooden planks, rather than the new, contemporary individual seats that came from a major renovation—did not come from either proposal but from then education minister Sergio Bitar, himself a former political prisoner. As Rozas says, this decision was beyond even the hopes of the ex-political prisoners group, who assumed that such a visible presence within the stadium stands was unthinkable. Rozas gives the preservation a negative review, arguing that most stadium-goers most likely do not know the meaning of the memorial and that it interferes with other imperatives of the space. Rozas's criticism of the preserved section struck me as surprising, given that among those who study commemorative sites and have visited the stadium site, the arguably counter-commemorative visual disruption gets uniformly high marks. The planks invite us to ask what happened; they evoke curiosity as well as acknowledgment, in ways that more conventional memorials might not.

And this brings us to a notable absence in Rozas's otherwise laudable study: first, the work of today's postdictatorship protagonists who maintain the National Stadium commemorative spaces; and second, the national context in which, even with former political prisoners in the executive, ordinary survivors' experiences and accounts go unheard, particularly those of women torture survivors.¹⁰ The National Stadium memorial site does privilege survivors, who clearly coexist among the rest of society. Often a generation or more after the fact, women are sharing stories of their atrocious treatment, which was usually followed by the loss of employment, alienation, and shame and stigma, even within their own families. This was and is compounded by a common feeling of survivors' guilt (discussed in Guglielmucci's text reviewed below). The fact that the stadium privileges survivor testimonies in ways other sacred sites do not is quite significant.

What is involved in establishing and maintaining such a site of memory? Perhaps most important, it requires a dedicated core of memory activists. One of the most impressive dimensions of the National Stadium site today is the small army of young volunteers. Most of the volunteers were born after the dictatorship. They guide school visits, run film series, coordinate artist circles and workshops, and support older survivors. The weekly activities that volunteers facilitate are over and above the visits of the thousand or more Chileans who arrive with their families at the stadium each September 11 to light candles, create installations, listen to testimonies, and mourn. Again in recognition of women's experiences both as torture survivors and as those who anxiously awaited news of loved ones held inside, the National Stadium memorial site also sponsors a major event each March 8 for International Women's Day. I would argue that every major site of memory involves conflict from start to unending finish, and every site can also surprisingly come to thrive, even under less than stellar conditions regarding resources and institutional will. Like traumatic memory itself, sites can be engaged, become dormant, and then be reengaged in unanticipated ways.

It is the perseverance of memory activists—as bureaucrats and professionals as well as human rights advocates and political militants—that constitutes the central focus of anthropologist Ana Guglielmucci's equally ambitious *La consagración de la memoria: Una etnografía acerca de la institucionalización del recuerdo sobre los crímenes del terrorismo de Estado en la Argentina*. Guglielmucci traces the entry and eventual embrace of "memory" into the Argentine human rights lexicon and the development of local and federal legislative norms governing the establishment of memorial sites. Her research involved mountains of documents, interviews with an enormous number of protagonists, and participation in dozens of meetings among advocates and legislators. Argentina is no stranger to public argument, and Guglielmucci conveys with sensitivity and respect the contested nature of the diverse, divergent discussions regarding memory and memorialization.

¹⁰ For a leading journalist's work that does address these concerns, see Pascale Bonnefoy's *Terrorismo de estadio: Prisioneros de guerra en un campo de deportes* (Santiago: Liberalia Ediciones, second and updated edition, 2016).

She also focuses on and compares the years-long struggles to establish what are today the vibrant, hugely visited, and distinct sites of the former clandestine centers of detention and disappearance, the Escuela Superior de Mecánica de la Armada (ESMA) and the Olimpo.

Guglielmucci's analysis of the professionalization of some dimensions of the memory field is useful in comparative terms, as she discusses how social actors unfamiliar with the legislative terrain (a terrain in fact nonexistent under dictatorship) or with grant writing, say, were compelled to develop such expertise. The professionalization of sites today is evident even in what were some of the most conflictive struggles to establish them. This includes the ex-ESMA, now the headquarters of many human rights NGOs. In the renovated ex-ESMA's Casino, the space most like a museum of memory, Argentine university students receive accreditation for their *prácticas* (internships) as guides. Public scholars now debate the "banalization" of memory there.¹¹

Like Rozas, Guglielmucci includes an extensive review of the debates regarding how memory is conceptualized in relation to commemorative sites. What is fascinating about her review is that it does not focus on the European literature as do most reviews (including Rozas's) but rather takes us deep into Argentines' theorizing in creative tension with what has been at stake on the ground politically. For activists who had championed the demand for truth and justice, memory—that is, particular memories of state terrorism—became a third value, an end point to be insisted upon through sites of memory. For academics, Guglielmucci explains, memory must be conceptualized as a social process, a social construction with all its disparate, dialectical battles over which memories, what time period, who should be described as what, what objects, toward what purposes, all the while recognizing that a consensus is highly unlikely and perhaps even undesirable. Drawing primarily from meetings and forums over many years, particularly regarding establishing the ex-ESMA as well as other former clandestine detention and disappearance sites, Guglielmucci replays and evaluates the complexity of the ongoing decision-making processes and trade-offs.

Guglielmucci then analyzes the relationships of these processes to agencies of the Argentine state, another complex and often brand new set of layers crucial to the outcomes and sustaining of the sites. Again, the understandable suspicion toward the state meant that the agencies and their representatives' legitimacy and intentions were always in question. The author illustrates how the newly created Autonomous City of Buenos Aires government (1996) proved the most consistent supporter of memorialization initiatives, given close ties between official representatives and human rights organizations, even as the local government itself struggled to create functioning bodies to support and regulate decision making. Guglielmucci underscores the basic point that sympathetic bureaucrats can be essential to successful social movements.

As an anthropologist, Guglielmucci includes a chapter on rituals and performances that anchor a human rights conscience through the ebbs and flows of national politics. She reminds us that in the mid-1980s, Argentina became the first Latin American country to try its military junta, forcing society to recognize publicly what many claimed they did not know. Thus, in spite of a subsequent period of ten years or more characterized largely by state retreat on truth and justice, the trials performed a crucial service and precedent unique to the region at that time. During the hard 1990s, human rights groups' ceremonies visibly insisted that neither they nor the issues would go away. And on March 24, 2004, in a major public act twenty-eight years after the coup, President Néstor Kirchner announced the ESMA would be ceded from the Navy to the human rights community and provided with national resources for a major transformation. Lest we forget, Guglielmucci also discusses military ceremonies as rituals to attempt to counter the state terrorist narrative.

Finally, Guglielmucci conducts a detailed comparative analysis of the establishment and operation of the ex-ESMA and the Olimpo, two sacred sites that today accomplish complementary objectives and that in fact worked in part together to define their respective spaces. Both have contributed to evidence gathering for trials as well as to basic pedagogical imperatives. The massive grounds and location of the ex-ESMA affords an enormous range of large as well as small activities. To recognize El Olimpo as both a "space of death" and a "space of life," the site provides guided visits that describe both death and survival, and organizers dedicate a good deal of energy to the site's relationship with the neighborhood in which it is located, including an activist role that relates the movements and resistance of the past with ongoing basic social rights struggles.

Brigitte Sion's short, synthetic *Memorials in Berlin and Buenos Aires: Balancing Memory, Architecture, and Tourism* is a comparative study of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe and the Parque de la Memoria. Sion comes from the performance studies field and possesses multilingual expertise. She squarely engages with the question of reception as well as representation. In addition to a helpful presentation of

¹¹ Verónica Gago, "Conspiraciones contra la banalidad," *Emergente*, <https://medium.com/@EMERGENTE/conspiraciones-contra-la-banalidad-69d74b3feaf3#.v77nt73cu> (accessed August 16, 2016).

the national contexts and the evolution of the memorial form in broader terms, Sion conceives of each memorial as a performance site between the violently absented bodies of the victims, on the one hand, and those present as visitors, mourners, and tourists, on the other. Sion also explores the phenomenon of “death tourism” and the contrasting marketing of the sites. German state-sponsored tourist brochures heavily market the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, while the commission that oversees the Parque de la Memoria does no marketing (86), and the Parque has only fairly recently appeared in any guidebooks. As in other memory sites of the country, guided visits at the Parque are termed “journeys” or “visits,” never “tours.” There is no gift store.

Sion concludes that of the two sites, the Parque de la Memoria is more successful, for it never loses sight of the disappeared and murdered. Drawing from her experience as participant-observer, Sion suggests that “starchitect” Peter Eisenman’s portraying the German site’s massive stelae as the cold bureaucratic machinery of evil evokes more ambiguity than clarity regarding who as well as what should be remembered. In contrast, Sion argues that Alberto Varas’s design for the Parque, coupled with both the sculptural selection and the staff’s continued privileging of the lives of the dead and disappeared in all their work, keeps even the increasingly diverse and numerous visitors on message.

Taken together, the five texts constitute a strong yet necessarily incomplete picture of how sites of memory across the Americas are evoking recognition and instruction. Works from the Southern Cone have tended to dominate Latin American memory studies. Yet we are increasingly seeing contributions on sites of memory from Colombia, Guatemala, and El Salvador, countries where comparatively recent internal armed conflicts, often with significant US support or outright military funding, further complicate the debates. Mexico’s sites of memory studies also call for approaches that implicate both sides of the border.

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