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Memorializing in Movement: Chilean Sites of Memory as Spaces of Activism and Imagination[1]

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In 2010, Chile's Museum of Memory and Human Rights opened its doors. It is an official museum of the state, established by Chile's then outgoing center-left president Michele Bachelet. The Museum focuses on the Chilean dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet—the brutal 1973 military attack on the presidential palace, the death of president Salvador Allende, the massive repression in the early period, and the institutionalization of the dictatorship and the lasting transformation of society over seventeen years of civil-military rule.

Over the several years since the opening of the Museum, visitors have increased astronomically, to an average of approximately 10,000-15,000 a month, and the kinds of visitors have moved from what were at first largely national and foreign human rights and leftist activists, to the now massive numbers of visitors of all kinds,

[1] Editor's note: Katherine Hite gave a talk on this topic on November 18th, 2018 to celebrate *A Contracorriente*'s 15th anniversary.

primarily Chilean youth and Chilean families, particularly from working and lower-middle-class neighborhoods near the museum.[2] The Museo is one of the most visited in the country, with a total number of visitors in 2017 of 167,000.[3]

From time to time the Museo is also the locus for political attack, predominantly from the Chilean right, which denounces the Museum's failure to include in its official narrative more detail of the pre-1973 military coup events that they claim led to the necessity of the coup. Most recently, an attack on the Museum surfaced from Chile's then newly appointed Minister of Culture, Mauricio Rojas. The public learned that in Rojas's co-authored 2015 book, *Diálogos conversos*, he had strongly disparaged the Museum. He wrote: "The Museum of Memory is a staged spectacle whose purpose, which without a doubt it accomplishes, is to hit the spectators, to leave them aghast, to impede their reason, it's a manipulation of history. It's a shameful and false account of a national tragedy that affected so many of us harshly and directly."[4]

Rojas's nasty assertions about the Museum triggered a mass outcry, championed by well-known Chilean writers, actors, and artists and joined by civil society across generations and social class. It forced the minister's resignation. At the end of the heady week that marked the outcry and Rojas's exit, thousands of Chileans gathered for a concert in defense of the Museum, staged in the outdoor amphitheater that frames the Museo's entrance (Figure 1). In these years since the Museum's opening, the site has gained the respect and support of a broad swath of the Chilean public imagination, it is embraced and claimed as Chile's own.

This is not to say that Chilean memories of the coup and the dictatorship are undivided. Opposing political beliefs and dispositions clearly influence the ways the Chilean citizenry views the atrocious past. Nevertheless, we argue that the defense of the Museum speaks to the power of *memory as possibility*, as foundational to ways collectivities understand the genealogies of violence and injustice in order to imagine otherwise. Moreover, memorial site protagonists have successfully challenged and

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[2] *Estudio de audiencias 2016*. Departamento de Audiencias, Área de Educación y Audiencias (Santiago: Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos, 2017), 19.

[3] *Estudio de audiencias 2017*. Departamento de Audiencias, Área de Educación y Audiencias (Santiago: Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos, 2018). https://ww3.museodelamemoria.cl/publicaciones/estudio-de-audiencias-2017/.

[4] "Más que un museo (…) se trata de un montaje, cuyo propósito, que sin duda logra, es impactar al espectador, dejarlo atónito, impedirle razonar (…). Es un uso desvergonzado y mentiroso de una tragedia nacional que a tantos nos tocó tan dura y directamente". Cited in María José Ahumada y Francisco Artaza, "La caída de Mauricio Rojas en tres actos," *Diario La Tercera*, August 18, 2018. https://www.latercera.com/reportajes/noticia/la-caida-mauricio-rojas-tres-actos/285736/#

accessed state resources toward representation and education regarding the violence of the past and toward alternative ways of imagining justice and human rights in the present and future.

Figure 1: Concert in solidarity at the Museum of Memory and Human Rights, August 2018. Source: Sindicato del Museo de la Memoria, número 1.

As an official site, the Chilean Museum of Memory and Human Rights is in fact quite traditional in its museological strategies and representations of the dictatorial past, borrowing usefully from models that include Holocaust museums around the world, the Apartheid Museum of Johannesburg, South Africa, and others. In contrast, there are many Chilean memory sites that are more organic and grassroots-inspired, sites of memory activism toward political and social transformation in the here and now. Sites of memory, however fitfully, open the possibilities for meaningful dialogue and connection regarding the legacies of state-sponsored political repression, racism and imperialism, and many memorial spaces also integrate activism directly into their work.

Here we will first reflect on the rise of sites of memory marking atrocious pasts across the Americas, south and north, including tension-ridden and contrasting memorialization-state relations. We will then explore two grassroots-led Chilean sites that have drawn powerfully from the repressive histories and memories to become dynamic places of connection, dialogue, and activism, toward distinct possible presents.

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As a region writ large, Latin America is a recognized trailblazer of what in the social sciences has been termed "transitional justice," that is, political and policy agendas in the aftermath of dictatorships and conflict that attempt to confront the past and hold past human rights violators accountable for their criminality. Trials, truth commissions, forensics work, and monetary and symbolic reparations like memorials and museums of memory have been cornerstones of governance and statecraft in several post-military, post-armed conflict Latin American regimes.[5] When it comes to the number of prosecutions of former human rights violators, Latin America leads the world, and it is no coincidence that the first prosecutor of the International Criminal Court is an Argentine jurist. Such advances in what are considered the most common transitional justice policy arenas broadly stem from a combination of persistent local, national, and international human rights movement demands and the long legalist traditions that characterize the Americas.

Yet it is also the case that all this is embedded in deep traditions of imperial, colonialist, class, and racist violence, interwoven through the Americas, North and South. In point of fact, racism and coloniality are structured into the very institutions theoretically meant to protect and uphold rights. In addition, as political scientist Bronwyn Leebaw has suggested, transitional justice approaches basically adopt a time frame in which it is assumed that there was some form of past violent s*tate of exception* that must and can now be righted, when in fact systematic human rights violations *were and continue to be* the norm against both dissidents and the structurally marginalized.[6]

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[5] For more on trials and truth commissions, see Cath Collins, "Truth-Justice-Reparations Interaction Effects in Transitional Justice Practice: The Case of the 'Valech Commission' in Chile", *J. Latin American Studies* 49 (2016): 55-82.; Naomi Roht-Arriaza and Javier Mariezcurrena;, *Transitional Justice in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Priscilla Hayner, *Unspeakable Truths: Transitional Justice and the Challenge of Truth Commissions* (New York: Routledge, 2001); Ruti Teitel, *Transitional Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). On forensic work, see Adam Rosenblatt, *Digging for the Disappeared* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015). For a more elaborate analysis of the relationship between museums of memory and questions of citizenship and democracy, see M. González Oleaga and M. S. Di Liscia, "Museos y ciudanía: The Odd Couple," *A Contracorriente* 15, no. 2 (2018): 1-10.

[6] Bronwyn Leebaw, *Judging State-Sponsored Violence; Imagining Political Change* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011). For a critique of the Western standardization of this paradigm, see J. Balint, J. Evans, and N. Macmillan, "Rethinking Transitional Justice., Redressing Indigenous Harm: A New Conceptual Approach," *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 8:2 (2014): 194-216.

Centering a structural violence framework, we argue that many recent memorial movements are countering, confronting past and ongoing violence. New commemorative projects, led primarily by grassroots activists and public scholars, expose sites of violent memory and injustice around which there has often been intimidation and unease over several generations. For many such efforts, exposure posed risk, then and now, for different sides, unequally. We would argue that memorializing can become a defiant political act, a form of reckoning with violent haunting.

There is nothing easy or straightforward about memorialization processes. We must explore head-on the significant silences, fear, and denial of the relationships between violence past and present, as well as the persistent invisibility of significant historical atrocities, all over the world and in our own communities. Clearly throughout the U.S. we are witnessing citizen initiatives to remove monuments and memorials, to mark formerly invisible past sites of violence, and to establish museums of memory that address atrocious pasts in relation to the present. We are also seeing how charged several of these initiatives are, and how offensive many people find such demands for a reckoning.

We would like to believe, for example, that in the U.S., more people would sympathize with the UNC-Chapel Hill grassroots action to topple the "Silent Sam" Confederate statue if they were familiar with the words of Carolina industrialist and supporter of the KKK Julian Carr, who delivered a lengthy speech at the 1913 unveiling of the monument:

> One hundred yards from where I stand, less than ninety days perhaps after my return from Appomattox, I horse-whipped a negro wench until her skirts hung in shreds, because upon the streets of this quiet village she had publicly insulted and maligned a southern lady, and then rushed for protection to these University buildings where was stationed a garrison of 100 Federal soldiers. I performed the pleasing duty in the immediate presence of the entire garrison…[7]

The vile speech drives home the racist realities embedded in Chapel Hill institutions, including in premiere public universities of the state, almost a good half-century post-

[7] Antonia Noory Farzan, "'Silent Sam': A Racist, Jim Crow-era Speech Inspired UNC Students to Topple a Confederate Monument on Campus," *The Washington Post*, August 21, 2018. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2018/08/21/silent-sam-a-racist-jim-crow-era-speech-inspired-unc-students-to-topple-a-confederate-monument-on-campus/?utm_term=.24f4c81e0b5d. This article also includes a link to the original speech.

Civil War. The 1913 Silent Sam must be debated in its specific historical-genealogical context.

Moreover, in 2015, North Carolina passed legislation that prohibits conventional democratic institutional channels for debate regarding the memorials, and it is all the more jarring that even the one official state body charged with investigating and rendering decisions on memorials, the North Carolina Historical Commission, does not have the legal authority to approve a monument's removal.[8] State laws prohibiting democratic debate over removals have quite recently been placed on the books in Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Virginia, Kentucky, and elsewhere, reflecting significant local and regional political reactions to twenty-first century movements for change.[9]

This contrasts in interesting ways with recent practices of the Chilean state and with state agencies that have had to recognize—in response to the consistent demands of civil society—the imperative of facilitating memorialization processes that address state-sponsored, systematic violence within. Today extreme rightist groups attack Chile's memorializing initiatives, while in the United States, extreme right-wing nationalists fight to preserve the state's iconic monuments, producing new legislation to shore up the monuments. Like the United States, however, in Chile, local and regional political shifts strongly influence struggles over the country's violent past, unfolding in different ways across the country. This can translate into either the support or halting of particular memorialization initiatives from one administration to the next.

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As students of Latin America, primarily of the Southern Cone, we have thought a great deal more about the recent creation of memorial sites than the removal of them. Indeed, there has been an explosion of new memorial sites and museums of memory all over Latin America, and Chile has been among the countries at the forefront

[8] Merit Kennedy, "Three North Carolina Confederate Monuments Will Stay in Place, Commission Decides," *National Public Radio*, August 22, 2018. https://www.npr.org/2018/08/22/640923318/3-north-carolina-confederate-monuments-will-stay-in-place-commission-decides.

[9] See, for example, the Alabama Preservation Act of 2017, or the Kentucky Memorial Preservation Act of 2018. These state laws are not going unchallenged, however, and in Birmingham, Alabama, a judge overturned the Alabama Preservation Act. Brigit Katz, "Alabama Judge Overturns Law that Protected Confederate Monuments," *Smithsonian.com*, January 16, 2019. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/alabama-judge-overturns-law-protected-confederate-monuments-180971282/.

of these very recent processes. The demands come from the grassroots—from survivors of violations, families of victims, neighborhood groups, and new generations of political activists—organizing to ensure that spaces that were once the site of horrendous violations attain National Heritage status. It is also worth noting that after almost two decades post-dictatorship, Chile re-named a major Santiago street that Pinochet had changed to "September 11th Avenue" to celebrate the military coup. The mayor of the Santiago municipality in which the street is located led the return of the street name to its original one.

In Chile, the explosion of demand has produced two new governmental divisions: The Projects and Memorials Program of the Ministry of Justice, and the Department of Memory and Human Rights within the National Council of Culture and Art. Both are designed to handle community petitions for sites, and more recently the programs have themselves become technical advisers to groups seeking new memorials. Over the past two decades, and from 2009 to the present in particular, Chilean sites of memory have proliferated and earned recognition as National Heritage Sites (Table 1).

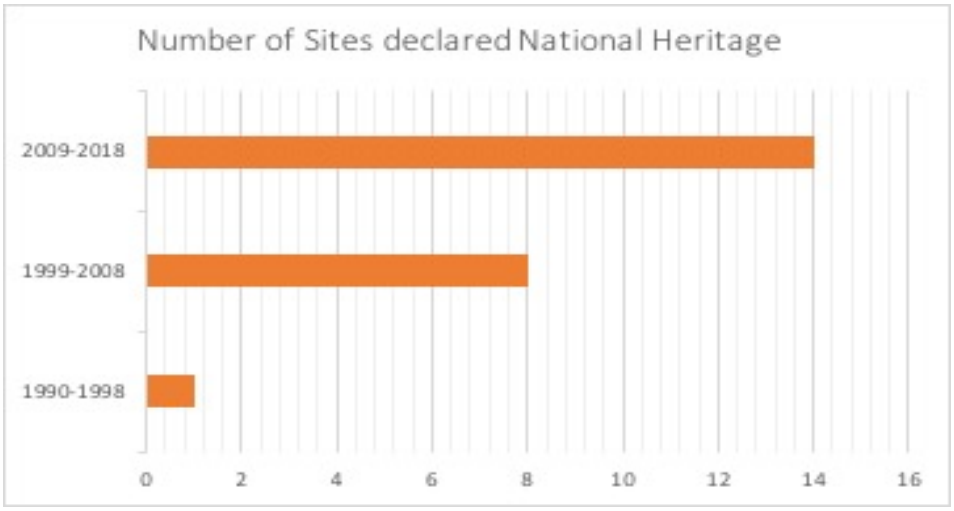

Table 1: Memorial projects that obtained legal status as National Heritage Sites

Impressively, 44% of the Chilean memorial projects obtained legal status as National Heritage Sites between 2015 and 2016 alone. Moreover, as civil society-driven sites of memory have strengthened and flourished, they have created collaborative networks, including the Sites of Memory Network, which shares best practices both nationally and transnationally, assists with new memory site initiatives, and channels state support toward these varied efforts. Chilean state agencies themselves have lent

additional know-how and encourage the communicative practices emanating from the sites.[10] Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that state-supported memorialization is unquestionably volatile, fragile, vulnerable to political shifts that can at times be dramatic.

There is also reason to be skeptical of the explosion of memorialization and the institutionalization of memorial processes within the state itself. Many see the phenomenon as evidence that Chilean justice has fallen short, that past perpetrators of human rights crimes are not held accountable, that the few who are lounge in special prisons with short sentences, and therefore, that memorialization can be a cheap and far less threatening substitute to actual justice. Moreover, applications and approvals for state-funded memorials generally downplay the political subjectivity of those being memorialized—the fact that many who were killed were Chilean revolutionaries, for example. The state claims a moralist logic that "transcends" ideological conflict, that evades what Leebaw has termed an ethics of political judgment, in which amidst intense conflict, violence, and repression, hard truths must be confronted.[11] Both arguments for skepticism are valid.

Yet human rights and political activists, including torture survivors and the families of loved ones whose cases are, in fact, often being processed through the courts, can find such processes slow and exclusionary, rendered to the professionals in ways that do not invite their activism or expression.[12] Memorial activism becomes a way to channel grief, to denounce the criminality of the dictatorship, and to champion past lives creatively, actively, to educate new generations and the public.[13] In addition, the political subjectivities and accounts of the men and women who were tortured, murdered, and disappeared are becoming more visible, through imagery and texts, through the guides, artists, teachers, and organizers who are the protagonists of the memorial sties. From their study and work in the sites, new generations, particularly,

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[10] For example, in December 2017, the Department of Human Rights of the Ministry of Justice organized a two-day International Seminar on Legislation for Sites of Memory, bringing together experts and memory site activists.

[11] See Leebaw's discussion throughout her book, *Judging State-Sponsored Violence, Imagining Political Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 174-7.

[12] For an elaboration on this point and more detail on 1990s Chilean memorialization processes, see Cath Collins and Katherine Hite, "Memorial Fragments, Monumental Silences and Awakenings in the Contemporary Chilean Political Imagination," *The Politics of Memory in Chile: From Pinochet to Bachelet*. Co-edited with Cath Collins and Alfredo Joignant (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publications, 2013).

[13] Katherine Hite, *Politics and the Art of Commemoration: Memorials to Struggle in Latin America and Spain* (London/New York: Routledge Press, 2011).

are finding meaning and inspiration from the past struggles that are embodied in the sites, toward ongoing struggles in the here and now. In point of fact, young people have come to the sites to debate the current political morass as they understand it, and to promote new ways and forms of participating politically.

Officially, the Chilean state recognizes that there are 1132 spaces throughout the country that were used as spaces of torture, murder and/or illegal detention.[14] Of the 1132 spaces, 25 are now National Heritage sites, and they are primarily run by activists supported financially to lesser or greater degrees by the state. While there are several sites doing important work, here we will focus on two site projects in particular: *Londres 38* (an ex-clandestine center of detention, torture, and disappearance in downtown Santiago); and the Estadio Nacional, Memoria Nacional (Chile's national stadium that was, for a few short months immediately following the 1973 coup, the dictatorship's largest site of detention, torture and death).

We focus on these sites because while they are not alone, they represent distinct examples of many years of struggle for memorialization that have successfully materialized into concrete, robust, and long-term projects. In addition, they are sites in which we have several years of personal and professional connection, as investigators, colleagues, professors and students of memory.

Londres 38

Londres 38 was one of the most important clandestine detention centers to Chile's repressive apparatus, the DINA, a site where from 1973-74, approximately 98 people were assassinated or disappeared. It is located very centrally, in downtown Santiago, Chile, and had been a former headquarters of the Chilean Socialist Party. Reclaiming, or recuperating the site from the hands of what had become a right-wing institute, took several years and a great deal of struggle for families of the disappeared, families of assassinated political prisoners, and left-wing activists. Rightists did not want to give up the site, and the government was initially wary of supporting the reclaiming. As a place of so much torture and death, it was also important to undertake forensics work there. In 2005, activists finally scored a victory, and the National Council of Monuments declared Londres 38 a national monument, granting the site protection and preservation status. The site was inaugurated in 2008 and is today a

[14] National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture Report, 2004. In https://bibliotecadigital.indh.cl/handle/123456789/455

vibrant center of guided visits, workshops, and organized actions that commemorate the past with a clear eye on the present (Figure 2). Londres 38 practices an agenda that pays deep respect to the men and women who were tortured and murdered by the dictatorship and that mobilizes the memories of their revolutionary commitments toward combatting violence against today's marginalized. In addition, as a site in the center of downtown Santiago, Londres 38 often serves as a center for meetings, poster- and print-making sessions, and political and cultural fora related to major social mobilization.

Figure 2: *Londres 38* Memory workshop. Source Memorias de la Periferia Collective

During the several guided visits we have taken with colleagues and students (both US and Chilean students) there, we have appreciated the constant self-reflection and critique on the part of the Londres 38 protagonists as they engage with visitors. At Londres 38, guides audiotape each group visit in order to process and reflect collectively on the kinds of questions and interactions that take place. Guides think out loud with visitors and ask them questions about why they are there and what they are experiencing.

For U.S. students, occasionally, the Chilean guides raise questions about what the students are viewing and experiencing in light of the fact that the U.S. was deeply complicit in the destabilization of Salvador Allende and subsequently lent tacit support to the military regime during its very early and most brutal years. This directness forces

visitors to try to articulate both what drew them into the site and what unnerves them once inside.

As interlocutors with both U.S. and Latin American university students to major memory sites, we hold that a critical dimension of "what sticks" with U.S. students after their visits takes place when they experience *"empathic unsettlement*," a dynamic exchange, spoken or unspoken, during their encounters with exhibits and narrators, that jars, that unsettles, that reframes their thinking and emotions in productive ways, that moves them toward understanding another, while appreciating that the trauma or injury of another is largely beyond total understanding.[15] Empathic unsettlement may be even more powerfully at work when visitors can connect traumatic or violent memory to their national identities as well as their own lived experiences. We can imagine empathic unsettlement, that middle ground between engagement and disruption, as a moment where *critical pedagogy* can be at its best.

Londres 38 activists consistently seek to establish the connections between past and current activism, and they maintain engagement with contemporary Chilean social movements, including the student movement, the women's rights movement, and the Mapuche indigenous movement. Research supports the finding that Chilean visitors do make such connections among the violence, fears, and sense of political threat of the past with the many dimensions of police repression during mobilizations in the present.[16]

Estadio Nacional, Memoria Nacional

Chile's National Stadium, today renamed the Julio Martínez National Stadium, is an enormous public space and home to the largest sports events in the country, as well as to major concerts and political events. Each presidential and congressional election day, the Stadium also serves as Santiago's largest voting site. Nevertheless, the civic and community-centered life of the Estadio Nacional changed dramatically on September 11, 1973, when for several months, the Stadium was converted into the largest detention center of the military dictatorship. The central coliseum, with a 50,000-seat capacity, held thousands of prisoners, making use of the varied spaces on

[15] "Teaching the Politics of Encounter: Empathic Unsettlement in Spaces of Memory in Chile," *Radical History Review* Issue 124 (January 2016): 217-225.

[16] See more in Manuela Badilla, "The Day of the Young Combatant, generational struggles in the memory field of post-dictatorship Chile", *Memory Studies*, published on line first, 2017; Isabel Piper, "Violencia política, miedo y amenaza en Lugares de Memoria", *Athenea Digital* 15(4) (2015): 155-172.

the grounds—locker rooms, race tracks, communal shower stalls and changing rooms—to conduct interrogation, torture, and murder. As many as 20,000 men and women were detained at the Stadium, subjected to egregiously inhumane conditions.[17]

While thousands were held inside the Estadio Nacional, outside the Stadium's walls family members and loved ones gathered and waited for news, trying to communicate with those inside. Long after the Stadium's most repressive period, Chileans continued to gather at the Stadium to remember and to demand justice. In 2003, the Council of National Monuments declared the Stadium a Historic Monument, both for its iconic national status and for having served as a critical site of collective memory.

Over the many years since the government declared the Stadium a national memory site, the Stadium-based group that was once chiefly composed of women former political prisoners, political militants, and their families has grown tremendously. It is now formally recognized as Estadio Nacional Memoria Nacional, an organization that has incorporated and invited a wide array of professionals and young activists to join in the many initiatives. In 2014, the state supported construction of a memorial at the entrance to *Escotilla 8* (Gate 8), the main passageway for political prisoners in 1973. Amidst the stadium's major renovation, the memorial also managed to preserve the Stadium's original section 8 seats, over which an illuminated sign reads, "A people without memory is a people without a future." Since that time, several additional areas of the Stadium have been memorialized and repurposed.

In 2018, Estadio Nacional Memoria Nacional successfully secured state funding from the Office of Libraries, Archives, and Museums (DIBAM), allowing the organization to employ a dedicated team of professionals and staff who work in four programmatic areas: education, primarily focused on pedagogical visits; communications; programming and culture; and archival work. The financing has facilitated the consistent presence of trained educators, museologists, and those who provide the administrative backbone, while also encouraging the participation of a much younger staff, or in the words of one Stadium professional, "a new generation

[17] Estimates range from those provided in the declassified November 15, 1973 CIA "Fact Sheet—Human Rights in Chile," that placed the number of arrested and detained in the Stadium at 7-8,000, to the International Red Cross estimate at between 12,000 and 20,000. The most authoritative account of state terror within the National Stadium is Pascale Bonnefoy Miralles's in-depth journalistic study *Terrorismo del Estadio: Prisioneros de Guerra en un Campo de Deportes*, now in an expanded second edition (Santiago: Editorial Latinoamericano, 2016).

that is in charge of re-signifying our history, of developing new issue areas," incorporating themes that are relevant to the Chilean present.[18]

The stadium has also become a major site for commemorative performances, events, and protests. Evening ceremonies are multi-generational and participatory. For example, on the occasion of the September 11th anniversary of the military coup, as well as on March 8th, International Women's Day, Estadio staff members who are also musicians, lyrical singer Moisés Mendoza and his partner, musician and music teacher Luís Valencia, have organized enormous programs, involving classical chamber orchestras, choral groups, theater troupes, and more, bringing to the Stadium nationally renowned performers (Figures 3 and 4).

Figure 3: March 8, 2017. Source: Andrés Aguirre, Corporación Estadio Nacional Memoria Nacional Ex-Prisioneros Políticos.

[18] Interview with Moisés Mendoza, September 25, 2018.

Figure 4: Classical choral group and chamber orchestra, September 10, 2018. Source: Estadio Nacional Memoria Nacional.

In addition, Mendoza, Valencia and other guides offer instructive ways to connect past human rights violations and issues with those of the present, including gay rights, immigrant rights, and the rights of the Mapuche. The memory projects at the Stadium have attracted younger generations of Chileans to participate as guides, artists, archivists, workshop facilitators, event organizers, and more (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Estadio Nacional Memoria Nacional staff. Source: Katherine Hite.

For some, participation has been a means to gain knowledge about their own family members, a kind of postmemory experience. After months of his involvement with the stadium, one participant learned from his own family that he had an uncle who had been a member of the elite GAP (Group of Personal Friends) that served as Salvador Allende's personal bodyguards during his presidency. His participation with Estadio Nacional Memoria Nacional thus opened up a once silent familial space in relation to the past. Young volunteers organized a weekly film series and invited *Estadio Nacional* documentarian Carmen Parot to facilitate a discussion session after the film's showing. One young woman thanked Parot and said she had come to see the documentary because her father had been a prisoner in the stadium but never talked about it.[19]

For many others, participation is more explicitly political—a search to retrieve a sense of an inspired and somewhat romanticized previous political generation amid massive discontent with Chile's current political leadership. Stark social inequality, racism against the Mapuche, who are labeled terrorists for their campaigns to reclaim land, the exposure of widespread political and corporate corruption, have together created a politics in which younger generations, in particular, seek new collective political identities and affiliations. From participation in the Estadio Nacional Memoria Nacional-organized political history workshops, to art collectives, and major commemorative events, younger post-dictatorship generations of Chileans situate the memories of the dictatorship's militants in relation to contemporary political struggles.

Conclusion

Major memorial sites are spaces of instruction and sometimes, of transformation. Moreover, and in spite of the explosion of virtual/internet access and on-line exploration of sites, more and more people are physically visiting museums and memorial sites, throughout the world.[20] Increased museum-going underscores the

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[19] For an elaboration of women's historical experience and current activism in the Stadium, see Katherine Hite and Marita Sturken, "Stadium Memories: The *Estadio Nacional* de Chile and the Reshaping of Space through Women's Memories," Edited by A. G. Altınay, M. J. Contreras, M. Hirsch, J. Howard, B. Karaca, and A. Solomon, *Women Mobilizing Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, forthcoming 2019).

[20] See "Met Museum Attendance Up Six Percent in 2016, Natural Museum Attendance Holds Steady," *New York Business Journal*, June 2, 2017: https://www.bizjournals.com/newyork/news/2017/06/02/met-museum-attendance-up.html. Bob Beatty, "Running the Numbers on Attendance at History Museums," *Hyperallergenic*, March 1, 2018: https://hyperallergic.com/429788/running-the-numbers-on-attendance-at-history-museums-in-the-us/.

value of personal human experience and interaction within the physical spaces, including the ways such spaces facilitate face-to-face connection, learning, and relationships.

As a demonstration of the fluidity of memory debates in relation to the here and now, the recent broad defense of the Museo de la Memoria speaks to both the institutionalization of a narrative regarding the atrocities of the dictatorship and in the immediate term, to current struggles against a rightist government's looming threat to roll back social reforms and a progressive imagination. The fluidity also allows for critical symbols of past struggles to be adopted in current ones, perhaps best illustrated by the green handkerchiefs of the reproductive rights movements in Argentina and Chile, who appreciably borrow from the Madres of the Plaza de Mayo's historic struggles to demand their loved ones' return, albeit for quite distinct political intent.

New debates are surfacing more visibly in Chile regarding the silencing of violent histories of racist repression against the indigenous and the ways such histories are reproduced over generations. Memory can open up debates regarding the relationship between terror of the past and the use of the terrorism laws to thwart Mapuche demands. Reflecting the ways in which major sites and institutions of memory can respond dynamically to critical conjunctural national and transnational moments, the Museo itself has named 2019 to be the year of the migrant as its key thematic focus, and the Museo will organize exhibits, forums, films, and workshops around the issue.

Taken together, we would argue that memorial projects expand our understandings of temporality and space toward distinct kinds of connection across difference, through shared mourning, recognition, and activism. Recognition, understood as a conscious act of seeing and listening, can open conversations, presence a past, and explore such political questions as why and what could have or should have been, in ways that potentially invite connection, action, and less violent, less unjust possibility going forward.