The Media of Memories:
Argentine and Brazilian Transitional Justice as Seen on TV

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Dedications

With all my love
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Introduction

"We live on images" (Lifton 3). Referring specifically to the haunting of broken images after a traumatic event, Robert Jay Lifton's work on how images and imagination structure our reality takes on a new life with the explosion of images in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The foundation and growth of new media industries, such as television, film, and the Internet, allow for a re-reading of what images "we live on" and how we use these digitally produced images to make sense of collective trauma. Understanding the collective trauma felt by a community in the aftermath of genocide, war, terrorism, and other mass atrocities is complicated by the nature of trauma—its inherent latency and belatedness, the array of conflicting memory narratives proposed to understand its persistent effects, the limited tools used to address these effects, and an insufficient societal awareness of its permanence (e.g. Caruth; Laub; Lifton). Guided, in large part, by these complexities, and their continued impact on how communities remember mass atrocities, this project turns to the digital, moving televised image, as a new form of cultural transitional justice, which directly addresses these collective traumas in a way that works to restore dignity to victims, develop an inclusive narrative of the past, protect the right to memory, and inspire future activism.

Grounded in my own observation of the recent string of Latin American television shows such as *Montecristo* (Argentina, 2006), *Los archivos del cardinal* (Chile, 2011) and *Amor e Revolução* (Brazil, 2011), which directly reference, discuss and frame traumatic national pasts, this project looks to investigate why, nearly 40 years after the fall of the last wave of Latin American dictatorships (1960s-1980s), have these dictatorial pasts become fodder for fictional and nonfictional televisual productions? What does this communicate

about the role of televisual productions in the construction and mediation of the officially sanctioned memory regimes[1] promoted by more normative transitional justice mechanisms (trials, laws, truth commissions, reparations committees etc.)? A theme that has garnered recent attention from the Ibero-American Observatory of Television Fiction (OBITEL) in its 2013 report on social memory and television fiction. It has also become the focus of recent transitional justice scholarship, including the 2016 report on *Innovative Media for Change* dedicated to gaining knowledge on the role of the media in transitional justice contexts (Viebach et al.). While at times criticized for being a medium that leads to the dissolution of reality and the sensationalism of truths (aka 'Spielberg style' history), television is explored in this project as a medium of mass media with the potential to prevent the ossification of memory through its presence as a public discursive space that contributes to the reconstruction and transmission of memory for new generations. This investigation thus opens up a space for reading televisual productions as screens[2] that rather

[1] Adopted by Emilio Crenzel in his book *La historia política del Nunca Más*, the term memory regime (régimen de memoria) is used to describe a memory narrative that acts as a foundational reading of the past, which in turn, frames what should be remembered, how this past should be remembered, and its suitable modes of transmission. As Crenzel describes this term, "retrata 'aquellas 'memorias emblemáticas' que se tornan hegemónicas en la escena pública al instaurar, a través de prácticas y discursos diversos, los marcos de selección de lo memorable y las claves interpretativas y los estilos narrativos para evocarlo, pensarlo y transmitirlo" (24). While not necessarily controlled by the state, these memory regimes are given various qualifiers within this study, such as "official" and "public" to consistently name those memory regimes that are institutionalized by the state at any given time, and then are publicly reproduced and performed, becoming hegemonic. Aware of the potential problems that stem from the use of these qualifiers, it would be a mistake to read this use of qualifiers as an assumption that these regimes are only re-produced by cultural products, and are never crafted originally as such. Thus, one might ask what does *institutionalized* mean in this context? Is a memory regime, or transitional justice mechanism for that measure, only institutionalized when done via the state or can this process occur via private enterprise? In this sense, I would argue that the state's institutionalization of the process often reflects, reacts and produces norms that in many ways are already given cultural norms. Cultural norms can shift before state norms.

[2] Here, my use of the word screens references Sigmund Freud's concept of screen memory where one memory is used to displace, block, and at times silence another memory that cannot be

than block specific images, actually generate new lines of communication, fostering a sense of multidirectional memory that questions the closed system critique[3] and unpacks the economic benefit model associated with many televisual productions.

Through this project's specific investigation of television, it begins to address a broader set of questions regarding the role of cultural products and cultural practices as transitional justice mechanisms. How can transitional justice be understood as processes that take place in the cultural and artistic realm? And how can understanding these artistic and cultural practices advance existing theories of transitional justice as it relates to the right to memory, and the protection of memory's productive problematics, such as the respect for the silences, gaps and hauntings inherent in remembering mass atrocities? Working towards a deeper understanding of what should and can be done to respond to a nation's recent history of mass atrocity, these questions directly address a gap in scholarship that tends to disregard the multiple ways in which cultural products are inherently entangled with transitional justice and its specific defense of the right to truth(s), memory, and justice (Lundy and McGovern 267). In recent years, this gap has become clear as nations have resoundingly addressed the questions of what can and should be done through the implementation of institutional transitional justice mechanisms, including the creation of laws, the implementation of trials, and the installation of truth commissions.

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understood directly. However, I consider televisual screen memory, as it is interpreted by Michael Rothberg's study of multidirectional memory. As Rothberg interprets it, this displacing force of screen memory, "functions as much to open lines of communication with the past as to close them off" (12). Therefore, these screen memories do not just block, but in this very act of suppression actually reveal something about our pasts (Rothberg 13-14).

[3] The closed system critique of television refers to a concern that televised representations actively "resist the constant need for revision and debate," and as such are largely divorced from forces that inform the (re-)production of these representations (Anderson).

Following suit, transitional justice scholarship has predominantly analyzed these institutional mechanisms as independent practices divorced from the cultural forces that mediate their relative influence on memory production. This gap, which is more dependent on disciplinary divisions than the theoretical or practical definition of transitional justice, tends to uphold a false dichotomy between the political and judicial realm of transitional justice and those cultural products that are at best interpreted as supplementary mechanisms for confronting and working through past human rights violations.

This project's interdisciplinary focus advocates for the development of broader transitional justice theories, which go beyond seeing cultural works as supplementary methods of narrating the violent truth claims and marginalized memories often hidden or altered by the official rhetoric of truth commissions, trials and laws. Instead, it recognizes the always present influence and mediation of cultural productions, and thus, their inherent centrality to all discussion on transitional justice procedures. In consequence, this project does not look to add a new factor into the transitional justice equation, but rather bring to the forefront television's pre-existing mediations of these processes and this medium's unique contribution to the construction of cultural memory. Recognizing that transitional justice processes take place in the cultural/artistic realm and in the judicial/legal realm allows for a reconsideration of the role of televisual productions in the mediation of any official memory regime. As Andrew Rajca states in his own work on cultural memory production in Brazil and Argentina, "cultural production has the capacity to interrogate the past in new ways and offer alternative memory discourses through which the readers or spectators can engage the past and connect it to their lives in the present…" (*Dynamic Memories and Meanings* 37). By presenting and performing the fissures, silences, residues

and conflicts inherent in all memory, cultural productions have the ability, as argued by Rajca, to highlight the inherent gap between past experiences and their reconstruction as memory. This same presentation and performance allows for a reconstruction of these experiences from the present in a way that allows for the public's reuse and re-reading of their meaning. This project aims at investigating these claims of the uniqueness of televisual products in the context of Brazil and Argentine's transitional justice processes in an effort to elucidate how specific examples of mass media contribute to the comprehension and advancement of various memory problematics. In this vein, I argue that transitional justice in its judicial and quasi-judicial dimension tends to publicize a less dynamic memory that for legal purposes often sutures the inherent gap between experience and memory by associating the act of remembering with the re-calling of judicial evidence. This project maintains that moving televised images operate as a widely accessible form of transitional justice that not only translates their central tenants to the mass populace, but also provides alternative spaces for the re-definition of justice and the performance of multilayered activism. Through its visual depiction and fictionalization of the limit experiences of collective traumas, television stages those realities that resist verbal narration, but also has the potential to operate as a form of symbolic reparation by providing a public recognition of a polyphony of conflictive voices, disparate losses, traumas and marginalized memory narratives.

1.2 Methodology: Case Study Approach

By adopting a comparative country case study approach, I explore the relatively unique transitional justice processes put in place in Argentina and Brazil in an attempt to

deepen our understanding of how these various mechanisms (particularly amnesty laws, reparations committees, judicial proceedings, truth commissions and new media laws) produced competing national memory narratives that both influenced and were influenced by representative Argentine and Brazilian televisual productions, ranging from telenovelas—*Amor e revolução (*2011*), Montecristo* (2006)—and mini-series—*Trago Comigo* (2009), *Queridos Amigos* (2008), *Volver a nacer* (2012)—to testimonial interviews—*Somos memoria* (2015) and *Historias debidas* (2000), *Resistir é Preciso* (2015). All aired during the 21st century, these shows highlight to a certain degree the continued sociopolitical impact of Brazil's and Argentina's years of state repression, and its current economic potential—as many of these shows were produced by large media conglomerates. Additionally, this focus on 21st century televisual productions allows for a discussion on the transference of memory to new generations who never personally experienced these civil-military dictatorships. As such, this investigation dialogues directly with Marianne Hirsh's theory of postmemory, the concept of exemplary memory presented by Tzvetan Todorov, and recent scholarship on memory marketing (see Atencio; Bilbija and Payne; and Huyssen). Centering this analysis around Brazil's and Argentina's 21st century televisual productions also allows for a deeper consideration of memory itself not as a mere reflection of the content publicized by these shows, but also as constructed via their context and positionality (see Achugar and Feld). A reconsideration, which in turn shifts away from analyzing television shows as mere cultural products, but rather as cultural practices that negotiate meaning and activities (Sturken 75).

Specifically, this project approaches cultural productions as a dynamic memory medium that operates as a 1) technology of memory, 2) memory entrepreneur, 3) vehicle

for memory, and a 4) "memory merchandiser" (Atencio *Memory's Turn*). The first of these terms, which stems from Pierre Nora's concept of "televisual memory," considers television as a space that internally constructs what events will be later remembered. In other words, this approach to television considers what will be memorable for a society ("Between Memory and History" 17). In contrast, the second term takes into account the communicative aspect of television in regards to James Carey's theory of television as both a ritual and transmission form of communication. I analyze television as a vehicle for memory in the transmission sense of the word as an "extension of messages across geography for the purpose of control", while also considering how the concept of communication as a daily ritual that plays a role in the construction of communities and the representation of shared beliefs adds to television's ability to mediate/inform official memory regimes and negotiate the past (Carey 18). While memory regimes are shaped and institutionalized by transitional justice mechanisms as they attempt to construct a shared narrative of the past, these official memory regimes are similarly mediated and informed by media's ritual form of communication, which negotiates with these types of emblematic memories in ways that resist, transform, and reflect their dominant narrative (Lundy and McGovern 267; Martín-Barbero *Communication, Culture* xiii).

Certain television shows simultaneously operate as memory entrepreneurs, which stems from Elizabeth Jelin's use of this term and Claudia Feld's later application of this term to the televisual genre. Jelin defines these memory entrepreneurs as those individuals who "develop active policies of meanings of the past" by advocating for the political recognition of certain framings of the past (Location 1344-1346). Applying this term to television is complicated by Jelin's stipulation that memory entrepreneurship refer

primarily to those memory producers that do not seek financial gain, but rather work for moral profit. This stipulation emphasizes what many see as television's main limitation, its commercial logic as a for-profit capitalist industry. As Feld states, "Al transformar la memoria del horror en producto para la venta masiva parece que se transgredieran ciertos códigos morales implícitos en la representación de una experiencia de este tipo" ("Memoria y television" 71). In order to apply the term "memory entrepreneur" to television productions and thus address mass media's limitation as a cultural medium that lies at the intersection "entre banalización y capacidad" (Feld "Memoria y televisión" 71), these shows must also be viewed as memory merchandisers.

Developed by Rebecca Atencio, Ksenja Bilbija and Leigh Payne, the concept of marketing memory operates as "an analytical framework for examining transactions over memory" (3). As producers and products of the memory market, television shows are seen as profiting financially by selling memory accounts to potential memory patrons. However, as Bilbija and Payne argue, this financial profit cannot be separated from the "memory profit", which is defined as "progress toward human rights goals, acknowledgement of events in the past, justice and deterrence" (3). I utilize these concepts to reconsider the potential and limitations of fictional and nonfictional televisual memory accounts. Through an analysis of the industry constraints (overgeneralization, commercialization as cheapening etc.) and memory profits (expanded audience, artistic expression of memory problematics, highlighting the inexpressible etc.) associated with memory merchandising, my project supports the claim that while memory merchandising may sell a specific version of the past, it also may "elucidate what lies beyond the

possibility of language, what is inaccessible or inexpressible by those coping with the trauma of memory" (Bilbija and Payne 6).

As a complement to this broad analysis of television as a dynamic memory medium that simultaneously operates as a technology, entrepreneur, merchandizer, and vehicle for memory, I consider the multiplicity that lies at the center of televisual production as a "malleable discursive space" (Rothberg 5). As such, I also draw on Michael Rothberg's concept of multidirectional memories to explore the transitional justice work performed by certain Brazilian and Argentine television productions. Guided by the questions: "What happens when different histories confront each other in the public sphere? and Does the remembrance of history erase others from view?", Rothberg argues that multidirectional memory opens up a space for the acknowledgement of the cooperative versus competitive nature of memories (2). In contrast to the concept of all memory work being a battleground of opposing forces (e.g. Jelin), multidirectional memory views the public sphere as an unlimited space that allows for contradictions and multiple interactions between productive forms of memory. As Rothberg states, "Pursuing memory's multidirectionality encourages us to think of the public sphere as a malleable discursive space in which groups do not simply articulate established positions, but actually come into being through their dialogical interactions with others" (5). While normally applied to the cosmopolitan nature of memories—such as the memory of the Holocaust or the rhetoric of *Nunca más/Nunca mais*—this concept can be equally as productive as a form of exploring the relationships between media memories that rely on each other to grow and evolve into pasts that can be translated into future projects.

In the case of television, it is uniquely placed to become part of the archival evidence of an event, while at the same time restaging this evidence and participating in the construction of meaning (Waterson 58). The latter of these tasks relies heavily on television's inclusion of usable pasts that, when read through the lens of the present are relevant to viewers and their current needs. Thus, television programs—as something that must be bought by the public—tend to portray those parts of cultural memory that can be used to reconstruct memories from the present and for the future. These usable points, which are most commonly associated with Todorov's concept of exemplary memory, create "the opportunity for a shared, dynamic interaction with the past and the possibility to activate memory for new social uses in the present and in the future" (Rajca *Dynamic Memories and Meanings* 9). I argue that it is through this production of exemplary memories that tend towards multidirectionality that televisual productions resist the closed system critique of all television as a medium, which through neat narrative endings constructs a past "sem implicações para o presente do espectador" (Leme 272).

In order to explore how specific television shows perform these tasks in conjunction with Argentine and Brazilian normative transitional justice mechanisms, this project adopts a qualitative methodology of content analysis. Operating as both a micro-strategy and macro-strategy, close-readings of these texts' context highlights the micro-level interactions, such as language use, television dialogue, and audiovisual images, which are central to televisual production, while also considering the macro-level memory narratives that are publicized by these same television products from within an ever-evolving memory regime and a shifting climate of memory politics. In the case of state agents, some of the documents that I rely on as evidence of these macro-level structures include: 1) the final

reports of each nation's official and unofficial truth commission, 2) the reports published by the reparations programs put in place, 3) the laws passed that directly align with the stated goals of each nation's transitional justice process (including Amnesty Laws, those which democratize media institutions, and those which aim to hold perpetrators accountable for past atrocities), 4) the transcripts from iconic trials, such as the Juicio a las Juntas, and 5) governmental press releases, which directly inform how the past is read from the present. As I am additionally interested in how television programs act as mediums of memory that package and promote social memory, which in turn inform the memory production of viewers, I also incorporate into my analysis the public debate surrounding these cultural products as published in online, televisual and print news sources. Thus, in addition to the aforementioned textual analysis, I analyze public interviews, online fan forums, social media reviews—such as YouTube comments—, newspaper articles, and opinion pieces by human rights organizations in an attempt to track their public reception and how these new media genres specifically influence the memory resonance of various memory narratives.

1.3 Interdisciplinary Contributions

Lying at the intersection of transitional justice scholarship, memory studies, and Latin American cultural studies, this project indexes fields whose complex interactions have received relatively limited theoretical analysis. Thus, it is this project's interdisciplinary focus, which imbues it with the potential to make significant contributions to numerous fields of research. Primarily, this project is a comprehensive work that adds to a burgeoning field of transitional justice by deepening our understanding of its complex

processes and its persistent effects on memory. This contribution responds to a gap in scholarship, which disregards the influence of cultural production on transitional justice, despite their role as unique mediums that mediate society's decoding of normative transitional justice practices and contribute to the permanence and production of this original encoding (Hall Encoding/Decoding). Additionally, this research will open new pathways in the field of memory studies through an exploration of how cultural productions provide new socio-cultural frameworks through which society's cultural memory may be produced and shaped. By developing an argument that brings up questions of media control and manipulation, this project creates a space for a more complete discussion of the television media's intentions as a relatively new structural medium of memory and as a central participant in the cultural arena of transitional justice.

The lack of academic scholarship that explores cultural products and memory production within the transitional justice context is even more stark when discussing cultural productions in their televisual form. This deficit is curious given 1) the concurrent rise of Argentina and Brazil's civic-military dictatorships with the growth of the Latin American television industry, 2) the proven collaboration between certain television networks and these dictatorships (Brazil's Rede Globo and Argentina's Grupo Clarín), and finally, 3) the accessibility of televisual programs as potential mass vehicles for the dissemination, construction and mediation of memory narratives. The fact that in Brazil television reaches approximately 95% of the population and in Argentina that number jumps even higher highlights the surprising lack of academic studies that investigate the normative claim that television has political importance. As Luis Felipe Miguel states in his study on politics and mass communication in Brazil:

> Os estudos sobre os processos de transição democrática na América Latina servem de exemplo. Militares, partidos, empresários, sindicatos, 'novos movimentos sociais', a Igreja e os Estados Unidos são personagens frequentes: questões de gênero e minorias étnicas também tem seu espaço. Mas os meios de comunicação são, via de regra, ignorados ou, quando muito citados de raspão" (43).

This gap is further outlined by placing it in dialogue with existing scholarship that begins to address the dynamic interactions between these three fields of inquiry.

1.4 Terminology

1.4.1 Transitional Justice

In the last 30 years, the field of transitional justice has virtually exploded; a field that emerged during the third wave of democratization in the late 1980s (Huntington; Rodrigues Pinto), transitional justice is the predominant term used to describe the set of judicial and non-judicial mechanisms employed by states to address mass human rights violations following a period of conflict and/or authoritarian rule (ICTJ; Haider; United Nations). At their core, these mechanisms look to "ensure accountability, serve justice and achieve reconciliation" (United Nations). A definition that functions as an amalgamation of the oft-cited United Nation's definition of transitional justice with that used by the International Council of Transitional Justice (ICTJ) and the Governance and Social Development Resource Center (GSDRC), it brings together many of the constituent interpretative trends of the field, such as its focus on processes and mechanisms as defining factors of transitional justice and its emphasis on the continuing impacts of the past from the present and for the future. Nevertheless, this definition is not without its controversies.

Particularly, it offers a relatively limited view of the core elements of the transitional justice process, and it does not allow for a re-thinking of transitional justice itself as a process less constrained by a set of normative mechanisms. As a result, while this definition serves as the base for understanding transitional justice, it merits a more complex elaboration for the purposes of this project.

The term transitional justice was first coined by Ruti Teitel, a scholar who has provided a detailed genealogy of the field as a political practice, and yet a rather narrow definition of the practices inherent to transitional justice. Teitel confines transitional justice to the legal realm stating that transitional justice is "the conception of justice associated with periods of political change, characterized by legal responses to confront the wrongdoings of repressive predecessor regimes" (69). Teitel's definition is both broad—given the fact that transitional justice has most frequently been associated with democratic transitions—and narrow—by limiting all responses to the legal realm. It is the later of this factors that is concerning, as it points to a potential causal relationship between the naming of this field and the widening gap that exists between transitional justice and the cultural realm. Since this initial definition, this gap has been addressed by re-defining transitional justice as a process not confined to the legal and judicial realm, as is evident by this project's chosen base definition, which provides for an exploration of both judicial and non-judicial mechanisms.

The mechanisms most commonly associated with transitional justice processes have in many cases become integral components of defining said processes. Marking an emerging trend in transitional societies that cautiously echoes the increasing commitment to prosecutions and the implementation of truth commissions central to Kathryn Sikkink's

justice cascade,[4] the normalization of these mechanisms represents a shift away from asking whether justice should be pursued, and an increased focus on how and when it should be pursued (justiceinconflict.org). These defining mechanisms, which I frequently reference in this project as institutionalized or normative transitional justice mechanisms include criminal prosecutions, truth commissions[5], reparations programs and institutional reforms, such as the creation of new laws (ICTJ). Considered an essential component of transitional justice—as observed by their inclusion within the ICTJ's definition of the field,

[4] Central to Sikkink's book, *The Justice Cascade: How Human Rights Prosecutions are Changing World Politics*, the term justice cascade refers to her central argument that human rights prosecutions and the implementation of truth commissions lead to decreased human rights violations in the country itself and even beyond its borders. Thus, Sikkink argues that the use of these trials—exemplified by the Argentine case—may actually deter future perpetrators of human rights violations. This argument has been questioned by later scholarship, such as Olsen, Payne and Reiter's article, "The Justice Balance: When Transitional Justice Improves Human Rights and Democracy", which maintains that only the combination of trials and amnesties show a statistically significant increase in a nation's human rights and democracy scores.

[5] With the creation of truth commissions in over 35 countries in the last 40 years, it is clear that this question is more often than not being answered with a cry for an acknowledgement of abuses carried out, an exhumation of the truth, and an apology from those identified as responsible. These tasks, which are often central to the mission of truth commissions, help to define this mechanism as an investigative institution that despite its popularity remains ambiguous. One of the main reasons for this ambiguity is the need for truth commission to be able to flexibly and effectively respond to the specific needs of various countries and their unique conditions of transitional justice, which are often affected by the continued power of those responsible for abuses, the political opportunities provided to civil societies, the nation's relative legacy of colonialism, the country's capacity for autonomous resolution of conflict, the level of involvement of the international human rights community, and the cultures and traditions of the country (Fletcher, Wenstein and Rowan 208; Hayner). Thus, as opposed to searching for a concrete definition of truth commissions, it may be more effective to look towards the institutional aims of truth commissions as officially authorized bodies. Hayner describes these aims in hierarchical order with the first and foremost being the fact-finding mission of all truth commissions. Secondly, truth commissions, as opposed to judicial proceedings, often put more emphasis on respecting the voices and silences of victims of mass atrocity. Lastly, many commissions are tasked with making recommendations to "advance criminal accountability", "evaluate institutional responsibility" and "promote reconciliation" (Hayner 22). However, I would like to expand this list of institutional aims by also defining truth commissions as organizational bodies that have temporary power due to their limited mandates, which primarily investigate "severe acts of violence or repression" and are also tasked with "providing an account of the broad causes and consequences of the violations that occurred" (Freeman 14-15).

as well as Paul Van Zyl's use of them to exemplify the key elements of transitional justice—these mechanisms tend to define the field as opposed to being exemplified by them. while reflective of the evolutionary bent of the political practice of transitional justice, present the field as defined by these mechanisms versus being exemplified by them. Fletcher and Rowan articulate this crucial distinction in their investigation of the field stating, "In fact, conceiving of transitional justice as an ongoing process that may be initiated by a set of interventions rather than *defined* by these interventions may be more useful" (217). Removing these institutionalized transitional justice mechanisms as stipulations for the existence of this process and/or viewing them as components of the process as opposed to representative of the process itself, opens up the field for a reconsideration of how cultural practices are inherently entangled with transitional justice, and in turn, allows for a broader interpretation of its specific defense of the right to truth, justice, and memory.

The inclusion of the central objectives of transitional justice as core elements of its definition has become an increasingly common way to evaluate the relative success of transitional justice processes and broaden our understanding of the complex network of factors that motivate sociopolitical and cultural actors to push for transitional justice. Accountability, justice and reconciliation are the three central objectives mentioned in this project's base definition of transitional justice, taken in part from the United Nation's definition. Encompassing justice in both its retributive and restorative forms, as well as political and social reconciliation (despite the latter's apparent impossibility[6]) these central

[6] Lentz's definition of transitional justice hints at this impossibility by highlighting the difference between thinking through transitional justice in the political realm as opposed to the social realm, and how these realms affect the concept of reconciliation. Drawing from Ricoeur's concept of

objectives have been further elaborated in recent iterations of the term transitional justice, which identify truth and memory as central objectives from which these larger projects of accountability, justice and reconciliation develop. As Abrão and Torelly state in their study of transitional justice in Brazil, "Truth and memory are the logical starting point—and in many countries the chronological starting point—of efforts in transitional justice. The recognition of truth regarding past criminal acts and the adoption of this truth in the public sphere is the platform from which victim's demands can be made with a hope of success" (Abrão and Torelly 40). While it is beyond the reaches of this investigation to quantitatively measure the success of the cultural products as unique transitional justice practices, by exploring the ways in which these products function as dynamic memory mediums that broadcast, produce, publicize and mediate memories and the truths associated with these rememberings, this project unpacks the two central objectives—truth and memory—that initiate transitional justice. I, thus, define transitional justice as: a state's ongoing move towards democracy after a period of conflict and/or authoritarian rule comprised of a variety of judicial and non-judicial approaches, which address mass human rights violations through their defense of the rights to truth, memory and justice. As such, transitional justice is not theoretically nor practically defined as a process that excludes cultural practices, and yet, it has largely been coopted by the sociopolitical and judicial realms, which attempt to achieve these objectives through the implementation of the previously mentioned institutionalized transitional justice mechanisms.

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reconciliation, Lentz states that "A própria ideia de reconciliação [social] está ligada a uma tradição de anistia e perdão via esquecimento e impunidade, que ignora a impossibilidade efetiva dessas subjetividades sem o necessário trabalho de luto levado a cabo pelo exercício de memória e o teste de realidade" (Lentz 22).

1.4.2 Transitional Justice in Argentina and Brazil

"No two truth commissions—nor, for that matter, two political contexts—are identical" (Freeman xiv). Too frequently in the recent push for large-N studies of transitional justice mechanisms and their effectiveness, important contextual factors are overlooked. Yet, it is precisely these factors that enrich the investigation of transitional justice by illuminating the national, cultural, and sociopolitical norms, which are the true instigators of many of the developments in the field. For example, South Africa's well-documented decision to offer amnesty to those perpetrators who fully disclosed their crimes stems in large part from the nation's cultural emphasis on social reconciliation and restorative justice. In the cases of Argentina and Brazil, each nation's unique transition to democracy—ruptured[7] versus pacted[8]—and their different sociopolitical and economic climates affected the temporality and sequence of events that made up their pathway of transitional justice. As Laurel Fletcher, Harvey Weinstein and Jamie Rowan write, "there is no tabula rasa society upon which transitional justice is inscribed. Context matters and it matters considerably" (209). The particularities of national media industries further

[7] Ruptured transitions are defined as rapid democratic transitions wherein the authoritarian regime has little power to participate in the process. In other words, the authoritarian regime does not consent to the transition, but rather an event—such as the loss of the Guerra de las Malvinas—causes for a rapid diminution of the regime's power, opening up a political opportunity for a move towards democracy. The Argentine case exemplifies the category of transitions through rupture (Mainwaring).

[8] In the typologies of democratic transitions, a pacted transition "reforma pactada" (Linz) aligns with what other scholars have named a transition as transaction (Dahl; O'Donnell). This form of transition occurs when a democratic transition is "brought about with the participation or consent of the leaders of the authoritarian regime" (Dahl 529). While this category that has been criticized as being overly restrictive (Mainwaring), the pacted transition model is exemplified by the Brazilian case.

complicate the easy categorization of democratic transitions, leading to my decision to adopt a case study approach to transitional justice.

The decision to directly compare Brazil's and Argentina's respective histories of repression, processes of re-democratization and reconciliation, and the cultural products that (in-)form them stems from three factors. First, these countries display a shared involvement in Latin America's right-wing campaign of political repression and state terror, often referred to as Operation Condor. Consequently, both nations experienced repressive dictatorships during similar time periods: Argentina (1976-1983) and Brazil (1964-1985). These shared years of repression squarely locate these nations' transitions within Huntington's third wave of democracy and Teitel's second phase of transitional justice known for its accelerated democratization, use of local and/or privatized forms of justice and focus on nation-building (71). "The transitional dilemmas at stake in Phase II were framed in terms more comprehensive than simply confronting or holding accountable the predecessor regime, and included questions about how to heal an entire society and incorporate diverse rule-of-law values, such as peace and reconciliation, that had been previously treated as largely external to the transitional justice process" (Teitel 77). Yet despite this temporal overlap, these countries adopted unique, and at times diametrically opposed methods of addressing their related histories of repression. Argentina has been lauded as a model for the successful implementation of transitional justice mechanisms, not only due to its status as the first nation ever to adopt a truth commission, but also because of the precedent it set in regards to domestic trials (Filippini). These events have led the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) to claim that "Argentina has one of the best records of transitional justice in the world" (Filippini 1). On the other hand,

Brazil has received mixed reviews regarding the state's belated implementation of a national truth commission, and refusal to overturn its 1979 Amnesty Law. As such, it has been defined as a new transitional justice model that relies heavily on amnesty and reparations (Leão 82). In part, these differences in transitional justice procedures stem from the contextual factors that determined each nation's relative transitional justice model including the Brazilian pacted transition versus the Argentine ruptured transition (Lundy and McGovern 291). However, several other scholars explain these differences pointing to the countries' varying cultural norms, such as Brazil's cultural norm of *não violência* and *cordialidade*[9], the relative complicity of the national press with these regimes, each nation's history of commitment to the human rights discourse, as well as the differing socio-political strategies for exacting terror, which affected the extensiveness and intensiveness of each nation's levels of repression. (Chauí; Lentz). Of these two cases, Argentina is known for the intensity of its institutionalized and systemized repression due to its extremely high degree of legal-force killings and disappearances. The iconic number of dead and disappeared publicized by human rights organizations nears 30,000 in Argentina, as opposed to the 421 cases of assassinations recorded by Brazil's recent National Truth Commission (CNV). This statistically significant difference does not lead

[9] Drawing on Sérgio Buarque de Holanda's essay *Raízes do Brasil*, Brazil's cordialidade is associated with the "homem cordial" who thrives on "a vida em sociedade" (147 where interactions with others are based in "uma ética do fundo emotivo" (148). "A cordialidade é tudo aquilo que se relaciona às coisas do coração, como a sinceridade, a afabilidade e a espontaneidade" (Almeida 192). Veronica Eloi de Almeida further explores this concept in relationship with the Brazilian miniseries due to its influence on Brazil's social composition, stating "o Brasil deu ao mundo o homem cordial, no qual a sentimentalidade deixou a sua marca" (192). For more information on the importance of cordialidade to Brazil see Roberto Schwarz's essay "As idéias fora do lugar" from *Ao vencedor as batatas: Forma literaria e processo social nos inícios do romance brasileiro*.

me to read Brazil as experiencing less repression, but rather the societal impacts of this repression were felt in different ways.[10]

Finally, the shared borders of Argentina and Brazil make for a unique investigation of the "regional effect"[11] and the "contagion effect"[12] of transitional justice (Olsen, Payne and Reiter 993), a look at the transnational appeal of certain cultural products, and a glimpse at the strong economic imperatives and political alliances that have historically allowed for 1) the import and export of cultural products among these countries and 2) the constant migration of people—whether politically or economically motivated—between them. Thus, placing these nations in dialogue with each other opens up new possibilities for the development of theories, which speak to both the potential and limitations of cultural productions.

Today, the presence of this field is punctuated by the over 2,000 academic texts, which directly use the term transitional justice, as well as the creation of the ICTJ (International Center for Transitional Justice), and the United Nations' development of

[10] Vasconcelos quotes these statistics at length in his study of Brazil's transition. "Em uma breve radiografia dos atingidos pela repressão política no Brasil, estima-se que o Ato Institucional n.01 provocou a cassação de 378 mandatos eletivos, a demissão de 10 mil centena de oficiais das Forças Armadas (Arquidocese de São Paulo 1985: 61); aproximadamente 50 mil prisões ocorreram nos primeiros meses após do golpe de Estado (Brasil, 2007: 30; Mezarobba, 2019: 8); até o ano de 1979, registra-se cerca de 10 mil exilados políticos, 245 estudantes expulsados das universidades, 130 banidos do território nacional, além da cassação dos direitos políticos e mandatos de aproximadamente 4.862 pessoas e milhares de presos políticos (Arquiodiocese de São Paulo, 1985: 68)" (Vasconcelos 153).

[11] The "regional effect" theory of transitional justice hypothesizes that the success of transitional justice processes have little relation to the type of mechanisms implemented (trials, truth commissions, reparations programs etc.). Instead, it maintains that the success of transitional justice initiatives is more dependent on the historical patterns and cultural attributes of specific regions (Olsen, Payne and Reiter 995)

[12] The "contagion effect" is an expansion of the "regional effect" theory. In this theory, scholars argue that types of transitional justice mechanisms spread to nearby nations solely due to their geographic proximity (Olsen, Payne and Reiter 993).

specific toolkits to aid nations in their implementation of various transitional justice mechanisms. Despite these resources and this plethora of academic scholarship, the reconsideration of culture as an inherent component of transitional justice demands further research. Firstly, only a handful of studies provide a comparative analysis of Brazil's and Argentina's transitional justice processes (e.g Leão; Lentz; Silveira Bauer; Vasconcelos). Secondly, there are even fewer cultural investigations of transitional justice (e.g. Atencio; Bilbija and Payne; Straubhaar; Feld; Sturken). As such, this project is one of the first do perform a study of transitional justice that is both comparative and cultural in nature.

This lack of scholarship is surprising given the various critiques aimed at institutional transitional justice mechanisms, and the accompanying call for a thicker more multi-faceted approach to transitional justice (McEvoy). For example, in her book on how to make sense of traumatic experiences that often defy representation, such as Argentina's disappearances, Ludmila da Silva Catela highlights the questionable acceptance among scholars and human rights organizations of institutionalized top-down transitional justice mechanisms as the sole providers of justice and truth. Providing an overview of the field she states that:

> Os trabalhos que são realizados tanto na ciência política (Méndez & Mariescurrena, 1998) quanto nos próprios organismos de direitos humanos (Abregú, 1996; Áveila, 1997), e que focalizam sua análise nestas categorias, associam seu uso exclusivamente à ligação da verdade e da justiça ao Estado e às demandas realizadas pelos grupos de direitos humanos. De certa forma, 'compram a ideia' de que estas categorias só podem estar ligadas ao sistema judicial e que não existe uma construção de baixo para cima sobre a concepção e a delimitação das

> representações que essas palavras implicam para os indivíduos envolvidos nesse jogo. (Catela 290)

This critique is furthered by a slew of recent investigations that argue for adopting a broader more participatory approach to transitional justice (e.g. Lundy and McGovern; Osiel). As Kieran McEvoy argues in his study of the 'thin' nature of legal work on transitional justice:

> In some contexts, the realities of confusion, 'messiness', and tough choices that characterize the lives of many (including human rights activists themselves) is translated through rights discourse into the legalese of international standards, legal certainties, and political objectivity. This process 'thins out' the complexities of life in conflicted societies and positivizes the norm, which underpin such challenges in international conventions, tribunals, national constitutions and the domestic courts. (419)

Cultural products and practices have the potential to thicken this thinning process through their ability to generate debate on complex and often contradictory situations. Thus, a reconsideration of transitional justice as a cultural process in many ways responds to Paul van Zyl when he argues that, 'more expansive and creative strategies should be considered and employed in order to address the rights of victims and the needs of society as a whole' (2).

1.4.3 Memory Studies

"Nós somos tudo aquilo que lembramos; nós somos a memória que temos. A memória não é só pensamento, imaginação e construção social; ela é também uma determinada experiência da vida capaz de transformar outras experiências, a partir de resíduos deixados anteriormente.
---Rodrigues Pinto 132

Roger Errera a senior member of the Conseil d'Etat, France's Supreme Court, once stated that "memory is the ultimate form of justice" (qtd. in Luc Huyse 78). Highlighting the intimate relationship that exists between the work of memory, as both duty and right, and justice, this quote begins to speak to the ways in which the labors of memory act as a defining component of transitional justice processes (Jelin *State Repression*). It is the turn towards memory as a way of representing the past from the present and for the future that aligns with the theoretical impetus of transitional justice as it looks towards the atrocities of the past from the confines of the present in the hopes of developing a narrative that will provide the nation with a vision for the future. Furthermore, memory is not only mediated, but constructed by this very process; for it is in large part the laws, trials, songs, museums, testimonies, cinema and television programs etc. that frame how and what societies remember. In the case of transitional justice, there is an increased impetus to preserve memory—remember so as to not repeat, recognize competing pasts, and reconcile these differences in order to move forward as a nation—, while restoring dignity to victims who have suffered from these past abuses. While a fair amount of studies contemplate how institutionalized transitional justice mechanisms use and/or abuse memory in an attempt to meet these objectives—thus recognizing the import of memory to the justice process primarily through an analysis of a nation's memory politics—and a growing body of literature addresses how cultural production influences how and what society remembers, few studies allow for the intersection of these key discussions.

Those pieces of scholarship that most directly intersect with the interdisciplinary bent of this project arise from three well-researched conceptual pairings that speak to the construction of theories of memory, the investigation of the political impact of television

productions, and the discussion of memory politics. These pairings include: 1) the investigation of cultural production—including films, photography, literature, television programs, and theatrical productions—within the field of memory studies, 2) the investigation of television's impact on and mediation of political processes, and 3) the melding of political science and memory studies via the exploration of the politics of memory.

In the Latin American context, many of these conceptual pairings emerged within the last 40 years as part and parcel of the region's recent memory boom. In the wake of the dictatorships, which gripped much of South and Central America during the second half of the 20th century, this memory boom coincides with the re-democratization measures and transitional justice procedures adopted by many Latin American nations. As the political landscapes of these countries shifted so did their struggles over memory. New questions arose on how to remember the region's recent history marked by human rights abuses and denial. These questions began to form the interdisciplinary field of what is now known as memory studies. Among those studies that problematize the relationship between memory, truth and justice during moments of political transition one finds the work of Hugo Achugar, Andreas Huyssen, Ricardo Forster, Elizabeth Jelin, Nelly Richard, and Hugo Vezetti. For example, in her book *State Repression and the Labors of Memory*, Elizabeth Jelin argues for the importance of Tzvetan Todorov's exemplary memories as a way of balancing society's cries for legal justice remedies and the inclusion of marginalized memories. As Jelin writes on the subject, "when generalization and universalization are introduced, memory and justice converge, in opposition to intentional oblivion" (*State Repression* Loc. 687). Similarly, Huyssen recognizes the risks associated with the

propagation of literal memories by distinguishing between usable pasts and disposable pasts. Included in the first category are the critical memories associated with the fight for justice and for the protection of human rights because not only are they "better methods for dealing with historical trauma," but these memories also "go a long way to provide a welcome impetus for writing history in a new key and thus for guaranteeing a future of memory" (Huyssen *Present Pasts* 28).

All the previously discussed authors (Atencio, Achugar, Huyssen, Forster, Jelin and Richard) recognize, to some degree, the unique way in which cultural productions address memory problematics, and the contribution (positive or negative) of these cultural productions to the transitional justice process. For example, Jelin maintains that memory, when evoked in the cultural arena, has fewer silences, and Huyssen strengthens this conviction when he writes about how cultural products that are normally associated with entertainment can participate in the construction of cultural and collective memories: "It is too easy to argue that the fun events and spectacles of contemporary media societies exist only to provide relief to a social and political body. They work at the collective level not by guiding citizens, but as an area for discussion of deep memories of violence and genocide perpetrated" (Huyssen *Present Pasts* 19). Richard presents these arguments even more concretely when she applauds the ability of certain cultural products (specifically art and literature) to deconstruct the tense and conflictive zones that accompany certain memories. Thus, she introduces the concept of traces that "point to unstable formations of symbolic and cultural deposits and sedimentations, where shredded meanings that for social reasons have become omitted or discarded come together" (*Cultural Residues* 3).

And yet, despite these numerous affirmations of the power of cultural products, few

of these canonical memory studies scholars have undertaken investigations that speak to the role of televisual productions in addressing memory problematics, constructing new memory regimes, and their potential/limitations to carrying out the work of transitional justice. In the rare case that television is cited within these studies, it is read as a market-driven commodity that more frequently disseminates a pre-fabricated meaning than displays the slippages and fissures of memory. Thus, while television exemplifies mass media and its potential to foster a public memory, it is regarded by certain scholars, such as Forster and Richard, as too uniform and controlled by institutionalized market capitalism to depart from the memory politics of institutional transitional justice measures. This project looks to unpack this assumption by drawing on recent political science scholarship and communications research, which analyze the political impact of televisual products (see Atencio; Bilbija and Payne; Feld; Hall; Porto; Ramos; Nicolosi), and the work of Andreas Huyssen, who rejects equating mass media and mass consumption with homogenization (*Present Pasts* 16).

Huyssen argues for the importance of accepting less canonical structures of memory framing, while simultaneously underlining the new possibilities introduced with the invention of these mass media genres. Echoing Marshall McLuhan (McLuhan 103), Huyssen maintains that one must consider how the structure of new media genres shape the messages they transmit. As Huyssen states, "We do know that the media do not transport public memory innocently. They shape it in their very structure and form" (*Present Pasts* 20). Huyssen bridges the gap between the field of memory studies and communication studies by providing an interdisciplinary theory on memory transmission that underlines how the past is used to give meaning to the present and envision a potential

future (*Present Pasts* 1). As he writes:

> For if it is our concern and responsibility to prevent forgetting, we have to be open to the powerful effects that a melodramatic soap opera can exert on the minds of viewers today. The post-Holocaust generations that receive their primary socialization through television may find their way toward testimony, documentary, and historical treatise precisely via a fictionalized and emotionalized Holocaust made for prime time television (Huyssen *Twilight Memories* 256).

1.4.4 Defining Memory

Memory has been carefully categorized in many of these previously mentioned studies in an attempt to classify and explain the processes of memory production. Punctuated by an excess of terms, the field of memory studies often redefines memory by qualifying its place in space and time. While all memory in itself constitutes a space that denotes a specific temporal relationship, in which the past is made present via its representation, construction and articulation from within the present, the abundance of qualifying terms used in memory studies, such as public memory, multidirectional memory, cosmopolitan memory, and social memory, favor a spatial and temporal vision of memory. Similarly, other terms, such as postmemory, highlight the generational aspects of memory-making. While many of these terms prove useful to this project's interrogation of television as a dynamic memory medium, they can also complicate our understanding of what constitutes memory. Therefore, before entering into a more thorough discussion of these key terms, first we must lay the foundation for understanding memory as a general concept.

In simple terms, memory is the re-presentation of the past from the present. It does not claim to be a re-living of the past; for memory itself is a social construction and re-articulation that differs from the original experiencing of a past event. As Huyssen reiterates, "rather than leading us to some authentic origin or giving us verifiable access to the real, memory, even and especially in its belatedness, is itself past on representation. The past is not simply there in memory, but it must be articulated to become memory. The fissure that opens between experiencing an event and remembering it in representation is unavoidable" (Huyssen *Twilight Memories* 2-3). This fissure is productive as it allows for a plurality of memories. Instead of insisting on one unchanging past, memory as a social construction recognizes heterogeneity, as both the existence of a plurality of memories tied to one historical moment, and the alteration of these various memories, as the active work of memory continuously imbues these memories with ever-evolving meaning. Meaning evolves in this sense as a result of the conditions of the past evoked, the type of event evoked, and the relationship that exists between the present when this past is evoked and the moment itself (Carlos Castilla del Pino 17). The needs of the present and the sociopolitical, economic, and cultural frameworks all influence what and how pasts are remembered and/or forgotten. Pierre Nora, one of the founders of the field of memory studies writes, "Memory is life, borne by living societies founded in its name. It remains in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revived" (*Les Lieux de Mémoire* 8). Referring directly to the social aspects of memory, Nora's statement nevertheless speaks to the intrinsic relationship between collective memory and individual memory; for while it is

always dependent on the individual to perform the actual act of remembering and/or forgetting, this individual act is influenced by the social frameworks operating in the past and the present; no memory can be vocalized, thought, reconstructed or imagined without first passing through these social frameworks.

Cultural productions, in particular mass media, act as one such structural memory frame that has recently garnered attention, as made evident by the previously discussed conceptual pairing—the investigation of cultural production within the field of memory studies—and the development of a new qualified form of memory deemed cultural memory. While hinted at in Maurice Halbwachs' work, cultural memory emerged as a topic of investigation in the 1980s with the works of Jan Assmann and Pierre Nora and has since acted as a key theoretical component of numerous studies.[13] This project looks at memory, in its communicative and cultural dimensions, due to their ability to accentuate the socially constructed nature of all memories, and bring together two facets of Halbwach's concept of collective memory as something reliant on institutional and socially communicative memory frames (Assmann 117). *Cultural* and *communicative* act as umbrella terms that emphasize memory's existence as a cultural phenomenon that rereads the past from the present. Additionally, cultural memory incorporates the concept of media transmission into its definition due to its insistence on investigating the key interactions triggered by cultural objects, images, and representations. Marita Sturken succinctly describes the term by stating that it "implies not only that memories are often produced and reproduced through cultural forms, but also the kind of circulation that exists between

[13] For more information on the use of the term cultural memory, see cited works by Astrid Erll, Marita Sturken, Andreas Huyssen, Elizabeth Jelin and Nelly Richard.

personal memories and cultural memories—the personal photograph, for instance, that ends up in the public arena, or the Hollywood film that 'becomes' part of an individual's memory of an event" (75). Cultural memory thus serves as a framework through which to investigate the cultural negotiations that occur between individuals and cultural productions—such as television shows, as people work to develop a narrative that makes sense of an unstable past from the continuously shifting present. Communicative memory complements cultural memory by bringing into play the non-institutional components of memory. As Jan Assmann states, "[communicative memory] is not formalized and stabilized by any forms of material symbolization; it lives in everyday interaction and communication" (111). Considering these terms in conjunction allows for an investigation of the heterogeneity of memories that may not align with the official memory initiatives of institutionalized transitional justice mechanisms, but rather highlight memory as a sociocultural practice that is carried by local and national media, and the daily interactions between receivers of these televisual products. While these two concepts act as the cornerstones of this project, it receives further theoretical support from three additional approaches to cultural memory studies: 1) memory markets, 2) dynamic memory, 3) multidirectional memory. All three of these terms are explored in more detail within the following chapters of this study, as I turn to an exploration of what role(s) television industries play in the construction and mediation of Brazil's and Argentina's evolving memory regimes and their memory politics.

1.4.5 Cultural Studies

Finally, this study draws from both British and Latin American cultural studies to begin to interrogate the relationships of power and cultural processes as they manifest themselves in the production and reproduction of memory regimes and the authoritative narratives of truth that uphold them. Independent in their own right, British and Latin American cultural studies began to enter into a deeper dialogue during what Abril Trigo names the "dramatic turn" of the late 1980s and early 1990s, which aligned with the creation of a "global theoretical marketplace" (5). In this space Latin American cultural studies as the investigation of the "symbolic production and living experiences of social reality in Latin America" (Trigo 3) and British cultural studies, punctuated by the prominence of the Birmingham School's notion of active reception and their expanded definition of what constitutes an appropriate cultural text for analysis (Rowe 43) flourished in a productive exchange of theoretical advances. In order to bridge these two fields of cultural studies, my work relies heavily on Lawrence Grossberg's conceptualization of cultural studies, which highlights its 1) radical contextualization, 2) interdisciplinary nature, 3) self-reflexivity and 4) various detours through theory (142). For the purposes of this exploration of 21st-century televisual production in Brazil and Argentina this vision of cultural studies as "radically contextual"[14] is particularly useful as it allows for an investigation into the political macro-structures that influence Brazil's and Argentina's current television programs and the market forces that allow for cultural practices and

[14] Lawrence Grossberg's claim that cultural studies is radically contextual exists in contrast the assumption that there is a single cultural studies position. Specifically, Grossberg employs this term when speaking about how cultural studies in its rigor and academic practice allows us to bring together disciplines, allowing us to "produce better knowledge of the political context of the world", which in turn opens up "progressive possibilities of struggle and transformation" (Grossberg 133).

products to be commoditized, circulated and promoted as part of a national and transnational industry (see Canclini; Feld; Young and Hart 9). Furthermore, it is this contextual nature that cautions against the construction of overarching models of cultural practices; for this reason, theory, rather than driving my work, is employed as a tool with which I illuminate existing "structures of power" that are made and unmade from within my deep content analysis of television productions (Grossberg 144).

This narrow focus on a specific sector of the communication's industry precariously places this study at risk of falling into the trap of idolizing contemporary popular culture as socially symbolic due to its previous exclusion from the academy. In order to avoid the repetitive claim that mass media matters, which is a well-worn conclusion of what William Rowe and Vivian Schelling deem conformist cultural studies that fail to critically analyze cultural practices, this investigation looks beyond the popularity and accessibility of 21st-century television products in Brazil and Argentina to interrogate their relationship to identity and their role as political actors, spectacle and commodity through *how* they operate as new memory frames that shape how mass atrocity is remembered.

1.5 Chapter Overview

My first chapter, *The Televisual Turn Towards Democracy,* provides a historical and theoretical backdrop for the later exploration of 21st century television programs by exploring the evolution of Argentina's and Brazil's continuous transitional justice processes as seen on television. This chapter begins by addressing two questions: 1) How have Argentina and Brazil's television industries been historically linked to each nation's recent civic-military dictatorship? And what role have these television industries played in

the construction and mediation of officially sanctioned memory narratives promoted by more normative transitional justice mechanisms prior to the 21st century? Analyzing the near simultaneous emergence of the television industry with these dictatorships and their relative distancing during Argentina's ruptured and Brazil's pacted transitions, this chapter begins to address the ways in which Argentina's and Brazil's democratization of television acted as an at times belated component of each nation's respective transitional justice process. In part, this chapter provides a comparative framework for understanding this ever-evolving relationship—which I divide into 5 interrelated stages: 1) authoritarian/simultaneous emergence, 2) conditioned cooperation and symbiotic cooperation, 3) transitional distancing (gradual vs. abrupt), 4) privatized independence and finally, 5) nascent democratization. Next, I specifically posit how televisual productions have been recognized, used by and/or excluded from these normative transitional justice mechanisms and their recommendations for the democratization of the nation. Finally, this chapter closes with a brief discussion of what constitutes a democratized television industry, and why the tendency to study transitional justice from within the legal and judicial framework may actually impede its secondary goal of reinforcing the possibility of democracy; for it is through television's belated democratization that it as a medium may act as a broader, more inclusive discursive space for the production, transmission, promotion and merchandizing of a plurality of memories.

This investigation sets the stage for my project's later chapters, which dialogue with these framings by exploring how different television genres, both fictional and nonfictional, present these normative mechanisms, while themselves acting as unique

transitional justice mechanisms that in certain cases are better suited to addressing various memory problematics and ensuring the acceptance of a plurality/multiplicity of memories.

The opening chapter of the second portion of my dissertation begins to explore the previous chapter's theoretical claims through an analysis of the highly rated and widely viewed genre of the *telenovela*. A fictional television product that originally developed from within the Latin American culture industry, *telenovelas* are daily serials of approximately 120 episodes that are marked by a closed structure, specific thematic tropes and melodramatic plots (Abstaz 37). *Telenovelas* are one of the most viewed, sold and produced television genres; they occupy the prime-time slots of almost all networks, and as such, I consider these programs as central to any analysis of Latin American fictional television production. As Jesús Galindo states, "la telenovela está ahí, es el programa de televisión más observado en el orbe, millones de seres vivos se aproximan a ella todos los días. Hablar de la telenovela no puede ser un tema trivial y secundario" (132). By looking at this highly-rated genre of mass consumption, this dissertation begins to question the remark made by Bilbija and Payne that the memory market is a niche market targeted towards specific memory producers. While this notion may apply to the testimonial interviews discussed in the fifth chapter, it fails to account for the 21st-century boom in *telenovelas* that directly address Brazil's and Argentina's repressive pasts.

Two Argentine and Brazilian telenovelas that directly address each nation's dictatorships as founding pasts and/or presents and thus guide this chapter's close-textual analysis are *Amor e Revolução* (2011) and *Montecristo* (2006). Both of these *telenovelas* aired over 30 years after their nation's initial transitions towards democracy, and yet they directly reference the state terrorism of the past. In the Argentine case, *Montecristo*

constructs a continuity between the perpetrators of the past, and the crimes of the present, while also highlighting the on-going struggles over memory and identity that continue to affect the nation today. The Brazilian example, *Amor e Revolução*, returns to the 1960s to discuss the nation's civic-military dictatorship, portraying the political intrigues, protests, and abuses of the era.

This chapter investigates how these two shows package cultural memory in a way that shapes memory production, while also recognizing the discordant uses of these programs by active viewers. In this regard, I analyze the structural, thematic and audience particularities of each show in an effort to elucidate how each show operates as a form of independent memory merchandise and merchandiser, a vehicle for memory, and a memory entrepreneur. Within these roles, I argue that these telenovelas, to varying degrees, push the boundaries of each nation's purported memory regime, allowing for the insertion of new televisual memories that speak to the needs of a contemporary audience, while also recognizing the productiveness of the impossibility of total recall. Just as these shows introduce viewers to these persistent memory problematics, they also reflect on the limits of normative transitional justice mechanisms due to their erasure of these same problematics.

The project's third chapter explores a similar set of issues as portrayed by three fictional Argentine and Brazilian mini-series: *Queridos Amigos* (Brazil, 2008), *Trago Comigo* (Brazil, 2009), and *Volver a nacer* (Argentina, 2012). These shows function as dynamic memory mediums that reimagine formative social, cultural, and political histories. The climate of the 1970s and 1980s acts as the backdrop for the mini-series *Queridos Amigos* and a crucial force behind the formation of friendships and the memories that rip

these same friendships apart. The trauma of memories is further explored in the revolutionary mini-series *Trago Comigo*. Focusing on memories forgotten, the miniseries follows a theater director who participated in the armed struggle against Brazil's dictatorship and has forgotten the entire period during which he lived clandestinely. Presenting a meta-analysis of how art triggers, produces, and frames memories, *Trago Comigo* acts as a hybrid product that directly blends reality and fiction through the inclusion of real testimonies. In the Argentine context, *Volver a nacer* directly confronts the nation's turbulent past by unraveling the often homogenized and idealized figure of the disappeared as seen through the eyes of the generation of HIJOS by focusing on how these appropriated children of the disappeared look to reclaim, commemorate and remember this past.

Drawing on notions of hybridity (e.g. Bhabha; Brennan; Canclini; Hall; Martín-Barbero), I explore how these mini-series operate within the in-between of authority/resistance, past/present, private/public and history/memory (Creeber 452). Found in both the structural and thematic characteristics of these miniseries, this hybridity allows for these shows to craft "living memories" (Feld "Imagen, memoria y desaparición" 10) that respond to the needs of contemporary generations, embrace the impossibility of total recall, and celebrate the embodied rememberings of the repertoire. While these shows are not free from digital media's archival frenzy nor the constraints of the official memory regimes and its edification of certain subjective memories as objective truths, these shows draw on their aforementioned hybridity to forward multi-faceted approaches to justice that encourage collaboration between formal and negotiated forms justice by recognizing the individual limits of both.

My dissertation's fourth and final chapter acts as a continuation of the previous two chapters by introducing a televisual genre—testimonial interviews—that has emerged out of the growing prevalence of audiovisual testimony and testimonial literature's own roots in investigative journalism. Operating in a testimonial register, this genre blends the singularity and individuality normally highlighted in the interview process (yo/eu) with the collective voice of an imagined audience. Broadcast exclusively on public television, the three testimonial interviews I analyze bring up a number of questions about televisual mediation, the role of publicly funded television stations in the memory market, the guiding voice of an interviewer in a seemingly unscripted interaction, and the objectivity/subjectivity of the various truth claims communicated in these productions. Furthermore, this chapter returns to the opening chapter's exploration of Argentina's and Brazil's processes of democratization through an exploration of the different pedagogical processes purported by the show's of each nation.

The three programs analyzed in this final chapter include the two Argentine shows—*Somos memoria* (2013-present) and *Historias debidas (*2000-present)—and the Brazilian project—*Resistir é Preciso* (2014). All three utilize first person interviews and testimony to discuss the past, how the past is re-constructed from the present, and the human rights rhetoric that tends to influence this re-construction after periods of mass atrocity. The participants in the first program, *Somos memoria*, are cultural and political representatives from Argentina and a variety of other Latin American countries who all receive an entire episode dedicated to speaking about their own lives, memories and interpretation of Argentina's recent past. The show's inclusion of a wide-range of writers, artists, actors, and musicians complements Brazil's *Resistir é Preciso*, which brings

together various writers and artists to speak about how resistance was written during the dictatorship. As part of a larger thematic exposition and art installation, *Resistir é Preciso* plays with the testimonial interview genre by adopting a more guided, closed structure. In contrast, *Historias debidas* presents a return to the more loosely-structured interview format, which is the Argentine generic norm. As the show's site states, *Historias debidas* presents "biografías para no olvidar y hacer memoria colectiva" ("Historias debidas"). The differing structure of these shows, their blending of the generic norms associated with judicial testimony, literary testimony, interviews, and documentary films and their national popularity inform my presentation of these shows as transitional justice mechanisms that attempt to 1) protect the right to memory by informing viewers of their duties to remember and denounce human rights abuses, 2) encourage intergenerational dialogue that recognizes transitional justice as an on-going process, and 3) restore dignity to victims by amplifying their political voices. These attempts, nevertheless, remain constrained by the internal limitations of these shows, the external control exercised over each show by their governmental funding, and their failure to foster a participatory virtual community.

Chapter 1. The Televisual Turn Towards Democracy: Argentina's and Brazil's Belated Televisual Democratization

How are memory regimes enacted? Who are the central players in the development of these memory regimes, and how do these players perform them? Memory regimes are defined by Emilio Crenzel as narratives that act as foundational readings of that past, which in turn, frame what should be remembered, how this past should be remembered and its suitable modes of transmission (*La historia política* 24). Analyzed within this chapter as a type of theatrical frame that results from the interrelated performances of numerous actors—including the State, non-governmental organizations, and the media, these memory regimes are constructed on the pre-existing backdrop of emblematic national memories. In other words, they are the final, albeit temporary, products that act as both subject and object of these performances. This chapter details these performances by tracing the ever-evolving relationship between Argentine and Brazilian state actors and each nation's respective television industries during the later half of the 20th century (1950-2000) and how this relationship has produced temporary resonant memory frames. A relationship whose complexities have largely been overlooked by the more normative transitional justice mechanisms tasked with addressing these diverse memory frames and their relative complicity in the perpetration of human rights abuses, I contend that this relationship must be revisited and continuously reevaluated in an attempt to understand television's role in remedying the abuses to truth, justice and memory so central to the process of transitional justice.

Looking specifically at Argentina's and Brazil's democratization processes, I investigate the ways in which television's relative democratization echoed the rise and fall

of these nations' civil-military dictatorships (1976-1983; 1964-1985) and their relative distancing during Argentina's ruptured and Brazil's pacted transition. Through this analysis, I begin to address the ways in which Argentina's and Brazil's democratization of television may act as a belated component of each nation's respective transitional justice processes. I divide the strategic, continuously shifting relationship between these two actors into five central stages: 1) authoritarian emergence, 2) conditioned cooperation and symbiotic cooperation, 3) transitional distancing (gradual vs. abrupt), 4) privatized independence, and 5) nascent democratization. By providing a detailed analysis of this evolution, this chapter paves the way for the later exploration of the 21st-century boom in television productions that directly reference, discuss and frame these past relationships and their lasting effects. Furthermore, I contend that while this memory boom, is in part, aided by the partial independence and democratization of these television industries, the incomplete nature of this independence continues to constrain the transmission of a plurality of memories.

Just as these five relational stages evolve, so to do the memory regimes that arise, in part, out of these relations. Divided into four acts, these memory regimes are specifically explored in this chapter as rhetorical frames that looked to provide an authoritative interpretation of the past—in this case the events of Argentina's and Brazil's recent dictatorship. In the case of Brazil, these interpretive frames move from 1) stability through revolution, to the subsequent 2) reconciliation through institutionalized forgetting, leading to 3) reconciliation through remembering, and finally, to 4) reconciliation through retributive and restorative justice. The Argentine sequence is marked by the acts of: 1) stability through a just war, 2) the regime of *Nunca Más* marked by symbolic retributive

justice, 3) national reconciliation through institutionalized impunity and finally, 4) truth, justice, and memory through an appeal to human rights rhetoric.

2. Framing the Past

Framing theory provides an entryway into the investigation of how these past moments are keyed[15] by a variety of sociopolitical and media actors. Various conceptualizations of framing theory have arisen from diverse fields of study—such as mass communication theory and social movement scholarship. Erving Goffman first forwarded this idea in his differentiation between natural and social frames—natural frames being associated with the physical occurrence of an event that is divorced from the social decisions of human beings, whereas social frameworks operate more as guided doings (21). Given this project's focus on how media and sociopolitical actors exert agency on events and their consequent re-readings from the present, I draw on Goffman's concept of social frames and their various keyings, which transform events already incorporated into a primary social framework into something new via a process of transcription (44).

However, Goffman's exploration of framing is limited by its focus on those frames adopted on an individual level. While to a certain degree the meaning deduced from all frames is carried out on said level, this project's interrogation of memory regimes as socially constructed narratives of the past requires a broader analytical lens that looks towards framing as a group dynamic. Thus, I draw on two additional definitions of framing. The first by McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, states that frames are essentially, "conscious

[15] Erving Goffman defines keyings as the "set of conventions by which a given activity, one already meaningful in terms of some primary framework, is transformed into something patterned on this activity but seen by participants to be something quite else" (Goffman 44)

strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of their world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action" (6). This definition focuses on framing as a tool of strategic mobilization, while also underlining the process of essentialization inherent in all framing. In addition, I adopt Snow and Benford's extended definition of framing, which points to its ability to interpret and apply meaning to "relevant events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists" (126). This secondary definition is crucial due to its acknowledgment of framing as a potential offensive tool, as well as its emphasis on the active nature of framing and its ability to engender a multiplicity of discourses.

While mass media often serves as the space within which these multiple discourses are produced, media framing is increasingly competitive given the limited space available in television, radio, and newspapers. As Koopmans iterates, "the strong disproportion between the available space in the public sphere and the number of messages that are potential candidates for inclusion in it, implies a high level of competition among groups who aim to get their message across in the public discourse" (372). While this limited space is expanding with new technology, most prevalent being the Internet, it remains bounded by contextual and editorial factors of traditional mass media spaces and the consensus of political elites (Hallin). Additionally, increased digital competition means it does not necessarily provide a more democratizing space (Thrall et al.).

3. Literature Review

Television as an object of study has gone through numerous phases, from the exploration of its production, reception, and consumption to the more recent focus on television as an actor with discursive powers that do not merely reflect, but rather mediate the rhetoric of society. This chapter draws on a variety of texts that not only explore the relationship between television, democratization, and dependence in the Brazilian and Argentine cases, but more specifically on those that support my interpretation of television as both a subject that acts within the cultural and political norms of a society and as a cultural repository that could be said to maintain a cyclical relationship with society's political actors and institutions. For example, numerous studies (e.g. Capparelli, dos Santos and de Lima) speak to the potential influence of television networks in the political sphere due to their ability to construct multiple realities and forward representative frameworks through which the past and present are understood. Suzy dos Santos and Sergio Capparelli, in particular, take up this notion of the representative power of television through their introduction of the concept of "coronelismo eletrônico." A term that refers to the clientelistic practices that define the relationship between individuals with public power and the owners of television channels, "coronelismo eletrônico" is viewed by dos Santos and Caparelli as a barrier to the democratization. I take up this term throughout this chapter to analyze the varying degrees of interdependence of the Brazilian and Argentine political realm and each nation's respective television industry.

Another investigation that begins to unpack this evolving relationship between television and democratization is Mauro Porto's book *Media Power and Democratization in Brazil*. Porto's investigative questions show the cyclical relationship of television and the political realm, as he ponders if and how Brazil's process of democratization has

affected the nation's major broadcasting network, TV Globo, and similarly, how TV Globo's own media opening has affected Brazil's emerging democracy (2). Arguing in the end that recognizing this cyclical relationship is crucial to understanding the development of both institutions, Porto proposes a "political context model of media transformation" (7). This model stems from his conceptualization of media openings and his detailed definition of the process of democratization, which in turn, inform my own understanding of democratization as a process that extends far beyond the moment of political transition, and encompasses more than direct elections and a peaceful exchange of power. Democratization is about equal representation—whether symbolic or electoral (Porto 7, 27). Using memory, this project explores that representation through the lens of pasts made present, thus responding to Porto's call for more studies that consider media as a component of democratic transitions (18), while also expanding the work of Porto and others (e.g. Ferreira Simões; Mattos; M. Ramos; dos Santos & Caparelli) by not exclusively analyzing shows produced by Brazilian media giant—Rede Globo.

One of the few authors to address this lack in scholarship in the Brazilian context is Rebecca Atencio whose book *Memory's Turn* focuses on what she terms "exceptional cultural works," which successfully complete Brazil's "cycle of cultural memory" in a process that both deepens and complicates memory construction (6, 8). Through this study's unique interdisciplinary focus, it is able to reread Brazil's early stages of transitional justice often associated with the fields of political science and legal scholarship through the lens of cultural studies. She recognizes the "reciprocal interplays" of politics and cultural products by presenting a cyclical cultural model that focuses on the interaction of specific cultural productions and key political events: 1) near simultaneous emergence,

2) imaginary linkage, 3) leveraging and 4) propagation. A model that aligns with my interpretation of the cyclical relationship of television and politics, it nevertheless places television in a supporting role. I argue instead that cultural products, in this case television, need to be recognized as powerful subjects and leading actors in the process of democratization as opposed to being interpreted as placeholders for "future institutional responses" (Atencio *Memory's Turn* 9).

3. Argentine and Brazilian Memory Scripts: A Relationship Remembered in Five Stages

When analyzing two national television industries, several factors to consider include the level of development of each nation's industry, their regulatory laws, the type of television industry promoted by the State, and the relative cooperation between television networks. These factors are further complicated by the circumstances of Argentina's and Brazil's respective transitions towards democracy, and the evolving memory regimes that both construct and constrain these processes. As such, additional factors that guide this chapter's analysis of the mutable relationship between these industries and the State include the affiliation and/or divisions between media networks and political parties, the level of State intervention in the television industry, and the stakes involved in purporting a specific memory regime and/or re-keying this regime. In the end, all of these factors contribute to the development of the five interrelated stages that define the State-TV relationship in Argentina and Brazil: 1) authoritarian emergence, 2) conditioned cooperation and symbiotic cooperation, 3) transitional distancing (gradual vs. abrupt), 4) privatized independence and 5) nascent democratization.

3.1 Authoritarian Emergence in Brazil

In the case of Brazil, the emergence of television as a dominant medium of audiovisual media mirrored the rise of the nation's 20th century military dictatorships. Inaugurated in 1950, the first Brazilian television network—Rede Tupi de Televisão—was owned by Assis Chateaubriand and constructed as an expansion of his already powerful newspaper empire—Diários Associados. Seen as a useful investment due to its ability to unite the nation, Rede Tupi received broad support from Vargas, operating in many ways as a precursor for the pathway adopted by Rede Globo and the military dictatorship of the 1960s. For example, Chateaubriand often utilized the public reach of his media conglomerate to directly influence the political sphere, including its cited role in instigating the Revolution of 1930 and supporting the Vargas re-election campaign (Felipe Miguel 46).

Brazilian television grew in popularity during the next decade with help from the infrastructure developed during the military junta's 21-year rule (1964-1985). While during the first 14 years of the Brazilian television industry only 33 private channels were authorized, this number jumped to 112 during the first years of the dictatorship, and by the 1980s there were over 1,483 television and radio broadcasting stations (Lentz 57). Marking the beginning of a close relationship between Brazilian television conglomerates and the dictatorship, particularly in the case of the Brazilian media giant TV Globo, the establishment of Brazil's system of television networks expanded the influence of television as a medium that was considered a relatively safe substitute for other collective practices, such as protests and marches.

As such, television was also utilized by the military due to its ability to communicate their rhetoric on national identity and promote their official memory regime of national stability through revolution. In an attempt to constrain media to this specific task and control its ability to mediate these messages, creatively question its content or provide pathways for contradictory decodings by viewers, the military government placed at least four types of constraints and guidelines on media content. Enumerated by Joseph Straubhaar, this censorship included, "the need to restrain political or economic criticism; the need to maintain conventional social behaviour and morals; the need to create or reinforce a Brazilian identity conducive to capitalist development; and the need to present a positive image of the regime, particularly the 'economic miracle'" (6). These guidelines can be found in laws and institutional acts (AIs) put in place during the civil-military dictatorship's years of harshest repression, including the AI-5 passed in 1968[16] and the decree passed in 1970 under President-General Medici that prohibited publications and programs that were considered morally offensive.

3.2 Symbiotic Cooperation in Brazil

[16] Ato Institucional Número Cinco (AI-5) was passed in 1968 during the Presidency of Costa e Silva. It had a series of immediate effects on Brazil's cultural, sociopolitical and economic systems. It gave the President authority to shutdown the national congress and legislative branches and put the legislative power in the hands of the President and state governors. As such, the President and state governors were able to pass constitutional amendments. Furthermore, it allowed for the suspension of the powers of local authorities under the pretext of national security. In regards to censorship, it expanded the censorship of television, cinema, music, the press etc. AI-5 also suspended *habeas corpus* for politically-motivated crimes, declared unauthorized political reunions to be illegal, allowed for the firing of public/political officials who did not cooperate with the dictatorship, and also gave the President the power to suspend the political rights of subversives. For more information on the full-extent of AI-5, see (http://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/atoins/1960-1969/atoinstitucional-5-13-dezembro-1968-363600-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html)

Viewing the Brazilian television industry as a pure instrument of the government, and victim of this direct censorship, however, overlooks the symbiotic relationship that existed between certain networks and the dictatorship. The contract between Time-Life and TV Globo exemplifies this relationship and its clientilistic tones. Flagged as illegal due to the massive investment of foreign funds and technological know-how in this domestic media conglomerate, the contract was ultimately approved after a brief parliamentary review in 1969, insuring that the dictatorship received support from TV Globo. This symbiotic cooperation also operated as a form of double identification between TV Globo and the dictatorship. In this sense, Globo legitimized the dictatorship by acting as a key example of a modern and efficient business that had successfully adjusted to their economic policies, while Globo achieved economic viability via this association. TV Globo's owner, Roberto Marinho, had his own ideological stake in this symbiotic relationship, having stated on one occasion: "Ministro, o senhor faz uma coisa, vocês cuidam dos seus comunistas, que dos meus comunistas cuido eu" (Lentz 6). Marinho's broad classification of competitors as communist dissidents echoed the dictatorship's authoritarian rhetoric, which attempted to craft a vision of a nation on the brink of communist violence that could only be saved through the stability of a military revolution. This framing of the recent past as stability through military revolution championed by the dictatorship in cooperation with the nation's media giant, TV Globo, attempted to legitimize the censorship practiced by the "revolutionary" state in the name of economic and social stability. The dictatorship's first institutional act clearly lays out this frame by stating, "O que houve e continuará a haver neste momento, não só no espírito e no comportamento das classes armadas, como na opinião pública nacional, é uma autêntica revolução. A revolução se distingue de outros

movimentos armados pelo fato de que nela se traduz, não o interesse e a vontade de um grupo, mas o interesse e a vontade da Nação" (A1-I). Placing themselves at odds with the leftist armed militants, the Brazilian State demanded collaboration with their "revolution" by framing it as an issue of national pride.

3.3 Gradual Transitional Distancing in Brazil

Given this symbiotic relationship, the distancing between television networks, such as TV Globo and the Brazilian dictatorship occurred gradually, thus echoing in many ways the nation's gradual pacted transition, which allowed the military regime to continue to hold certain media influence due to its lingering governmental power. This power is exemplified by Brazil's prolonged reliance on the communication policies implemented by the dictatorship, which through the allocation of licenses and the funding provided by governmental publicity, continued to encourage a memory regime that favored reconciliation through institutionalized forgetting. None of these licenses distributed during the dictatorship were overturned or reviewed following the military's slow removal from political power. This fostered a sense of cautious support for the dictatorship's political policies by many Brazilian media companies. For instance, TV Globo continued to broadcast their support for the pro-dictatorship political party (ARENA—Aliança Renovadora Nacional) by working against the election of opposition candidates during the nation's gradual transition. In one instance, TV Globo re-framed the massive protests in favor of direct elections for the presidency in 1984 to make them appear as if they were part of the celebrations of São Paulo's anniversary celebration.

It was not until the nation's sociopolitical climate stabilized and Brazil shifted to a slightly more inclusive and representative democracy that the country's first televised fictional work to speak directly about the military regime and the resistance of the armed left was broadcast: *Anos Rebeldes* (1992). Reflecting a shift in Brazil's memory regime insistent on reconciliation through institutionalized forgetting to one that Atencio names reconciliation through remembering (123), *Anos Rebeldes* exemplifies the gradual distancing of TV Globo from the dictatorship's depiction of this past, while at the same time displaying this network's reticence to directly question the new memory regime promoted by the standing democratic government, which called for memory, but not for justice.

Set in the 1960s-1980s, *Anos Rebeldes* follows the lives of a group of students as they balance their studies, friendships, families, various loves, and the new political repression taking control of Brazil. While much of the story focuses on the love triangle between the protagonists, Maria Luisa, João, and Edgar, in the end, it is the political loyalties and militant ideals that truly define these relationships. Incorporating the viewpoints of leftist militants, rich businessmen, apolitical bystanders, and artists, the show offers an inclusive vision of the past punctuated by the *nunca mais* rhetoric that is inserted into the show via fictional images, dialogue, and realia. As the show states, "A gente tem a obrigação de divulgar para que isso *nunca mais* se aconteça." (*Anos Rebeldes*—Capítulo 2). And yet, this "isso" is displayed by the show in a rather gentle way. For example, the military's use of torture is implicit, but never portrayed on-screen, the show's only character who proudly dresses in military uniform is a secondary-character who remains unaware of any military abuses, and finally, the few denouncements of torture included in

the show are divorced from the naming of their actual perpetrators. In this way, *Anos Rebeldes* tends to portray the nation's *ditadura* as a *ditabranda* or dictatorship "light." These seemingly contradictory messages of *nunca mais* and the *ditabranda* actually shape and are shaped by this frame of "reconciliation through remembering" (Atencio *Memory's Turn* 123). For while there has been a cautious shift in allegiance—from supporting the dictatorship's purported memory regime to that of a democratic government—as Atencio brings out—both of these frames offer a relatively ambiguous historical account of the past that shies away from questions of accountability and legal justice (*Memory's Turn* 70).

3.4 Authoritarian Emergence in Argentina

The emergence of Argentina's television industry follows a similar pattern to that of Brazil. Launched one year after the Brazilian industry on October 17, 1951, the nation's first television station—Canal 7—initiated its inaugural broadcast by projecting the image of Eva Perón during the *Día de la Lealtad* in Buenos Aires' Plaza de Mayo. A seemingly peculiar combination, Canal 7 operated as a commercially-financed state channel that was privately owned (Mindez 49); and yet, this unique mixture of the US system of private television and the British system of public television all under the auspices of the government's executive power became a staple of Argentine television. This format, in part, responded to the Peronist vision of television as a tool of the state with the potential to exalt the traditions of the nation and promote patriotism[17] (Recalde).

[17] Aritz Recalde provides a detailed analysis of this law in its entirety, in which Article 20 is described as establishing the existence of "un servicio de comunicación en manos del Estado y dependiente del Poder Ejecutivo a través de los organismos que éste disgne." This control was specified in order to meet the objects of this service, which were articulated as "contribuir a consolidar la unidad espiritual de la nación exaltando las genuinas tradiciones y sentimiento

This unifying potential, as articulated by Perón, was a major impetus for the military junta's eventual appropriation of the ever-growing industry. Expropriated in 1973 by Perón, the military government decided to maintain control of Buenos Aires' public channels when they came to power, dividing them up among the various branches of the armed forces to be used as mouthpieces for the dissemination of their National Security Doctrine. Heriberto Muraro describes the hypocrisy of this decision in the face of the economic policies supported by the regime, writing that "la dictadura mantuvo en manos del Estado a los canales de la ciudad de Buenos Aires…a despecho de las presiones, los juicios comerciales, y sus propias declaraciones en contra de la intervención estatal en cualquier sector de la economía" (22). This strict control stemmed, in large part, from a fear of the spread of information that may damage the junta's international reputation. As such, President Videla in conjunction with the other members of the military junta quickly passed La Ley de Radiodifusión 22.285, which created an authoritative and centralist legal framework for communications that continued in effect for over 30 years (Loreti 20).

3.5 Conditioned Cooperation in Argentina

Demonstrating a degree of authoritarian control and censorship implemented to discourage all opposition, laws such as these and the censorship regulations imposed by the *Secretaría de Información Pública* were met with little protest by the television networks. As Leonardo Mindez states in his book on the history of Argentina's Canal 7, "Mientras las dejaran seguir con sus negocios, no pusieron reparos en que se controlara

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patrios y procurer un mejor conocimiento patrio del país" and "Jerarquizar los programas radiotelefónicos mediante transmisiones calificadas y servir de vehículo difusor para la acción del Estado" (Recalde).

cada información antes de que saliera al aire y se estableciera qué artistas podían trabajar y cuáles no" (84). This lack of outright support for the methods of the military junta, but similar refusal to question these changes, as evidenced by the adoption by many of these networks of a policy of self-censorship, leads to my categorization of this relational stage as conditioned cooperation. This conditioned cooperation extended the reach of the memory regime of stability through just war that was championed by Argentina's civic-military dictatorship. In the most basic sense, by reserving broadcast time for the dissemination of the junta's rhetoric, such as their various communiqués, television stations furthered a vision of Argentina as a nation that must be saved from the threat of subversives. As the juntas seventh official communiqué reads, "El gobierno de la Nación recuerda que la obligada intervención de las Fuerzas Armadas se ha hecho a favor del país todo y no en contra de determinados sectores sociales. En el proceso de reorganización que se inicia y que procura la pronta recuperación del país y el bienestar de sus habitantes es imprescindible contar con la colaboración de todos" (Comunicado Oficial Número 7). This rhetoric presents national stability and unity as something to be won via a just "reorganization" of society that relied upon the pervasive use of censorship as a necessary form of collaboration, while at the same time being careful to not deny the Armed Forces' use of force as a recourse to bring about this reorganization.

This conditioned collaboration, I maintain, differs in many aspects from the more symbiotic nature of the relationship in Brazil, in large part due to the divergent economic impact that Brazil's and Argentina's dictatorships had on their respective television industries. While Brazil's industry experienced a boom as part of the nation's "economic miracle" of the late 60s and early 70s, the Argentine state's poor administration of their

newly appropriated television networks coupled with the junta's lack of practical knowledge on how to operate a television channel led to an industry-wide economic crisis exemplified by the all-important color broadcast of the 1978 Argentine World Cup. As the Secretary of Finance at the time, Juan Alemann, stated about this economic disaster: "Cualquier empresa privada lo hubiese construido por veinte por ciento de lo que costó. Técnica y arquitectónicamente ha sido un desastre. Llegaron a construir una salida tapando una vereda y Cacciatore [por entonces intendente porteño] la hizo tirar abajo. La fortuna que costó eso. Daban ganas de llorar" (qtd. in Mindez 86).

3.6 Abrupt Transitional Distancing in Argentina

The third stage in this rocky relationship was similar to the Brazilian case in that there was a correlation between the end of the dictatorship and a relative distancing from some of the communication politics of the regime. For example, immediately following his election in April of 1984, President Raúl Alfonsín suspended the application of the *Plan Nacional de Radiodifusión* (PLANARA) put into place by the dictatorship and called for the creation of a new broadcasting law. These changes appeared consistent with his political platform, which demanded that given the key role of the media in the preservation of democracy, the broadcasting law passed by the dictatorship needed to be replaced by new, transformative solutions (Mindez 93). This apparently drastic rupture, however, was tempered by the fact that few of Alfonsin's early promises were transformed into actual legislation; he only returned one of the networks seized by the military juntas to its original owner—Canal 9—and failed to pass through legislation replacing the much criticized Broadcasting Law. In fact, much of the regulation and massive privatization of the

television industry would have to wait until Menem took office in the 90s. This slow alteration of Argentina's communication politics contrasts with the abrupt departure from the dictatorship's memory politics. Following the lead of the new democratically elected government, the television industry broadcast programs that questioned the memory narrative being sold by the previous civic-military dictatorship, choosing instead to broadcast the human rights cries for truth, justice and memory. Often deemed a "show of horrors" or "a circus" due to television's tendency to use spectacle to garner interest in these past systematic human rights abuses, the Argentina television programs of the 1980s and 90s struggled to find a balance between television's commercial logic and the ethics of representing, transmitting, and mediating the experiences of the dictatorship's all-too-recent traumas (Feld "Aquellos ojos" 102).

3.7 Privatized Independence

The penultimate relationship stage, which I deem privatized independence, gradually entered into effect in the mid-90s. Taking place during the Argentine Menem administration and the Brazilian Cardoso administration, this stage is marked by a wave of privatizations, foreign investments, and in the Argentine case, an increased concentration of the television industry. Industry changes that were the direct result of each nation's varying degree of adherence to a set of neoliberal economic policies, it is through an examination of these policies that one gains a deeper understanding of the state of these industries leading up to their belated, nascent democratization.

Menem adopted a stance of almost total adherence to key neoliberal policies by following the recommendations of international financial organizations, such as the IMF,

which included inaugurating a strict rule of cooperation with US approved-policies, a drastic reduction in state services, and a broad program of privatization. These changes were accompanied by an increased regulation of the independent television networks that had operated during the Alfonsín administration and a re-regulation of the broadcasting system via amendments to the existing broadcasting law put in place by the military juntas. Together, these reforms allowed for the concentration of media enterprises, a decrease in the amount of national programs required of each station, and an increase in foreign investment. In contrast, the Cardoso administration adopted qualified neoliberal policies. Thus, while many industries were privatized, there was a concentrated effort to democratize the industry by creating a more diverse array of TV offerings, and an extension of television services to rural areas.

Brazil's and Argentina's differing economic policies during this decade paralleled the nations' opposing shifts in government-promoted memory regimes, and resulting memory politics. For Brazil, the mid-1990s marked a turn towards a regime of reconciliation through remembering, a unique change for a country that had spent decades defending amnesty and promoting a memory politics that often extoled the benefits of burying the past. In direct contrast, the late-80s marked a major alteration in Argentina's use of symbolic retributive justice as a way of addressing the past, and the resounding cries of *Nunca más*. Politically cemented by Alfonsín's introduction of the famous *Punto Final* (1986) and *Obedencia Debida* (1987) laws, Argentina's memory regime of national reconciliation through institutionalized impunity was founded. While these changes in memory regime affected the media industry, (Argentina saw a reduction in the number of films that addressed the dictatorship during the early 1990s, moving from 16 in 1985 to

only 5 in 1990) they also highlight the increased independence of this industry, which allowed for a certain degree of freedom to broadcast programs that were more critical of these governmental policies, including the broadcast of Adolfo Scilingo's interview in March of 1995 on the program *Hora clave.*

A final aspect of this stage is the "independence" factor within both nation's television industries. As recently privatized enterprises that were no longer as dependent on state resources, major television networks took full advantage of their economic and political power to influence legislation that affected their economic interests. For many networks this meant fighting for less legislative oversight. Mindez describes this movement from hyper-control to extreme legislative freedom when he writes, "Tras la arrogancia normativa de regímenes militares que habían modificado una y otra vez las reglas vigentes para la radiodifusión, la democracia demostraba sus limitaciones convirtiendo los últimos 20 años (1980-2000) en los más pobres en material de legislación de radio y televisión" (101). I contend that this privatized independence from official control, which aligns with one of Porto's requirements for a "media opening" (3), presented a partial media opening wherein both televisual industries underwent a political split from their previous qualified cooperation. The slow democratization of the political system, the political opportunities provided by this democratization, and the privatization of the industry were all factors in this partial media opening. However, the failure of the media industry to adhere to the second requirement of Porto's definition, where media processes "become more representative of societal viewpoints," ironically due in large part to this lack of official control, results in my qualification of Argentina's and Brazil's media openings as partial

(4). It was not until the next stage of nascent democratization that these industries could claim to be embarking on a more complete media opening.

3.8 Nascent Democratization

While the final stage of nascent democratization continues to face many governmental hurdles, the series of broadcasting laws passed within the last decade in both Brazil and Argentina coupled with both nations' restructuring of public television might allow for this cautious re-definition of the television industry. The first alteration that I see central in this regard is the recent wave of government investment in public television, which has allowed it to gain a certain degree of commercial autonomy, as it becomes less dependent on the publicity dollars that are closely tied to audience ratings. This is complemented by the qualified restructuring of Argentine television under Nestor and Cristina Kirchner who with the introduction of Argentina's "Media Law" (26.522) initiated a gradual televisual shift intent on transforming television into what Martín-Barbero deems a "strategic space" where images are both produced and reimagined in a way that is more reflective of community relationships and marginalized voices (Martín-Barbero "Claves del debate" 37). However, this newly legislated pluralism remains constrained by the Executive branch's refusal to renounce its existing oversight of public television, as well as by the recent changes to the law decreed by President Mauricio Marci.

In the case of Brazil, the television station TV Cultura exemplifies the concept of television as a public service, while also highlighting the inherent contradictions that continue to plague many television stations in both Argentina and Brazil. Founded in 1969, TV Cultura has always been an outlier due to its mandated cultural and educational

autonomy. However, it also historically been state-funded, which, while providing it with the freedom to produce more cultural and education programs, has stinted its ability to differentiate itself from the policies of the reigning government (see Chapter 4).

Another key step towards the realization of television's media opening is the reformation of the institutions that were complicit in the abuses of the past civic-military dictatorships of both countries. On this front, one of the main shifts towards the democratization of Argentina's media industry was the introduction of the aforementioned "Media Law" (Law 26.522). Proposed by Cristina Kirchner in 2009, this law was meant to replace the earlier broadcasting law passed under the dictatorship by developing a set of mechanisms to promote competition and undo the concentration of the media industry therefore allowing for more democratic access to new information technology (Lentz 58). The numerous hurdles faced by this law, including the claims that Grupo Clarín levied against its constitutionality and the decrees passed by President Macri in 2015, which re-organized the entities that oversee the Media Law and modified the very articles so problematic for Grupo Clarín, are telling of the nascent, contested character of this democratization.

The cautious definition of Argentina's and Brazil's television industry as entering a stage of nascent democratization welcomes a deeper discussion of how the evolving relational stages recorded in this chapter undergird each nation's previous and ongoing transitional justice processes. In other words, by exploring these various stages, I begin to shine a light on the belated, gradual democratization of the Argentine and Brazilian television industry as a crucial, if largely overlooked, component of transitional justice in its defense of marginalized memories, quest for symbolic reparations, re-building of

societal relations, and commitment to improving democratic rule of law. In the chapters that follow, I explore the micro-interactions that characterize this recent stage of nascent democratization by asking, how can transitional justice processes take place on the small screen? A question, which is itself grounded in the existing interpretive frameworks employed by normative transitional justice mechanisms and their relative exclusion of television as a valid tool, I conclude this preliminary investigation by asking: 1) Given the previously explored relationship between television and the State as actors in the construction of memory regimes, how have these same relationships and their interpretive frameworks been historically framed by, utilized by, and in some cases excluded from each nation's normative transitional justice mechanisms? And 2) How does this framing inform the nascent democratization of these national television industries and the consolidated democratization of Argentina and Brazil?

4. The Transitional Framing of TV: TV as a Supplement

The first of these questions lays the groundwork for my discussion of why the television industry and its potential democratization are rarely included in discussions of Argentina's and Brazil's transitional justice processes, and how this common exclusion overlooks a fundamental component of democratization. Through an analysis of a series of seminal transitional justice policy documents in Argentina and Brazil—the official truth commission reports of Argentina's CONADEP and Brazil's CNV, unofficial truth commission reports, such as *Brasil: Nunca mais,* and reparations committees—I argue that despite being framed as a dynamic medium that holds a multiplicity of roles, television is largely ignored as a potential form of remedy for those abuses of which it was both victim

and perpetrator. Presented in four ways, television is most frequently referenced in these documents as either 1) a vehicle for the transmission of information and ideologies, 2) a victim of state or self-imposed censorship, 3) an apparatus of torture, and/or 4) a civic perpetrator of the abuses committed during the dictatorships.

In its first form, television is primarily portrayed as an instrument of misinformation used to spread the political ideology of each nation's reigning civic-military dictatorship. Brazil's CNV refers on more than one occasion to the use of national television, particularly TV Globo, for the dissemination of the dictatorship's message regarding the necessary use of force against criminals who opposed the Brazilian armed forces and their methods of governance. As the commission's final report claims, "Em sua mensagem de comemoração do sexto aniversário da "Revolução", em cadeia de radio e televisão, o general Médici afirmava: 'Haverá repressão, sim. E dura e implacável. Mas apenas contra o crime e só contra os criminosos'" (CNV Vol. 11, 103). This example is complemented by the case of Massafumi Yoshinga also included in the final report of the CNV. Pressured by the military regime, Yoshinga was forced to disavow his participation in the militant organization VPR (Popular Revolutionary Vanguard) on television. Considered a form of psychological warfare utilized by the dictatorship, this complements television's more tangible use as a torture mechanism, particularly in the Brazilian case.

The employment of television as a form of torture is recognized by Brazil's Comissão Especial de Mortos e Desparecidos Políticos (CEMDP), the nation's unofficial truth commission, *Brasil: Nunca mais*, and the CNV. Television was directly involved in torture due to the use of television sets to charge many of the electric shock apparatuses housed in the nation's detention centers (CNV Vol. 1, 366). These devices are described in

detail in one testimony included in *Brasil: Nunca mais*. "Dobradores de tensão alimentados à pilha, que, ao contrário do magneto, produzem eletricidade de alta voltagem a baixa amperagem, como as dos cinescópios da TVs; que, esta máquina produzia faísca que queimava a pele e provocava choques violentos" (37). Referred to as Bridgette Bardot by DEOPS in São Paulo, television was only one media apparatus used as a torture instrument. Other such apparatuses included the radio, which was not only used for its electric current, but also in the Argentine case, was frequently employed to cover the screams of torture victims in the *centros clandestinos*.

Television's implementation as an instrument of torture, informative vehicle, and ideological apparatus presents a snapshot of how, according to transitional justice documentation, television was directly employed by each nation's dictatorial regime. However, these very same truth commissions, reparations committees, and truth trials commonly used television as a mechanism for the spread of information and opposing ideologies. Before publishing their abbreviated final report, Argentina's National Commission for the Disappearance of Persons (CONADEP) aired the television documentary *Nunca más* on Canal 13. Marking the first use of the report's now iconic title, *Nunca más* was aired on July 4, 1984. It detailed the work of CONADEP, including their collection of testimonies and their visits to *centros clandestinos* around the nation, all contextualized by the inclusion of photos of the disappeared and edited testimonies of their family members (Crenzel *La historia política* 88). Television spots were also incorporated into the conscience-raising strategies of other organizations, such as the CNV and the CEMDP, both of which reference the media's publicity as key to their organizational efforts. Additionally, television coverage was cautiously used to publicize Argentina's

Juicio a las Juntas by broadcasting small segments of the trials without sound and only accessible on state television.

To combat television's potential to be used to inform and disseminate varied ideologies, as exemplified by its eventual use by the transitional justice mechanisms cited above, Argentina's and Brazil's civil-military dictatorships are also framed by these very same mechanisms as victimizing television through their use of extreme censorship. The CNV's final report employs this censorship frame by dedicating an entire section of its report to the Brazilian dictatorship's use of censorship. While censorship itself, the CNV claims, was not introduced to Brazil by the 1964 dictatorship, it became more centralized and political/ideological in nature during this specific episode of dictatorial control (CNV Vol.1, 376). Altered in part due to television's growth during the era and its potential to operate as both a tool and threat to the dictatorship, Brazil's system of censorship shifted its focus during the 60s and 70s by not only repressing those acts that could be considered direct, open and politically-motivated, but also directly monitoring spaces and individuals who belonged to the "esfera cultural" (CNV Vol. 1, 378). Brazil's CEMDP highlights the pervasiveness of this censorship and its concrete effects on the freedom of the press, as well as its transition into a form of self-censorship and symbiotic and conditioned collaboration on the part of television networks.

This degree of collaboration hints at the fourth manner in which television is framed by these same transitional justice mechanisms—as a civic perpetrator of the abuses committed during the dictatorship. This framing has become more prevalent during the 21st-century, as civil actors—such as judges, clergy, business owners, attorneys, and other civil servants are being investigated for committing abuses during the recent Argentine and

Brazilian dictatorships and/or being complicit in the perpetration of these abuses. A 2015 report from the Argentine Center for Legal and Social Studies (CELS) states that while CONADEP's original report did not explicitly mention the involvement of civil actors in these crimes, it provides data relevant to the re-construction of these criminal relationships between civil actors and military forces (Rocha et al. 113). One of these specific legal complaints was brought against *Clarín, La Nación*, and *La Razón* for the manner in which they obtained the majority shares in the company *Papel Prensa*. The *Argentina Independent* summarizes this case in a recent report, stating that the wife of *Papel Prensa*'s prior owner Lidia Papaleo, testified in 2010 to the fact that during 1976 she received death threats against her and her family. These threats were then acted on from March 1977 to July 24, 1982, during which time she was abducted and tortured. This case is representative of the many ways in which specific media companies benefitted from supporting and contributing to the repressive structures of Argentina's and Brazil's dictatorial regimes.

Brazil's CNV provides an overview of this participation by dedicating an entire chapter to the discussion of civilian complicity in its final report. For example, IPES was a group that developed from a formal association between impresarios, conservative politicians, and high-ranking officials of the Brazilian Armed Forces, and as such, is framed by the CNV as crucial to the military's coup d'état and much of the resulting repression. The CNV writes:

> Na verdade, o IPES seria o 'ovo de serpente' do golpe de 1964, sendo capaz de produzir uma notável campanha, que integrou importantes órgãos da impressa e do entretenimento, produziu peças de teatro, programas de radio e de TV, livros e, principalmente, 14 filmes curta-metragem que foram exaustivamente veiculados

> nas favelas, em sindicatos, universidades e empresas, durante os horários de almoço, em pracinhas das cidades do interior, clubes e nos cinemas da rede do empresário Severiano Ribeiro. (Vol. 2, 317)

This brief review of the four frames assigned to television by a variety of normative Argentine and Brazilian transitional justice documents presents a seemingly multi-faceted framing of television. However, the tendency to limit television to its status as either a public, passive transmitter of set narratives or as a privatized active victimizer, conveniently eliminates television from being recognized as a mechanism of transitional justice that satisfies the need for reparations via representation, particularly in the cases of the rights to memory and truth. This elimination of television from these documents becomes clear in the stark absence of any recommendations regarding how to alter, use, or include mass media in addressing the aftermath of these nations' dictatorial periods and in protecting the rights to memory, truth, and justice. Tellingly, television is not once mentioned in the recommendations and conclusions included in the final reports of either CONADEP or the CNV, despite the express intent of both documents to recommend appropriate measures to address previous human rights violations and prevent future violations.

5. The Transitional Exclusion of TV's Belated Democratization

The relative erasure of television from the official transitional justice script written and performed by its normative mechanisms lies in stark contrast to the lead role played by television during the five relational stages explored in this chapter. An erasure that has long been overlooked, it nevertheless is telling of a larger inquiry into the end goal of

transitional justice. Circling back to this chapter's discussion of the ways in which Argentina's and Brazil's democratization of television may act as the epilogue of each nation's respective transitional justice processes, I maintain that television should not only be incorporated into the solutions and recommendations of these normative mechanisms due to its presence as a dynamic memory medium (see chapters 3, 4 and 5), but also that in order to make a claim regarding the completion and consolidation of any process of transitional justice, the relative democratization of a nation's mass media must be taken into account. A claim made by numerous scholars before me (e.g. Califano, Lentz, Martin-Barbero, Nicolosi), the completion of transitional justice demands a national cultural transformation, which is carried out in part through television's democratization. As Califano argues, "no podremos hablar de un sistema político realmente democrático cuando no haya medios de comunicación que reflejen la diversidad política y cultural de la sociedad" (8). To achieve a truly democratic television industry, the industry itself must be reformed to allow for media pluralism, the eradication of media monopolies, freedom of expression, a reduction in publicity's control, the democratization of existing legislation on communication and cultural products, and the improvement of the geographical reach of diverse programming, to only name a few factors. These reforms allow for the construction of a media industry that addresses viewers less as consumers and more as citizens with the inherent right to inform others and be informed, to be seen and to be heard, and to produce their own representations as opposed to being subjected to the interpretations of others (Martin-Barbero "Claves del debates" 43; Nicolosí 2).

In the case of the Argentine television industry, the legislative reforms passed under President Cristina Kirchner began to respond to some of these demands for

democratization. While not all have been implemented to their full extent, these reforms include the previously cited Law 26.522, which aims to avoid the formation of new monopolies and oligopolies, limit the duration of broadcasting licenses, recognize the diversity of the beneficiaries of these licenses, particularly non-governmental organizations, and provide state funding for educational and cultural channels (Nicolosi). Another central component of this law was its refusal to allow members of non-democratic governments from being partners in licensed broadcasting companies (Lentz 59). These new legislative measures and their resulting re-structuring of the Argentine television industry are both crucial moves towards the democratization of the nation's television industry, and yet, the discussion of these democratizing measures in both the Argentine and Brazilian case are largely excluded from discussions on transitional justice.

In the end, I do not intend to argue against the existing transitional justice scripts, which are largely written from within the legal and judicial framework, but rather hope that this chapter begins to unpack the ways in which these existing scripts may to some degree impede the reinforcement of democracy and the expression of memory's plurality by not recognizing their own limitations and the artistic interplays that allow for their own existence. In the chapters that follow, I explore these interplays by detailing the ways in which three unique television genres—telenovelas, miniseries, and testimonial interviews—have the potential to operate as broader, more inclusive discursive spaces for the production, transmission, promotion and merchandizing of a plurality of memories.

Chapter 2. Our Daily Dose of the Past: Telenovelas as Dynamic Memory Mediums

"El pasado regresa como ficción"
- Forster 54

"Yo soy aquel que estando lejos no te olvida" (Rapheal). Meant to invoke the romantic image of a banished, but persistent love, this opening line from the Argentine telenovela *Montecristo* also evokes the haunting vision of persistent traces, partially erased pasts, and memories forcibly marginalized. This double entendre points to a broader question of how the rights to truth and memory so inherent to transitional justice are performed daily in fictional media productions. Going beyond recent studies on this topic, which tend to focus on the news media and the ethics of journalism within transitional justice contexts (Hodzic and Tolbert; Viebach et al.), this chapter looks to telenovelas to illustrate the contradictory ways in which fictional television programs provide a digital space for the expression of memory problematics, while offering a more nuanced if perhaps less cohesive narrative of the past. To explore these memory problematics, I analyze one Argentine and one Brazilian telenovela in their interconnected roles as memory archives, vehicles for memory, memory entrepreneurs, and memory merchandisers. Under the umbrella of these four roles, I argue that both telenovelas 1) use and re-enact archival footage to cement a televisual memory (Nora "Between Memory and History" 17), 2) champion the memory regime of the time, while also questioning it by highlighting the persistent gap between representation and recollection, 3) provide a malleable discursive space that insists on the transmission of exemplary memories that tend towards multidirectionality (Todorov; Rothberg), and 4) market memory by being commercial products, but also by selling social action.

This chapter's comparative close-reading of the Argentine telenovela, *Montecristo* (2006), and the Brazilian telenovela, *Amor e Revolução* (2011), illustrates these multiple functions. First, I argue that it is in part through the inclusion of key thematic components that continuously read the past through the present that *Montecristo* and *Amor e Revolução* assert themselves as independent pieces of memory merchandise. In this role, these programs re-tool existing televisual memories and construct new televisual memories for a contemporary audience that, together, open up the possibility of divergent pathways for interpreting each nation's dictatorial pasts.

These thematic components operate in conjunction with the inherent structural characteristics of the telenovela—including its use of excessive emotions and the subjunctive voice—to highlight the productive gap between representation and recollection. A gap akin to the Lacanian gap between representation and experience, it persists due to the layers of negotiation inherent in making meaning of recollection and inserting said recollection into the existing framework of social understanding; it is the "impossible-real kernel" that resists total articulation (Zizek xxiv). Productive in its persistence, this gap allows for a celebration of the plurality of truths and the imperfections of any totalizing memory regime. As such, it provides more flexibility for the inclusion of marginalized memory discourses, which might fall outside of the national norms of how and who we remember.

While both *Montecristo* and A*mor e Revolução* push the boundaries of the promoted memory regime of the time, the Brazilian telenovela's revolutionary nature is tempered by its historical setting, including its re-enactment of iconic historical events, and its attempt to present viewers with a broad understanding of all competing historical

viewpoints. In other words, *Amor e Revolução*'s targeted infusion of real events into its fictional narrative works to situate viewers into a specific historical moment where colliding socio-political viewpoints provide them with pre-packaged pathways through which to read the past, as opposed to allowing them to construct their own past narratives.

In the end, this chapter's investigation of the various ways in which these shows package cultural memories not only recognizes the processes through which the memory production of viewers is shaped, but also the ways in which viewers are interpellated as subjects of carefully crafted memory narratives. A political tool in its own right, memory can be molded and the call to remember can become a platform. As such, I explore the specific roles of telenovelas as an ideological apparatus that hails the viewer as a memory consumer, while recognizing the agency of these consumers as conscience subjects (Butler 8). Dave Elder-Vass brings forth this agency in his concept of norm circles, stating that people are "agentic subjects in the sense that they can make decisions that affect their actions" (201). A humanism and agency that is itself acknowledged by these very television programs, they provide a space for this social recognition of one's subjectification and dynamic role in enacting the memory debates central to transitional justice

Divided into four main sections, this chapter first explores *Montecristo* and *Amor e Revolução* as independent memory merchandise through an analysis of each program's internal structure as a new product of televisual memory that to some degree cites pre-existing televisual memories, and the ways in which their characters participate as actors in their own processes of remembering and memorializing. As these characters reconstruct the totality of their pasts, television viewers are both orally and visually exposed to the oppositional memory frameworks that are frequently flattened in the production of a

singular memory regime, as well as the struggles inherent in recalling and representing the past. The fictional stories of memory production and real-life testimonies so central to these shows provide audio-visual pathways, which can guide viewers' own process of remembering. It is through these pathways that *Montecristo* and *Amor e Revolução* function as memory vehicles, a piece of memory merchandise, and an active structure of memory merchandising. Extending the concept of memory merchandiser[18], this study focuses next on the ways in which each of these individual programs balances their roles as commercial products and memory entrepreneurs by analyzing the overarching ways in which each program frames memory (Atencio *Memory's Turn* 44). Specifically, this second section investigates the major cultural memory frames adopted by each program as well as their thematic particularities to explore the ways in which they question and support the memory regimes promoted by each nation at the time of their broadcast. The third section brings to light how these thematic particularities, which inform these memory frames are further complicated by the telenovela genre's structural characteristics, including its portrayal of personal emotional excess and its relationship with the "what if" of the visual subjunctive voice. In its final section, this chapter places the previously outlined specificities and limitations of *Montecristo* and *Amor e Revolução* in dialogue with the normative transitional justice mechanisms and the judicial truths they often construct. Looking briefly at this nexus, I highlight the potential of telenovelas to draw on these thematic and structural components to provide a more inclusive space for

[18] Memory merchandiser is a term that takes into account the memory frames that a television program strategically adopts in order to sell a specific version of the past as truth, but which also speaks to the impossibility of these frames to every fully impose this truth claim on the show's spectators. For a more thorough exploration of this term and its origins, please refer to the Introduction.

remembering and making sense of seemingly contradictory pasts in a way that satisfies societal needs not currently met by these normative mechanisms. These shows expand on the Argentine and Brazilian drive of re-democratization with its, at times, exclusionary rhetoric of victimhood and de-contextualized vision of human rights abuses.[19] Specifically, I argue that *Montecristo* loosens the category of victim, while also constructing a parallel between activism directed towards addressing human rights violations committed during the height of each nation's military dictatorship and contemporary activism surrounding new iterations of these human rights abuses, such as illegal medical testing.

2. The Telenovela Genre

Telenovelas are the stars of prime time. In Brazil, this can translate to a profit of as much as $500 million dollars per telenovela, as was the case with the nation's hugely popular *Avenida Brasil* (Antunes). Brazil's largest television conglomerate—TV Globo—has produced over 260 telenovelas in its lifetime and broadcasts an average of 6 telenovelas per year, while Argentina's Telefe, which has dominated national ratings for most of the 1990s and 2000s, airs approximately 4 telenovelas every year. Telenovelas strong foothold in Brazil and Argentina not only speaks to their popularity, but their centrality as a defining genre of the Latin American television market. A fictional televisual narrative that evolved from the Latin American *folletines* and *radionovelas*, the Brazilian and Argentine

[19] As Nelly Richard states during her discussion of those fractured and/or hidden narratives often overlooked by the homogenizing, hegemonic rhetoric of the Argentine democratic transition, "Las hablas mutiladas de estos relatos carecen, muchas veces, del poder de enunciación suficiente para inscribir su queja en el tono—fuerte—de una interpelación que sea capaz de descentrar el monopolio argumentativo de la razón impuesta por las estrategias transicionales. Son, sin embargo, estas señales truncas las que deben ser incorporadas a las narrativas históricas de la Transición" (Richard *Políticas y estéticas* 11).

telenovelas also took their cues from the Cuban soap operas first aired in the 1950s. This amalgamation of influences has resulted in a transnational telenovela format, which is known for its open-ended structure, daily broadcast of approximately 120-200 episodes, thematic tropes and melodramatic plots (Abastaz 37).

Nevertheless, from within this standardized format, Latin American telenovelas maintain certain national particularities, specifically in regards to thematic content. For example, contemporary Brazilian telenovelas tend to align with what Carolina Acosta-Alzuru deems *telenovelas de ruptura* and what Maria Aparecida Baccega calls *telenovelas socioculturais*, meaning that these serial melodramas expand on the traditional model of telenovelas known for its depiction of a heterosexual love story and the tribulations that prevent said love story from coming to fruition through marriage. Instead, they showcase complex characters, reject good and evil archetypes, and develop stories that speak to social and cultural issues taken from Latin American reality (Acosta-Alzuru 194). During the 21st-century, Argentine telenovelas have also begun to show signs of a more consistent alignment with this category of *telenovelas de ruptura.* While the traditional style is still relatively prominent in Argentina, key telenovelas such as Telefe's *Resistiré* (2003), *Montecristo* (2006) and *Vidas Robadas* (2008) exemplify shows that have confronted country-specific sociopolitical problems as part of their central plotlines and have invited citizen participation in the resolution of these problems. Thus, while telenovelas are still the subject of frequent criticism aimed at their entertainment value, escapism, and low-brow use of melodramatic stereotypes (Beltrán e Carodona qtd. in Alves Pinto; França Mendes qtd. in Brennan *The Brazilian Television Mini-Series* 196), their importance as culturally meaningful forms of representation, their validation and questioning of

discourses of power, their political roles and their construction of a national imaginary are increasingly garnering scholarly attention (e.g. M.K. Almeida; Atencio; Acosta-Alzuru; Benavides; Baccega; Felipe Miguel; Martín-Barbero; Porto). This chapter adds to this new line of scholarly inquiry through an exploration of two telenovelas—*Montecristo* (2006) and *Amor e Revolução* (2011)—and the multiple ways in which they operate as dynamic memory mediums, presenting narratives of the past that walk a fine line between disturbance and acceptance of each nation's official memory regimes purported in part by normative transitional justice mechanisms.

3. *Montecristo: Un amor y una venganza*

Loosely based on the Alexandre Dumas' novel of the same name, *Montecristo* is a tale of revenge, corruption and the obstacles that impede a society's search for truth and justice. The telenovela follows the life of Santiago Díaz Herrera, a rich lawyer who appears to have the perfect life; he is in love with the woman of his dreams (Laura Ledesma), has a loving family, seemingly supportive friends, and has recently been promoted. Yet, in a split-second, all of this is lost. Santiago's life changes completely when Alberto Lombardo—his best friend's father—discovers that Horacio Díaz Herrera—Santiago's father—has been investigating a case implicating Alberto in the disappearance and illegal kidnapping of children during Argentina's recent civic-military dictatorship (1976-1983). In order to prevent being investigated and charged with this crime, Alberto orders the murder of Horacio, and demands that Marcos Lombardo—Alberto's son—oversee the murder of Santiago (*Montecristo*).

Figure 1: Promotional Poster for Montecristo

Believed dead, Santiago is abandoned for 10 years in a Moroccan prison where he finds time to carefully plan his revenge on those who betrayed him and his family. Upon escaping, he returns to Argentina and disguises himself as the reclusive and rich Alejandro Dumas who with the help of Victoria Saenz, Ramón and Leon Rocamora seeks revenge on the Lombardo family. Nevertheless, Santiago's plan is far from foolproof. Throughout the show, it is stalled by various unforeseen events, such as Laura's marriage to Marcos, Santiago's discovery that Laura's son, Matías, is actually his child, and the eventual discovery that Laura is one of the dictatorship's "bebés robados" as well as Victoria's forcibly disappeared sister (*Montecristo*).

4. *Amor e revolução*

First aired by Sistema Brasileiro de Televisão (SBT) in 2011, this show offers a multi-faceted, detailed version of the historical events of the Brazilian military dictatorship and the systematic abuses perpetrated by the regime. A historical melodrama that follows the evolution of the nation's dictatorship, *Amor e Revolução* opens in 1964 with a massacre of suspected communists outside of São Paulo and closes with the Direitas Já campaign of

the 1980s. The telenovela follows the Romeo and Juliet love story of Maria Paixão and José Guerra. While brought together by the early events of the dictatorship, the couple is just as frequently torn apart by the opposing political leanings of their families. As Tiago Santiago the show's scriptwriter states, "Ela é de família de comunistas. Ele é filho de general de linha dura. Ela quer fazer a revolução socialista no Brasil. Ele é um major que trabalha para a Inteligência do Exército, apesar de ser democrata por convicção. Tudo é muito difícil para este amor" (oplanetatv). A relationship that is threatened by a mix of the traditional telenovela tropes, such as love triangles, and by key political events, such as *Atos Institucionais*, it provides the axis around which the rest of the telenovela revolves.

Figure 2: Promotional Poster for Amor é Revolução

Through Maria and José's ties with family and friends, viewers are exposed to a variety of societal spaces and how the evolution of personal relationships and political institutions affect said spaces. For example, Maria's brother João invites the audience into the world of vanguard theatre, while José's father, General Lobo Guerra, and his brother,

Filinto, represent not only hardline, anti-communist military figures, but also cogs in the systematic torture and abuse of suspected subversives. This societal space is complemented by the world of DEOPs (Departamento de Ordem Política e Social), and contrasted by the characters who are communist militants, student activists, and journalists committed to challenging Brazil's increasingly harsh censorship laws. Grounded by the inclusion of real life testimonies of the dictatorship, *Amor e Revolução* subtly echoes *Montecristo*'s deconstruction of the past as remembered from within the present.

5. Argentina's and Brazil's Official Memory Regimes

Montecristo's storyline—marked by secrets, stolen identities and the opposition between revenge and justice—is premised on the historical gaps in memory and secret abuses associated with Argentina's recent history of state oppression. As Marcelo Camaño, one of the series's scriptwriters maintains:

> Nuestra idea era esta que la traición que habían sufrido los protagonistas tenían que ver con los civiles que habían colaborado durante la última dictadura; ya que la historia de amor, dentro del melodrama—que hay el triángulo amoroso entre Victoria, Laura y Santiago—desencadene sobre la historia de dos hermanas que fueron separadas por el terrorismo de estado y también que el objeto amoroso ayude para juntarlas. (qtd. in Sciacca 252)

A potentially controversial topic, it nevertheless matched perfectly with the global boom in memory merchandising and also the political opportunity provided by the first Kirchner administration and their purported memory regime (Atencio *Memory's Turn*; Huyssen *Present Pasts*; Sueldo).

Néstor Kirchner's rise to power marked a new surge in political support for the human rights movement, which had fought for years to re-frame the past dictatorship as a time of extreme repression and violence that must not be forgotten. This movement rallied around the *Nunca más* rhetoric, and its inherent promise that remembering these events functioned as a lesson in human rights for present and future generations (Forster 59). Under the banner of truth and justice, the Kirchner administration, thus, often equated memory with the protection of human rights; in other words, the fight to remember and share one's story was seen as a privileged way of shining a light on past human rights abuses, and thus, doing human rights work in the present. The truth trials of the 1990s and the more recent human rights trials (2003-present) highlight this overlap; memory, extracted from archival material and re-constructed in individual judicial testimony, became the entry point for the edification of judicial truths and facts. This, as some would argue, led to a necessary objectification of the subjectivity of truths; for while memory itself was recognized as inherently constructivist and imperfect, it was also the only remnant of these forcibly erased pasts. Miguel D'Agostino, a survivor of the Club Atlético detention center, reiterated this point on the witness stand during these human rights trials. "The only way for you to enter into a concentration camp is through our memories. It's a big effort to narrate this in a way that can be helpful for judging and sentencing. [Memories] are the only way to travel to those times. And they are imprecise" (qtd. in Kaiser "Argentina's Trials" 2). Néstor Kirchner's administration (2003-2007)[20] embraced this

[20] Néstor Kirchner was sworn in as the President of Argentina on May 25, 2003. He continued in this role until 2007, when he announced that he would not be running for a second-term. In his place, his wife, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, ran for President as a member of the Partido Justicialista. She won and was sworn into office on December 10, 2007. This term in office was followed up by a second-term as President from 2011-2015. The political power of the Kirchner's

relative objectification of memory, while also initiating a new wave of commemorative efforts including the musealization of previous *centros clandestinos*, the creation of the Centro Cultural de la Memoria Haroldo Conti and approving the legal review of those directly involved in the abuses committed during the dictatorship[21] (Kaiser 314; Otero 103). As Susana Kaiser states, "Thus in 2006, the official memory discourse mirrored that of the Argentine human rights movement, characterized by strong alliances with official fiscal support from federal and local government" ("Memory Inventory" 315).

This official political support for the demands of certain sectors of the Argentine human rights movement marked a shift in the state's cultural memory policy (see Chapter 1). The official policy of democratic advancement through "national reconciliation," itself championed by policies of impunity, such as the infamous Decretos de Indulto[22], Ley de

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from 2003 to 2015 is reflected in the on-going political support for the populist-left politics of both Presidents, often referred to as Kirchnerismo.

[21] During his time in office, Néstor Kirchner supported the transformation of the former Escuela Superior de Mecánica de la Armada (ESMA) in Buenos Aires and La Perla in Córdoba, both famous concentration centers, into museums that worked to commemorate the victims of these abuses, protect the memory of this devastating past, and promote human rights. Kirchner's policy of re-purposing these spaces affected approximately 60 additional spaces that were previously controlled and used by the military as centers of torture and detention. Additionally, the administration passed Law 26.394 in 2008, which repealed much of the internal power of the Military Justice Code and modified the Penal Code to speed up the justice process for victims of the dictatorship's abuses (Ministerio de Justicia y Derechos Humanos).

[22] The Decretos de Indulto were passed by President Carlos Meném on October 7, 1989 and December 30, 1990 (Mignone). In 1989, these *indultos* pardoned around 300 people with open judicial processes, including 1) all of the high ranking military officers not already beneficiaries of the Ley de Punto Final and Ley de Obediencia Debida (Decreto 1002/89), 2) a certain number of citizens accused of subversion (Decreto 1003/89), 3) all military personal that intervened in the military rebellions during Semana Santa in 1987 (Decreto 1004/89), and 4) certain ex-members of the nation's military junta (Decreto 1005/89). The *indultos* of 1990 named specific individuals who received pardons, including ex-members of the military juntas: Jorge Rafael Videla, Emilio Eduardo Massera, Orlando Ramón Agosti, Roberto Eduardo Viola, Armando Lambruschini, former Buenos Aires' chiefs of police: Juan Ramón Alberto and Ovidio Pablo Riccheir (Decreto 2741/90), Montoneros leader: Mario Eduardo Firmenich (Decreto 2747/90), and others: Norma Bremilda Kennedy, Duilio Antonio Rafael Brunello, Jos Alfredo Martínez de Hoz and Carlos Guillermo Suarez Mason (Decreto 2743).

Punto Final and Ley de Obediencia Debida, are key reference points in the activation of an official memory regime that ruled the nation from the late 1980s until the mid-1990s (Salvi; Otero). Predicated on a need for reconciliation after the fratricidal violence carried out by two Argentine *demons*—armed militants and the Armed Force—, this rhetoric of reconciliation embraced what Rocío Otero calls "el régimen de memoria humanitario" (69). As a memory regime, this humanitarian turn typified Argentines' victims as depoliticized innocents and tended to avoid any contextualization of this violence (Otero 70; Crenzel 44-45 *La historia política*). However, the exclusions inherent in this regime's limited definition of victim and thus, its inability to make sense of the nation's multidimensional past garnered a growing amount of institutional criticism and became the subject of a series of films that looked to re-insert the memory of militants, such as *Montoneros, una historia* (1998).

Nestor Kirchner's ascension to the office of the presidency, echoed this partial turn away from this humanitarian memory narrative by officially rejecting the theory of two demons[23] and acknowledging the political militancy of many of the disappeared. The prologue to the thirtieth anniversary edition of *Nunca más* highlights this shift in official memory narratives.

> Es preciso dejar claramente establecido, porque lo requiere la construcción del futuro sobre bases firmes, que es inaceptable pretender justificar el terrorismo de Estado como una suerte de juego de violencias contrapuestas como si fuera posible

[23] The theory of two demons was adopted immediately following the dictatorship as a way to frame the dictatorship as a battle between two equal sides—the military juntas and the leftist militants—who were "responsible for the country's fate." At the same time, this theory allowed for the portrayal of rest of Argentine society as innocent, apolitical victims in this struggle (Lazzara 321).

> buscar una simetría justificatoria en la acción de particulares frente el apartamiento de los fines propios de la Nación y del Estado, que son irrenunciables. (*CONADEP Nunca más*)

Together, this increased level of political support for the historic demands of Argentina's human rights movement and the cultural shift away from a humanitarian memory narrative, created an opportunity for the mainstream production of *Montecristo*.

Montecristo was not only bolstered by this political shift, but also by the commercial success of previous memory-based cultural productions, beginning with the 1984 bestseller, *Nunca Más*, and continuing with the popularity of films, such as the Oscar-winning *La historia oficial*, and Verbitsky's infamous televised interview with Adolfo Scilingo in 1995. As Bilbija and Payne contend, "Television shows about the authoritarian past, complete with advertisements receive high ratings, demonstrating that memory sells, and that it also sells products" (2). However, *Montecristo* departed from these productions through its representation of the experiences of the children of the disappeared—a reflection of the larger shift in televisual testimonies seen in the 1990s—, and it also embraced the hyper-emotionality of melodrama as a new logic for asserting the immediacy of these experiences and, thus, their relevance to Argentina's ongoing human rights violations. As Mario Villani, a survivor of 5 of Argentina's detention centers reflects on this latter point, "El público que me escuchaba en el año ochenta y cuatro y ochenta y cinco...no es lo mismo que el público que me escucha ahora...Gente muy joven...que se queda...cuando escuchan a alguien hablar sobre la vida dentro de un campo y ese tipo de cosas, se quedan muy impactados. Más impactados que en aquella época" (qtd. in Feld "Aquellos ojos" 93). This recent inclusion of new voices and the political opportunity

provided by the Kirchner administration in conjunction with the market success of previous programs, created a strong demand for Telefe—the show's network producer—to supply a program such as *Montecristo*.

Itself a product that took advantage of Brazil's shifting memory politics, *Amor e Revolução* aired during former President Dilma Rousseff's first term in office (2011-2014). Rousseff's former involvement with the Vanguarda Armada Revolucionária Palmares (VAR-Palmares), a leftist militant group that opposed the nation's civil-military dictatorship and her subsequent imprisonment and torture led many human rights groups to hope for increased political support for the human rights movement and a more thorough investigation of past abuses committed during the dictatorship (Quadrat 71). Rousseff responded to many of these hopes by signing into the law the nation's first truth commission (Commissão Nacional da Verdade-CNV) on May 16th, 2012. Tasked with investigating the systematic abuses that took place between 1946 and 1988—the period between Brazil's last two democratic constitutions—the National Truth Commission (CNV) analyzed the realities and facts of the past through an exploration of the various crimes against humanity committed during these years, particularly emphasizing the years of the nation's most recent military dictatorship. The CNV, thus, responded to a shift in the nation's willingness to consider more retributive justice mechanisms—such as trials—and to acknowledge the individual accountability of certain state and civil society actors. Thus, despite articulating their overarching objective as "efetivar o direito à memória' e à 'verdade histórica' e promover a reconciliação nacional," the CNV no longer viewed judicial accountability as antithetical to reconciliation (*A Instalação da Comissão*). This is evidenced by the CNV's specific inclusion of the names of suspected perpetrators in the

final volume of its report, its recommendations for how these perpetrators should be punished, its qualified insistence that the 1979 Amnesty Law should be revoked, and its refusal to see truth as equivalent to retributive justice. As the CNV wrote in its final report published on December 10, 2014, "A instituição de uma comissão não substitui, contudo a obrigação do Estado de obter a verdade por meio de processos judiciais" (*Relatório Vol. I* 36). This project of truth-finding and memory consensus was bolstered by specific symbolic actions taken by Rousseff, her sustained support for the 2010 project developed by the Federal Secretariat of Human Rights called "Direito à Memória e à Verdade," her decision to prohibit all official celebrations of the 1964 coup on March 31st in military headquarters, and also her work to insure that overthrown president João Goulart received head of state honors during his burial (Quadrat 86). These political developments in Brazil's official memory politics created a space for *Amor e Revolução's* writer Tiago Santiago to draft the telenovela that he had always hoped to make (oplanetatv). Itself, the first Brazilian telenovela to be set during the State's last military dictatorship, *Amor é Revolução* is also one of the first Brazilian television programs to emit images of the type of torture carried out by the dictatorship's intelligence agencies, such as the Departamento de Ordem Política e Social (DOPs).

6. Memory Merchandise and Televisual Memory: Selling the Past from the Present

Both *Amor e Revolução* and *Montecristo* actively construct the past from the present and for the future through their individual depictions of semi-fictional worlds where the past is always intrinsically linked to the present. In the case of *Amor e Revolução,* this linkage is made most evident by the show's historical setting, its incorporation of

realia, and inclusion of recorded testimonies at the end of the first sixty-six episodes. Alternatively, *Montecristo's* focus on present pasts comes to life in vivid flashbacks of the characters, which continuously interrupt and affect the present, the language/rhetoric adopted by these same characters and the active and intentional forgetting proposed by the show's villains. The last of these two characteristics, which are also central to *Amor e Revolução,* are indicative of both telenovelas' rejection of previously purported memory regimes of reconciliation through forgetting. Instead, these shows construct new televisual memories, and (re-)frame existing memories for the 21st-century. Whether through the concrete bleeding of past memories into the past via flashbacks or through the more elusive effects of the past as it subtly informs individual actions and identities, these telenovelas refuse to create a barrier between the past and present that would favor total forgetting.

6.1 Historical Setting

On the most basic level, *Amor e Revolução* brings the past into the present through its existence as a 21st-century telenovela that is set during the *anos de chumbo* of the Brazilian military dictatorship. A setting that is not only made evident by the costumes, lighting, and topics addressed, this telenovela reminds its viewers of this setting through the frequent projection of dates and specific days.

Figure 3: Amor e Revolução's visual use of historical dates ("Amor & Revolução – Capítulo 1")

Its rapidly advancing timeline—as the telenovela moves from 1964 to the 1980s over the course of 200 episodes—is grounded in key cultural and political shifts, which further emphasize this historical setting and its potential educational appeal. The show places in-depth political discussions on the validity of the *Atos Institucionais* imposed on the Brazilian populace ("Amor & Revolução – Capitulo 33") and the myth of the revolution of March 31st ("Amor & Revolução – Capitulo 43") on equal footing with debates on the changing social norms of the time including the acceptance of homosexuality, abortion rights and existing racism. Thus, in many ways, *Amor e Revolução* provides a snapshot of the disputed truths of the pasts that highlights how this past continuously intersects with present sociopolitical debates.

6.2 Realia

Amor e Revolução further blends past/present and fiction/nonfiction through its reliance on realia. Realia is defined by Atencio as "references to or images of actual events"

that are incorporated into fictional works, and that work to "tie the imagined world of the televised drama to the spectator's reality" (*Memory's Turn* 62). While both *Montecristo*

Figure 4: Still shot of Amor e Revolução's portrayal of the murder of Edson Luís ("Amor & Revolução – Capítulo 127 08/09/2011 1/3")

and *Amor e* nse through their frequent ref ies from *centros clandestinos* in the Argentine case, and the reenactment of the polemical murder of 18-year old Edson Luís de Lima Souto by the Rio police in the Brazilian case ("Amor & *Revolução*– Capítulo 127 08/09/2011 1/3")—the latter's frequent integration of material realia reinforces the shows educational aspirations and commitment to literally re-imagining the past in the present.

Black-and-white period photos of downtown São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, these cities' government buildings, and iconic protests are used as scenic transitions in nearly every episode of the show.

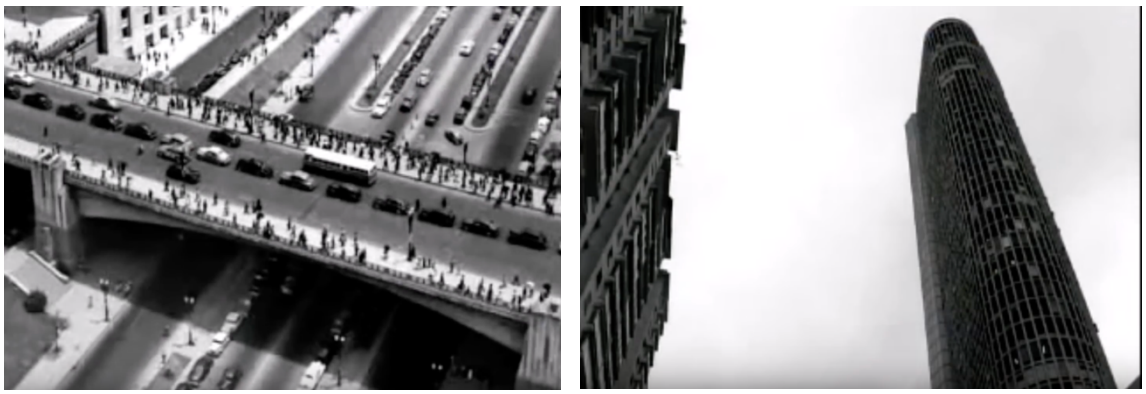

Figure 5: Black-and-white period photos used as scenic transitions in Amor e Revolução ("Amor & Revolução – Capítulo 10")

One telling example of realia are the photos of the death of ex-president Castelo Branco, which were incorporated into the fictional news report used by the show to mark the on-screen announcement of his death on July 19, 1967 ("Amor & Revolução: Capítulo 124"). The blurring between fiction and nonfiction nonfiction present in this news report is re-enforced by the name of this new show—Antena Nacional Jornal Televisivo—, which itself is a play on the popular Globo program Jornal Nacional founded after Castelo Branco's death in 1969.

Figure 6: News report on Castelo Branco's death ("Amor & Revolução –Capítulo 134"

The subtlety that defines *Amor e Revolução*'s use of realia is indicative of a trend in Brazilian television that was previously presented in the Globo mini-series *Anos Rebeldes*. In both shows, fiction and reality were separated primarily by color differentials, with black-and-white images signaling a historical frame (Atencio *Memory's Turn* 64). Also, both shows took advantage of modern technology to place fictional characters at the forefront of historical footage of mass protests as made evident by the closing sequence of *Amor e Revolução* where the fictional protagonists are presented as if they were active participants in the Diretas Já protests of the 1980s (Atencio *Memory's Turn* 6 4; "Amor é Revolução- Cenal Final").

Figure 7: Maria, José, Rubens and Jandira in the Diretas Já Protest ("Amor é Revolução – (cena final)".)

6.3 Recorded testimonies

Going beyond the referential quality of realia, *Amor e Revolução*'s inclusion of testimonies at the end of its first sixty-six episodes directly brings individual reconstructions of past experiences into the mediated present, placing them in dialogue with the fictional narratives of the show's characters. The inclusion of these testimonial practices works as both a denunciation of the abuses committed during the dictatorship and as a visual portrayal of the inherent limits to narrating these atrocities. By grounding the telenovela's fictionalized accounts of these abuses in testimonies of torture survivors, leftist militants, politicians, military officials and academics, not only is the collective effect of these abuses communicated, but it is also individualized on a daily basis. All prepared and recorded for the purposes of this telenovela, these testimonies feature well-known figures such as current senators, lawyers, journalists, musicians, the children of militants—such as Carlos Marighella's son, and even Dilma Rousseff's ex-husband, lawyer Carlos Araújo. Viewers watch these testimonies in medium close-up, while the words *guerra*, *repressão*, *censura*, *tortura* and *ditadura militar* float in the background.

Figure 8: Testimony of Ivan Seixas following Amor e Revolução ("SBT HD Amor e Revolução – Depoimento #5 Ivan Seixas)

These words are often placed on a sepia background that is further defined by the traditional head shots of disappeared individuals, images of civilian protests and military armaments. This combination of images, faded colors, and keywords work to spatially locate each testimony in the past, while at the same time juxtaposing this past with the shots of those giving testimony who are visually defined by their over-saturated colors and bold outlining.

6.4 Flashbacks

Flashbacks are frequently used throughout both *Montecristo* and *Amor e Revolução* to forge links between past actions and present circumstances. In the case of *Amor e Revolução*, these flashbacks most frequently link events that have occurred in previous episodes with current episodes, thus creating internal continuity for the show's sporadic viewers. However, in rare cases, they link events from current episodes with previously unaired footage. Flashbacks, in the latter case, fill in gaps in knowledge and uncover characters' hidden or previously inaccessible memories. Victoria's visit to her childhood home as part of the *Montecristo* exemplifies the latter case, as it links previously unseen footage with the reconstruction of traumatic memory.

Upon gazing on her old house, Victoria immediately recalls the moments before her parents' kidnapping and forced disappearance. Shifting into an almost colorless sepia tone, the screen suddenly shrinks and the viewers are presented with a tunnel-like image bordered by darkness and blurred, faded edges. The scene begins with Victoria, portrayed as her 8-year old self, eating dinner with her nervous parents. As the flashback continues, Victoria sees a car pulling up in front of the house and observes a man walking to the front door. Suddenly, her mother rushes to her, and she is hurriedly asked to hide in a cramped

closet space. From this moment on, the scene shifts. The only audible noises are the screams of her parents' struggle, which Victoria hears from the closet. Similarly, all the viewers are allowed to see is a close-up image of young Victoria as she reacts to these sounds ("Capítulo 9- Parte 2- Montecristo").

The juxtaposition within this flashback of those people and actions that Victoria personally heard and saw with other moments that were not personally witnessed by Victoria (such as a Ford Falcon pulling up to the front of her house) highlights the constructed nature of all memories. Victoria's memory of this traumatic moment has been shaped by the stories others have told her and her investigation as an adult of the typical circumstances in which people have disappeared. Thus, her present context colors her past just as her past influences her present. This mutual influence is visually represented as the scene both begins and ends with a split-screen of this flashback juxtaposed with a close-up image of the present-day Victoria.

Figure 9: Split-screen image of Victoria hiding in her closet and gazing, as an adult, at her old house ("Capítulo 9- Parte 2- Montecristo")

The blending of present and past, which muddles the objective veracity of flashbacks, is further complicated by the relationship between memory and forgetting. Memory is always accompanied by some degree of forgetting due to the impossibility of total recall. As Ricoeur highlights, forgetting can be so closely tied to memory that it can, in fact, be considered one of the conditions for it (428). On the individual level, one can view this degree of forgetting as controlled by the collective frameworks and individual experiences that inform what meaning is associated with each memory and what is kept hidden (Jelin *State Repression* 24). However, within the Halbwachisan vision of collective societal frameworks, official memory policies—such as the Argentine *decretos* and the Brazilian amnesty laws that favor impunity and reconciliation—do not immediately become embedded in the social cadre. These policies need to be translated into these social frameworks through a process of careful construction, a "manipulation of memory" (Ricoeur 448). "When higher powers take over this emplotment and impose a canonical narrative by means of intimidation or seduction, fear, or flattery. A devious form of

forgetting is at work here…" (Ricoeur 448). In this collective sense, forgetting can be framed as a constructed "memory abuse" where forgetting is manipulated, and therefore is tantamount to the institutional silencing of certain marginalized discourses in favor of a constructed memory regime[24] (Rajca *Dissensual Subjects* 54; Ricoeur 56). On both the individual and collective level, the active or passive act of remembering can also be interpreted as the active or passive act of forgetting.

Montecristo and *Amor e Revolução* incorporate both these forms of forgetting into their storylines, playing with Ricoeur's categorization of forgetting as a process that occurs on the pathological-therapeutic level and on the practical level (69, 80). The unstable memories presented in testimonies in *Amor e Revolução* and voiced through the character of Leticia Lombardo in *Montecristo* clearly illustrate the passive and unconscious nature of the first level, while the active and intentional nature of the second level is portrayed through the concrete plans made by each show's villains.

6.5 Active and Passive Forgetting

Despite being carefully recorded, practiced and clearly edited, the testimonies broadcast at the end of *Amor e Revolução* display the inherent fissures and limits of memory, which question the construction of definitive narratives of the past. At the same

[24] While this investigation does not oppose the use of the term *collective memory* as a way of thinking through the weight and/or effect of political, social, and cultural frames in their Halbwachsian sense, it does begin to question the structuring effects of any singular memory frame. This project is thus premised on the basic notion that while pop culture frames are of extreme importance due to their existence as dynamic memory mediums, they are not all-powerful nor should they be thought of as definitive in the structuring of memories. They are, rather, one factor in the complex web of collective frames, personal experiences and inter and intra-generationally transmitted memories.

time that these testimonies amplify the voice of Brazilian citizens, allowing them to recount their truths, they highlight the impossibility of perfect recall, particularly given the nature of the limit experiences narrated by these citizens. The testimony of Lideu Manso, aired after episode thirty-seven of *Amor e Revolução,* exemplifies these critical gaps. The son of a militant member of the Brazilian Communist Party (Partido Comunista Brasileiro), Lideu Manso recounts his experience being kidnapped with his father as a 17-year old. The detail with which he describes what he saw and heard during his time in the *Quartel General do Exército* in Curitiba, guide the imagination of the viewer. However, the silences and pauses, left empty of words, but full of tears, are what truly mark Lideu's inability to articulate his traumatic experience. It is within these gaps that we begin to see the limits of language as a tool for making sense of these experiences. As Lideu states "eu fiquei nessa masmorra…e... sofrendo torturas fundamentalmente psicológicas, porque eu só levei realmente u... os telefones que eram tapas do ouvido e uma pequena joelhada na boca do estômago que não me chegou a balar, mas que mais me balava e torturava era...(*silence, tears*)…ver meu pai…(*silence, tears*)…(*rough cut*) os anos dois mil em maio ele faleceu…" ("Amor & Revolução" – Capitulo 37 – Parte 3/3 (25/05/2011)"). As viewers watching this testimony, we are left to fill these silences with our own narratives. While many of these silences were cut by the show's editors to craft a more cohesive narrative, to a certain degree, these rough and obvious edits serve an opposing purpose; for rather than highlighting the fluidity of these testimonies, they visually depict their inherent cracks.

Montecristo also ties passive and unconscious forgetting to trauma through its embodiment in the fictional character of Leticia Lombardo (Ricoeur 445). Leticia's temporary lapses in memory stem from the traumatic experiences of her past. In particular,

it is her discovery of her husband Alberto's cooperation with the civic-military dictatorship and his later involvement in Horacio's and Santiago's assassinations that leads to her traumatic break and eventual realization that, as she states, "tengo miedo de mis recuerdos" ("Capítulo 14 - Parte 1- Montecristo"). As one of the characters whose past most concretely and visibly infiltrates her present, Leticia is also a metaphor for the difficulty of working through past traumas. As Jelin states, 'for the individual subject, the imprints of trauma play a central role in determining what the person can or cannot remember, silence, forget or work through" (*State Repression* 2). Throughout the telenovela, Leticia meets with therapists and undergoes hypnosis in order to recuperate her memories and be able to survive with the knowledge of them. She embarks on a process of working through, in order to remember, those traces that while present remain "inaccessible, unavailable" in the hope that "entire sections of the reputedly forgotten past can return" (Ricoeur 445). However, the process is not easy and is never completed—a fact that is marked by the re-erasure of her memories in the final episode of the show ("Capítulo 144 (Final) Montecristo").

This passive erasure contrasts with the active forgetting enforced by the melodramatic villains of each story—Alberto, Lisandro and Marcos in *Montecristo*, and General Lobo Guerra, Filinto Guerra, Delegado Aranha and Fritz in *Amor e Revolução*. All are implicated in various crimes, including torture, murder, kidnapping and sexual abuse. In an attempt to cover up these actions and protect themselves from future prosecution, all vocally support the separation of the past and the present. As Alberto states, "el pasado ya pasó" ("Capítulo 10 – Parte 1- Montecristo"). This sentiment is furthered by Filinto and Lobo Guerra who, while still temporally located in this past, adopt a policy of

denial, which complements the military's later reliance on the theory of individual excess to deny the systematic nature of abuses committed during the civic-military dictatorship. A tense exchange between José Guerra as he confronts his father Lobo Guerra exemplifies this policy.

> José: Eu acho que o exército brasileiro com sua honra e sua tradição de ordem e progresso deveria se abster da prática de tortura.
>
> Lobo: Major José Guerra, você e todos nós aqui sabemos que o exército brasileiro não apoia, é contra, e não pratica tortura.
>
> José: Infelizmente, general, a tortura é praticada diariamente nas delegacias, nos presídios, e também nos quartéis. Só não vê o que não quer.
>
> Lobo: …nós não praticamos a tortura...nós só fazemos o que é necessário para manter a ordem de nosso país. ("Amor & Revolução- Capitulo 41")

Putting up a barrier between the past and present that is based on the denial of misdeeds is part of a systematic plan of erasure similar to that used by Argentina during its push for reconciliation via impunity in the 1990s, and Brazil's legal project of reconciliation through amnesty; it supports silence. Jelin describes how this manipulation of memory can result in "erasures and voids" that are in fact the "result of explicit policies furthering forgetting and silence, promoted by actors who seek to hide and destroy evidence and traces of the past in order to impede their retrieval in the future" (*State Repression* 18). In *Montecristo*, the ordered assassination and attempted disappearance of the show's protagonist, Santiago, embodies the destruction of evidence so central to the Argentine dictatorship by constituting a willful act of "destruction of evidence and traces, with the goal of promoting selective memory loss" (*State Repression* 18).

However, despite their best attempts to construct a barrier between the past and present via hiding, destroying and denying the existence of traces of the past, it remains clear that in the case of all of these melodramatic villains, their attempted destruction and denial merely strengthens the haunting effect of the past and its infiltration into the present (Huyssen *Present Pasts* 19). The persistence of the original psychical trace is retained, if not heightened, by the presence of an absence in the wake of this active destruction; it haunts these characters, as in their roles as agents of social violence, that which they believed repressed makes itself known (Gordon xvi) and the "over-and-done-with comes alive" (Gordon xvi). For example, in *Montecristo.* Lisandro is haunted by the murders he has committed; as made evident by the stroke he suffers when receiving a letter from one of his supposedly deceased victims. While in *Amor e Revolução,* General Filinto Guerra is similarly haunted when the wife he presumably tortured and killed reappears as her twin sister, Violeta.

The blending of the past and present found within this natural/practical forgetting is part of each show's function as a form of televisual memory. Televisual memory stems from Pierre Nora's description of society's reliance on both a narrative and visually selective representation of the past. As he states, "ours is an intensely retinal and powerfully televisual memory" (Nora "Between Memory and History" 17). Thus, just as contemporary moments are transformed into memorable event by garnering televisual attention, these telenovelas do not merely rebroadcast already archived televisual memories, but through their present framing of the past, they also construct new televisual memories that direct dialogue with existing interpretations of the past in an attempt to understand how these dictatorships fit into the framework of a supposedly democratized,

modern nation. Ana Sílvia Lopes Davi Médola affirms that "não seria impróprio afirmar que, em certa medida, essas produções colaboram para a preservação da nossa memória" (p. 4). I maintain that the codification of certain discourses on the past via the incorporation of specific memory frames within *Amor e Revolução* and *Montecristo* responds to the contemporary social context and creates space for a multiplicity of truths, while also partially linking up with the rhetoric of the memory regime popularized during the time of each show's broadcast.

7. Rhetorical Remembering: A Tale of Truth and Justice

In the case of *Montecristo,* the telenovela constructs an intrinsic bond between past and present that influences the language adopted by the show's characters, which is strikingly similar to that used by Argentina's human rights movement and endorsed by Néstor Kirchner's administration. For example, *Montecristo* consistently introduces and discusses memories within the specific frames of truth and justice as promoted by human rights activists. These frames, oppose, to a certain degree, the postmodernist critique of truth as an imposed universalism that is, in turn, an impossibility, as its existence is a discursive construction. Adopted by the international and national human rights community in a more anti-relativist manner, truth is readily employed as a representation directly derived from an existing state of affairs; as such, *Montecristo* uses truth as a political banner under which to rally and fight against the human rights abuses carried out during the dictatorship.

One storyline that relies heavily on the latter approach to the concept of truth is Laura's prolonged search for her hidden identity and biological parents. The telenovela

first introduces this theme when Helena, Laura's supposed aunt, informs her that they are not actually related. After hearing this news, Laura demands her right to the truth by bombarding Lisandro—her supposed uncle—with questions. She yells, "Yo tengo que saber la verdad, Lisandro. Yo quiero saber la verdad y vos tenés la obligación de decirmela" ("Capítulo 34 - Montecristo"). A cry that repeats itself in various episodes, truth is often referenced within *Montecristo* as a singular, definitive human right, thus reflecting the vision of many normative transitional justice mechanisms, such as truth commissions, which write into being a shared cohesive narrative of the past. In the end, when Lisandro's crimes are revealed, including his complicity with the crimes committed during the military dictatorship, it is his wife, Helena, who is there to affirm the strength of justice and the power the past holds over the present. As she states, "Gracias al cielo, las cosas ya no son como eran. Gracias al cielo esta gente ya no es más tu gente. Creías que me habías destruido para siempre, pero no es así. Y eso no es gracias al cielo. Eso es gracias a mí. Todo lo que creíste destruido, enterrado, desaparecido hoy te va y delante de tus narices y te va a dar el último cachetazo en tu último suspiro" ("Capítulo 144 (Final)– Montecristo"). This quote is a key example of the way that *Montecristo* incorporated the three main components of the human rights movements—the demand for justice, the call for truth, and the importance of memory—into its framing of the past.

Looking beyond character dialogue, another central way in which *Montecristo* aligned itself with prominent actors in the Argentine human rights movement was through the participation of the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo in the writing and production of the show. The Abuelas agreed to this collaboration in large part because of the overlap between the telenovela's emphasis on memory and identity and their own dedication to the

continued search for information about their grandchildren who were disappeared during the civic-military dictatorship. Through this collaboration, the telenovela benefitted from the knowledge and experience of the Abuelas, and in turn, the Abuelas benefitted from the incorporation of their organization into the main plot of the show. Martín Sueldo argues for the importance of *Montecristo* for their organization because it provided a new outlet for them to transmit their message and consequently reach a wider, younger generation. As he writes, "entre la búsqueda de las Abuelas y las nuevas generaciones…El pasado y presente se intersecan…conlleva un propósito bastante práctico: instalar en las nuevas generaciones la idea de que las Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo todavía están buscando cientos de bebés y niños" (Sueldo 189).

Figure 10: Victoria visits Las Abuelas to inquire about her sister ("Capítulo 26- Parte 2- Montecristo"

The broadcast of *Montecristo* did, in fact, have a positive effect on the number of consultations that the Abuelas received every month and played an important role in the

recuperation of grandchild #85, Marcos Suárez Vedoya[25] (Landau 60). These positive effects point to the educational impact of *Montecristo*. As a result of its mass broadcast, the telenovela introduced the rights to truth, justice, and memory—as framed by the nation's human rights movement—to a large viewing audience, while also teaching said audience about the resources available to those unsure of their own relationship to the nation's past oppression.

7.1 Rhetorical Remembering: A Tale of Democracy

The international human rights discourse also punctuates *Amor e Revolução,* primarily to provide a legal condemnation of the systematic torture displayed on almost a

Figure 11: Depiction of Odette's torture in Amor e Revolução ("Amor & Revolução – Capitulo 3")

[25] During the broadcast of *Montecristo*, the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo informed the public that they had found grandchild number 85—Marcos Suárez Vedoya. Marcos had approached the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo with questions about his past, particularly looking for information about his father. He first sat down for an interview with the Abuelas in September of 2005, and later underwent a DNA test in the Banco Nacional de Datos Genéticos of Hospital Durand on June 22, 2006. The same day, Marcos sat down to watch television and saw a photo of himself as a child being held by the actress Viviana Saccone who portrayed Victoria in *Montecristo*. This incorporation of the real photos of disappeared grandchildren was a strategy adopted by the Abuelas to communicate to the show's large audience made up of now adult grandchildren and their relatives (Gorenstein; Landau 60).

daily basis in the show. As opposed to the implied, off-screen torture of previous television miniseries such as *Anos Rebeldes*, *Amor e Revolução* explicitly shows torture on-screen focusing on its systematic use by all branches of the military as one of the main tactics used to interrogate *subversivos*.

Characters adopt the human rights discourse to connect these depicted abuses occurring during the nation's dictatorship with the existing international set of legal standards for the protection of human rights. This link is displayed by one charter in particular, Doctor Marcela. A lawyer by training, Marcela works as the legal representative for the show's fictional newspaper, *O Brasileiro*. There, she uses her expertise to help various characters defend themselves against the repression of the dictatorship, particularly the kidnappings and torture that many of the show's protagonists experience at one point or another throughout the show. In defense of her clients, she quotes the Geneva convention, the constitutional right of habeas corpus—written into international law as article 9(4) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights—and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As she states in one suchd defense, "Ele é só mais um cidadão comum violentado em seus direitos humanos…esse é uma violência, um dia vocês vão pagar por isso. Estão cuspindo encima da decência, da civilidade, do estatuto dos direitos humanos, da convenção da Genebra" ("Amor & revolução Capítulo 30 – COMPLETO (16/05/2011)"). With words such as these, Marcela not only brings her knowledge of international human rights to the fore, but *Amor e Revolução* recognizes the legitimacy of the human rights discourse as an appropriate frame for the contemporary understanding of the crimes committed during the dictatorship.

The human rights framing of these abuses, however, does not drive the overarching plot of the show, but rather is given a supporting role to the show's democratic discourse. *Amor é Revolução* employs the democratic ideals of freedom of expression, free and fair elections and the duty to remedy, to guide its interwoven subplots. These ideals are central to furthering the show's central romantic relationship, to differentiating between various military factions and to spurring fictional artistic projects. In the first case, Maria and José successfully overcome their familial differences due in large part to their shared democratic ideals. Despite José's insistence on working from within the military to create change, and Maria's equally dogged determination to foster this change as a member of the armed resistance, both agree on the importance of the nation's return to democracy. José is constantly proclaiming himself a true democrat in contrast to the democratic façade adopted by military hardliners. In one representative scene, he speaks to these military hardliners, including his father and brother, stating "Com um terço dos congressistas cassados e o estado único apoiado pelas forças armadas…Isso não é bem minha ideia de democracia. Não. Uma democracia é um país onde as pessoas podem se expressar livremente, isso é meu sonho" ("Amor & Revolução – Capitulo 43"). This division within the military is thus highlighted by different understandings of these democratic ideals and what constitutes a democracy. Given José's central heroic role, however, it is in large part his vision of democracy which is forwarded by this telenovela. This vision is further complemented by the show's fictional theatre company, which overwhelmingly writes and performs plays that speak to the importance of freedom, and the music included in the show, much of which was censored due to its critique of the anti-democratic nature of the dictatorship—*Cálice* (Chico Buarque), *A qué será* (Chico Buarque), *Opinião* (Nara Leão),

Para não dizer que não falei das flores (Geraldo Vandré) etc. In the end, *Amor e Revolução*'s democratic discourse is cemented in the final scene of the telenovela, as viewers watch the telenovela's main characters at the front line of the Diretas Já movement, fighting for their right to vote in direct presidential elections.

8. Telenovelas as Memory Merchandisers and Memory Entrepreneurs

The human rights frames, central to *Montecristo*, and the democratic discourse, which drives much of *Amor e Revolução* speak to both shows' alignments with the existing memory regime of their nation, and the ways in which they work to insure the resonance of said regime. It is in part this alignment, which traditionally defines telenovelas as modern products that work to support the dominant sociopolitical order by operating as effective forms of memory merchandising. Due to the repetition of archetypal plots, themes and characters, they are often associated with a Maravallian vision of repetition, where repetition is in itself interpreted as a propagandistic method utilized in cultural products to enforce the hegemonic social order (Maravall 182).

Another possible effect of this repetition is the blurring of the boundaries between one's real life experiences and the experiences one views on television. Jesús Martín-Barbero and Sonia Muñiz speak about this confusion when they affirm that "autor, lector y personajes intercambian constantemente sus posiciones…y dicho intercambio es una confusión entre relato y vida que conecta en tal modo el espectador con la trama que éste acaba alimentándola con sus propia vida" (*Televisión y melodrama* 30). A potential danger often assumed to accompany the blurring of reality and fiction is that telenovela viewers will too easily adopt the show as a key structural memory frame and thus accept the

memory messages intentionally produced by it. Daniel Barredo-Ibánez and Martín Oller-Alonso articulate this fear, "we could say that a TV series is not only a place of entertainment, but a source of information in which the plots, dramas, and human conflicts suffered by its fictional characters come to rise in some cases to the category of credibility very similar to that reality holds" (132). While this fear of the over-blending of reality and fiction is predicated on the assumption that television viewers are passive recipients—an interpretation that has been largely disproven—it remains highly relevant to this chapter's investigation due to its reference to the bias of all cultural products and its assurance that they do indeed act as structural memory frames. An assurance that is affirmed by Rajca when he states that, "the recognition of the ability of cultural production to not only represent the past but also influence the interpretation of historical events for viewers or readers and contribute to the shared social discourse about 'historical trauma' is an important contribution to the study of cultural memory" (*Dynamic Memories* 35).

These telenovelas specifically support each nation's hegemonic memory regime by operating, to some degree, as tools for consensus. Whether by selling the myth of democratization or by constructing archetypical visions of mythic heroes, both programs can be interpreted as biased forms of memory merchandising that assert the relative truthfulness of certain representations of the past through repetition (Elizondo Oviedo 104). For example, *Montecristo* carefully shapes public memory through its portrayal of the disappeared as unassailable, but silent heroes: a portrayal, which in many ways mimics the idealized vision of the disappeared incorporated into what Richard names an "anti-dictatorial Symbol" (*Insubordination of Signs* 21), where the disappeared are "martyrs" in a struggle for democracy (Crenzel *The Political History* 31). This vision comes through

most clearly during the scenes in which Victoria discusses her disappeared parents. "Ellos fueron alegres y nos enseñaron de esa libertad. Sus vidas valieron la pena. Dejaron una huella y siempre van a estar con su aliento y el consejo de esa verdad y esa justicia que conocieron, por la que lucharon, y por la que murieron" ("Capítulo 144 (Final)-Montecristo"). Via language similar to this, the disappeared are appropriated by the human rights rhetoric of truth, justice and memory. As Rajca states about this common framing, "the 'disappeared' do not speak, they are made to speak through the counter-hegemonic discourse of 'resistance' to the dictatorship, representing their 'subjugated experience' (which is impossible to know or represent) as a mythic anti-dictatorial symbol" (*Dynamic Memories* 65). This portrayal of the disappeared as fighters embedded in a war for truth and justice often erases the specific characteristics that humanize and differentiate them as individuals within this overarching term "the disappeared."

While it is precisely the polyphony of individualized voices that allows *Amor e Revolução* to avoid this trap of crafted mythic heroes, the categorization of these voices into archetypes also provides a relatively prescriptive vision of the past. As historic events, such as the murder of student activist Edson Luís de Lima Souta, and the death of Ernesto "Che" Guevara are re-enacted on screen, viewers are offered a wide-range of reactions to these events; and yet, it is precisely these set reactions, which cement potentially static pathways through which viewers are asked to remember. For example, following Che's death, the military hardliners are shown celebrating the extermination of a subversive and praising Bolivia's government. In turn, the leftist militants insist that his death will strengthen his revolutionary ideals; the members of the newspaper *O Brasileiro* discuss the importance of running a report about this historic day to educate the public about his life;

and the less politically motivated argue that the death of any human is sad regardless of their political affiliation. By focusing less on the process of remembering, and more on the specific set of reactions held by disparate social sectors, *Amor e Revolução* is able to remain relatively inclusive of differing truths and memories, while inherently leaving aside some of the more marginalized narratives still of the past. In other words, by partially closing off the process through which memories are constructed, and instead offering an already constructed vision of the past, *Amor e Revolução* encodes a more prescriptive message of this past than that offered by *Montecristo*.

The relative linkages between *Amor e Revolução* and *Montecristo* and the memory regimes favored by the memory politics of the Kirchner administration and the Rousseff administration highlight the communicative aspects of television productions by providing examples of how they disseminate messages that reflect the nation's ever-evolving dominant memory regime. Nevertheless, it would be a grave error to assume that these memory regimes are uniformly adopted by the shows or passively accepted by each show's viewers. Astrid Erll argues that the memory-making effect of media representations "lies not in the unity, coherence, and ideological unambiguousness of the images they convey, but instead in the fact that they serve as cues for the discussion of those images, thus centering a cultural memory on certain media representations and sets of questions connected with them" (396). Similarly, the very concept of memory merchandising, which claims that products sell specific versions of the past, also questions this uniformity by affirming the impossibility of this past to fully impose itself on the viewer. Televisual products are not one-way transmitters that receive a message and then pass said message onto a passive audience. These shows also mediate these memory regimes by questioning,

altering and inserting new allogical[26] messages into this institutional frameworks, and as such opening up negotiate spaces for the inclusion of marginalized or previously forgotten memory narratives. The following section looks specifically at *Amor e Revolução* as a case study of the ways in which the thematic particularities of individual telenovelas are able to define them as unique mediators that 1) interrogate whose memories will be included in these memory regimes, 2) allow for the inclusion for marginalized memories through the use of the unspoken or the intimately spoken, 3) self-reflect on the importance of art as a mode of resistance and opposition, and 4) act as a discursive space for the transmission of usable memories that tend towards multidirectionality. Furthermore, this section incorporates the reactions of television viewers as expressed on telenovela forums, articles, and YouTube comments to analyze the articulations associated with these thematic particularities and their interplays with memory production.

9. Televisual Mediations: Complicating the Process

The inclusion of a polyphony of voices and societal viewpoints that move beyond their presentation as stereotypical, one-dimension archetypes are a central way in which *Amor e Revolução* complicates the nation's, at times, exclusive memory regime. By incorporating these varied voices and opinions in a complex way, this show legitimizes, to a certain degree, these stories, allowing them to form an integral part of the public sphere,

[26] Here the term "allogical" is adopted in the form used by Andrew Rajca in *Dynamic Memories and Meanings: Memory Discourses in Postdictatorial Literary and Visual Culture in Brazil and Argentina*. It is defined as an argument and/or message that does not enter into the "accepted" ways to discuss the dictatorial past. In other words, I use this term to mean those messages that question and/or differ from those cultural and political arguments in line with the nation's current memory regime.

which television has come to represent. Mauro Porto echoes this sentiment stating, when groups:

> are positioned by the media in more positive terms, as legitimate political actors, their voices have more opportunities to be represented…In the opposite scenario, if the media ignore the representative claims of marginalized groups or disseminate stereotypical or disparaging claims about them, these obstacles in symbolic representation will tend to exclude significant interests, opinions and perspectives from processes of political accountability. (44)

In her book, *Ditadura em imagem e som*, Caroline Gomes Leme speaks to some of the ways in which societal actors have been stereotyped, judged, and/or excluded from Brazilian audiovisual productions, and consequently marginalized or degraded within the national imaginary. Historically, she states, the characterization of the torturer has been a point of contention in films, as has the portrayal of those involved in the leftist struggle. The first is so difficult to categorize because essentializing specific military officials as evil beyond reason can lend support to the dictatorship's rhetoric of excesses committed by a few perverted soldiers. Thus, a more productive way to include these figures would be to allow for a description of why these military officials acted in this way, explain how they reached these positions of power, and historicize these mechanisms of abuse. Similarly, this added background is also necessary in the case of leftist militants, who, as Leme argues, are generally portrayed as outsiders who are prevented from holding roles as the protagonists of the drama.

In the case of *Amor e Revolução*, the majority of these audiovisual norms are broken. For example, within the program a variety of main and supporting characters are

members of the military, and while the telenovela to a certain degree creates a melodramatic separation between the military hardliners as bad military men and those who believe in democratic ideals as good military men, it does provide many of these characters with backstories that individualize their struggles and contextualize their actions. One example of this is the character of Jeová. The son of a democratic coronel, he insists on working at DOPs in order to provide some degree of comfort and information to the tortured prisoners.

Additionally, the telenovela works to historicize the abuses committed in these centers. The show's portrayal of torture as a political norm, while potentially problematic due to the sensational nature in which it is used as a publicity hook—particularly in the show's official rapid-shot teaser trailer—, is powerfully presented as an understood and accepted risk when fighting for *justiça social* and is defined not as a new military invention, but rather historicized as a central component of Brazil's weak democratic past. As Maria's father, Thiago, relays to his son, João, upon his son's release from DOPs, "Eu te entendo, meu filho. Eu sei exatamente do que você está falando. Eu já fui torturado na época de Getúlio" ("Amor & Revolução Capitulo 29 – COMPLETO (13/05/2011)"). This attempt to historicize the current dictatorship and frame human rights abuses as something that not only plagued the 1960s to the 1980s, but began prior to the dictatorship, questions the exceptionalism of this dictatorship and the rhetoric of military excess, which defined the nation's previous memory regime of reconciliation through forgetting.

Similarly, the telenovela offers a more complex characterization of those who participated in the leftist resistance, the civilians who supported these movements and the relatively apolitical characters. As previously highlighted, the show's female protagonist,

Maria Paixão is a leftist militant who trains for the armed resistance in Cuba with Ernesto "Che" Guevara, participates in the re-appropriation of military weapons, supports the student movement and their iconic protests and in the end, is forced to live in exile because of her beliefs and actions. Maria, as such, departs from the telenovela's traditional depiction of a depoliticized, innocent female protagonist who relies on destiny to bring about justice. This depiction of leftist militants is further complicated by the inclusion of a wide range of characters who participate in the armed resistance, and the individual perspectives they share with the audience on the limits of this resistance, as well as its end goals. Two committed militants, the relatively stable couple of Rubens Batistelli and Jandira often argue as to what actions are necessary to bring about change during the dictatorship, as well as the role of women in bringing about this change. While Rubens frequently refers to this struggle as a war where the ends justify the means—thus to some extent mimicking the rhetoric adopted by the Armed Forces—Jandira questions the drastic means that he sometimes adopts, such as bombing the US Consulate and robbing trains. She fears that the use of such violence will not only breed more violence, but will turn the Brazilian people against their cause.

The complexity of this characterization, while noted by some viewers, was frequently overshadowed by viewers' reading of this show as setting up a dichotomy between good and bad. However, there was much disagreement as to who held which role. As "ExtremistaBR" a frequent commentator on a third-party YouTube channel that uploaded complete episodes of the program sarcastically posted, "Guerrilheiro de esquerda é um santo…Militar de direita é um demônio..." ("Amor & Revolução - Capitulo 01 - Parte 1/5"). This sarcasm is greeted by others who non-sarcastically agree with this

interpretation, and those who attempt to mediate the situation. Mônica Dos Santos falls in between these categories by highlighting how while no one was a saint during this time period, the members of the military implemented an utterly cruel form of state terrorism by killing, torturing and disappearing people. As she states, "ngm tem direito de matar e torturar, os militares acharam que iam ficar como totalmente boazinhas, mas a história tratou de trazer as vvds a tona" ("Amor & Revolução - Capitulo 01 - Parte 1/5"). Analyzing the show through their own sociopolitical frames, these viewers interpret the show as supporting and/or criticizing their pre-existing beliefs on this historical period and how it should be remembered.

Inspired to write, in part due to these pre-existing beliefs and how the show addresses this iconic period, it is rare to find viewers who impartially analyze the content of the telenovela, particularly given the ties that these events have with recent political turmoil in Brazil. The Petrobras corruption scandal and Lava Jato, that led to the investigation of 232 people; former president Dilma Rousseff's impeachment in 2017—named by some a

"parliamentary coup"; and the controversial election of Jair Bolosonaro to the Office of the President have all informed recent reactions to this telenovela. For example, many posters craft direct connections between the fictionalization of the past broadcast in the present and president Dilma Rousseff's impeachment proceedings. Furthermore, the controversial election campaign of Jair Bolsoanaro brought forth a new slew of YouTube comments that use the forum of *Amor e Revolução* as a political poster board to publicize their ideas, with some posting the viral hashtag "Elenão," while others write "Ustravive" in a call back to Bolsonaro's speech during Rouseff's impeachment proceedings. This

connection is further developed as viewers respond to these potential dichotomies by defining for themselves, and other viewers what constitutes a democracy. Mônica Dos Santos again comments by saying that if being democratic means to choose for the people and dictate what they "devem ler, escrever, assistir, ouvir etc." then she "não quero uma democracia dessa" ("Amor & Revolução – Capítulo 1- Parte 1/5") Reactions such as these, are punctuated by others who clearly recognize the previously discussed democratic framing of the telenovela, but chose to reject it as untruthful due to their understanding of communism as anti-democratic.

Bringing these discussions into the private sphere, *Amor e Revolução* locates this show's discussions of sociopolitical issues within the intimate space of the family. A trademark of melodrama, it is through these interpersonal relationships that both telenovelas explore the complexity of social relationships and how they frame the ways in which we make sense of the past. Using family relationships as the basis for national discussions on how to remember, how to define the military's rule—as coup or revolution—, and how to support or protest this new authoritarian rule, shows such as *Amor e Revolução* and *Montecristo* appeal to the intimate conversations of viewers and insert these debates into the collective cultural imagination of viewers.

In the case of *Amor e Revolução,* these familial discussions are exemplified by the diverse political, social, economic, and humanitarian debates amongst the show's Guerra family. With a last name that clearly references their attachment to the military dictatorship, as well as their propensity to fight amongst themselves, the Guerra family showcases on a private, intimate scale the debates that gripped the nation during the dictatorship, and which continue to complicate the construction of a singular past truth and official memory. Made

up of two military hardliners who both support and helped plan the military take-over, Major Filinto Guerra and his father, General Alcides Lobo Guerra, this sector of the family insists on the necessity of the military's "revolution" by preaching the dangers of communism and socialism and practicing torture and disappearances as the necessary means to an end. Diametrically opposed to these family members is Major José Mariano Guerra—the previously presented self-proclaimed democrat and the show's romantic protagonist—and Major Filinto Guerra's wife, Olívia Guerra, who in the face of her husband's abuse and torture, refuses to silence her truth relating to her husband's corruption and propensity for violent behavior. Acting as a moderator between these two opposing sides throughout most of the show is the family matriarch, Ana Guerra, who quietly justifies all wrongdoings, while also questioning both sides' truths. In this way, *Amor e Revolução* uses family relationships and family time as a way of reconstructing memories and mediating between the "historical time"—which is defined by Jesús Martín-Barbero as the time of the nation, the world, and the larger events that affect the community—and "individual time," which is the time of intimate family conversations (*Communication, Culture* 225). By refusing to separate these realms, and allowing for the constant seepage between the traditionally divided realms of the public and private, this telenovela keeps open a space for the construction of allogical arguments that at times are overlooked by the official memory regimes that tend to value the public and political over the private and cultural, not realizing their interconnectivity. Thus, while some authors argue that "casting sensitive topics in romantic or family dramas tends to neutralize social and political content" (Atencio *Memory's Turn* 66-7), this casting can also be read as a way to highlight the entanglement of these realms and, as Leme writes, "transmitir ao

espectador a percepção de que, num regime autoritário, a linha que separa ao espectador da normalidade e da exceção é muito ténue" (183). This entanglement also becomes clear in the online comments left by many of the show's viewers.

A consistent trend in the online comments posted on telenovela forums, the show's YouTube channel, and SBT's website is the placement of the telenovela's historical narrative into direct dialogue with the familial relationships of the show's viewers. For example, numerous viewers post on how the show interacts with the stories that their parents and grandparents have passed down to them about life in the 1960s, and how the dictatorship influenced this life. On the SBT website, Selma Gomes Rodrigues responds to a comment posted by Fábio Rhoden, the actor who plays Bartolomeu, by reflecting on her parents' own story. "Apesar de ter meus pais vivos que nasceram em 1941 e 1960, vivos até hoje, sempre ouvi eles contarem histórias daquela época. Eles nunca participaram diretamente, mas viveram a época. E hoje poder ver o quanto várias pessoas lutaram de favor da Liberdade do Brasil, chega do ser FASCINANTE apesar de às vezes, sofrer junto." Others connect their own personal life experiences with that of the show. They begin to fill in the gaps of their past experiences with the information that the telenovela provides. For example, Jose Braz de Silva responds on YouTube to the telenovela's ninth episode by questioning whether his discovery of five unidentified bodies during the construction of a hospital could have been the result of the use of mass graves by the dictatorship ("Amor & Revolução – Capitulo 9 – Parte 3/3 (15/04/2011)"). The reflections brought about via this blending of public and private space begin to highlight the impact, which stems from the performative nature of the repertoire, and its ability to construct empathy and satisfy society's search for truth about the past in a unique way.

Amor e Revolução displays certain awareness of this power by self-reflecting on the importance of the arts as a powerful mode of resistance. Protest songs of the era work to set the historical tone for this production by evoking personal memories associated with the time, and also by highlighting the manner in which these songs shaped the cultural memory and sociopolitical climate of an era. Songs such as "O Que Será," "Cálice,"[27] and "Roda Viva" by well-known artist Chico Buarque act as a repetitive soundtrack as scenes fade in and out, while others are incorporated into the plot as lines of dialogue, sung by characters during various reunions, or even transformed into points of contention, such as when the show's theatre troupe performs a satirical version of the children's song "Marcha Soladado" as a critique of the military's use of forced disappearances and torture. In addition to this incorporation of music, *Amor e Revolução* devotes entire storylines to exploring the potential for peaceful resistance found in the *teatro da vanguardia* and performance art. Whether by quoting Tiradentes or through the creation of a piece of art that uses the nude human figure to corporally represent the need for freedom, the show clearly proclaims that, "A revolução também se pode fazer através da arte" ("Amor & Revolução – Capítulo 2").

[27] Itself a veiled challenge to the military dictatorship, the song "Cálice" plays with the Portuguese pronunciation of "Cálice" as chalice and "cala-se" as *shut-up* or *be quiet*. This famous play on meanings punctuates *Amor e Revolução*, as the song speaks from the past as a critique of the government's use of censorship, and into the future, by re-asserting the danger of silencing these past critiques.

Figure 12: Theatrical Performance on Freedom in Amor e Revolução ("Amor & Revolução – Capítulo 134"

10. The Fault Lines in Production and Consumption

The thematic particularities, such as those illustrated in *Amor e Revolução* complicate the derivative interpretation of telenovelas as purely hegemonic forces that operate as memory entrepreneurs seeking recognition for the already installed memory regime. Instead, these particularities speak to the complexity of hegemony, which as framed by Gramsci highlights the mediations and creations of shared meanings that define the interactions between hegemonic messages of the past and marginalized memories, which are incorporated into the dominant message, while also acting as residual forms that reserve aspects of oppositional and alternative readings of the past (340; Martín-Barbero *Communication, Culture* 125). Exemplified by the previously cited viewer comments, the viewers of telenovelas, such as these, hold additional power in the construction of this hegemony. By watching the show, they in part buy into the program itself and the memory regime it forwards. However, these viewers also are buying into these thematic

particularities, which question this regime, and are also interpreting these particularities and this memory regime through their personal decodings of this program. Due to this fact, television shows inherently contain a liminal space that prohibits its internal memory frames from controlling all memory production. Furthermore, this unavoidable rupture between encoding and decoding does not break the chain of transmission—which categorizes television as a vehicle for memory—but rather mirrors the fissure that exists between all past experiences and the representations of those experiences. As Jelin states, "the possibility that those who are on the receiving end will reinterpret and re-signify whatever is being conveyed has to be left open. It will never be a process of simple repetition or memorizing" (*State Repression 96*). The space in which viewers carry out this reinterpretation and re-signification of the memory regime sold by these telenovelas is not only marked by thematic particularities, but is opened in large part due to the structural characteristics of the telenovela as a visually-driven, serial melodrama. To explore these characteristics, the following section specifically adopts *Montecristo* as a case study.

10.1 Visual Possibility: The Image's Subjunctive Voice

Similar to many television genres, the telenovela has a fixed beginning and an undetermined end. What makes the telenovela unique in this sense, however, is each program's long run, which essentially allows for its final episodes to be written many months after the airing of the pilot episode. The simultaneous consumption and production of these products, thus opens them up to audience input, while also imbuing each program and each episode with what Barbie Zelizer terms a "subjunctive voice" (163). The subjunctive voice of a visual image is best described as the "what if" of that image. This

hypothetical stems from the ability of visual works to freeze a sequence of events midstream, thus creating a space for viewer conjecture and discussion of what will happen in the next few frames. In the case of the telenovela, the strongest "what if" moments come at the end of every episode. As the screen freezes on a specific scene or expression, the audience is left to invent their own interpretations of how the next episode will resolve today's predicament. Thus, the freeze in telenovelas is highly functional, as it invites viewers to attend to an actor's reaction and imagine his or her thoughts or impenetrable emotions that the audience cannot possibly decipher with enough accuracy to know what the character will say or do next (Baym 156). These imaginings and the discussions around them are only loosely guided by the show's narrative and thus defy, in many ways, the dominant master narrative imposed on viewers. As Zelizer states, "The subjunctive creates a space of possibility, hope, and liminality through which spectators might relate to images" (163).

The online forums where viewers discuss their reactions to the show and their suppositions on how the telenovela will develop act as a tangible example of this space of possibility and imagination. On the site Telenovela World, one poster specifically writes about the future of the show and what he/she hopes will occur. "So it seems that Sarita did make a mistake putting those papers in the wrong hands…I just hope she doesn't pay for it with her life...I also like Victoria and Inaqui—I hope that he sticks around. He seems passionate, and if he's not destined for Victoria, maybe him and Erika will hit it off!" (tc "Episode 3…"). Comments such as these emphasize the discursive space that is formed when viewers question plot decisions and ponder potential future plots.

For the contributors to forums, such as Telenovela World, the draw of telenovelas is not only the entertainment that stems from watching the television drama unfold, but also the communities that develop outside of the show in which the intertextual reading and narrating of telenovelas takes center stage. As Martín-Barbero states, "en los sectores populares, la telenovela se disfrute mucho más contándola que viéndola porque es en lo que se cuenta donde se produce la con-fusión entre relato y vida" (*Communication, Culture* 76). The discussion of yesterday's plans intertwines and mixes with the retelling of yesterday's telenovela episode, creating a hybrid version of one's own life that both influences and is influenced by the meaning of the telenovela plot. While this hybridization might appear to support the adoption of the official memory frame explicitly portrayed through the characters' processes of remembering, this sharing actually reiterates the role of viewers as both consumers of this discourse and producers of their own diverse and at times marginalized memory discourses (Martín-Barbero *Communication, Culture* 333).

The telenovela's generic structure and its subjunctive voice, which together foster external discursive spaces in which the fissure between experience and memory production may be explored, are complemented by certain aspects of the program's internal content that similarly highlight this slippage between recollection and reproduction. Two of these internal components are 1) the excessive emotions associated with the memory production processes of the show's characters and 2) the show's purposeful disassociation from historical events and singular, universal truth claims

10.2 Emotional Excess: Living on the Edge

Over-the-top emotions are part of the tried-and-true telenovela package. In the context of a telenovela, emotional excess can thus be defined as an "endogenous phenomenon" that is itself engendered from within the melodramatic acceptance of "extreme states of being" (Brooks 12). While this emotional excess can destabilize the dominant narrative by breaking through the borders and/or limits of acceptability, in the case of telenovelas, this internal excess can be more productively viewed as existing in the borderland between the interior and exterior, challenging the system while not necessarily producing "social unacceptability" (Calabrese 65). The system minimizes the threat of excess by accepting it and normalizing it. Nevertheless, this standardization cannot ever totally eradicate the potential rebellion of excess. In her study of melodrama's use in Franco Spain, Annabel Martín highlights the ever existing, but subtle subversive quality of melodrama. As she states, melodrama can never be perfectly complicit with a hegemonic system. "Su poder de crisis reside en su capacidad para generar una *plusvalía*, un exceso a nivel narrativo y simbólico, capaz de fracturar el mismo imaginario político que ayuda a tejer tan bien" (Martín 17). Specifically, it is the audience consumption of these excessive emotions that creates the possibility for the audience's later production of similarly excessive emotions.

In the case of *Montecristo*, the use of excessive emotions is a stylistic quality that is present in every episode. One specific example of this hyper-emotionality is Laura's reaction to hearing that Santiago has been murdered. Upon receiving Marcos's call about Santiago's death, Laura has a mental breakdown. Her first reaction is to shake and cry uncontrollably for various minutes before finally becoming almost numb to the pain. In this final stage, the audience sees Laura standing in the kitchen with an empty expression

and smeared mascara all over her face. In what feels like slow motion, she picks up a knife and calmly slits her own wrists, as the camera zooms in on the blood leaving her body ("Capítulo 1 - Parte 3 - Montecristo").

Figure 13: Laura's suicide attempt ("Capítulo – Parte 3 - Montecristo)

Resonating with many of the show's viewers, this emotionally charged reaction was a major topic of conversation on the show's online forums. For many, it was the most memorable part of this first episode. "But I do remember Laura's reaction to it all…it seemed so real and it was totally enveloping and just drew you into her world of pain" (Camelia, "Wow what an AWESOME first episode!"). The emotional identification that occurs via the audience's consumption and re-production of these excessive emotions introduces the possibility of questioning the truth claims that are essential to *Montecristo*'s ability to sell its specific memory discourse as correct and authentic.

Additionally, the emotional identification that occurs between characters and audience members has the potential to prevent the total abstraction of past events (Forster 64). For example, while the rhetoric of *Montecristo*, as previously explored, specifically

supports a vision of the disappeared as a homogenous idealized group, the emotional sentiment behind the language used to describe these disappearances breaks with this homogeneity. One scene that exemplifies this occurs in the final episode of the show when Laura and Victoria bury the ashes of their disappeared parents. In this scene, it is clear that Victoria adopts the dominant rhetoric of the Madres and Abuelas when describing her parents as idealistic citizens who worked towards a cause that would ensure freedom for all. However, the intense emotions felt by both sisters in this moment act as a conduit through which audience members can represent their own memories and thoughts on these situations—thus slipping their own memories into the cracks formed by these excessive emotions. These excessive emotions are most intensely communicated during the silences of the scene. Silence reigns as both characters slowly walk towards the tomb of the Díaz Herrera family, where their parents' ashes will be placed. Later as they enter the tomb, the camera zooms in for a close-up on the sad, but determined faces of both Laura and Victoria as they take in this intense moment. Finally, the scene shifts to a close-up of their two hands intertwined over the ashes of their parents ("Capítulo 144 (Final) - Montecristo").

Figure 14: Images of Victoria and Laura symbolically burying their parents ("Capítulo 144 (Final)- Montecristo")

Forster describes how emotional scenes such as these highlight the existing space between experience and memory by simultaneously bringing viewers closer to the on-screen characters' emotional turmoil, while also affirming the difference that continues to exist between their present past and each viewer's unique memory production processes. There is "algo en las imágenes que impide la mitificación" (Forster 64). While watching:

> Recorremos con emoción y temor nuestra biografía, dejamos que la nostalgia se apodere de nuestra reflexión; pero también percibimos lo anacrónico de la situación, sentimos el abismo que se abre entre nosotros y lo que estamos viendo y escuchando; la lejanía y la proximidad se cruzan y conmueven nuestra conciencia. (Forster 64)

The emotional past experiences of these characters resonate with viewers, creating a degree of identification and empathy that situates them both inside and outside the telenovela and its form of memory merchandising.

10.3 Breaking Away from the Truth

The degree of separation that occurs between viewers and the actual content of the show is also carried out in the case of *Montecristo* through the show's refusal to concretely associate itself with a specific historical event. Before the opening credits of each episode, viewers are shown a black screen with a line of white letters, stating, "los hechos y personajes de este programa son ficticios, cualquier semejanza con la realidad es pura coincidencia" ("Capítulo 1 – Parte 1- Montecristo"). This statement problematizes the truth of all supposed facts and statements made within the show, and also effectively warns

viewers to not overly-associate the show with the nation's previous civic-military dictatorship. Thus, this line acts as a departure from the concept of truth, which frames the majority of the memory production processes within the show. A statement that is crucial to understanding what could be considered a partial failure of *Montecristo* as a form of memory merchandising, it reframes the entire debate about the show from the moment of its appearance at the beginning of each episode. Nevertheless, this same statement could contradictorily be read as yet another aspect that makes *Montecristo* a particularly well-suited vehicle for fostering marginalized memory discourses; its appearance puts the language of truth so abundantly used within the telenovela in question. In this sense, this opening statement introduces a productive degree of ambiguity, which cautiously places the show between the often-at-odds humanities and human rights discourses on truth and justice. This subtle framing may foster audience discussion as it asks viewers to unpack the concepts of truth and justice and discuss the appropriateness of any action couched within its parameters.

Amor e Revolução's opening sequence adopts the opposite approach to that of *Montecristo*; for instead of warning against the easy acceptance of fictionalization as truth, the Brazilian telenovela parodies the show's historical truths through its self-depiction as excessively real. Replacing the stark white letters of *Montecristo*, *Amor e Revolução* fades into a facsimile of a document produced by the Censorship Service of Public Entertainment (Serviço de Censura de Diversões Públicas), a real Brazilian institution that was under the nation's Federal Department of Public Safety (Departamento Federal de Segurança Pública). Filled out as if written on a typewriter, the program *Amor e Revolução* is named on this document and dated from the program's premiere—April 5, 2011. While the

veracity of this document is clarified by the neatly hidden "documento fictício" at the bottom of the screen, its presence sets the tone for the telenovela.

Figure 15: Opening image of Amor e Revolução ("Amor & Revolução Capitulo 01 Parte 1/5 (05/04/2011").)

On a basic level, it engages viewers with the time period explored during the telenovela by framing the dictatorship as a time of limited freedom of expression, manifested in the reference to the 14 years between the military coup and the beginning of the nation's democratic opening (1964-1978). However, given the characteristics of the telenovela genre, the hyper-realism of this introduction clearly parodies what the telenovela truly is, which is a fictional construction of reality (Hayward). *Amor e Revolução*, thus, attempts to have the same effect as *Montecristo*'s opening message, which directly questions the truth of all narrated events, through the employment of opposite means.

11. Telenovelas as Transitional Justice

Montecristo and *Amor e Revolução* draw on their thematic particularities and the structural characteristics of the telenovela genre to construct these spaces for the collision

and cooperation of multiple truths, and for the open discussion of how remembrances of the past produced within the present can serve as examples for future generations. *Amor e Revolução*'s insistence on the existence of multiple ways to contend with an authoritarian past—through art or through armed struggle—is telling of the multiplicity that lies at the center of fictional television productions as malleable discursive spaces. As a dynamic memory medium, telenovelas have the potential to move beyond the role traditionally associated with mass media, by not only transmitting ever-evolving memory regimes, but also playing at times contradictory roles in the production of these regimes and the subversion of their exclusive, dominant message. As such, the work of these telenovelas might be more productively discussed as a medium for multidirectional memories where in contrast to the concept of all memory work being a battleground of opposing forces (e.g. Jelin), the public sphere is instead viewed as an unlimited space that allows for contradictions and multiple interactions between productive forms of memory.

Telenovelas are distinguished as a "malleable discursive space" due to both the fictional interactions of characters within each telenovela, and the audience dialogue that, while outside of the show's fictional confines, influences the development of these fictional interactions (Rothberg 5). Thus, while these telenovelas mediate overarching cultural memory frames by putting forward their own internal micro-frames, their relative salience, credibility, and cultural resonance are dependent on these existing memory frames as well as the memory needs of an active viewing community. A specific example of this interaction is the frequent mimetic depiction of torture in *Amor e Revolução*. Incorporated into the telenovela to portray the daily fears and realities of those deemed subversives by the nation's military dictatorship, the ethical implications of its inclusion—re-

traumatization and the spectacularization of this horror—led to the audience's cry for its minimization (O Planeta TV). The show responded accordingly, severely cutting down on the scenes of torture included in its central plot, and thus answering the needs of a community still working through how to remember.

Identifying usable pasts that respond to the present needs of viewers is central to telenovelas due to their reliance on audience ratings. As such, telenovelas tend to portray those aspects of cultural memory that can be used to reconstruct memories from the present and for the future. These usable pasts, which are most commonly associated with Tzvetan Todorov's concept of exemplary memory, create the "opportunity for a shared, dynamic interaction with the past and the possibility to activate memory for new social uses in the present and in the future" (Rajca *Dynamic Memories* 9). Responding to both the historical tone of *Amor e Revolução* and *Montecristo*'s analysis of the contemporary implications of Argentina's past, their viewers often base their critique of both programs on how these depictions will help inform and educate future generations. In the Brazilian case, viewers frequently comment on how the telenovela works to construct an inter-generational memory, allowing for the nation's youths to understand the events of the past given Brazil's present sociopolitical context. For example, one viewer writes, "os jovens precisam conhecer o que foi essa época da história do Brasil em que a luta de classes estava na ordem do dia" (Ramos de Oliveira). Others concretely see how this program inspires social action through its inclusion of usable, relatable pasts that do not insist on literal meanings, but rather act as lessons for the future. "Espero que o SBT mantenha a novela no ar e se precisar vamos às ruas protestar pela verdade em abrir os arquivos da ditadura militar"

(Vilela); “Espero que a novela cumpra o papel de despertar nas pessoas o interesse pelo tema. Pesquisem, estudem e se emocionem com a história do Brasil” (Lins).

The balance achieved within telenovelas between the literal/exemplary and the individual/collective allows them to operate as a more inclusive space for remembering and making sense of seemingly contradictory past, which in turn, allows them to meet the goals of transitional justice in a way that satisfies societal needs not currently met by some of the normative transitional justice mechanisms. Normative transitional justice measures frequently aim to establish the truth, as a singular cohesive entity, of past human rights violations. This singularity closes off the heterogeneity that is necessary for the construction of memories. Lisa Laplante and Kelly Phenicie articulate this paradox:

> Transitional justice seeks to promote a culture of respect for human rights, the rule of law, and democracy, which necessarily includes free speech, the right to information and objective journalism. This formula relies on the tolerance for public debate and disagreement… On the other hand, by definition, transitional justice projects promote one version of the past. (226)

The telenovelas explored in this chapter take on a proactive role in finding this balance between the construction of exemplary memories and multiplicity by speaking to the silenced experiences of those often eliminated from the rhetoric of memory regimes, and performing the process through which memories are constructed. Another transitional justice goal is *restitutio ad integrum* (restoration to the original condition). While these telenovelas do not attempt to replace the important role held by reparations committees in these regards, both *Amor e Revolução* and *Montecristo* operate as a form of symbolic reparation that responds to different needs than more commonly implemented forms of

restitution—monetary reparations and social services. Through their broadcast on mainstream television stations, these telenovelas publicly acknowledge the existence of systematic mass atrocities in Brazil and Argentina, and provide a daily symbolic commemoration of these atrocities and their continued impact in the 21st-century.

Aware of their dynamic roles in the memory market, both telenovelas internally reflect on the normative mechanisms implemented during their nation's transition towards democracy. Given the temporal constraints of *Amor e Revolução*, this telenovela briefly references the nation's controversial 1979 Amnesty Law. Framed as an imperfect advancement that is welcomed with cautious optimism, it is the passing of this Amnesty Law, which allows exiles such as Maria, José, and their three children to return to Brazil in the final episode of the series. However, it is this same amnesty, which forgives the political crimes of the military hardliners. Beto, an actor in the *Teatro Vanguarda,* acts as a spokesman for the left's conditioned optimism when he discusses the restrictions of this law. "Passou! Passou! Passou a lei de anistia!... Pode ser de verdade mais ampla de que eu gostaria que fosse…porque vai ser para os dois lados. Isso significa que quem matou, torturou cometeu crimes do lado da repressão também vai ser anistiada" ("Amor & Revolução: Último Capítulo"). In response, his niece reminds him of the existing international treaties and laws that should be holding those responsible for systematic repression accountable. This accountability, however, is instead taken up by the telenovela which through illness, rebellion, fate, or stupidity punishes in true melodramatic fashion all those who committed these crimes under the auspices of the state. While these dramatic endings support to some degree the envisioning of a world where divine fate is the only form of accountability, the show's conclusion with the Diretas Já movement allows for a

rereading of these punishments less as a work of fate, and more as a result of the will of the people. In other words, *Amor e Revolução* ends with the hopeful portrayal of a new democratic nation where systematic human rights abuses no longer belong and where anti-democratic actions will not be tolerated.

In the case of Argentina, *Montecristo* directly links to one of the nation's most celebrated transitional justice mechanisms through its incorporation of the 21st-century truth trials into its plotline. These trials are used to try two of the show's villains—Lisandro Donoso and Alberto Lombardo—for those crimes they specifically committed while working in the Argentine *centro clandestino*—Campo de Mayo. Depicted as detailed, thorough proceedings, where victims are allowed to give testimony, and the accused are given a chance to defend themselves, these trials are nevertheless limited by what can be verbalized within the constraints of the line of questioning adopted by each attorney.

> Witness: "Me llevaba hasta el lugar del encuentro. Me esperaba y me conducía de nuevo hacia el Campo de Mayo."
>
> Lawyer: "¿Y él abusó de usted durante este trayecto?"
>
> Witness: No. Ya le dije. Él me llevaba. Me esperaba. Me regresaba.
>
> Lawyer: "Y cómo debía entender el comportamiento de mi defendido que no es un militar. Era un guía que le conducía usted hasta el lugar donde estaba Manuel García. ¿Esto es real?"
>
> Witness: "En realidad, Lisandro…"
>
> Lawyer: "Necesito que me conteste por sí o por no."
>
> Witness: *Cries. Pauses*. "Sí."

Lawyer: Correcto. Entonces estamos hablando de un simple empleado civil en Campo de Mayo que era utilizado para trasladarla a usted hasta los brazos de un militar para llevar acabo su mundo de lujuria.

Witness: *Uncontrollable crying.* ("Capítulo 106- Montecristo")

As such, these trials are framed within *Montecristo* as providing a space for potential accountability, but the limits of said mechanism often lead the protagonists of this show to look beyond these normative mechanisms to satisfy their needs.

12. Conclusion

By offering a comparative close reading of *Montecristo* and *Amor e Revolução*, this chapter articulates the potential of telenovelas to operate as a dynamic memory medium that through its work as a vehicle for memory, piece of memory merchandise and merchandiser, memory entrepreneur, and form of televisual memory thicken the cultural memory and truth production inherent in more normative transitional justice mechanisms. Responding, in part, to a market-driven logic, which necessitates the inclusion of pasts that are relevant to the present needs of viewers, these programs build upon this necessity by internally constructing a fictional world that celebrates the physical act of remembering in which the past acquires meaning, while also opening up a space for questioning this meaning. It is the complexity of this interaction that allows both telenovelas to simultaneously support their nation's existing memory regime and question its dominance. By refusing to suture this gap between the present and the past, these shows allow for the expression of memory problematics and oppositional memory frameworks. Thus, they hold the potential to productively satisfy a society's need for symbolic reparations and provide

a more multi-faceted and accessible performance that enhances the effects of normative transitional justice mechanisms.

Chapter 3. Between Authority and Resistance: Argentine and Brazilian Miniseries as Hybrid Memory Mediums

Separarse, cuestionarse, dolerse, 'vomitar historia', ficcionalizarse es también hacerse.
---Souto, 19

Hybridity exists as an inseparable form of blending that names the overlaps and points of contradiction that can no longer be categorized as discrete structures. Often viewed as a way to break away from binary notions, hybridization as a social process performs exchanges and constructive transformations that reflect authority's imprint, while exposing its relative emptiness as a signifier. The inscription of this in-between of authority and resistance is performed in the Latin American miniseries. An evolution of the telenovela's own temporal heterogeneity, the Latin American miniseries is both structurally and thematically a hybrid product from within which new notions of temporality, memory, and reception are formed.

Hybridity has been used broadly to explore the postcolonial experience (Bhabha 60), ground the theory of articulation (Grossberg 53), explain the at-times contradictory mixing of the traditional and modern (Canclini 29), and reformulate the concept of mediations (Martín-Barbero *Communication, Culture* 187). These diverse applications share a commonality, as they speak to the dizzying disturbances and subtle resistances that are part of dominant structures. For example, Homi Bhabha reads the postcolonial subject as a "terrifying, exorbitant object" that questions "the images and presences of authority" (122). A structure that is itself actively produced, hybridity is viewed by Stuart Hall as disrupting the traditional binary of domination/resistance by providing space for new forms

of narrativization to emerge (Hall "When was 'the Post-Colonial" 251). Mass culture, itself a "hybrid of foreign and national of popular informality and bourgeois concern with upward mobility," provides a digitized space for these new narrativations (Martín-Barbero *Communication, Culture* 159). When looking specifically at the medium of television, these combinatory facilities have been studied (e.g. Martín-Barbero and Hall) as part of the viewing processes of audience members and the incessant transformations that they produce via their re-readings of the constructed division between the real and imaginary. However, television's degree of mediation must also account for the new role of digitization, which facilitates the creation of hypertexts, the hybridization of different digital languages, and the development of "prosumers" that actively participate "in the creation of texts to feed to social networks" (Scolari 1100). Not free from the authoritative relations of power—as both political processes and concentrated media processes—these hypermediations further define television programs as digital spaces that are neither pawns of authority nor champions of resistance.

Three 21st-century miniseries—Brazil's *Queridos Amigos* (2008) and *Trago Comigo* (2009) and Argentina's *Volver a nacer* (2012)—ground this investigation. Specifically, I consider all three shows from within the traditional "triumvirate of television": production, text, and reception (Smith 55). Referencing Niall Brennan's discussion on how Brazilian miniseries always exist within the context of a "continuous dialectic between authority and resistanc`1 (*The Brazilian Television Mini-Series* 176), I begin by exploring the ways in which each show packages memory to further each nation's hegemonic memory regime, while subtly questioning this hegemony through the insertion of alternative forms of remembering, such as embodied memory and visual memory

performances. Serving as a source of conflict, but also creativity, the hybridity that defines these shows insists on 1) the temporal overlap of the past, present, and future, 2) the immersion of fictional plots into "real" events, which problematizes the stark categorization of history versus memory and 3) the public broadcast of the private. As such, I argue that all three shows provide a new outlet for the construction of deeper exemplary memories that respond to the needs of new generations; they craft "living memories" (Feld "Imagen, memoria y desaparición" 10) that recognize the productivity of difference, respect the impossibility of total recall, and advocate for hybrid forms of justice that do not operate as legal pluralism à la "stratified-concurrent jurisdiction" (Morris 367), but as a multi-faceted approach that encourages collaboration between formal and negotiated forms of justice.

2. Differentiating Serials: The Miniseries and the Telenovela

While both the miniseries and the telenovela share a history that begins, in part, with the *folhetim*/*folletín*, and its thematic characteristics—use of melodrama and inclusion of love triangles punctuated by impossible love stories—these two Latin American television genres can be most clearly differentiated by their structural characteristics, target audiences, and perceived cultural legitimacy (Conversani and Botosi 5). On the structural level, both the telenovela and the miniseries are continuous serials known for their interconnected chapters and "episodic appeal," which insure that viewers tune in on a regular basis (Brennan "The Brazilian Television Mini-Series" 99). Additionally, both genres depend on repetition in order to continuously reiterate their central plotlines to their viewers. However, while telenovelas are broadcast on a daily basis as part of a continuous

generic cycle, miniseries tend to be aired seasonally or as television specials. Miniseries are also considerably shorter, ranging from 4 to 60 episodes in the Brazilian case (Kornis 186) and are closed serials. This later structural characteristic means that the miniseries is written and recorded in its entirety prior to its broadcast. In contrast, the telenovela is an open serial, which is constantly being rewritten and rerecorded based on public comments, audience ratings, and production concerns. It is this central structural characteristic in conjunction with each genre's unique personalization of sociopolitical events that contributes to the miniseries' greater perceived cultural legitimacy. Highlighting in particular these structural aspects, Dimitri Pinheiro da Silva describes this relationship as follows:

> As minisséries oferecem, portanto, uma perspectiva privilegiada para examinar as linhas temáticas da teleficção brasileira, sobretudo em relação à telenovela, formato bem-sucedido do ponto vista comercial e que nem sempre obtém legitimidade cultural equivalente. Por se tratar de um produto finalizado antes de sua exibição, de menor duração, estruturalmente mais coeso e que usualmente concede maior tempo de preparação para os profissionais envolvidos em sua produção—motivos que elucidam o interesse que despertam no interior do próprio meio televisivo, o formato não se mostra tão sujeito quanto à telenovela às pressões diretas. (13)

Similarly, this cultural legitimacy often associated with the miniseries genre can be seen in the adjectives frequently dedicated to the description of these types of shows as explored by Brennan: "complicated," "detailed," "sophisticated," and "educational" ("The Brazilian Television Miniseries" 196).

The privileged cultural position of miniseries in comparison to that of telenovelas is often perceived as stemming not only from their structural differences, but also from their unique rendering of thematic components, their relative commercialization, their target audience, and the stereotypes held by television producers. The first aspect speaks to the literary and historical bent of Argentine and Brazilian miniseries. For example, in the Brazilian case, of the 88 miniseries produced by TV Globo between 1980 and 2015 approximately 40 of them were literary adaptations (D'Abreu). This statistic speaks to the growing acceptance of literary narratives as one of the generic conventions of the Brazilian miniseries. Additionally, the miniseries is often associated with national reality through the adoption and adaptation of historical themes and re-enactments of past events. By providing more concise depictions of social realities that tend to rely less on direct audience input, the miniseries also distinguishes itself from the telenovela as a less financially reliable genre; the market cost of a telenovela episode is considerably lower than that of a miniseries, and it also provides greater merchandising opportunities due to its higher quantity of episodes. However, it is precisely the financial risk factor of the miniseries, which allows it to operate as a mark of financial stability and success for a network. Often marketed to a more niche audience that is stereotyped as more masculine, well-educated, and affluent than their telenovela counterparts, the miniseries is frequently considered a status symbol by those networks that have the financial resources to produce them, as well as by the very same producers of these shows who value the miniseries for the creative and authorial freedom it allows them (Pinheiro da Silva 5; Brennan "The Brazilian Mini-Series" 197).

3. The Rise of the Brazilian and Argentine Miniseries

Despite these enumerated differences, both genres are intrinsically tied together via their origins; the Brazilian and Argentine miniseries as an independent genre stemmed from their nation's already established telenovela genre. In the case of Brazil, the miniseries first appeared in the mid-1980s as a replacement for the experimental 10pm telenovela (Conversani and Botoso 2). Emerging just as the nation's military dictatorship was transitioning out of power[28], the Brazilian miniseries has recently garnered attention as a politically-oriented genre that, with its historical themes and numerous references to real-life events, both benefited from and reflected a shift in Brazil's political climate and the transformation of the viewing preferences of a nation in democratization; "a produção de minisséries, bem como de outros programas—unitários e seriados, por exemplo—integraria, então um movimento realizado pela emissora visando se desvincular do regime político" (Pinheiro da Silva 9). The first Brazilian miniseries, *Lampião e Maria Bonita*, which aired in 1982, is considered to be a *teleromance*, and as such, did not stray far from the popularized generic conventions of the telenovela. However, the first half of the 1980s saw the rise in the popularity of the miniseries, particularly on TV Globo, and its characteristic fictionalization of Brazilian historical events. Two well-known miniseries that specifically address Brazil's history of political upheaval are *Anos Dourados* (1986) and *Anos Rebeldes* (1992). Written by Gilberto Braga and produced by TV Globo, both shows are often categorized as "generational miniseries" as they portray different time

[28] Some scholars, including Mônica Almeida Kornis and Dimitri Pinheiro da Silva, cite the miniseries as emerging during the Brazilian dictatorships' transition out of power; Notably, they highlight the politically-oriented Brazilian miniseries, *Anos Dourados*, which aired in 1986. One year after the election, and unexpected death, of José Sarney (Almeida Kornis 164; Pinheiro da Silva).

periods in Brazil's recent history (*Anos Dourados*: 1950s and *Anos Rebeldes*: 1964-1979) and the sociopolitical and personal discussions that defined these generations. The storylines of both shows were largely conditioned by the real events that punctuated the depicted decades. *Anos Dourados* "anticipates the military regime from the buoyancy of the late-50s Brazil, but it casts the increasingly tense and ominous tone of this era onto the intimate conflicts of Brazilian families" (Brennan *The Brazilian Television Mini-Series* 192). *Anos Rebeldes* takes up where *Anos Dourados* leaves off as the first Brazilian television show to dramatize the nation's recent military dictatorship and the first to ground this exploration in realia through the incorporation of archival footage from the period—a trend later continued in another TV Globo miniseries, *Queridos Amigos*, and the previously discussed SBT telenovela, *Amor e Revolução* (Schneider and Atencio 20; Kornis 183-184).

As opposed to the Brazilian miniseries, the origins of the Argentine miniseries have been the focus of relatively few studies. That said, the miniseries' increased presence after Argentina's turn towards democracy in the early 1990s corresponds with the changes in the nation's broadcasting regulations, particularly in the case of censorship laws, as well as Argentina's experimentation with new television formats. For example, in the 1990s, Argentina saw the appearance of miniseries such as *Zona de riesgo* (1992-1993) and *El precio del poder* (1992). In recent years, Argentina has seen a boom in the production of this genre, particularly by the nation's public television network—TV Pública/Canal 7—which broadcast 12 miniseries from 2011-2017. Public television's disproportionate production of these shows in comparison with those produced by large-scale private networks may speak, in part, to the continued financial instability of the miniseries in Argentina. Exempt from some of the commercial pressures associated with private

television and benefitting from the many competitions organized by the National Institute for Cinema and Audiovisual Arts (INCAA), TV Pública faces less of a financial disincentive to produce miniseries. Furthermore, the production of shows that act as agents for educating the public is a well-established public obligation for TV Pública.

It is, in part, this pedagogical turn that locates the miniseries in a liminal space. The miniseries brings together historical events, literary texts, video testimony, archival footage, and theatrical works in a bricolage that speaks to the impurity of an expanding genre, which differs, in essence, from the rigidity of the telenovela's structural characteristics (Canclini 207). In particular, the miniseries' inclusion of historical narratives allows it to operate as both "pedagogical object" and "performative subject" (Bhabha 216). Always working together, pedagogy and performance are weaved together in the miniseries, as a televisual act, that tends to reference the past as history, while performing the past in the present as a repetitive project of memory.

4. The Televisual Actualization of Memory

Representative of the previously enumerated generic characteristics of the miniseries, the chosen case studies for this chapter—Brazil's *Trago Comigo* and *Queridos Amigos* and Argentina's *Volver a nacer*—are all grounded in the on-going debate over the role of memory in the construction of both individual and national identities. All three shows reflect on the process through which memories are constructed and later cemented as truths, as well as how these memories color one's interpretation of what constitutes justice in the present. In addition to these similarities, I specifically analyze these shows due to their frequent references to both nation's most recent dictatorships and their

inclusion of characters directly involved in both dictatorships—whether as militants or members of the armed forces. Finally, all three miniseries engage in a continuous memorialization of the past that is activated and re-enacted in the present through their structural and thematic hybridity, as well as their emphasis on embodied "living" memory, post-memory, and the consciousness-raising that said forms of cultural memory produce.

4.1 Queridos Amigos

Broadcast in 2008 by Brazil's largest television network, Rede Globo, *Queridos Amigos* was written by Maria Adelaide Amaral as a loose adaptation of her previously published book, *Aos meus queridos amigos* (1991). Over the course of 25 episodes, the show portrays the evolving relationships between a once tight-knit group of friends who are brought together almost 20 years after their initial youthful encounters at the urgent request of one of the groups central members—Léo. *Queridos Amigos* follows the interactions of these friends during the late 1980s, as they remember their previous adventures, confront their personal and political traumas, come to terms with their failed

Figure 16: DVD image of Queridos Amigos

ideologies and reinitiate relationships that defined their lives during Brazil's recent dictatorship (Greco 140). Considered the first Brazilian television show to explore the exile of leftist militants, including members of the PCB, PCdoB, ALN, MR-8, and their eventual return to Brazil, *Queridos Amigos* places controversial political and social issues at the center of inter- and intra-generational debates that push forward the series' narrative arc.

Queridos Amigos, along with the Brazilian miniseries *Trago Comigo* (explored at length in the following section), prefigure many of the memory policies implemented by the Rousseff administration in 2011, such as the creation of the nation's first official truth commission. However, both shows do tentatively align with an overarching shift in the State's memory politics, which is often associated with Rousseff's predecessor, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Lula's second term in office concretely ushered in this shift through the creation of what Nina Schneider and Rebecca Atencio deem "culture-oriented initiatives," in particular the projects entitled *The Right to Memory and Truth* (2006) and *Memories Revealed* (2009) (17). The first of these initiatives led to the publication of a book by the same name in 2007 that presented the findings of the Special Commission on Political Deaths and Disappearances (Comissão Especial: Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos) , an organization that was created over 10 years earlier by the Law of the Disappeared (Lei dos Desaparecidos Políticos do Brasil) (1995) to identify those "em razão de participação ou acusação de participação em atividades políticas, no período de 2 de setembro de 1961 a 15 de Agosto de 1979, (que) falecerem em dependências policiais ou assemelhadas, por causas não naturais" (CEMDP 25).[29] The second cited initiative, *Memories Revealed*

[29] This initiative was expanded in 2002 to include an investigation of these deaths within a broader time frame. The law now promises to investigate those who died in these circumstances between 1961 and 1988. A second round of amendments took place in 2004 via Law 10.875,

(2009), was overseen by the Ministry of Justice and Citizenship and provides a database of information related to the dictatorship, including archival documents from the time, multimedia and artistic projects, and current news regarding the dictatorship. This information is meant to aid in the creation of educational and artistic programs related to memorializing this past. 2009 also marked the inauguration of São Paulo's Memorial da Resistência, which develops exhibits and houses archival material centered on the themes of resistance, control and political oppression (*Memorial da Resistência*). Together, these initiatives signaled a shift in memory politics, moving away from the politics of silence that had defined the Brazilian state and towards a policy of publicly acknowledging and remembering these atrocities.

Queridos Amigos performs memory work that parallels Brazil's shift in memory politics by highlighting the processes, in many cases artistic, through which fictional characters, and at times real-life victims of torture, recall and reconstruct those pasts associated with the nation's dictatorship. Conscious of the need to bring these processes to the small screen, *Queridos Amigos'* author, Maria Adelaide Amaral, has spoken of her effort to insure that almost all of the characters included in her miniseries were either directly or indirectly involved with the dictatorship (Villalba). Greco further explores this relationship in his article on the show. "Mesmo aqueles que fazem crítica à luta armada, durante a ditadura ajudaram a esconder amigos, ou mobilizaram suas relações para resgatá-los da prisão ou órgãos da repressão, e/ou facilitaram partidas para o exílio…A política, portanto, impregna a vida da maior parte do grupo (in *Queridos Amigos*)" (Amaral). Over

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which broadened the term "victims" to include those who suffered additional crimes at the hands of the state, such as those who were persecuted for participating in public protests, those who committed suicide following their imprisonment, etc.

a decade after the passing of Brazil's Amnesty Law, these political engagements still define the lives and relationships of these close friends in *Queridos Amigos*. The show's impetus to remember, which broadly echoes Brazil's new politics of memory, is further complemented by the hybridity of the miniseries as a genre that often encourages the continual permeation of the past into the present. A representation of Canclini's multi-temporal heterogeneity, *Queridos Amigos* explores the coexistence of lived moments—past, present, and future—intertwined with the power relations of "instituciones liberales y hábitos autoritarios" (Canclini 15).

The blending of the past into the present within *Queridos Amigos* is telling of an intrinsic linkage between temporal entities that exist on a continuum despite their frequent construction as distinct chronographic moments. In other words, the past does not only inform the present, but the present relies on the past, while simultaneously re-constructing it and imbuing it with meaning. This interdependence implies that the past and present operate in a liminal space from within which new understandings of temporality emerge. Using intertextual allusions and the visual arts, *Queridos Amigos* performs memory work by operating in this liminal space, which as opposed to bringing the vestiges of the past into the present, rather insists on their existence within the present.

The sounds of Chico Buarque, Janis Joplin, Milton Nascimento, and Elis Regina pepper the soundtracks of *Queridos Amigos* and *Trago Comigo*. Artists whose voices topped the charts in the 1970s, particularly in the genre of MPB (música popular brasileira), their inclusion alludes to Brazil's dictatorial past, and the artistic resistance that shines through in the lyrics of these songs. As the melody of "Sabiá" with its refrain "vou voltar," punctuates discussions of exile in the series *Queridos Amigos*, so do the haunting lines of

Regina's "Aos Nossos Filhos"— "e quando passaram a limpo/ e quando cortarem os laços/ e quando soltarem os cintos/ façam a festa por mim"—speak directly to those who survived the "perigos" of the dictatorship and the importance of transmitting their stories to future generations. Songs such as these ground the memories expressed in the show in an auditory reality; for they recall the listening experiences of viewers and align them with the memories constructed by each show's fictional characters as they analyze their present through the lens of these auditory fragments of the past. Luciana Moura underlines the role of this music in her analysis of *Queridos Amigos* and its construction of a new temporality, arguing that "a letra da música, os exilados 'reais', os diálogos marcados não apenas pela emoção, mas também pelas ideologias instaura-se o tempo duplo (Bhabha 2003), por meio do qual é possível que os fatos do passado da nação façam sentido no presente, que ganham significação e se tornem parte do presente e constituam parte do povo que constitui uma nação" (8). This double temporality can also be heard in the frequent verbal references to past events that are given new meaning in the present; it is through a re-framing of events, such as the passing of AI-5, the Diretas Já campaign, and the Amnesty Law, that the protagonists of *Queridos Amigos* attempt to reconstruct their relational identities, reflecting on how these moments inform their current social identities in the Brazil of the 1980s with its politics of forgetting.

Visual archives, whether in the form of video recordings or photos, also serve as an alternative form of preserving the past within *Queridos Amigos*; and yet, their presence does not separate the past from the present, but rather operates within the show to contextualize one's identity in the present. Thus, the show's use of visual archives tends to question Nora's understanding of the archive as "no longer living memory" and a

"deliberate and calculated secretion of lost memory" ("Between Memory and History" 14), instead, supporting the construction of an archival memory that is part and parcel of one's continued lived experiences. For example, the show uses video recordings as double archives that record the experiences of the series' fictional characters as they return from exile and insert real footage of the return of individuals, such as Luiz Carlos Prestes[30], Miguel Arraes[31] and Betinho[32], into these fictional representations (Moura 7). Similar to the use of material realia in the Brazilian telenovela *Amor e Revolução, Queridos Amigos* uses realia to visually re-imagine the past within the present ("Queridos Amigos: Capítulo 2 – Parte 4").

[30] Luiz Carlos Prestes was a politician and activists of Brazil's Communist Party (PCB). Additionally, he was President of the ANL (Aliança Nacional Libertadora) during its founding, and on the executive commission of the International Communist Party. During the Vargas administration, he was imprisoned for 9 years; in 1964, after the passing of A-1, he had his rights as a citizen revoked for 10 years. As a result, he went into exile in the Soviet Union at the end of the 1960s. He returned upon the entry into force of Brazil's Amnesty Law in 1979.

[31] Miguel Arreas was a lawyer, economist and politician who served as governor of Pernambuco for 3 terms. He first became governor in 1962 with support of the PST (Partido Social Trabalhista), PCB (Partido Comunista Brasileiro) and certain sectors of the PSD (Partido Social Democrático). When given the option in 1964—with the military take-over—to renounce his position or be jailed, he decided he would be jailed. After being in jail for approximately a year, his habeas corpus request was approved. He was freed in 1965, and went into exile in Algeria from where he did not return until 1979.

[32] A sociologist and economic activists, Herbert José de Souza (better known as Betinho), helped found the Marxist Ação Popular. He was the Chief of Staff in the Ministry of Education when the military coup d'etat took place in 1964. After this shift in power, he was exiled. He lived in Chile, Canada, Sweden, and France before returning to Brazil in 1979. Upon his return, he founded IBASE (Brazilian Institute of Social Analysis and Economics).

Figure 17: Friends watching the return of exiled Brazilians following the 1979 Amnesty Law ("Queridos Amigos: Capítulo 2- Parte 4")

Opening up a space of self-reflection, this inclusion of realia does not only spark discussion within the fictional plot line of *Queridos Amigos*—as the characters embark on emotional discussions of the effects of exile—but it welcomes viewers to place their own private familial stories in dialogue with these public televisual products. For example, it is common for viewers of the show to use the collective "nós" or "nosotros" to refer to themselves in relation to the fictional characters of these shows; this is found with particular frequency in the comments section of the show's YouTube channel. This willingness to share personal stories of their families in a public online forum—such as YouTube or Facebook—is telling of the private impact of *Queridos Amigos.* One such story comes from a viewer, who writing in response to the show's penultimate episode states:

> Muitas cicatrizes…traumas…mortes...sangue derramados nos porões da ditadura…exílios…censuras…autoritarismo…ceifou uma geração…eu sei que é entrar na tua casa e roubar os seus livros…invadir a sua propriedade…eu sei o que

> é ter gente na sua família perseguida…que teve que sumir…que teve que homiziar…espero que nunca mais voltemos aos tempos sombrios desse período!!! (Jorge Barros)

The generational frame included in this comment, while used to differentiate the violent past of the Brazilian dictatorship from the present, is also employed by the viewer to locate himself within this generation that was cut down by the dictatorship, thus highlighting the personalization of generational divisions—a theme that will be explored in detail in a later section of this chapter.

This personalization of the past as it is reconstructed through the lens of these viewers' present interactions with television shows is further framed by the continued fissures and residues that affect attempts to remember. As central memory problematics, fissures and residues prevent the act of remembering from operating as an exact replication of the past. Instead, they speak to the simultaneous impossibility of total recall, in the case of fissures, and the impediment of memory's easy classification, in the case of residues.

Seeping into *Queridos Amigos* both aurally and visually, these fractured remains flesh out the complexity involved in the process of remembering, and their centrality insures that those vestiges are portrayed as essential to coming to terms with one's past on both the societal and individual level. The character of Bia exemplifies these fissures, as she has no visual recollection of the man who repeatedly tortured and raped her during her imprisonment in Doi-Codi. Rather, the imprint of his words has overwhelmed his physical appearance, haunting her with the phrase, "chegou teu macho, vagabunda." As the series progresses, it is precisely the persistent memory of this voice, which, in the end, allows Bia to identify her abuser from within a crowd ("Queridos Amigos: Capítulo 13- Parte 2").

Figure 18: Bia recognizes the voice of her abuser ("Queridos Amigos: Capítulo 13- Parte 2")

This individual haunting is not unique to Bia, but rather upheld in the miniseries as a societal specter that is only strengthened by the national implementation of a policy that supports active forgetting. This is reaffirmed by a lawyer from Brazil's *Comissão da Justiça e Paz*—an organization that documents the human rights abuses committed during the nation's recent dictatorship, when he tells a desperate Bia, "mas o ruim, a gente não

consegue apagar. O que é ruim volta sempre como um fantasma…é sempre nossa sombra" ("Queridos Amigos: Capítulo 18 – Parte 3").

The deep inscription of the words of Bia's abuser into her memory contrasts with her inability to verbally articulate her fears. Instead, she turns to the written word as a way of imbuing her past experiences with meaning in the present. She composes a journal that details her time in captivity; incapable of providing an official oral denouncement of her abuser, it is this journal, which she offers to the *Commissão da Justiça e Paz* as a record of these violations ("Queridos Amigos: Capítulo 24 (Último Capíulo) – Parte 3"). This reliance on the dominant mode of meaning production and preservation—reproducible writings within the archive—does not erase the presence of the repertoire within *Queridos Amigos*, which celebrates the private staging of the archive through their retellings. It does, however, reiterate Diana Taylor's central question of whether or not an over-reliance on the archive may minimize the impact of the repertoire and work to disappear embodiment, which is in itself central to the understanding and transmission of cultural memory.

Adding to this complexity are the memory mediations that define memory transmissions within *Queridos Amigos*. Exemplifying intra-generational memory, these retellings of the past and the debates which they foster combat the construction of literal, static memories that can be easily relegated to the archive. All three miniseries explored in this chapter—*Volver a nacer*, *Queridos Amigos* and *Trago Comigo*—illuminate these new forms of memory transmission via 1) the extended on-screen debates held between characters whose past is marked by their participation, as either militants or members of the military during each nation's dictatorships and 2) through the conversations that the same characters have with members of the younger generation, many of whom did not

experience the dictatorship first-hand. These debates further intertwine the past and present by encouraging exemplary living memories that respond to the needs of the present by remaining open to new interpretations, as opposed to providing fixed narratives of the past that produce "una memoria 'congelada', que amalgama sentidos y condensa la pluralidad de significados en consignas, frases hechas e imágenes cliché" (Feld "Imagen, memoria y desaparición" 10). Thus, it is in part through these intra- and inter-generational dialogues that the multidirectional and exemplary nature of memory is brought to the forefront and admitted into debates on past truths, what constitutes justice, and the relative effectiveness of institutionalized transitional justice mechanisms in confronting past and current abuses.

In the case of intra-generational memory, *Queridos Amigos* welcomes the inclusion of debates between those members of society who were directly affected by the dictatorships. These intra-generational discussions of difference complicate the notion of a singular memory regime, which defines the truths of the past, and problematizes the nature of traumatic memory itself by presenting it as something that can be felt both individually and collectively. One of the recurring intra-generational discussions in this miniseries addresses the loss of utopias and the truths that grow from these ingrained ideologies. As the miniseries depicts the fall of the Berlin wall, viewers are exposed to the contradictory celebrations and hopeless despair occasioned by this event. In his contrived apathetic tone, one of the show's most outspoken characters, Bene, proclaims, "comunismo morreu" to his stalwart communist militant friend, Tito, who, physically sickened by this event, snaps back "se de uma coisa que tenho certeza nessa vida é que militância socialista não é uma causa em vão" ("Queridos Amigos: Capítulo 11 – Parte 2"). This knee-jerk rejection to this double-toppling—of both the wall and Tito's communist utopia—betrays Tito's

disappointment, as he and many of his friends are forced to confront their own ideological frames, which have shaped how they justify their past actions and remember their past truths.

Another theme that reappears throughout these intra-generational debates is the conceptualization of trauma and the imprints it leaves on memory as part of a collective pain. In other words, the affirmation that the traumas of the dictatorship have a social dimension that prevents them from being entirely privatized. *Queridos Amigos* uses Bia's desire to forget the abuses of the past to bring to the fore the social dimension of what she interprets as a purely personal trauma. As two of her close friends, Tito and Pedro, try to convince her to publicly denounce her abuse and her abuser, she is forced to revisit the idea that her torture was not an isolated incident, but rather, part of a larger systematic operation of oppression:

> Bia: "Para! Para! Para! Eu não quero ouvir mais nada. O que eu vivi o que eu sofri é problema meu…meu…meu"
>
> Pedro: "Não. Não. Não. Não é. Não. Não é Bia. É de todos nós. É de sua mãe, de Tito, de Ivão, de todos seus amigos que foram torturados e dos que não foram também". ("Queridos Amigos: Capítulo 22- Parte 1")

By seeing traumatic memory as something that, due to its internalization and personal impact, cannot be felt by the collective, Bia asserts the literal nature of her memory, closing herself off from the testimonies and experiences of others. In contrast, Tito and Pedro insist on the multidirectional nature of memory, seeing the past as a lesson for the present that is open to "negotiation, cross-referencing and borrowing" (Rothberg 3), a memory that gains

meaning and evolves precisely in relational spaces. Memory, is thus, presented as a process of hybridity; it cannot be defined by "zero-sum logic" (Rothberg 20). It is not controlled by a merely competitive logic of our past versus theirs, but (trans)formed by the very interactions of these logics.

4.2 Trago Comigo

The second Brazilian miniseries explored in this chapter, *Trago Comigo* (2009), also touches upon the hurdles that define the transmission of memories between generations and the traumas that are continuously "located on the threshold between remembering and forgetting, seeing and not seeing, transparency and occlusion, experience and its absence in repetition" (Huyssen *Present Pasts* 8). These hurdles and thresholds are explored through theatrical performance, as the show's protagonist, Telmo, decides to stage a play to work through his repressed past and interrogate the screen memories that have glossed over these absences. Only four episodes long, the series opens with Telmo being interviewed for the television program *Olhar para trás,* intent on recovering memories of the dictatorship and telling the stories of those disappeared during the dictatorship ("Direções: Trago Comigo").

Figure 19: Telmo testifies in Olhar para trás ("Direções: Trago Comigo")

During his description of his time in the armed resistance[33] and his own experience being tortured and imprisoned, he is confronted with a name: Lia. Immediately recognizing the importance of this name, and also cognizant of its erasure from his memory of the past, Telmo embarks on a re-presentation of his past, and a re-construction of Lia's presence by developing a theatrical production that performs his years of militancy, his imprisonment and the events that have led to Lia's physical and psychological disappearance.

A character who controls the trajectory of this miniseries and yet is never physically present, Lia is a metaphor for the presence of absence. A participant in the nation's armed resistance during the dictatorship, she is Telmo's former lover and his closest companion in the armed struggle. She is also the central subject of Telmo's play, which he creates with the explicit intent of confronting the traumas of the dictatorship that, in turn, have blocked his conscience memory of her, but have left behind a persistent absence that defies

[33] During the entirety of the program *Trago Comigo*, the specific organization in which Telmo participated is never named. Instead of naming particular movements and/or political parties, the series uses the overarching terms, "revolucionário," "guerrilheiros," "luta armada," "movimento," and "grupo."

corporality. Telmo gives the theatrical responsibility of playing the role of Lia to his current lover, Mônica, who must attempt to materialize her absence within the repertoire. Throughout the play's development, the separate beings of Lia and Mônica begin to merge in the mind of Telmo, leading to the emergence of a character who exists in a hybrid space—as both past and present, presentation and reality, corporality and immateriality. This hybridity is initially welcomed by Mônica who auditions for the play by using her knowledge about Lia to tap into Telmo's clouded, fragmented vision of her. However, the hybridity of this characterization becomes so real for Telmo that by the end of the play's development it is Mônica who must clarify the purely performative nature of this blending by reasserting the border between Lia and herself: "Eu não sou essa mulher que você quer que seja, ok?" ("Direções: Trago Comigo", Capítulo 2).

Figure 20: Mônica's on-stage portrayal of Lia ("Direções: Trago Comigo", Capítulo 2).)

The refusal of *Trago Comigo* to separate the past from the present, and instead, produce meaning from within this third space where these temporal categories come into constant contact is telling of how the miniseries acts as a vehicle for performing memory work that, in part, aligned with Brazil's recent rejection of active forgetting (Ricouer 448)

as a way of coming to terms with past atrocities. *Trago Comigo*, as such, critiques those who wish to classify the past and present as two sides of an irreconcilable binary system by locating this desire within the character of Lopes. Himself a former member of the armed resistance, Lopes actively prefers not to remember his past militancy. When prompted by Telmo's inquires about Lia at the beginning of the series, he asserts this desire by stating, "Telmo…isso é uma coisa que ficou lá no passado. Eu quero olhar para o futuro. Eu quero que você tenha essa chance de olhar para o futuro também" ("Direções: Trago Comigo", Capítulo 1). Incapable at this moment of making sense of the events of the past, Lopes works to detach them from the present and future.

This interdependence of the past and the present is complemented by the insertion of real events and references into the fictional plot of *Trago Comigo*. As noted in the previous discussion on the use of realia in *Queridos Amigos*, miniseries may operate as a linkage between history and memory by infusing lived experiences into the accounts of key historical events. Breaking down Pierre Nora's relatively rigid binary of history and memory, *Trago Comigo* performs this memory work by utilizing real life testimonies, broadcasting the intimate side of larger sociopolitical debates and emphasizing the continued fissures and residues that redefine specific historical events as cultural traumas that are privately felt, but which require public acknowledgement.

According to Nora, memory and history can be differentiated by their current societal embodiment and their relative existence as a perpetual present; memory is a perpetual actual phenomenon, and history is past. "Memory is life, borne by living societies founded in its name. It remains in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to

manipulation and appropriation…History, on the other hand, is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer" (Nora *Les Lieux de Memóire* 8). *Trago Comigo*, *Volver a nacer* and *Queridos Amigos* begin to break down these constructed divisions, and instead, highlight the ongoing dialectic between history and memory. Rather than aligning with Nora's critique of the media as a harbinger of memory's death through its obsession with history, these miniseries use diegetic conversations to create a space for diverse audience discussions that blur the line between history and memory, frequently transforming the concept of history as facts of the past into debates in the present (Ricoeur 498-499).

In its most concrete form, this transformation is carried out through the interspersing of testimonies into the fictional account of *Trago Comigo*. A small group of members of Brazil's student movements and various leftist Brazilian militants associated with unspecified political groups make up those who provide the testimonies that serve a variety of practical and symbolic roles within the show. First and foremost, these testimonies act as scenic transitions that contextualize the prior scene by grounding it in the shared experiences of a collective. By incorporating a multiplicity of voices all narrating personal accounts of their militancy, capture, and torture, these testimonies work to refute the claim of exceptionalism often associated with the argument of excesses committed by members of Brazil's armed forces during the dictatorship. Furthermore, these testimonies authenticate the fictional portrayal of Telmo's militancy by drawing a parallel between Telmo's attempt to remember his time in the armed struggle and the remembrances of others (S. Almeida 6-7). For example, the on-stage reenactment of torture

by *pau de arara*[34] is punctuated by six testimonials that specifically describe capture, imprisonment, and torture; Telmo's depiction of the hyper-sexualized torture of Lia is followed by the inclusion of numerous women who testify to their own experiences being raped in prison; and the debilitating guilt Telmo feels for "giving up" Lia is echoed by various militants who speak about their own struggles and guilt regarding what they said or refused to say while imprisoned ("Direções: Trago Comigo").

These testimonies offer their most striking complement to Telmo's artistic process when at the very end of the miniseries, Telmo decides he is ready to return to the program *Olhar para trás* and offer his own testimony. Following his assertion that "agora eu posso contar minha história," the audience is exposed to the reasons that have convinced others to share their testimonies within this miniseries, ranging from the importance of truth, justice, and closure, to assertions regarding the continued use of the practices of torture today and the need to denounce these techniques ("Direções: Trago Comigo", Capítulo 4). Finally, these real life testimonies personalize the historical narratives that would otherwise separate these past events from the present by portraying this history as other (Nora *Les Lieux de Mémoire* iv). By broadcasting these testimonies to younger generations in the present, while simultaneously highlighting their continued relevance to present socio-political struggles—such as Brazil's high rates of police brutality, these testimonies question the constructed division between history and memory. As Samira Almedia writes in her article on the role of these testimonies in *Trago Comigo*:

[34] A term that translates to "macaw's perch" it was a common torture technique used by the dictatorship. Hung from a pole by one's arms and knees, victims were suspended in the air for extended periods of time leading to severe physical pain and psychological trauma.

> As histórias (reais e ficcionais) entrelaçadas advogam a importância da preservação da memória coletiva do relato que é pessoal e subjetivo por natureza. Assim, essas vozes marginalizadas, no sentido em que colidem com a voz de autoridade e impessoal da História, buscam uma memória-histórica multiperspectivada que não exclui o testemunho daqueles que tem apenas o próprio corpo como prova das experiências. (1)

Viewers, thus are provided with a new outlet, the intimate stories of these survivors, to make sense of their sociopolitical past and present**.**

The impact of these testimonies is a topic that intermittently appears in the online comments section of the show's YouTube channel and the Facebook page of *Trago Comigo's* cinematic adaptation of the same name.[35] Praised for the inclusion of these testimonies as a form of paying tribute to past realities and giving a voice to those directly victimized by the dictatorship, the miniseries is also critiqued in these comments for choosing to censor the names of those accused of torture. As one commentator remarks:

> Achei frustrante apenas o fato do filme retratar a história das pessoas que davam a vida por um ideal de liberdade e ainda hoje os nomes dos torturadores, estupradores e assassinos que eles resistiam e combatiam não pode ser divulgado [podem ser divulgados] divulgados…. Suas vítimas mereciam mais do que isso…Se os fatos são reais não vejo [o] porquê dessa omissão, ou falar a verdade ainda é crime nesse país? (Punked3001)

[35] The miniseries *Trago Comigo* was transformed into a film in 2016. Still directed by Tata Amaral, the film version premiered to critical acclaim, and has won various awards, including Best Film at São Paulo's 10th Annual Festival of Latin American Cinema and Best Film at the International Festival of Cinema and Human Rights in Sucre, Bolivia.

The censorship of these names is further highlighted in the miniseries' filmic version by the use of a censor bar during these testimonies; this additional inclusion contrasts with the miniseries' subtler and perhaps more poignant muting of these victims just as they pronounce the names of their torturers. Operating under the orders of Brazil's judiciary, which censured these names due to their inclusion in a fictional piece, this inability to name names did not only bring to mind Brazil's incomplete justice for viewers, such as Punked3001, but also for the show's director Tata Amaral who qualifies this censorship as a direct result of the "fato de nunca teremos julgado e condenado os torturadores" (qtd. in Tajra).

Figure 21: Example of the visual censoring of names during Trago Comigo's testimonies ("Direções: Trago Comigo'

As made evident in the previous responses from viewers, the intimate conversations that drive the plot of *Trago Comigo* connect with viewers by opening up a channel through which they may recognize themselves and their own life histories. Néstor Canclini emphasizes the power of television in this regard when discussing popular culture as a tool, which often relies on this self-recognition, and the construction of alternative pathways for

asserting one's societal presence. "En el tango y la telenovela, en el cine masivo y en la nota roja, lo que conmueve a los sectores populares, dice Martín Barbero, es el drama del reconocimiento y la lucha por hacerse reconocer, la necesidad de recurrir a múltiples formas de socialidad primordial (el parentesco, la solidaridad vecinal, la amistad) ante el fracaso de las vías oficiales de institucionalización de lo social" (Canclini 260-261). On the Facebook page of *Trago Comigo*, one viewer applauds the show for providing just such a space for self-reflection, writing "Adorei este filme justamente porque não achei que o roteiro induzisse a qq pensamento… me senti com liberdade de ter minha própria opinião" (Mazzoni).

This interpretive freedom is celebrated through *Trago Comigo*'s direct acknowledgement of the ever present gap between experiencing an event and representing it. Instead of lamenting this irreproducibility, *Trago Comigo* embraces this gap and experiments with new performative forms that allow one to approach the residues of that which is unforgettable, but currently incomprehensible. As Telmo attempts to reconstruct his past on the theatrical stage, he quickly realizes the futility of trying to relive these experiences as they originally played out. Instead of closing this gap, he explores it as a "powerful stimulant for cultural and artistic creativity" by inviting his cast to improvise within this gap and by visually portraying the inability to construct an exact replication of one's past experiences through the use of a symbolically stripped down, almost bare set (Huyssen *Twilight Memories* 11).

Figure 22: Paired down set dressing used in diagetic play within Trago Comigo ("Direções: Trago Comigo", Capítulo 4)

Juxtaposing these moments of collaboration with visual emptiness, Telmo's creative process is indicative of the balance between the necessary collective frames, which aid one in interrogating the past, and the persistent voids that haunt this act of interrogation. Samira Almeida summarizes this point by affirming that:

> A minissérie não esconde a fragilidade da memória, apresentando-a como sendo fragmentada e pouco precisa em relação aos fatos. Na história ficcional, as lacunas quando não se apresentam como um vazio sem vistas à recuperação são, por ora, preenchidas com lembranças inventadas a partir da improvisação de atores que sequer faziam parte do universo do personagem desmemoriado. (2)

Thus, *Trago comigo* directly responds to Richard's assertion that this fissure between reality and its representation is productive as a space for "critical imagination" and for the insertion of alternative memories that may be stymied by the construction of official memory narratives that exalt the truth of a cohesive version of the past (*Cultural Residues* 14).

On another level, the performative, corporal vocabulary employed in *Trago Comigo* as a way of critically and creatively examining this space complicates the traditional placement of television on Diana Taylor's continuum of repertoire and archive. As an audiovisual medium, television naturally relies on the digitized image and its translation of discrete numbers to analog images to represent, however fleetingly, the real as a constructed reflection of itself. However, with modern technology, the once ephemeral television program can now be recorded, stored and accessed from a variety of different sources—VHS, DVD, the Internet etc. Potentially replacing the dominance of writing and visual images as the central forms of archival representation, digital mediums impose new ways of viewing and new ways of transforming live performance into archival material. The archive, as defined by Taylor, is more constant and resistant to change; it is that which cannot register the ephemerality of the embodied practices that constitute the performance as a registry of the repertoire, but also that which "endures beyond the limits of the live" (173). In the case of television, as both a visual and digital form of production, it not only operates within this continuum, but also alongside it by providing new modes of transmission often excluded from the traditional definition of the archive as a space reserved for literary and linguistic production (Taylor 25). Thus, while Taylor argues that embodied performance is an episteme, *Trago Comigo* provides its own "way of knowing" through the construction of memory that is simultaneously archival and performative. More specifically, the show emphasizes the centrality of embodied performance as a way of preserving those memories that resist narrative description, in particular those haunted by the fissures and traumatic repetitions previously explored, while also recognizing its archival digitization of these very same performances.

Moving past the common vision of performance as object, *Trago Comigo* transforms theatrical production into a pedagogy of memory (Virno). By placing the human body at the center of memory, the theatrical process adopted in *Trago* Comigo—with its dependence on improvisation and corporal exploration—creates a living memory that participates in the "circulation of representations of representations" in the here and now (Taylor 5).

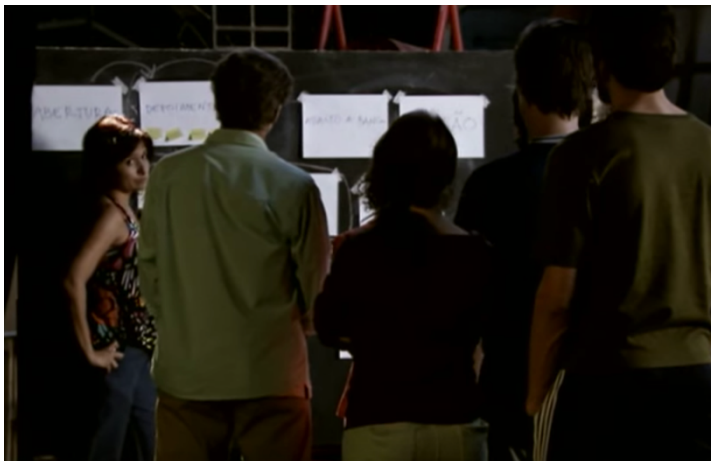


Figure 23: Actors piece together their improvisations into a cohesive play ("Direções: Trago Comigo", Capitulo 4)

In few instances are the actors in this performance provided with a script or a timeline, but rather this piece is organically compiled through the improvisations of each actor when placed in a specific hypothetical situation. The performative nature of these repetitive theatrical improvisations provides an alternative reading of the film's opening line, "Brasil é um país que não preserva a memória" ("Direções: Trago Comigo", Capítulo 1), which instead of serving as a critique of Brazil's lack of memory, may actually affirm Brazil's commitment to theatrical performance as a subjective reliving of memory that opposes the archival insistence on object preservation.

By inviting young actors to participate in this interactive theatrical process, T*rago Comigo*, as both a miniseries and a diagetic play, explores the transmission of memories

between generations and the Halbwachsian frames that guide the construction and articulation of inter-generational memories. Halbwach's influential study on collective memory bridges the gap between individual and collective memory through its insistence that all individual memories are informed by social frames (*On Collective Memory*). While these social frames differ greatly between generations—as social interactions and family dynamics change—their relative strengths do not only influence and alter individual memory, but also lead to the creation of what Jelin terms a dynamic collective memory, which refers to the malleability and impermanence of our readings of the past. Some factors that are crucial to the re-signification of these memories include: temporality, the effects of trauma, the strategic influence of memory entrepreneurs and social actions, and finally, the new doubts, questions and assertions inserted into the public sphere by younger generations (Jelin *State Repression* 42-43). It is within this theoretical realm that *Trago Comigo* begins to explore the competing contextual frames that affect post-memory.

Post-memory is defined by Marianne Hirsch as a group of experiences that people remember "only by means of the stories, images, and behaviours among which they grew up," but which can still be "transmitted to them so deeply and affectively as to seem to constitute memories in their own right" (106-107). Often associated with familial transmissions of memory, post-memorial work attempts to reactivate distant memories by reinvesting them with meaning that is resonant to younger generations and their present context (Hirsch 11). Thus, post-memorial work is about citation, but also mediation.

The fear that mediation will stray too far from citation is a common theme in *Trago Comigo.* The series recognizes the influence of changing temporalities on the transmission of memory and the contextual alterations that they bring about, while also insisting on

locating memories within the contextual realities of the past. Through inter-generational debates between characters, the show reflects on how competing generational frames read the repeated retellings of the past, emphasizing the degree to which older generations may insist on a more literal retelling due to their experiential involvement, while younger generations frame these memories as an aggregate of the socio-political and cultural frames to which they have been exposed. The numerous interactions between Telmo and Miguel—the famous telenovela actor whom is cast to play a young Telmo—exemplify these inter-generational debates.

One of these interactions centers on the naming of those who fought against Brazil's recent dictatorship; Miguel continually refers to these groups as "terroristas," and Telmo insists on correcting him by naming his past companheiros "guerrilheiros" or "revolucionários." While Telmo later concludes that said disagreement is "uma questão de perspectiva," the debate itself is telling of how various factors, such as the inherent losses in the repeated retellings of literal memories, the temporal distance from the dictatorship's crimes, the existence of a two-way Amnesty Law, and the omnipresence of the official memory regime of the dictatorship, have informed the memories of the younger generation ("Direções: Trago Comigo", Capítulo 1).

Another key example of these debates arises when Miguel is asked to reenact Telmo's participation in an attack on a national bank. Asked to empathize with Telmo's situation and understand his youthful interpretation of the event as a heroic act, Miguel finds himself unable to understand the contextual realities that shaped Telmo's decision to participate in such an act:

Miguel: Um ato heroico? Porque é um roubo, né?

Telmo: Você não pode criticar outro personagem. Você é ele. Você tem que pensar como ele. Posso te garantir para Jaime e para todos seus companheiros roubar o banco é expropriar o capital para financiar a revolução.

Miguel: Revolução, né? Como assim?.... Que mudou? Que trouxe o resultado?

Telmo: Eu acredito que deve ser muito difícil para uma geração sem ideologia como a sua entender isso. Deve ser muito difícil mesmo.

Miguel: É difícil. A gente está tentando entender, mas é difícil…mais pelo menos uma geração que não fez os erros como fizeram.

Telmo: Qual foi um erro? Lutar para um mundo mais justo? Vou tentar explicar para você. Para o Jaime e para os companheiros, eles não estão roubando um banco para comprar um tênis novo, para fazer um cabelinho bonitinho, para ter uma roupa nova, para ter uma camisa assim escrita em inglês. Se entende bem? Eles estão contra uma ditadura que oprime, que censura, que assassina, que tortura. É contra isso que eles estão…é para você! Para você ter um filho que tem a liberdade que você não teve. Se consegue entender isso ou não?

Miguel: É o que...que vocês esperam...que as gerações…disseram obrigado, que gratidão tremenda que bom que os ladrões trouxeram e fizeram esse mundo maravilhoso? ("Direções: Trago Comigo", Capítulo 3).

At the heart of this discussion is the generational differences that separate Miguel and Telmo. As they struggle to understand the social frames and contextual realities of each generation, both characters also tend to overlook the contributions of each generation—with Miguel highlighting the contemporary inequalities and discriminatory practices that

in many ways reproduce and evoke the past and with Telmo, in contrast, reading the past in a more heroic form that, while comforting, often glosses over its failures. Engagements such as these, while seemingly divisive, highlight the productivity of memory as a multidirectional force, which relies on these very negotiations to develop new exemplary memories that can be used as models for understanding current and future situations (Rothberg 5). For example, it is through this exposure to alternative interpretations of the past that Miguel begins to question his capitalist behavior and appreciate the political benefits that he previously had taken for granted.

4.3 Volver a nacer

Conflicting generational interpretations of the past are central to *Volver a nacer* (2011), the sole Argentine miniseries explored in this chapter. *Volver a nacer* tells the story of twin sisters—Pilar and Soledad—who after being born in a *centro clandestino* during the nation's last civil-military dictatorship are appropriated by different families; Pilar is taken by one of the army officials, Miguel Monteagudo, who was in charge of the very same *centro clandestino* to which Pilar's biological parents were taken; Soledad, her sister,

Figure 24: Volver a nacer's opening graphic ("Volver a nacer capitulo 1")

is given to a priest who puts her up for illegal adoption. The miniseries follows both sisters as they uncover their identities as children of disappeared parents and reconnect with their own pasts and with each other. This search is set against the backdrop of a myriad of informal and formal investigations into the current and past crimes of those involved with the recent dictatorship, including the trial of Miguel Monteagudo, and his allies, Alberto and Vicente. Described by the Argentine newspaper, *La Nación*, the show operates as "una historia policial en la que se mezclan el periodismo de investigación y los negocios ligados a una empresa de seguridad manejada por un ex militar" (Marín). Combining melodrama with an investigative style, *Volver a nacer* not only displays the continued effects of the dictatorship in the present, but teaches new generations about the importance of identity without falling into the trap of becoming overly didactic.

Through the show's commitment to bringing on-going national debates regarding justice, memory, and human rights into the homes of its television viewers, *Volver a nacer* directly interacts with the memory politics furthered by Cristina Fernández de Kirchner during her time as president from 2007-2015. Acting as a continuation of the official memory regime established by her husband, Nstor Kirchner—with its focus on the exemplary nature of the past and the defense of truth and justice as central to protecting the well-being of the nation—Cristina Kirchner's policies and rhetoric provided continued support and an official space for the nation's active human rights movement. For example, well-known human rights organizations, such as the Madres and Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, were frequently invited to participate in policy dialogues and human rights initiatives. Cristina Kirchner, additionally, oversaw the transformation of the ex-ESMA into a "memory site" (Buenos Aires Herald, 5/19/2015), provided government funding for

initiatives that combined artistic endeavors with human rights education, and vocally supported the efforts of the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo to push for the judicial reprisals of military and police officials accused of committing crimes during the civic-military dictatorship (Lazzara 321). These efforts were bolstered by Kirchner's previously cited passing of the new Media Law (Ley de Servicios de Comunicación Audiovisual) and investment in digital and public television, which in turn, led to the proliferation of new television formats, and the development of programs that dialogued with these human rights policies and memory politics. Alejandra Nicolosi maintains that due to these moves, TV Pública became a "caja de resonancia al visibilizar en su oferta ficcional, nuevos realizadores que expresan temáticas, representaciones sociales y estéticas hasta ahora marginalizados" (1). In the case of *Volver a nacer*, this program benefited directly from a competition organized by INCAA that looked to generate new programs for digital television.

The producers of *Volver a nacer* and media critics alike recognized the show's relative alignment with the memory politics of Cristina Kirchner and the political opening provided by Kirchnerism—specifically as it looked to do away with the two demons approach to the past and instead vindicate the memories of militants. The magazine *Popular* highlights this relationship by writing, "Esta idea surgió en este momento de cambio en el país por el espacio que se le da a los Derechos Humanos como política de Estado. Es un momento donde la política y los Derechos Humanos empiezan a ocupar un lugar común…" (González). A similar connection is made by *Volver a nacer*'s producers and co-stars, Julieta and Melina Petriella, who speak to not only the power of fictional media to affect viewers and influence current debates on memory, truth, and justice, but

who also associate their televisual efforts with a new type of militancy for the current generations. “Yo creo mucho en la militancia desde lo que uno siente como más auténtico, y en mi caso poder hacerlo desde el arte y poder transmitir lo que siento, mis expectativas respecto a la justicia argentina a través de la ficción, es una oportunidad única” (qtd. in Respighi). In the end, *Volver a nacer* benefitted from both the memory politics in place during the Kirchner administration and from the State initiative to develop unique public television programming. These benefits, to a certain degree, translate into an acceptance on the part of *Volver a nacer* of the official memory regime upheld by Kirchnerism, as is made evident by the show’s focus on educating younger generations on truths of the past and its portrayal of retributive and restorative justice as key mechanisms for societal change. However, the residues and hauntings which complicate the identity quests of the show’s fictional characters, the presentation of competing memory narratives that do not end in reconciliation, and the demonstration of the failures of retributive justice that punctuate *Volver a nacer* simultaneously “signal the very limits” of the emblematic memories on which memory regimes depend (Lazarra 320).

Similar to both *Queridos Amigos* and *Trago Comigo, Volver a nacer* rejects the rigid categorization of past and present; instead, the show constructs a vision of the past that references, reenacts, and reframes it as part of an “eternal present” (Greco 146). In its most concrete form, the present’s dependence on the past is showcased through the use of flashbacks. Similar to the previous chapter’s discussion of the employment of flashbacks in telenovelas, flashbacks are used in *Volver a nacer* to continuously interrupt and affect the present by visually and aurally depicting existing linkages between past actions and present circumstances. One repeated flashback that is central to the show is the traumatic

experience of Sebastián, the son of Miguel Monteagudo and adoptive brother of Pilar Visually distinct due to its sepia tone, this flashback follows the youthful point of view of Sebastián as he accompanies his father to his place of work, an Argentine *centro clandestino.* Fragmented and shot in close-ups, this flashback is first presented to viewers in the show's fifth episode. With a flash of light, a basketball drops onto the ground. The camera shakes, as the audience is led down a hallway to a keyhole, where the flashback momentarily shifts, transforming the audience into voyeurs who observe Sebastián as he gazes through said keyhole. As a woman screams in pain, we watch Sebastián run away from the doorway and back down the hallway from whence he came ("Volver a nacer capitulo 13 final").

Figure 25: Images from Sebastián's repetitive flashback ("Volver a nacer capitulo 13 final")

This series of events becomes a recycled sequence in the show, as viewers accompany Sebastián's frequent reliving of this moment as part of his process to slowly uncover more details about this fateful visit. It is through this process of discovery that objects such as the basketball, the isolated scream, and the keyhole are further contextualized, ending in his and our realization that these fragmented scenes are how an adult Sebastián has

organized the memory of his father appropriating the recently born Pilar from her biological mother.

It is through Sebastián's continued interrogation of these flashbacks, that he reinterprets the familial frameworks that had previously shaped his understanding of the past; no longer resonating with the national narratives proffered by the State nor consistent with his own personal experience, the memory frames supported by Sebastián's parents are put into question. This re-evaluation of those truths passed down to him are exemplified by Sebastián's debate with his family over whether the recent years of Argentine governmental repression should be categorized as a dictatorship or a war. The former frame is adopted by Sebastián, who insists on the criminal nature of those acts committed by the armed forces, while the later frame is forwarded by his mother, Celina.

Sebastián: ¿No puedo creer que vos te hayas callado en frente de sus (Miguel/su padre) crímenes?

Celina: ¿Crímenes? ¿Qué crímenes?

Sebastián: Los que cometió durante la dictadura.

Celina: ¿Dictadura? Eso era una guerra.

Sebastián: ¿Guerra mamá? Vos sabías perfectamente que el estado en esa época, secuestraba, torturaba y asesinaba gente inocente.

Celina: ¿Inocente? La patria estaba…

Sebastián: ¿La patria? ¿Qué carajo es la patria para vos?!

Celina: La patria...mucho. Pero, ¿la familia? ¿Qué es la familia para vos? Vas a declarar en contra de tu padre, tus hermanos, en contra de tu propia sangre.

Sebastián: Pilar no tiene mi sangre, o ¿me equivoco? ("volver a nacer capitulo 8")

This concluding parallel between nation and family further demonstrates the hybridization of the public and the private spheres found in *Volver a nacer*. By relying on a common call to national pride, as intrinsically related to unity, both familial and otherwise, Celina herself blends the public and the private in a way antithetical to her previous attempts to keep her personal life separate from her husband's involvement in the dictatorship. This subtle nod at the hybridity of the public and private realm is emblematic of all three shows' discursive transformation of historical distance into familiar memories. Through this partial transformation, new generations are invited to reconsider their relationships to these historical pasts and empathize with the intimate emotions that they trigger when presented as personalized memories, as opposed to objectified historical pasts (Ricoeur 498). An act that does not altogether strip the past of its historical nature, it rather allows for its productive hybridization as it provides an outlet for the exemplary reactivation of memory by new generations, who re-frame, correct, re-tool, and criticize those critical histories publicized by specific communities (Ricoeur 499).

By inviting these intra-generational disagreements into the very fabric of memory construction, all three shows not only recognize the persistent influence of difference, but also must account for those moments in which difference does not end in empathy or reconciliation, but rather reproduces societal divisions. Such is the case in *Volver a nacer,* which highlights how the conflicting stories passed down from one generation to the next influence not only what one remembers, but if one chooses to remember. After discovering the truth of her identity, Soledad who was always aware of her adopted status and taught to value memories, feels compelled to investigate her past and interrogate her own memories; as she contends, "no puedo dejar ese pasado atrás porque no sé de qué pasado

estoy hablando" ("volver a nacer capitulo 9"). Pilar's journey parallels Soledad's discovery, but she is much more limited in her interrogation of the past, repeatedly choosing to instead forget; "Ahora que sé la verdad, lo único que quiero es para olvidármela" ("volver a nacer capitulo 9"). This reaction, is in part crafted by the repeated messages of the need to move past Argentina's "war" that were passed down to her by her parents—Miguel and Celina. Thus, while the miniseries concludes with the reunion of both sisters, it is clear that there remain many unspoken divisions that persist in their relationship, and that will continue to inform their interactions.

Volver a nacer inscribes these divisions into its plot through its thorough contemplation of the individual emotions and experiences that escape from judicial categorization. By focusing on the personal path of discovery of both Soledad and Pilar, the miniseries intersects with issues of transitional justice—such as the implementation of truth tribunals—without leaving aside "the scarring of something unforgettable that resists being submissively molded into the perfunctory forms of judicial procedure" (Richard *Cultural Residues* 18). This commitment to exploring the emotional, as well as judicial pathways through which past truths are constructed is one way in which these miniseries allow for a reconsideration of those remains which cannot be verbally articulated. These remains visually reappear throughout *Volver a nacer* as fragments of a past that Pilar has unconsciously blocked, and yet which haunt her. In a recurring dream, Pilar awakes in an empty, cement hallway where she silently stands as a woman veiled in white passes by her. The shrill cry of an infant pierces the silence of the dream as the veil of the woman is pulled back to reveal an identical twin staring back at her. Pilar's vision drops and lands on an empty crib ("volver a nacer capitulo 7").

Figure 26: Still shots from Pilar's recurring dream ("volver a nacer capitulo 7")

Self-described as "un sueño horrible que se repite y se repite y se repite," this visual haunting once again highlights how these miniseries rather than ignoring that which cannot be explained, assert its presence ("volver a nacer capítulo 7"). Cognizant of the difficulties inherent in exploring these absences and inspired by her own personal identity search, Soledad commits herself to developing a workshop for grade-school students on memory and identity. Her fictional work, thus, mirrors the televisual effort of *Volver a nacer* by consciously fostering the transformation of literal memories into exemplary memories for the benefit of the nation's younger generations.

The dissemination of *Volver a nacer* to these future generations is grounded in the broad calls for truth, memory, and justice cited by many of the show's viewers. Specifically analyzing the content of *Volver a nacer's* Facebook page, the words "verdad," "justicia," and "memoria" make frequent appearances, and are matched by an equally impressive display of comments that speak to the didactic component of the miniseries for younger generations. One poster reflects on the educational benefits of visualizing this past by stating "son temas que ha trabajado en la escuela y en mi casa lo hablamos cada vez que algo nos recuerda las consecuencias de la MALDITA DICTADURA CÍVICO MILITAR,

ahora mi hijo, con VOLVER A NACER, le pudo poner imágenes a lo escuchado" (Viviana Baraldo). Others more directly highlight how this story functions to teach youths about "otra parte triste de la historia argentina," even going so far as directly asking the show's producers via Facebook if this show will be available to show in schools (Bueno; Reynaldo).

4. Multi-faceted Justice: Blending the Formal and the Negotiated

Cognizant of television's didactic privilege as well as the need to balance this educational impetus with broad public appeal, *Volver a nacer*, *Trago Comigo*, and *Queridos Amigos* skillfully frame the past abuses of the dictatorship by broadly articulating how it should be remembered versus specifying what should be remembered. These three shows, thus address some of the very same questions that inspire normative transitional justice mechanisms by reflecting on how mass atrocities should be confronted, what are the limits of retributive vs. restorative justice, and what role(s) does television play in this equation.

The bulk of this chapter has been dedicated to making a case for the structural and thematic hybridity of these shows and identifying the ways in which this hybridity places the shows on the border between authority and resistance, simultaneously furthering and complicating the literal archival truths often disseminated by official memory regimes and the institutional transitional justice policies on which these regimes are in part built. In this final section, I turn to an analysis of how this hybridity deepens our understanding of justice by confronting the limits of retributive justice often associated with trials and certain monetary forms of restorative justice, such as providing financial reparations. Furthermore,

this concluding section emphasizes the ways in which all three shows call attention to the role of television in the construction of new pathways for justice.

Justice is a common thread within all three television programs, as they internally debate the merits and limitations of more normative forms of criminal justice—such as trials—, public shaming procedures, the restorative benefits of truth commissions, and the reconciliatory effects of amnesty laws. One key example of these debates can be found in the miniseries, *Queridos Amigos*, which lauds Brazil's amnesty law for providing a pathway for the return of exiled militants, while simultaneously criticizing it ability to serve as a long-term solution due to its potential to stymie what some of the show's characters deem necessary justice. For example, the program's ever-provocative Bene baits the show's most ardent leftist militants when he classifies the amnesty law as yet another example of them accepting "tudo pela metade" ("Queridos Amigos: Capítulo 23 (Penúltimo Capítulo)- Parte 3"). He continues, "Essa anistia, essa constituição que não julga ninguém, que livra cara de todo mundo...é por isso, meus amigos, que vocês perderam a guerra e não vão ganhar guerra nenhuma..." ("Queridos Amigos: Capítulo 23 (Penúltimo Capítulo) - Parte 3"). Bene interprets the amnesty law as an ever-present obstacle to justice—an obstacle that he personally faces when he is unable to prosecute Bia's torturer/his current assailant. This frustration is expressed when Bia finally decides to name her torturer and denounce the crimes he committed against her during the dictatorship; "eu entendo esse sentimento de desamparo diante dessa lei de anistia. Uma denúncia parece realmente inútil" ("Queridos Amigos: Capítulo 24 (Último Capítulo) – Parte 3"). This criticism is not limited to Brazil's controversial amnesty law, but rather, is a common

thread among all three miniseries, which while simultaneously promoting the need for judicial action, also question its efficacy as a cure-all.

Known for its Juicio a las Juntas immediately following the civic-military dictatorship and the truth trials that followed years later, Argentina's judicial system is framed within *Volver a nacer* as increasingly effective, but still fundamentally flawed. Argentina's judicial process is primarily defended by one of is own employees—the lawyer Diego—who points to the nation's slow process of democratization as one of the potential reasons that Sebastián has returned to the country to testify against his father nearly three decades after witnessing his crimes. Diego continues to assert the capacity of these institutions of the rule of law when faced with the sharp criticism of his own brother who insists on their continued corruption and inefficacy.

Diego: La justicia funciona. No un día para el otro eh, como en las películas.

Leo: La justicia, la justicia. ¿Qué hizo la justicia eh? ¿Qué carajo hizo? Que mal…la justicia! El lento poder judicial siempre corriendo detrás de los eventos y ¿quién carajo los evita? ¿Quién mierda evita que maten gente? ¿Quién?

Diego: La justicia lenta o como quieras, va a llegar. ("volver a nacer capitulo 8")

This debate on the effectiveness of justice is further informed by the show's depiction of the relative impunity enjoyed by those who committed abuses during the dictatorship; for while the justice system does charge two of the show's military personnel, Miguel and Vicente, with the crimes of kidnapping, torture, and disappearance, the series ends without offering a final verdict to these criminal trials. In the end, this incomplete resolution speaks to the miniseries' true definition of justice, which is less associated with a specific mechanism—criminal trials, truth commissions, etc.—and more informed by the

theoretical purpose of justice, which as Diego states is to "cicatrizar las heridas" and "enseña a convivir con el dolor" ("Volver a nacer capitulo 13 final"). A definition of justice that may include retributive justice mechanisms—such as criminal trials—it recognizes the limits of trials with their edification of a singular truth as perhaps an incomplete manner to address both the individual and collective wounds of a nation. Instead, by adopting this definition, *Volver a nacer* leaves the conceptualization of justice open for the insertion of alternative forms of coming to terms with the past, such as speaking one's truth, actively listening to the stories of others, and thus providing a space for the reparation and restoration of one's dignity and humanity as a subject within a collective.

The three miniseries explored at length in this chapter, thus, bring their hybridity to bear on the question of how mass atrocities should be confronted by proposing less one-size-fits-all solutions to addressing past abuses, and instead acting as televisual laboratories that expose viewers to the intersections of alternative paths of coping with the aftermath of these atrocities. *Volver a nacer* presents criminal trials as a potentially effective approach when implemented in conjunction with other approaches to justice, including the sharing of personal testimony from within a non-judicial space, and the use of artistic means, such as the publication of a book, the keeping of a journal, and dance, as socially cathartic means of recuperating one's social autonomy and representing experiences that are overlooked by the practical efficacy of trials and their need to categorize society into victims and perpetrators. In contrast, *Trago Comigo* largely sidesteps the question of criminal trials, rather choosing to postpone this debate and focus on justice as an ideal that is only possible after Brazil's citizens are given the right to speak their truths—highlighted by the show's use of personal testimony and artistic expression as two modes of articulating these truths.

However, even this miniseries, similar to the case of *Queridos Amigos*, while not explicit regarding the need for further judicial action, begins to hint at the incomplete nature of justice when the nation fails to implement a multi-faceted approach. Thus, both Brazilian programs laud the use of theatre, written testimony, and truth commissions, while pushing viewers to consider the present day abuses that may have been prevented had the nation not only morally condemned these acts, but provided a pathway for their juridical condemnation (Schneider and Atencio 23). As one of *Trago Comigo*'s concluding testimonies summarizes "é uma sociedade que não resolve essa questão e vai ter muita dificuldade com a história dela também" ("Direções: Trago Comigo", capítulo 4).

This insistence on a multi-faceted approach to justice also benefits these television programs by reaffirming the role of television in this process, particularly given its ability to communicate complex debates to a wide public, its structural and thematic potential to deconstruct the binaries upheld by more normative judicial processes, its existence as a space for dialogue in the present, its relationship with the repertoire, and its educational capacities. Aware of this potential and their relative positionality, all three miniseries directly insert themselves into these very real discussions on competing memories, truths, and the construction of justice in the 21^{s-t} century. The producers of *Volver a nacer* reflect on how their program fits into this schema when they claim the importance of understanding "el espacio que se ocupa," asserting that, "se puede entretener sin subestimar al espectador. Creemos que los espectadores están un cambio en la TV, y es posible realizar contenidos que nos dejen algo, que nos entretengan, nos emocionen, nos generen preguntas. El entretenimiento no tiene por qué estar vacío de contenidos" (Respighi). However, by bringing forward fictional accounts of these events, these miniseries

additionally confront these mass atrocities in a way that preserves their essence without being constrained by the normative truths constructed by more institutionalized forms of transitional justice. They provide a unique outlet for viewing extraordinary suffering and making sense of this suffering through existing relationships, thus transforming TV "into the cultural, if not legal, property of spectators, as they process information, relate it to their own lives, and imbue it with new meaning" (Orozco and Miller 103). This invitation to find oneself in these stories of atrocity and identify current societal injustices with abuses of the past not only reactivates debates regarding these events in the present, but represents a potential promise for the development of new interpretations, approaches, and activism related to these pasts that without said promise may become so familiar that they are easily forgotten (Graham 4).

Chapter 4. Advances in Dynamic Memory Mediums: Public Television and the Testimonial Interview

> *"Narrar no consiste en copiar lo real, sino en inventarlo, en construir imágenes históricamente verosímiles de ese material privado de signo, que gracias a su transformación por medio de la construcción narrativa, podrá al fin, incorporado en una coherencia nueva, coloradamente, significar."*
>
> ---Juan José Saer (*El concepto de ficción*, 174)

Turning away from the carefully scripted fictional genres of the miniseries and the telenovela, this chapter explores the rise of another televisual genre—the testimonial interview. A televisual genre, that in the last 20 years has become a staple of Latin American public television, it operates as an oral and visual history that draws on the particularities of documentary interviews, investigative journalism, and audiovisual testimony to craft a visual archive in the quest to address the region's crisis of memory (itself a crisis of amnesia).[36] However, the archive created by these programs does not exist as pure register, but celebrates reflexivity, asking viewers to engage with hypersubjective[37]

[36] The concept of a culture of memory is studied as a response to society's current culture of amnesia. In other words, the rapid obsolescence of today's cultural innovations and the overwhelming speed with which our culture consumes and disposes of digital products invokes a sense of lost objects and lost time. Well-aware of these rapid losses, we engage in a type of "archive fever" where images, products etc. are stored as a protection against our fear that we might forget (Derrida 14). Andreas Huyssen articulates this complex relationship between the culture of memory and amnesia in his book *Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia*: "For the more we are asked to remember in the wake of the information explosion and the marketing of memory, the more we seem to be in danger of forgetting and the stronger the need to forget" (Huyssen 18).

[37] Hypersubjective as a term is used by Alejandro Baer in his study of audiovisual testimony—*El testimonio audiovisual: Imagen y memoria del Holocausto*. Here, hypersubjective is employed to highlight the principal virtues of testimony as a text with "un alto grado de apertura, variabilidad, imprevisión, así como la imposibilidad de producción de un resultado estandarizable" (61); this same term is later applied to the visual component of audiovisual interviews due to the images "carácter connotativo polisémico e inevitablemente subjetivo" (90).

experiences that unpack how memories themselves are constructed. Memories that themselves are marked by the fissures, silences, and absences of un-representable experiences, viewers are invited to participate in this double crisis of representation, as these very same gaps in memory are re-represented on television. Looking specifically at three 21st century testimonial interviews—*Somos memoria* (2013-present), *Historias debidas* (2000-present), and *Resistir é Preciso* (2014), I investigate how audience reception, as a critical form of participation, affects the impact of testimonial interviews, due to the genre's urgent focus on constructing truth in conjunction with the knowledge and needs of new generations (Forcinito *Los umbrales* 21). An often overlooked component of testimonial interviews, despite its noted importance to all testimonial production (Forcinito *Los umbrales* 13; McLagan 193; Sklodowska 73), this focus on reception intersects with an investigation of the structural characteristics of this genre—in particular it's episodic interpretations of past events from within overarching "emblematic memory scripts" (Stern 113).[38] Specifically, all three shows exteriorize the particularities of certain life stories on the small screen, while simultaneously binding these particularities to the "collective experience of society" by presenting each episode as part of a national showcase—both Argentine and Brazilian—of who "we" are and what stories "we" must remember.

All three of the testimonial interviews explored in this chapter invite spectators to locate their own remembrances within this inclusive "we" by advocating for new ways of

[38] A term used by Steve Stern in his 2004 text, *Remembering Pinochet's Chile: On the Eve of London 1998,* emblematic memory scripts refer to the memory narratives that while promoted by a specific sector of society, both "capture essential truth[s] about the collective experience of society" (Stern 113), while also being broad and flexible enough to "accommodate variegated individual experiences" (Lazzara 344).

interacting with generational memory. In their role as a dynamic memory medium that simultaneously acts as a vehicle for the transmission of intergenerational memories and as a digital storyteller that performs memories in an expressive, visual dimension, these shows aim to construct inclusive narratives that implicate viewers in the duty to remember, and in some cases denounce individual and collective traumas (Sklodowska *Testimonio hispanoamericano* 90). Thus, the testimonial interview, while not formally didactic, is predicated on engaging viewers in a pedagogical process, wherein the urgent "voicing of something," which is part and parcel of the "call to action" so central to testimony, teaches viewers about their own responsibility to respond to injustices in their role as national citizens.[39]

The titles of the Argentine shows are telling of the first of these collective responsibilities. *Somos memoria* asserts the centrality of memory to a variety of communities through its adoption of a vague "nosotros," which concurrently affirms that the show's participants, viewers, and Argentine society "are memory." *Historias debidas* is slightly less explicit in its pronouncement of the importance of key testimonies to Argentina's national imaginary. Finally, the Brazilian show, *Resistir é Preciso,* provides a

[39] The dependence of social documentaries and testimonies on an active, engaged and receptive audience has received a fair amount of scholarly attention. In their study of social documentary, Julianne Burton discusses these users and the development of new methods for activating social actors and viewers during the evolution of Latin American social documentary. Specifically, she cites Solaña and Getino's film manifesto, "Towards a Third Cinema" as a pivotal moment in facilitating "a more active relationship with the spectator" due to its insistence that all cinematic innovations be directed towards improving this audience engagement. The Argentine documentary, *la Hora de los Hornos,* by Solaña and Getino put these innovations into practice by building in pauses throughout the film for audience discussions (Burton 29). This necessary contact between readers/listeners and those testifying is often cited as one of testimony's defining qualities (Sklodowska "La obsolescencia no-programada" 906). Seen as a "zona de contacto" (Forcinito *Los umbrales* 13), a two-way representational flow (Beverley *"*The Margin at the Center" 20), its often cited, but understudied existence is a necessary condition of testimony.

more pointedly didactic, carefully packaged insistence that viewers must not only remember past forms of authoritarian resistance, but in so doing, resist and denounce current human rights abuses.

In this chapter, I argue that these shows operate in three overarching ways. First, they frame themselves as dynamic memory mediums that protect the right to memory by conveying to viewers these duties to remember and denounce. Second, they encourage intergenerational dialogue by incorporating new actors and contemporary human rights debates into discussion on the abuses committed by their authoritarian governments. This second role aligns with each show's attempt to foster new communities that are responsive to the continuity of Brazil's and Argentina's collective traumas. Finally, to a limited degree, these shows restore dignity to victims by amplifying their political voice and their intersecting, but divergent truths. Through a careful employment of televisual tactics, such as the splicing of archival footage, voice-overs, and memory games, these shows aim to meet these objectives. However, these efforts are constrained by the limitations imposed on these productions from within, including the threat of archival materials operating as a form of "ritualized repetition" and the use of hyper-editing, as well as the external control exercised on these shows by each nation's Executive branch, as they were crafted to try and fit the memory regime of the time (Jelin *State Repression* 86).

2. The Emergence of Testimonial Interviews: A Preliminary Definition

Both the limitations and potential of testimonial interviews to operate as a publicly-funded form of cultural transitional justice have been understudied. A medium, overlooked in part, due to the constructed division drawn between it and the legitimate institutional

judicial space, which in the Argentine case, was viewed as the appropriate space to "intervenir, investigar y juzgar lo que pasó" (Raggio qtd. in Amado 15), it echoes the previously noted gap in scholarship that disregards the dynamic role of television productions as mediums that directly address many of the central objectives of normative transitional justice mechanisms—such as remembering, denouncing, and accounting for mass human rights abuses. However, this lack of literature is particularly evident in the case of the testimonial interview; no scholarly analysis exists on the Brazilian program *Resistir é Preciso* nor the Argentine program *Somos memoria*. Additionally, there are only two studies by a single author—Patricia Cinícola—that investigate *Historias debidas* ("La entrevista"; "La identidad"). Both of these articles explore the qualities of this show that lead to its categorization as an interview, including its public nature, spontaneity, projection of the personal/intimate and discursive exchange. In the end, Cinícola argues that *Historias debidas* insists on the imbrication of the public and private spheres in political power struggles. The show, as she states, acts as a form of communication that disseminates information about human rights and their social, economic, and political implications by asking viewers to reflect on how this information already affects their daily lives ("La entrevista"). Just as the private and public spheres are bound together within this political turn, Cinícola hints at the show's blending of the individual with the collective by stating that the "mayor valor de la entrevista reside en su fuerza testimonial" ("La identidad" 3); and yet, her conceptualization of shows, such as *Historias debidas,* as in-depth interviews with a testimonial quality is limited by her singular association of testimony with credibility.

A central debate regarding testimony, due to its judicial origins as a positivist practice that aimed to provide a scientific, objective vision of past events, the authenticity and credibility of literary and audiovisual testimony has been the subject of numerous studies.[40] These debates began around the time of testimony's institutionalization as a literary genre, in 1970, when the Casa de las Américas debuted their award for *testimonio*,[41] and reached their peak in the 1990s with the frequently cited Stoll-Menchú controversy.[42] Originally viewed as either an authentic, direct way of accessing oral histories or as a factually accurate depiction of past events, audiovisual testimonies have been celebrated during the 21st century for their "selective, situational, and subjective" value (Baer 60). Thus as Alejandro Baer states, "no se trata de averiguar cómo en su momento se vivieron

[40] For more information on these debates, see the cited works of Baer, Beverley, Rosales Cervantes, Forcinito, García, Gatti, Reyes and Rodríguez, Sklodowska, Stoll and Vezzetti.

[41] The Casa de las Amércias defined their category of testimonio as "un documentario, de fuente directa, un aspect de la realidad…Se entiende por fuente directa el conocimiento de los hechos por el autor, o la recopilación, por éste, de relatos o constancias obtenidas de los protagonistas o de testigos idóneos. En ambos casos, es indispensable la documentación fidedigna, que puede ser escrita y/o gráfica. La forma queda a discreción del autor, pero la calidad literaria es también indispensable" (qtd in Sklodowska *Testimonio hispanoamericano* 56); This frequently used and debated definition of literary *testimonio* often overlooks the practices that inspired the genre's eventual institutionalization. Victoria García's article "Literatura testimonial en la Argentina: un itinerario histórico (1957-2002)" provides a relatively comprehensive discussion of these practices, including journalism, anthropology and political literature. As she affirms, "En el mundo contemporáneo, el testimonio existió como género de la oralidad cotidiana, de la esfera jurídica, y de la historiografía, mucho antes de ser considerado literario" (García 11). In the Argentine case, Rodolfo Walsh's *Operación Masacre* is one of the most frequently cited testimonio-esque pieces of investigative journalism due to its urgent presentation of a counter-hegemonic re-reading of the killings in José León Suaréz and the adoption of a "perspectiva singularizante y particularista...centrada en pequeñas historias de personajes individualizadas" (García "Testimonio y ficción" 18).

[42] One of the main referents used for academic studies of testimony, Rigoberta Menchu's *testimonio, Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú y así me nació la conciencia*, it became the subject of extreme criticism in David Stoll's book *Rigoberta Menchú and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans* due to what Stoll read as Menchu's lack of authenticity and the duplicated reception of all *testimonio.* Often referred to as the Stoll/Menchú controversy; these two texts are canonical to the debate over the problems of measuring *testimonio* by its truthfulness and authenticity, as well as *testimonio*'s questionable reception as a mediated text, and how mechanisms of memory transfer to the realm of writing in the transcription of *testimonio.*

los sucesos, sino de la manera cómo son construidos hoy en el recuerdo y el olvido su significado en el presente" (60). This quote points to a crucial distinction between viewing testimonial interviews as authoritative, factual accounts of the past and viewing them as interpretations of present truths—a quest that itself often demands that we interrogate the limit between fiction and reality (Forcinito *Los umbrales* 20); for fiction itself, as Rancière asserts, is not about the creation of an imaginary world that is opposed to real. Instead, it is about crafting works that produce a profound dissent; works that plays with the appropriate modes of representations and the ways in which we articulate truths by fostering unique relationships between appearance and reality, the (in)visible and its subsequent meaning. The testimonial interviews within this chapter employ fictional devices, such as the inclusion of a scripted narrator (*Resistir é Preciso*) and the use of background music (*Historias debidas)* to highlight moments in life histories that otherwise might be un-narratable and un-representable.

In this way, these shows call back to the blending of fiction within the documentary film industry, itself, a cinematic form and practice, which is grounded on making assertions about an actuality by using both fictional and non-fictional tropes (Ward 30). The centrality of interviews as a documentary mode further associates these shows with this cinematic form, leading *Historias debidas* to classify itself as a documentary—a self-classification that is predicated, in part, on the show's focus on highlighting human subjects who have shaped the artistic, political, and social trajectory of Latin America; a focus which it shares with popular social documentaries.[43] Additionally, there is a fair degree of overlap between

[43] In her study on Latin American documentary film entitled "Toward a History of Social Documentary in Latin America," Julianne Burton defines social documentary as that subset of "documentaries with a human subject and a descriptive or transformative concern" (3).

1) the urgent nature of audiovisual testimony and that of Latin American social documentary, 2) their dedication to amplifying stories that stem from "submerged, denied, [and] devalued realities" (Burton 6), and 3) their use of specificity to exemplify a larger collective experience (Baer 91). Due in part to these similarities, testimonial interviews are often regarded as a sub-component that may be used within a more extensive documentary;[44] however, I maintain that in the case of *Somos memoria, Historias debidas,* and *Resistir é Preciso* these shows play with documentary tropes—spliced in archival footage, voice-overs, and the employment of the camera as a stand-in for the audience—while ensuring that the testimonial interview itself acts as the driving force of the show. By celebrating the centrality of these testimonies, viewers are orally and visually exposed to 21st century Argentina and Brazil through the lens of a "central epistemology of knowing"/ a "conceptual and methodological prism" (Feld "Memoria y subjetividad" 161) that brings into stark relief the limits of traditional categories of representation, and asks us to participate in the testimonial process as imagined *escuchas* (Baer xxxvi). Shows that begin to move away from an emphasis on life events by instead interrogating their social, political, and psychological consequences (Baer 121), they largely resist the spectacularization that is more common in the entertainment-oriented telenovelas and miniseries. Furthermore, they exist as hypersubjective mediums; by filtering the stories of multiple subjective voices through the use of interviewers (silent and present), they have

[44] The use of testimonial accounts in Latin America documentary is frequently traced back to the New Latin American Cinema and the aforementioned "Towards a Third Cinema" manifesto written by Solañas and Getino (Pridgeon 47). Seen as aligning with their focus on cinema as activism—"cine-acción", they focused less on the esthetic norms of the work, and more on its ideological goal—"cine panfleto, cine didáctico, cine informe, cine ensayo…cine testimonial" (Pridgeon 47); thus, the 1970s saw a rise in the use of testimony within Latin American documentary productions.

the potential to provide a more multidimensional vision of the individuals who make up the national collective as political subjects worthy of recognition. Thus, I define these testimonial interviews as those shows, which perform an urgent, audiovisual, and consciously unequal exchange of information between an interviewer and interviewee, where the interviewee acts as a subjective "agent of a collective memory and identity" (Yúdice 44) in the presence of an imagined public. A definition that is broad enough to encompass different types of in-depth qualitative interviews, such as life histories and informant interviews, it is a point of departure for comparing the respective Argentine and Brazilian programs.

3. Argentine Testimonial Interviews: The Role of Canal Encuentro

Both Argentine programs, *Somos memoria* and *Historias debidas* are broadcast on the recently created public television station—Canal Encuentro. Created in 2006 by the Nation's Ministry of Education, Canal Encuentro was initially envisioned as a complement to the nation's education system. This station would broadcast a diversity of programming to and from every region of the country and incentivize the use of educational television programs in high schools. The channel's current mission statement still highlights many of these foundational objectives. "Encuentro trabaja con el objetivo de contribuir a la igualdad en el acceso al conocimiento, promover la construcción de una ciudadanía crítica y diversa y propiciar la discusión como herramienta fundamental del pensamiento" ("Acerca de Encuentro"). However, these goals have historically been constrained by the station's access problems; for example, it is only available 24 hours a day to those who pay for cable (Califano 71). Additionally, the plurality expressed in its democratic mission statement is

tempered by the State's monetary and organizational control of the station; for while Canal Encuentro is free from the commercial pressure imposed on private television, its actions are still coordinated by the State. In a move that further regulates this autonomy, Canal Encuentro was placed under the auspices of the newly created Sistema Federal de Medios y Contenidos Públicos (Federal System of Public Media and Content) in December of 2016. Despite this change, much of Canal Encuentro's programming remains the same, with both *Somos memoria* and *Historias debidas* being renewed for their respective fourth and eighth season in 2017.

3.1 Somos memoria

Through all of its four seasons, *Somos memoria* explores the lives of key Latin American political and cultural figures. Focusing overwhelmingly on notable Argentines, the show dedicates every episode to an extended interview with a single figure. *Somos memoria* almost entirely scrubs these episodes of the questions and/or prompts provided by the interviewer, thus placing the voice and gestures of the interviewee at the center of the narration. The show briskly switches between a set range of 2-3 medium-long to close-up shots in order to frame the interviewee during their one-hour introspective narration,

Figure 27: Close-up of Nora Cortiñas on Somos memoria ("Somos Memoria IV. Episodio 4. Nora Cortiñas")

which is defined by the program as an exploration of those pressing "experiencias de vida y anécdotas que contribuyen a la comprensión de la historia reciente de nuestro país" ("Somos memoria").

Figure 28: Medium-long shot of Nora Cortiñas on Somos memoria ("Somos memoria IV. Episodio 4. Nora Cortiñas")

Of the variety of historical experiences and anecdotes available, *Somos memoria* highlights the centrality of those life stories that closely align with its themes of "memory" and "human rights" ("Somos memoria"). These themes are made readily apparent in the show's online tags, which include "derechos humanos," "memoria," and "espacio memoria y derechos humanos", as well as its opening sequence, where sepia-toned words flicker in

Figure 29: Opening sequence for Somos Memoria ("Somos memoria I. Episodio 3. Teresa Parodi.")

and out of focus over the high-pitched sound of a television being tuned to an analog station.

Furthermore, these words frame the political nature of each individual testimonial interview by highlighting the "resistencia," "militancia," "compromiso," and "lucha" central to both the events recounted and their very recounting.

A review of those Argentines who participate in this program brings forth the show's political bent. For example, the majority of the show's protagonists are cultural activists, political militants and/or family members of those disappeared by nation's recent civic-military dictatorship. Season 2 emphasizes this politicization of the Argentine experience through its inclusion of over 10 stories of militancy, and an equally high number of stories of exile.[45] Additionally, Season 3 investigates even more closely the move from citizen to activist through the numerous interviews with family members of Argentina's disappeared, including the show's only two-part episode dedicated to speaking with Abuela de Plaza de Mayo, Estela de Carlotto ("Somos memoria III. Episodio 1- Parte 1 and 2. Estela de Carlotto").

3.2 Historias debidas

[45] This series, thus, responds to two central stages in Argentine postdictatorial audiovisual production. Explored in Ana Amado's book *La imagen justa*, the first moment of political audiovisual production specifically emphasized the extreme violence that controlled Argentine society, including frequent depictions of disappearances, torture, exile and government corruption (Amado 22). The second moment, which arose in the mid-1990s second moment of political audiovisual production, began to re-evaluate the victims of the dictatorship as political figures. During this moment, there was an increase in "narrativas que recogieron la experiencia política de los militantes de los años setenta expresadas en literatura testimonial, novela, memorias y películas ficcionales y documentales" (Amado 15).

Historias debidas provides a more structured space for the broadcast of in-depth life stories. Punctuated by the guiding voice of journalist and co-producer, Ana Cacopardo, *Historia debida's* hour-long interviews with well-known public figures and representatives of marginalized communities promote the construction and transmission of collective memories by shining a light on the experiences of overlooked communities and the intimate side of public stories. Through this process, *Historias debidas* highlights the memory production of central actors in Argentina's dominant memory regime of the 21st-century, while simultaneously questioning the façade of this regime through the inclusion of voices that displace this notion of centrality. While this inclusionary practice is limited by the predominance of Ana Cacopardo's voice, which carefully shapes the production of these testimonial interviews, the program does establish a new viewing community who are confronted with these stories for perhaps the first time. Anne Cubilié and Carl Good describe this potential relationship between testimony and its uses by stating that "Testimony is not inherently progressive or interventionist...We—practitioners, critics, readers (and I would add viewers)—must also always wait to see what testimony does with us: testimony is and must always be capable of displacing and surprising our politics and our ethics" (6).

The political bent of *Historias debidas* is also apparent in its self-tagging as a program that unpacks "memorias" of "compromiso" ("Historias debidas") and through its selection of participants, many of whom are Latin American political activists, icons of cultural resistance, and founders of social justice movements. *Historias debidas*, thus, offers an expansive definition of the political; less associated with institutional politics, it instead finds the political in reactions to the effects of institutionalized politics (Amado

32); it highlights the political quality of that which is made public. For instance, in the show's inaugural season, Claudio Tamburrini, a survivor of the Argentine detention center Mansión Seré and the Argentine musician and activist Liliana Herrero reflect on how the repression of the dictatorship influenced their personal trajectories ("Historias debidas I. Episodio 1. Claudio Tamburrini"; "Historias debidas I. Episodio 3. Liliana Herrero"). These personal narratives that vocalize the horrors of the dictatorship are interspersed with visual projections of the past in the present. Every episode of the program includes old family videos and photos and new footage of these interviewees visiting public and private spaces that are integral to their stories. In the case of Claudio Tamburrini, this takes the form of his return to Mansión Seré, where he orally re-members the ruins of this former *centro clandestino* ("Historias debidas I. Episodio 1. Claudio Tamburrini").

Figure 30: Claudia Tamburrini returns to Mansion Seré ("Historias debidas I. Episodio 1. Claudio Tamburrini").

The composite nature of the show's episodes may work to bolster the authority of the interviewee through the incorporation of new types of evidentiary support; however, this objective organization of the singular testimony also highlights the show's editorial

mediations, allowing one to question how past "truths" are constructed by producers for a televisual audience.

4. Brazil's Testimonial Interviews: TV Brazil's *Resistir é Preciso*

This reliance on multiple voices and archival footage is taken to the extreme in the case of the Brazilian show, *Resistir é Preciso*. An example of hyper-editing, *Resistir é Preciso* thematically and chronologically organizes the testimonies of over 60 journalists, writers, students, and political activists into easily digestible thirty minute episodes that aim to teach viewers about how the Brazilian press resisted the nation's recent military dictatorship. These testimonies are interspersed with 1) the remarks of two presenters who contextualize these edited testimonies within the narrative arch of each episode, 2) the introductory and concluding comments of the show's announcer, Othon Bastos, 3) the images of journal/newspaper covers and 4) informational cards that teach viewers about key moments and/or figures in this story of resistance. *Resistir é Preciso* in its televisual format, thus, borrows from the expository and interactive modes of documentary by gathering and analyzing a wide-variety of information from the project[46]—the gathering process of which is not described within the show—and relying on narrators and actors to draw objective conclusions regarding the subjective experiences inscribed in the piece

[46] As a television show, *Resistir é Preciso* is only one component of a project, of the same name, organized by the Instituto Vladimir Herzog. In its entirety this project includes an online site with access to the 60 recorded video testimonies in their entirety, digital copies of two books published by the project—*As Capas desta história* and *Os Cartazes desta história*, information about the traveling art exhibit hosted by the project from 2013-2014, and also a space for online users to share their own stories about how the press resisted the nation's dictatorship ("Resistir é Preciso").

(Burton 5). An amalgamation of these interrelated components, the television program *Resistir é Preciso: jornais que fizeram história* champions a didactic approach by using this diversity of sources to teach contemporary viewers about Brazil's past of resistance.

The didactic bent of *Resistir é Preciso* aligns with the evolution of Brazil's public television, in particular that of TV Brasil, which broadcast the show's 10 episodes in 2014. Jonas Chagas Lúcio Valente argues that Brazilian public television is marked by its oscillation between two overarching tendencies: "a de coordenar as ações das emissoras educativas estaduais" and "a de manter um aparato próprio centralizado" (Valente iv). Similar to the Argentine case, Brazil's public television is structured in a way that exempts it from much commercial pressure,[47] but remains subject to the needs of the nation's Executive and Legislative branch through vertical institutional control. For example, TV Brasil invites the participation of civil society as part of the station's "Conselho Curador," which discusses the educational, artistic, cultural and informative directions proposed by EBC's Executive Director, as well as the station's proposed programming. However, this participation is limited to this specific institution, which is only one of the six which monitor and direct TV Brazil. A revision of this "Conselho Curador" further highlights these limitations, as many of its members have historically been intellectuals, television professionals, and business leaders. This restriction coupled with the station's limited accessibility outside of the nation's major urban centers of Brasília, São Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro continue to constrain TV Brazil's stipulated efforts to promote "acesso à informação por meio da pluralidade de fontes de produção e distribuição do conteúdo" and

[47] Brazil's public television system is often distinguished from the nation's commercial television networks due in part to its existence as a non-commercial form of communication that "não têm a audiência como obsessão e nem o anunciante como objetivo" (Carmona qtd. in Valente 120).

produce "programação com finalidades educativas, artísticas, culturais, científicas e informativas; promoção da cultural nacional, com estímulo" (Valente 128). A show that calls for continued resistance, while focusing primarily on the direct and indirect censorship carried out both prior to and during Brazil's recent military dictatorship, *Resistir é Preciso* manages to avoid addressing the continued restrictions on TV Brazil in place today. Instead, it checks all the boxes of TV Brazil's content parameters: educational, artistic, cultural, and informative.

5. Political Constraints and Opportunities: Navigating Shifting Memory Regimes

The vertical control over TV Brasil and Canal Encuentro exercised by Argentina's and Brazil's Executive powers presents a series of opportunities for and challenges to the protection of the right to memory articulated by all three testimonial interviews as one of their central thematic objectives. An initial consideration of these opportunities brings forth questions of popularity and recognition. For example, all three shows are dedicated to exploring the processes of memory reconstruction through detailed analysis and in-depth interviews; while memory is a theme that increasingly sells on Argentine and Brazilian television (see chapters 2 and 3), its isolation from the fast-paced action and melodrama of the previously explored miniseries and telenovelas often lowers its rating potential. The structure of public television in Argentina and Brazil thus provides a space for the production and projection of programs that might be excluded by large commercial media conglomerates. As Nicolosí states "la financiación del Estado y la independencia del factor rating (determinante de la supervivencia de la tv privada) favorecen el ingreso en pantalla de temáticas ausentes en la televisión comercial" (44). On a symbolic level, the production

of these three shows by stations that rely to some degree on the State speaks to the shift in each nation's memory regime during the respective Rousseff and Kirchner administrations (see Chapters 2 and 3). Furthermore, their broadcast on public television may be read as an executive recognition of the struggles, abuses, and traumas that continue to affect society.

All of these opportunities, however, must be considered in conjunction with the evolving memory regimes of both nations and their specific framing of *what* memories should be protected and *how* they should be protected. Just as these programs are granted some degree of financial autonomy and freedom from ratings, they operate in a contentious space where they must simultaneously present themselves as shows that intersect with the "emblematic narrative scripts" of these memory regimes (Stern 113).

4.1 Somos Memoria's relative alignment with Kirchernismo

In the Argentine case, this intersection is spatially present, as the production facilities for Canal Encuentro are located in the Espacio para la Memoria y la Promoción de los Derechos Humanos (ex-ESMA)—a memory space championed by the Kirchner administration in 2004 to pay tribute to the human rights abuses committed by the dictatorship. On a more thematic level, both *Somos memoria* and *Historias debidas* further the politics of memory promoted by the Kirchner administration by adopting the protection of memory as their reason for being; Andrew Rajca underscores this linkage in his recent investigation of the *nunca más/mais* rhetoric, stating that this rhetoric, which has become so central to Argentina's and Brazil's memory politics, essentially equates democracy, memory and human rights. It presents "the importance of remembering the atrocities of the

dictatorial past as part of a dedication to justice and human rights in a democratic society guided by a rule of law" (Rajca *Dissensual Subjects* 47).

Furthermore, a temporal parallel concretely exists between the broadcast of these testimonial interviews in the early 2000s and the resurgence of the importance of judicial testimonies during the Kirchner administrations' 2005 reopening of the trials involving kidnapping, murder, and torture committed during the dictatorship.[48] This parallel is articulated by a number of participants in both *Historias debidas* and *Somos memoria.* Eduardo Jozami's testimony in the inaugural episode of *Somos memoria* initiates this trend, when he concludes that:

> Aquí creo que no. No existe esa representación política de la bandera de los derechos humanos. O mejor dicho, no existió hasta el año 2003. Por eso provoca tanto revuelo en el movimiento de los derechos humanos la política de Néstor Kirchner. Porque un movimiento que se había formado al margen del poder...se ve de pronto sorprendido por un gobierno que asume la bandera del movimiento de los derechos humanos. ("Somos Memoria I. Episodio 1. Eduardo Jozami").

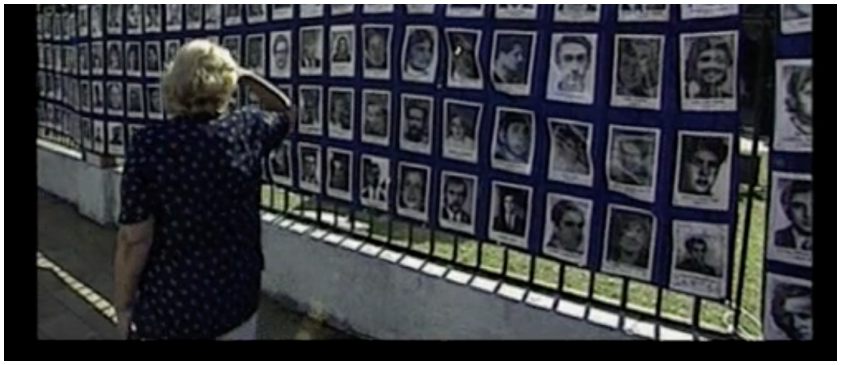
A quote that is immediately followed by a description of the human rights work that Néstor Kirchner undertook, including the nullification of the "leyes de impunidad", it is visually grounded through the projection of emblematic images, including Kirchner's removal of Videla's portrait from the Casa Rosada and photos of the disappeared displayed on the fence of the ex-ESMA. As such, *Somos memoria* crafts a conscious overlap between the

[48] As the CELS yearly report on the state of human rights in Argentina mentions, by the end of 2012, these trials had resulted in approximately 354 sentences and 24 absolutions. These numbers, as they state, is demonstrative of "un verdadero proceso de justicia, con respeto por las debidas garantías, de modo que nadie sea condenado sin pruebas" (Balardini, Alonso and Rocha 67).

actions initiated by Kirchner to honor the memory of victims of the State's human rights violations and the testimonies of these victims, such as Jozami.

Figure 31: The removal of Videla's portrait from the Casa Rosada ("Somos memoria I. Episodio 1. Eduardo Jozami")

Figure 32: Photos of the disappeared displayed on the fence of ESMA ("Somos memoria I. Episodio 1. Eduardo Jozami")



Despite this overlap, the human rights discourse purported by *Somos memoria* retains a degree of independence, in part, through its framing of contemporary human rights

issues as continuations of unresolved violations. A return to Jozami's testimonial interview exemplifies this point.

> No por el hecho de que uno tenga un gobierno con el que esté de acuerdo...eso ha solucionado de la noche a la mañana todas las injusticias sociales que existen en la Argentina…por ejemplo pensemos en el caso de los cárceles hoy...nunca, digamos, puede confundirse la defensa de la política de derechos humanos del gobierno con la preocupación por las violaciones de los derechos humanos. ("Somos memoria I. Episodio 1. Eduardo Jozami").

This quote is punctuated by a visual assertion of the necessary, ongoing work being carried out to address these contemporary human rights violations. For example, the previous quote is spoken in voice-over as a series of photos appear that highlight the ongoing projects being realized within Buenos Aires' Espacio para la Memoria y la Promoción y Defensa de los Derechos Humano and their critical engagement with memory, human rights, justice, and artistic production. This engagement spans across generations—as made evident by the first series of photos that depict an Argentine class visit to EMPDDHH's Centro Cultural—and reaches across mediums—brought to life by the images of musical workshops and photography exhibits organized during Jozami's time as Director of the Centro.

Figure 33: Photos used throughout Jozami's episode of class visits, lectures and photography exhibits at the Centro Cultural Haroldo Conti (Ex-ESMA) ("Somos memoria I. Episodio 1. Eduardo Jozami")

While the focus on spatial and artistic interventions within these images does construct a visual parallel between the Centro's human rights projects and the work carried out by Néstor Kirchner, its targeted inclusion of youth and traditionally de-politicized subjects closely aligns with Jozami's defense of the importance of future human rights challenges and those subjects that fall outside of Kirchner's memory politics.

4.2 Working within the system: Resistir é Preciso

This precarious balance between autonomy and acquiescence with the State's purported memory regime is weighted towards the latter in the case of the Brazilian program, *Resistir é Preciso*. Framed by the network as part of a televisual movement to broadcast previously silenced memories, *Resistir é Preciso* plays into the spectacle of a new national narrative intent on recovering "vozes caladas" and "obras censuradas" in order to teach a new generation about the abuses of the past ("Resistir é Preciso"). In other words, it celebrates testimonies for their ability to operate in an explanatory role by showing what it was like to live through this political transformation. This didactic approach treats the show's gathered testimonies less subjectively. For instance, the show's opening episode welcomes viewers by promising them "uma história que nunca foi contada na televisão…. a trajetória da imprensa alternativa que surgiu em oposição à ditadura militar que vigorou em nosso país durante 20 anos, de 1964-1985" ("Resistir é Preciso-Ep.1 – 'Como tudo começou'"). This advertisement of these testimonial interviews presents them as "una vía de acceso supuestamente directa a las fuentes del pasado" (Baer

51); a depiction that is furthered by the specific temporal focus of this television series, which immediately couches the show's vow to investigate the resistance of the alternative press as a historical investigation of the past. As such, the testimonial interviews that ground this investigation operate as a rather rigid "escenario de memoria" as defined by Claudia Feld. For while they attest to the importance of remembering, they also portend a "truthful" or "authentic" version of the past and attempt to generate "un tránsito entre un pasado que se da por finalizado y un presente que se interpreta como diferente del pasado" (Feld "La televisión ante el pasado" 156). *Resistir é Preciso* thus functions as a digital "escenario de memoria" that predominantly mirrors the political rhetoric of the time by detailing the abuses of the past as part of a historical truth founded on the division between a before and an after.

Resistir é Preciso's specific temporal focus on those abuses committed during the dictatorship coupled with its didactic bent embraces this rigid temporal construction. In the first case, *Resistir é Preciso* shies away from delving into the continued activism of its interviewees, instead creating a more digestible narrative about the rise of the dictatorship, the various outlets of alternative press, the exile of many journalists and their return from exile. The titles of *Resistir é Preciso*'s episodes exemplify this narrative arc: "Como tudo começou," "Começa a ditadura militar: A resistência pela imprensa também…," "Imprensa alternativa, uma leitura obrigatória," "O Regime se fecha como o AI-5. As publicações se multiplicam...no exílio, " "Vou-me embora para...A clandestinidade," "A repressão e a censura fecham o cerco. A resistência dá a volta por cima". Secondly, the program employs two youthful presenters who teach the stories of this past to viewers in the present, using a variety of tools including still images, digital notecards that operate as a historical Cliff

Notes of sorts and testimonial interviews. The latter is subjected to hyper-editing, as these testimonies are spliced into digestible sound bites of 10-30 seconds to fit into the overarching framework provided by the presenters. *Resistir é Preciso,* thus, differs from the freeform testimonial interviews of *Somos memoria*, and the semi-structured testimonial interviews of *Historias debidas* by choosing a more heavily scripted format, which allows for a certain degree of manipulation, as they are "reordenados de acuerdo con criterios ajenos a los del testigo" (Feld "La memoria tiene rating" 82).

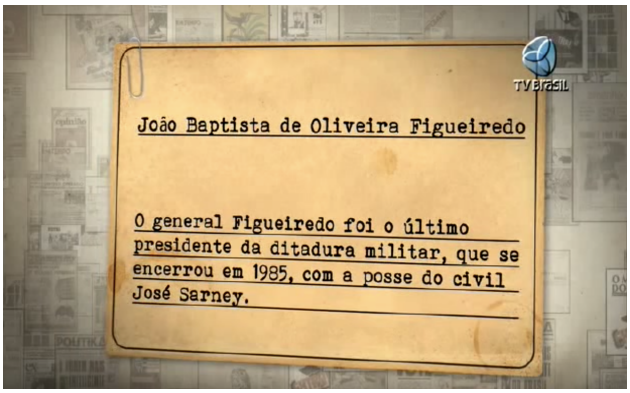


Figure 34: Example of the informative notecards included throughout Resistir é Preciso's episodes ("Resistir é Preciso- Ep. 1- 'Como tudo começou'")

5. Testimonial Interviews as Dynamic Memory Medium

Despite this external control incorporated within *Resistir é Preciso,* the show does align with *Somos memoria* and *Historias debidas,* in its 1) critical reflection on the past and 2) construction of new memory communities tasked with remembering past abuses and denouncing ongoing abuses—two factors that are central to my project's relative categorization of all three shows as dynamic memory mediums. Operating as such, these shows work to protect the right to memory by providing a public stage for memory storytellers to reflect on their pasts and assert their presence as active agents whose past experiences have previously been denied public recognition. For example, many of the

interviewees in these shows are those of political militants whose attempts to tell their stories were initially frustrated by the prior definition of appropriate victims as non-politicized innocent bystanders (Argentina) or their presentation as individuals who benefitted from the Amnesty Law and thus whose desire to communicate their stories was equivalent to *revanchismo* (Brazil). These television shows, thus, opened "una ventana de oportunidad para actores ya concernidos" in an attempt to "potenciar y articular, así acciones que ciertos emprendedores de la memoria desarrollan aisladamente" (Feld "La televisión ante el pasado" 166) Furthermore, their participation in this collective experience of giving testimony provided these interviewees with an opportunity to try and shape the Argentine and Brazilian public agenda. In the case of many of these political militants, as well as certain artists and human rights activists, this takes the form of a re-politicization of the act of memory.

Somos memoria designates a space for this political reflection by beginning each episode with an interviewee's self-definition of who they are. These openings are peppered with phrases that establish the political engagement of the show's participants: "Siempre he sido militante político" ("Somos memoria I. Episodio 1. Eduardo Jozami"); "alguna vez me definieron como luchadora optimista y bueno creo que ésta soy" ("Somos memoria III. Episodio 4. Adriana Lestido") and "Peronista, militante y comprometido con mi pueblo y con Argentina" ("Somos memoria III. Episodio 17. Dante Gullo"). At times contrasted with black-and-white images of their youth, these phrases highlight the tension between who we are born as and who we become. Furthermore, all three programs engage with the political involvement of their interviewees by bringing forward key instances of this political engagement—such as their involvement in student protests, production of protest

art, and dedication to disseminating knowledge about the crimes of the dictatorship—, and how it shaped their trajectories, and in some cases, threatened their existence.

5.1 Productive pauses and the "ritualized repetition" of archival images

Within all three shows, the interviewees' assertions of their past political activism and engagement carries over into the present via their recorded reconstruction of said pasts for a contemporary audience. In the case of the two Argentine shows, *Historias debidas* and *Somos memoria,* they complicate the aforementioned rupture between before/after and past/present so characteristic of political discourse (Ossa 74) instead employing an array of televisual tactics to situate these political stories within a televisual space where the past is intrinsically tied to the present. *Somos memoria* primarily re-purposes archival footage to forge a conscious connection between the past and the present; *Historias debidas* closes each episode with an image-driven memory game; *Resistir é Preciso* enlists a form of reflective questioning.

Every episode of *Somos memoria* relies on archival video footage, newspaper clippings, radio broadcasts, and old family photos. A technique that is extremely common within documentary films, this insertion of archival images contextualizes the events being narrated, while also adding to the fragmentary quality of these interviews. The first of these tasks is made starkly evident through the repetitive use of footage of Videla being sworn

into office. Used as a visual introduction to Argentina's years of dictatorial control, this footage punctuates a variety of testimonial interviews.

Figure 35: Footage of Videla being sworn into office ("Somos memoria IV. Episodio 4. Nora Cortiñas")

In a similar way, footage of the *ronda* of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo ushers in discussions of Argentina's disappeared, and still photographs from both outside and inside of the Escuela Mecánica de la Armada are overlaid on discussions of the torture and prolonged detention that defined Argentina's mass disappearances.

Figure 36: Image of the ronda of the Plaza de Mayo used throughout Somos memoria ("Somos memoria IV. Episodio 4. Nora Cortiñas")

The frequent usage of select images, such as these, within various *Somos memoria* episodes plays with Jelin's concept of "repetición ritualizada" (*State Repression* 86), which

emphasizes the isolating threat of a repetitive retelling of past stories that do not connect with new communities, and thus close off creative, open dialogue with new generations. Employed by Feld in her study of Argentine television, this concept can also be applied to the images inserted in testimonial interviews, which are presented "como si ayudaran a traer al presente marcas y sensaciones que hubieran quedado intactos a lo largo de tres décadas" (*Aquellos ojos* 104). While this use of images as closed-off, archival evidence is an ever-present pitfall for testimonial interviews, which *Somos memoria* does not entirely sidestep, the show does manage to avoid some of the effects of this "repetición ritualizada" by inviting new listeners to hear these testimonies and by highlighting the interactive aspect of images as emblems (*State Repression* 86). These emblems, in turn, allow for a certain re-signification of past events by encouraging identification between diverse communities and generations. This identification occurs in part due to the frequent use of still photographs, in particular those taken from family photo albums, the emblematic *fotos de carnet* of the disappeared, and the slightly blurry images of *ex-centros clandestinos.* These still images rupture the moving images that revolve around the seated figure of the interview. A rupture that provides a reflexive pause, it urges viewers to consider the discontinuities, gaps and psychological work attached to these emblematic images. Miguel Mesquita Duarte expands on this role of still images in audiovisual testimonies, arguing that "a experiência da imagem produz a experiência de uma *tempo outro* (...) A imagem fixa e o plano estático adquirem...um valor de interrupção e de fragmento—redutíveis à sua consideração como mero recurso técnico e formal, re-equacionando a estrutura do filme e relacionando o espectador com um tempo essencialmente psíquico" (188). This moment of pause, in effect, allows one to think through and establish a sense of relationality with

the text; thus, one must not only be willing to hear this story for it to become a testimony, but also see these images.

A return to the aforementioned still images of the ESMA (Escuela Mecánica de la Armada) exemplifies this sense of identification. Miriam Lewin's testimonial interview broadcast in Season 2 of *Somos memoria* is spliced with still photographs taken from inside

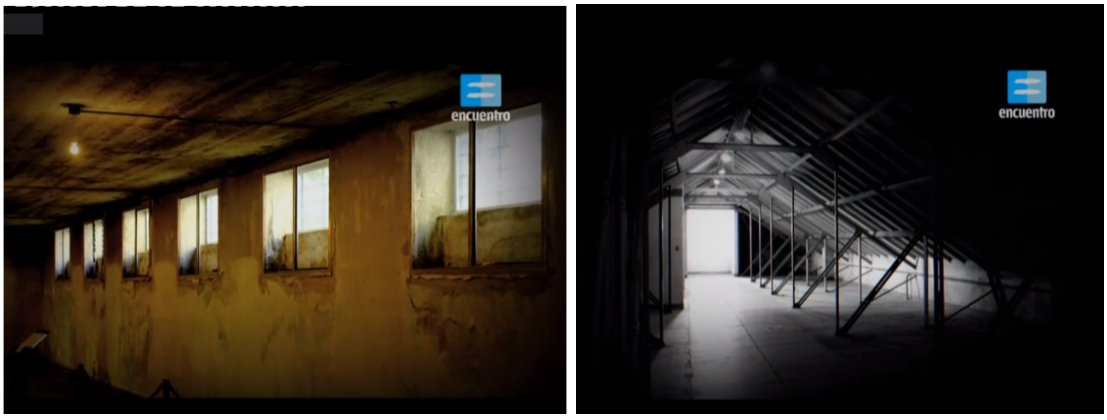


Figure 37: Two of the images of the ESMA that punctuate Lewin's testimony ("Somos memoria II. Episodio. 4. Miriam Lewin")

the ESMA. As she describes her time there, viewers are faced with a sepia-toned image of the *capucha* where she was held and the basement where she was tortured ("Somos memoria II. Episodio 4. Miriam Lewin"). These stark images allow viewers to re-imagine these spaces, filling them with Lewin's memories, but also with their own; as within these still images, viewers are confronted with a pause; a parenthetical silence that interrupts the advancement of the moving image and holds open the "possibility of imagining" the centro clandestino as an "unimaginable place" (Slwinski 403).

5.3 Visual reflections: Los juegos de foto

While archival footage, family photos, and re-enactments can also be found in *Historias debidas*, it is the show's *juegos de foto* that most clearly display its temporal

continuity. Every episode ends with the show's interviewer, Ana Cacopardo, displaying a photograph from the interviewee's youth. After gazing upon this photo, the interviewee is prompted by Cacopardo to try and reflect on it from within the present. She asks them to consider, "si pudiera tener un diálogo imaginario con esta joven que le diría?" and "¿qué pasaría en este diálogo si esta joven pudiera decirte algo hoy?" In this moment, it is not just the speaker who must reflect on the inherent overlap between these temporalities, but the viewers themselves. Invited into this self-reflection through a series of close-up shots that capture the minute facial expressions of Cacopardo and the interviewee, viewers experience these *juegos de foto* as both a continuation of the series' reliance on family photos as memory triggers and as a narrative fracture that is punctuated by careful pauses and prolonged silences. In this first role, viewer identification can be fostered by the relative conventionality and familiarity of family photos. As such, these photos have the potential to expand the circle of post-memory by connecting those who personally experienced an event with those who did not (Hirsch 106). It is in its second role, however, when viewers are exposed to the persistent inability to process and/or verbalize certain images/sentiments from one's past that *Historias debidas* further opens up a space for the possibility of understanding and identification for future generations—as they insert their own uncertainties, political dilemmas, personal stories, and sometimes "silences" into the narrative of these shows. As one viewer states, "Vi el programa y no tengo palabras para expresar lo que me produce Vanesa (la entrevistada--Vanesa Orieta) y su fuerza. Somos tantos lxs que vemos la policía aprieta a nuestrxs pibxs en los barrios para que laburen para ellos...Me partió el corazón...Toda la fuerza de muchxs militantxs sociales tenés..." (White).

5.3 Narrative reflections: ¿Valeu a pena?

Resistir é Preciso begins to foster a connection between the past and present that relies on a more scripted line of questioning. Less open-ended, but still reflective in nature, this line of questioning is straightforward. Within those select few testimonial interviews included in the show's episode, interviewees are asked, "Valeu a pena resistir à ditadura através de jornais, revistas, panfletos?" ("Resistir é Preciso- Ep. 10 – 'A resistência dá a volta por cima'"). In other words, they are presented with the opportunity to speak from the present as to whether their militancy and resistance, and in some cases, consequent exile and/or torture, was worth it. The responses are varied, with many noting their errors and failures. "Valeu a pena...mas aquele sonho dum Brasil mais justo...não vejo" ("Resistir é Preciso- Ep. 10 – 'A resistência dá a volta por cima'"); and yet, all recognize the importance of their resistance to their personal development: "Eu acho que sou um privilegiado. Eu devia morrer… eu sobrevivi. Eu sobrevivi lutando. Eu acho que isso me dá uma dimensão como pessoa como ser humano que me faz um homem pleno" ("Resistir é Preciso- Ep. 10 – 'A resistência dá a volta por cima'"); "Me transformou em outra pessoa. Em uma pessoa melhor do que eu era" ("Resistir é Preciso- Ep. 10 – 'A resistência dá a volta por cima'"). It is in these closing reflections that the protagonists of this series expose the rawest emotions marked by silences, hesitation and a haunting sense of disappointment. However, it is also these emotions, which provide a certain degree of relatability and contemporary relevance to a show that's rigid organization of historical facts and commitment to teaching viewers about past truths often builds a temporal barrier between the events of the past and the contemporary struggles of the present.

6. Audiovisual Intergenerational Engagement

The variety of tactics employed by *Resistir é Preciso*, *Somos memoria,* and *Historias debidas* to bring the past and present into dialogue with one another is further complemented by their visual and narrative inclusion of younger generations and pressing human rights abuses. First, the visual style adopted throughout *Somos memoria* and *Resistir é Preciso* invites the audience into the testimonies by situating them as active listeners. This positionality is virtually constructed through the use of straight-on camera angles during the entirety of *Somos memoria* and within *Resistir é Preciso'*s testimonial sections. This technique, where the camera is placed directly facing the interviewees, thus privileges the televisual spectator, allowing them to sit across from the interviewee, hear their story, and craft a visual dialogue with them (Bueno and Foglia 453). María Florencia Basso asserts the import of this relationship, arguing that types of esthetic productions, such as these, "que generan un diálogo afectivo/intelectual con el espectador—son maneras de comunicar estas vivencias particulares, de elaborar los traumas de los hijos, y de establecer lazos afiliativos con la comunidad en general" (Basso). This positionality is further enhanced in *Somos memoria* through the erasure of the questions, prompt and comments normally associated with an interview process; it is this narrative absence that inspires a more intimate relationship between spectator and interviewee.

Testimonial interviews rely on the development of these intimate relationships, as their very form and purpose requires the active participation of viewers (Reyes and Rodríguez 527); for it is not merely the presence of imagined viewers that aids in the recognition of stories of trauma and victimization, but rather their critical engagement with

these stories (qtd. in Chare 170) This critical engagement necessarily brings up questions of memory as a re-presentation of the past that may require a televisual expression to not only make this past present, but to engage viewers in a re-consideration of the consequences of the past in the present (Amado 111). In this way, these shows can also be read as bearers of televisual memory, as their individual televisual representations of an event, image etc. not only frames the way these stories are told and shown, but also directly informs the viewer's interpretations of these interviews and the events that are recounted (Holdsworth 130) Every image, statement, silence etc. included in these shows has the potential to become a component of a viewer's prosthetic memory of the past. One needs only to turn to the comments section on Canal Encuentro's Facebook page to see this process in action.

Viewers use this space to comment on specific episodes of shows, such as *Somos memoria*, reflecting on how the words and images from these programs inform their interpretations of the past and present. One viewer responds to an episode dedicated to Nora Cortiñas, writing "Cuando se ponga todo turbio en la lucha, recordá las palabras con las que siempre cierra Nora Cortiñas: 30 mil compañeros desaparecidos, presentes! Hasta la victoria siempre! VENCEREMOS!" (Romi). Others directly include themselves within these stories, as *Somos memoria* invites them to do: "Una gran alegría, en esta historia llena de tristezas. Nuestra historia" (Canevari). A sense of complicity is crafted through these interviews when viewers are exposed to experiences that while distant from their own, foster a shared frustration in the limits of representation and find a shared humanity in the points of overlap, oftentimes emotional, between the marginalized struggles of the past and terrible events of today.

7. Current Human Rights Abuses as Extensions of the Past

Historias debidas's commitment to including a diversity of voices exemplifies this critical re-reading of current human rights abuses through the lens of past abuses. The show intersperses episodes that feature activists who fight against human trafficking and police violence with those who suffered at the hands of Argentina's civic-military dictatorship, such as members of the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo and H.I.J.O.S. This blending of unique, but fundamentally interconnected voices highlights a continued pattern of abuses in Argentina. For example, disappearances—a defining crime of the country's dictatorship—are upheld by *Historias debidas* as a crime that cannot be relegated to this pre-transition time period, but must rather be understood as a central part of its democracy.[49] By featuring the mothers of those who have disappeared during the 21st century, including Susana Trimarco and Sabina Sotelo, the program builds bridges between the famous rondas of the Madres and journeys of these newly grieving mothers ("Historias debidas V. Episodio 13. Susana Trimarco"; "Historias debidas II. Episodio 1. Sabina Sotelo"; Cinícola "La entrevista" 9). Furthermore, it engages television viewers as a virtual community tasked with reflecting on these intersections/overlaps. For example, the group Centro de

[49] The continued struggles for the protection of civil rights, particularly the rights of Afro-Brazilians and indigenous communities in both Brazil and Argentina, is something that was far from resolved during the Kirchner and Rouseff administrations. Thus, despite the relative alignment between the demands of certain human rights groups and these two national administrations, this paper does not intend to present these alignment as a final solution. Paula Simón Porolli articulates this point in the Argentine case, stating, "lo cierto es que muchas de esas asociaciones de Derechos Humanos y otros movimientos vinculantes que bregan por la garantía de los derechos civiles en democracia….mantienen en la actualidad intensas luchas por la reparación, la recuperación de la memoria y la reivindicación de las víctimas adoptando posiciones no siempre concordantes con dicho gobierno" (586).

Estudiantes ISFD 109 reflects on the testimony of Chicha Mariani included in the most recent season of *Historias debidas* and its present relevance by writing, "Desde nuestro lugar seguiremos defendiendo su legado, el Derecho a la identidad y encontraremos a los nietxs que aún faltan. Como decía Chicha: 'Aunque el mundo se termine mañana, yo plantaré mi manzano.' ¿Y vos ya plantaste tu manzano?"

The continued urgency of this activism is also fostered in *Resistir é Preciso.* While this show, as well as *Somos memoria*, interviews a preponderance of participants whose activism blossomed during the nation's recent dictatorship, *Resistir é Preciso* continues to challenge its viewers to actively combat all forms of oppression. A challenge found not only in the show's title, it also is repeated at the final moment of every episode when after dedicating 30 minutes to exploring the long history of censorship imposed on Brazil's alternative press, all audience members are repetitively told "é preciso resistir sempre" ("Resistir é Preciso- Ep.1- 'Como tudo começou'").

8. Testimonial Interviews: Addressing Transitional Justice's End Goals

8.1 The Hypersubjective within the Collective

The polyphony of voices found within this overarching imperative to remember to resist underlines the hypersubjective nature of these testimonial interviews, while also providing a more malleable space for the relative restoration of dignity to those affected by each nation's respective dictatorship. The amplification of the voices of those persons both directly and indirectly victimized during these dictatorial regimes is one of the central objectives of transitional justice processes. In the case of these testimonial interviews, these on-screen representations have the potential to not only allow for one to reclaim that

identity so meticulously erased by these regimes, but also to re-assert oneself as a sociopolitical agent, capable of retelling, repeating and working through one's trauma in a public space. As Patricia Hill Collins states on this issue, "naming oneself and defining ideas that count as truth are empowering acts. For those damaged by years of silencing, [testifying] speaks to the significance of self-definition in healing from oppression" (qtd. in Miller 270). Thus, the choice of the Argentine programs, *Somos memoria* and *Historias debidas* to dedicate entire episodes to a singular narrative is of seminal importance; for it recognizes the uniqueness of each individual story by allowing each interviewee to act as both protagonist and interpreter of their story (Bueno y Foglia 451).

Somos memoria also elevates the centrality of each individual through its scenic portrayal of each interviewee as a singular "yo" within the collective "somos." For example, simple shots, the absence of all background color and the elimination of the interviewers' voice, all work together to highlight each interviewee's singularity. This singularity is further expanded on by encouraging interviewees to perform their life stories, showcasing those moments, decisions and emotions frequently excluded from judicial testimony's temporal limitations and grounding in events (Forcinito *Los umbrales* 134). This uniqueness, however, is contained within this community of interviewees through the placement of each interviewee in front of the same background, in the same chair and next to the same table, as they tell their story. Thus, while these individuals each imbue their narratives with a unique affirmation of self, they also are given a place within the larger national memory collective that historically had excluded and/or molded these subjects to fit national needs.

Within these three testimonial interviews, the types of difference that most commonly allow for this "affirmation of the individual self in a collective mode" (Beverley 16), include 1) a recognition of the active, thinking body from within a collective and 2) variations in ways of telling. For example, one of the most frequent viewer criticisms launched at televised testimonial interviews is their tendency to overlook the errors committed by self-identified political militants; for this move hides the heterogeneity of this political activism in favor of a democratic "epic of resistance" (Richard *The Insubordination of Signs* 4) that operates as a "highly idealized and celebratory narrative of challenges to the military regimes by armed militant groups, student movements, labor unions, and political parties" (Rajca *Dissensual Subjects* 34). However, the protagonists of these shows directly address these errors and the discordant opinions from within these movements are directly addressed by many of the show's protagonists. This point is articulated in the show's fourth episode when a militant journalist describes "como eram delicadas as relações entre as tendências de esquerda naqueles primeiros momentos da democratização" and highlighting the internal disagreements between activists that led to the formation of new journals associated with burgeoning political groups ("Resistir é Preciso – Ep. 1- 'Como tudo começou'). Statements, such as these, do not only fracture the homogenized cohesive collective, but also recognize these interviewees as articulate individuals with differing ideological goals.

The ways in which these experiences are articulated also differs from episode to episode and program to program, as illustrated by the lighter tone adopted by many of the interviewees within *Resistir é Preciso*. The show is relatively unique in its use of humor to lighten moments of uncertainty, such as during experiences of exile and detention. One key

example of this is the testimony of Aguinaldo Silva, famous for starting the alternative queer journal, *Lampião*. Silva describes his detention at Brazil's Ilha das Flores in the following manner:

> Eu cheguei a Ilha das Flores e nunca vi nada tão parecido com a chegada de alguém num campo de concentração. Pareceu um filme sobre nazismo e aconteceu as grandes ironias de minha vida. Eles me levaram para uma cela e me jogaram lá sozinho. Fiquei lá. E ali de madrugada de manhã, eu escutei que vem alguém varrendo assim no corredor devagarinho, devagarinho... E a cela só tinha uma abertura. Foi à abertura e vi que era uma moça porque eles tinham me jogado na ala das mulheres (begins to laugh). ("Resistir é Preciso- Ep. 10 –'A resistência dá a volta por cima'")

Moments, such as this, highlight memory's dynamism. The ability to find humor in the moments of extreme desperation opens up new ways of experiencing the truth of how a society remembers. A tone that is commonly found in Brazilian testimonies, it underscores how the nation's political militants often employed humor as a way of making fun of officers of the military dictatorship for their relative incompetence. *Resistir é Preciso*, thus, offers a different form of engagement with these limit experiences. It highlights how the austere, ultra-ethical engagement, initially implemented to imbue a testimony with credibility, is not the only way of understanding the nuances of these traumatic situations.

The use of humor is a tool that reifies the intelligent agency of those whose bodies have been used as evidence of abuse; it exemplifies a turn away from the use of testimonial figures as suffering bodies to thinking bodies, and by doing so, affirms the "capacity to think" and act of these interviewees (Forcinito "La voz visible" 531, 536). The 2017

Historias debidas episode that follows the trajectories of two activist artists—the Argentine Mariana Arruti and the Guatemalan Rebeca Lane—highlights these characteristics. Both drawn to different forms of artistic activism—film and rap—due to the loss of their fathers, Mariana and Rebeca present themselves as creative doers who doggedly interrogate their own life stories and problematize the edification of accepted truths by inserting their own familial narratives into the national scripts of who constitutes a victim that deserves remembering. For example, Mariana Arruti dedicates a large portion of her episode to a description of her new semi-fictional film, *El padre*. When asked to describe the process leading to its creation, she emphasizes her desire to learn more about her father *beyond* his political activism. "Creo que la gran pregunta era ¿quién había sido mi papá? Después hubo otras preguntas. ¿Quién había sido por su compromiso político? ¿Cómo había sido él como padre? ¿Cómo había sido él como compañero? ¿Cómo esta familia y este entorno familiar pudieron ensombrecer todo?" ("Historias debidas VIII. Episodio 6. Marian Arruti). Furthermore, Mariana emphasizes how her movie discusses the silences that engender even more profound silence; a theme that is not limited to discussion of the nation's recent dictatorship, but rather open to interpretations of the "unsaid" by contemporary viewers and their intra-familial struggles.

> Creo que nuestra familia y muchas familias están atravesadas por eso, por estas cuestiones de lo que no se dice no? Por miradas muy distintas al interior de la familia, por disputas políticas, por reproches, por culpas, por una cantidad enorme de sentimientos y de sensaciones. Que me parece que no es fácil tampoco ponerlas afuera no? Son cosas que terminan, digamos, reservadas para el orden doméstico

> para las historias intrafamiliares pero a mí me parece que de estas historias estamos todos atravesados. (“Historias debidas VIII. Episodio 6. Mariana Arruti”)

Through reflections, such as this, other protagonists of *Historias debidas* utilize their questions, voices and stories to complicate the overarching homogenizing force of Argentina’s Kirchner-backed memory regime that was itself predicated on the easy classification of those affected by the dictatorship as either democratic heroes and/or innocent victims, as well as the celebration of remembering as akin to addressing human rights abuses (Rajca *Dissensual Subjects* 57).

8.2 Televised Testimonies: Testimonial Interviews and Judicial Testimonies

The particularities of these interviews deepen our understanding of the types of stories that remain open, despite, and perhaps as a result of, the institutional transitional justice process (not)implemented in Argentina and Brazil. Considered a break-through in transitional justice processes, the 1985 Argentine Juicio a las Juntas had a tense relationship with television. In order to ethically represent the judicial testimonies fundamental to these trials, the Juicio was not broadcast live. Instead, snippets of the testimonies were included in soundless daily news summaries (Zylberman 718). This dependence on the nightly news to summarize and disseminate judicial testimonies continued into the early 21st century with the civil trials against those associated with Argentina’s recent dictatorship. This leads Lior Zylberman to conclude that “con excepción de flashes informativos en la TV Pública, estos (judicial testimonies) no han tenido lugar en las pantallas nacionales” (718). This lack of television coverage is even more extreme in the Brazilian case given the lack of judicial trials and hence judicial testimonies to cover. Hence, the appearance of these testimonial

interviews on both Brazilian and Argentine public television provides not only a new form of audiovisual access to these life stories previously inaccessible to the general populace, but through this form has the potential to expose contemporary viewers to a more complete picture of these interviewees outside of their role as judicial proof, as in the Argentine case, or as historical evidence, as in the Brazilian case. Cubilié and Good begin to unpack the benefits of looking beyond testimonies as synonymous with these roles by asserting that, "when we demand, juridically, historically or theoretically, that the body physically perform its difference merely as a wound rather than as a human being—yet another injustice of dehumanization is enacted" (10). These testimonial interviews, thus, must be celebrated for the varying degrees to which they restore this humanity to the process of memory-making, bringing forward the impossibilities of representation and trying to communicate these impossibilities to a younger generation affected by these continuing abuses and faced with new ones.

9. The Transitional Justice Effects of Limited Participatory Engagement

This need for continued activism brings up a final quandary regarding the potential activism and/or engagement inspired by these shows. Throughout this chapter, I have highlighted the intersecting ways in which all three shows operate as forms of cultural transitional justice; they restore dignity to victims by amplifying their voices; they further recognize these wrongdoings by broadcasting these stories on state-funded television stations; and finally they communicate the duty to remember and denounce by providing personal stories that ring true to a collective and continued struggle for the protection of human rights. However, despite this potential, these shows have fostered relatively few

comments on online forums and inspired almost no digital re-mixing.[50] This lack of measurable participatory online engagement contrasts starkly with the frequent user made videos and the extensive comment sections associated with the previously explored Argentine and Brazilian miniseries and telenovelas.

In part, this faltering participatory engagement may be a result of the lack of interactive digital resources provided by Canal Encuentro and the Instituto Vladimir Herzog as the organizers of these television programs. Neither organization provides an online discussion forum or a comments section attached to these shows. However, this tentative conclusion regarding online participation may itself be biased by this project's decision to use these online resources as a tool for measurement. In other words, user engagement with alternative pathways for participation—such as art installations and online books in the case of *Resistir é Preciso*—are not included in this analysis due to this project's digital focus and the large infusion of resources required to organize focus groups and audience interviews. Nevertheless, a further investigation of the digital resources provided by each show does put into stark relief the limited participatory engagement with these shows, and raises a series of new questions as how this affects the testimonial interviews existence as a medium that requires active reception.

In the Argentine case, Canal Encuentro's Facebook page and Twitter account dedicate numerous posts to advertising *Somos memoria* and *Historias debidas*; they provide online access to full episodes, promos and production footage. While these platforms inspire more comments and shares than the organization's website or YouTube

[50] Digital re-mixing is a form of audience engagement where viewers edit their own digital videos from existing footage taken from third-party shows, particularly television programs. These user-made videos are often posted on social media sites, including personal YouTube channels.

channel, they too show relatively low levels of participatory engagement. This difference is made evident in Canal Encuentro and TV Brasil's number of Twitter followers: 244,000 and 214,000. This is a stark contrast to Telefé's 3.11 million followers and Globo's 11.5 million followers, and as such, highlights not only the large viewership gaps between Argentine and Brazilian public television and their private counterparts, but also presents a final question regarding these shows relative efficacy as cultural transitional justice mechanisms. For while this low-level of participatory engagement does not directly translate to equally low levels of emotional engagement with these shows nor does it negate these shows' internal restoration of dignity, recognition of trauma, celebration of memory and presentation of contemporary abuses, it does construct a barrier to the "active agency of individuals and publics" necessary for these programs to share these responsibilities with diverse communities, and by doing so, may narrow those intra- and inter-generational pathways necessary to allow for continued human rights activism (Rothberg 9).

Conclusion

In recent years, a series of questions aimed at exploring how nations come to terms with past mass atrocities have inspired an upswing in theoretical investigations of why these atrocities occur and what should be done with these pasts (e.g. Sikkink; Hayner), as well as an increase in the creation of practical toolkits for the implementation of best practices in the wake of these events. However, the exclusion of mass media as a factor in both these theoretical and practical developments raises a new set of inquiries about the role of mass culture practices in remembering, accounting for and reconciling with these mass atrocities.

This project begins to address this gap in scholarship by laying the groundwork for a reconsideration of transitional justice in its cultural dimension. As such, this project investigates 1) the historical relationship between television and the State in the construction of memory regimes, and 2) the potential of 21st-century telenovelas, miniseries and testimonial interviews to act as dynamic memory mediums that reframe how we remember mass atrocities, question what truth(s) are constructed around these pasts, and provide a complementary space for performing, accounting for, and in some cases, repairing the trauma associated with these pasts.

In the end, I contend that, in the Argentine and Brazilian cases, television programs have the potential to act as malleable discursive spaces that question the hegemonic memory regimes and complicate the normative truths put in place by the State, in part, through their implementation of normative legal/judicial transitional justice mechanisms. To varying degrees, these shows function as dynamic memory mediums that simultaneously promote memory as "memory entrepreneurs," profit from memory, frame

what truths should be remembered, and digitally transmit memory. Specifically, this project shows that these programs perform two of the central objectives associated with the legal/judicial transitional justice mechanisms—the protection of truth and memory—, while providing new avenues for advocacy by embracing multiple truths and allowing for the expression of memory's ambiguity. Thus, this project maintains that moving televised images have the potential to operate as a more accessible form of transitional justice that not only translates judicial arguments to the mass populace, but also provides alternative spaces for the re-definition of justice and the performance of multilayered activism. Through its visual depiction and fictionalization of the trauma, television stages those realities that resist verbal narration and operates as a form of symbolic reparations that restores dignity to victims, develops a more inclusive narrative of the past and protects the right to memory.

While it would be all too easy to end on this note, the massive sociopolitical changes that have occurred in Argentina and Brazil since the broadcast of many of the television productions studied in this project deserve consideration. When this project was first conceptualized in early 2015, the Presidency of Argentina and Brazil had each been controlled by a single political party for 12 years, with the Argentine Partido Justicialista (PJ) holding the Executive Office under Néstor Kirchner (2003-2007) and Cristina Kirchner (2007-2015) and the Brazilian Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT) in this position under Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003-2010) and Dilma Rousseff (2010-2015). The political alignment of these administrations with key goals of each nation's human rights movement (see Chapters 3, 4, 5) allows for my cautious re-definition of each nation's current memory regime as one of democratic development through the ideals of truth,

justice, and memory as interpreted by national human rights rhetoric. Furthermore, the policies of these administrations inform many of my arguments on the ways in which the previously explored telenovelas, miniseries, and testimonial interviews align and or depart from these memory regimes and the transitional justice mechanisms associated with them.

However, as 2015 came to a close, we saw the PJ lose control of the Executive, as Mauricio Macri from the Propuesta Republicana Party (PRO)/Cambiemos coalition was sworn in as the Argentine President. Brazil found itself in the middle of the Petrobras corruption scandal and subsequent Lava Jato, and Dilma Rousseff was in impeachment proceedings. Skip forward to 2018: Macri is facing a re-election campaign as Argentina's economy struggles and Brazil elected Jair Bolsonaro (PSL- Partido Social Liberal), a politician who has been called a dictatorship denier. For instance, Bolsonaro went so far as to dedicate his 2016 impeachment vote of Dilma Rousseff to Coronel Brilhante Ustra, the man who during the military dictatorship led DOI-Codi, the organization that held and tortured Rousseff during her militancy (in its former state as São Paulo's OBAN). As Bolsonaro stated, "Pela memória do coronel Carlos Alberto Brilhante Ustra, o pavor de Dilma Rousseff." (AFP). These sociopolitical changes force us to reconsider these nation's evolving memory politics and how these politics influence these nation's status as democracies that have successfully met the central objectives of transitional justice processes—accountability, justice, reconciliation, truth, and memory.

In Argentina, one of the most cited threats to justice and memory was the polemical "fallo Muiña". The subject of massive protests spearheaded by numerous national human rights organizations—including CELS, las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora, SERPAJ, H.I.J.O.S and the Asamblea Permanente por los Derechos Humanos--, the "fallo

Muiña" refers to the 2017 case when the Supreme Court decided that in accordance with Ley 24.390 (since repealed) and the concept of applying to one "the most favorable law" in the sentencing of their cases, that time in prison served before conviction could count double towards a final sentence. Never before applied to crimes deemed crimes against humanity, this ruling opened the door to a flood of appeals that would benefit the approximately 350 sentenced former military officers (Goñi; Zaldua et al.). Responding to the unpopularity of this decision and the massive protests in its wake, Congress passed a law that nullified this judicial interpretation. This pushback from civil society highlights, to a certain degree, an intense commitment to, and relative normalization of, truth, justice, and memory, as something that may not be so easily overturned by new political powers. However, this commitment, is continuously confronted with growing challenges, such as Macri's recent militarization of the nation's domestic security (CELS; ODH; Pardo) and his decision to allow those condemned for crimes against humanity who are over the age of 70 to serve their sentence under house arrest (Gilbert).

Mano dura security policies also defined former Brazilian President Michel Temer's tenure in office, as did the subsession of the nation's Ministry of Human Rights under the control of the Ministry of Justice (Uribe). The effects of this restructuring on the nation's memory projects have been grave. For example, immediately following Temer's inauguration, 7 of the advisers of Brazil's Amnesty Commission were removed from their positions, and a lack of financial governmental support has impacted the work of Commissão de Mortos e Desaparecidos, leading to the suspension of the digitization of archives about the dictatorship. These moves were met with an increase in state efforts to uphold the initiatives began by Rousseff and recommended by the national and various

state truth commissions, including the training of municipal professor in the "Kit Direito à Memória e à Verdade." (Glock). This shift from the federal organization of these efforts to the regional level highlights the existing safeguards that may prevent a return to the dictatorship of the past. Nevertheless, with the recent inauguration of Jair Bolsonaro and his polemical negation of the dictatorship[51] and controversial statements on torture[52], these safeguards will be put to the test.

These changes in political opportunities for and support of some of the memory projects initiated in Argentina and Brazil during the early 21st century open up new lines of inquiry into the aforementioned boom in television productions that directly address these nation's dictatorial pasts. In other words, how has the production, content, and reception of programs, such as these, engaged with these political shifts? What does this mean for the future of televisual productions and their simultaneous independence and interaction with these new memory politics and the relative failures of these modern democracies? The sustained production of programs that continue to shine a light on these atrocities—*Os Dias Eram Assim* (Brazil, 2017), *Cuéntame cómo pasó* (Argentina, 2017)—and contemporary human rights issues—*Cien dias para enamorarse* (Argentina, 2017), inspire these further inquiries, while grounding my tentative hypothesis that the memory profits gained in the early 21st century will not be so easily lost by this political back-peddling.

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[51] "O povo brasileiro não sabe o que é ditadura aqui ainda" (Bolsanaro in a conversation with Rio de Janeiro journalists) (Caleiro).

[52] One of these statements is, "O erro foi torturar e não matar." Questioned about this phrase on multiple occasions, he recently defended it in an interview with Marina Mantega in July of 2018 (Pan).

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