

HISTORY, MEMORY AND TOURISM

THE USE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE MILITARY DICTATORSHIP IN ARGENTINA



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Image on the front page: *Espacio memoria y derechos humanos Ex ESMA*
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INTRODUCTION

*Las cosas hay que llamarlas por su nombre y acá si ustedes me permiten, ya no como compañero y hermano de tantos compañeros y hermanos que compartimos aquel tiempo, sino como Presidente de la Nación Argentina vengo a pedir perdón de parte del Estado nacional por la vergüenza de haber callado durante 20 años de democracia por tantas atrocidades*¹ (Néstor Kirchner, 2004).

In 2004, Argentine president Néstor Kirchner asked for forgiveness for the violation of human rights that occurred during the military dictatorship (1976-1983). To understand profoundly the horrific events that took place during this period, attention must be paid to the coup d'état and the following dictatorship of seven years.

On March 24, 1976, a right-wing coup took over control of Argentina. A military *junta* under Jorge Rafael Videla, Emilio Eduardo Massera and Orlando Ramón Agosti was installed as the new regime. Against the background of the Cold War, the United States lend their support to the new government. During the military dictatorship, there existed a growing idea of an 'internal enemy', initially defined in the Truman doctrine of 1947. Because of the fear for a communist revolution, many human rights violations took place in the period of 1976 to 1983. People who were suspected of communism or who spoke out against the new regime were locked up by the state in clandestine detention centres and later killed in the notorious death flights. Several scientists claim there were up to 30.000 people who disappeared. These persons were given the name *desaparecidos* (the disappeared). They were titled this way because authorities denied knowing their whereabouts.

In September 1984, after the military regime ended, the *Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas* (CONADEP) published the report *Nunca Más*. According to this report, there were 340 detention centres in Argentina in the years of 1976 to 1983. They were meant for systematic tortures and at times even executions. Death squads controlled the country. The state terrorism of this period formed part of the 'Dirty War', in which the Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance (AAA) hunted down political dissidents. This was part of Operation Cóndor, a campaign to annihilate supposed subversive enemies among Latin American Countries, backed by the United States.

Several human rights movements started to resist against the military *junta* to demand the truth. The most famous example are the *Madres de Plaza de Mayo*, who organized themselves for the first time in 1977. They wanted to know where their children were, and started walking in a circle in front of the *Casa Rosada*, the government

¹ Translation: "Things must be called by name and here, if you allow me, no longer as a companion and brother of so many companions and brothers who share that time, but as president of the Argentine nation I come to ask forgiveness from the national state for the shame to have silenced for 20 years of democracy for so many atrocities" (Néstor Kirchner, 2004).

palace in Buenos Aires. With their white *pañuelos*, they are now a symbol of resistance against the dictatorship.

At the end 1983, elections were announced. Raúl Alfonsín was chosen for the presidential office of the new democratic government of Argentina. The Argentine *junta* tried to make amnesty laws for the military to avoid criminal prosecution. However, they failed to do so. From 1983 onwards, a process of recuperation and justice started to take place in Argentina. Nevertheless, they had a long way to go.

Néstor Kirchner (2003-2007) was not the first Argentine president to admit there had been state repression in the years of the military *junta*. He was, however, the first president to ask for a pardon in name of the state. From this moment on, Kirchner promised to fight against the impunity laws and to find justice and recuperation. With a groundbreaking speech he inaugurated the *Espacio Memoria y Derechos Humanos ex ESMA*, a former clandestine centre where systematic tortures took place as part of the state terrorism during the military regime. ESMA, situated in the capital of Buenos Aires, was changed into a museum and archive of memory. The importance of this particular act at this particular place was the symbolism behind it. Ex-ESMA was functioning as *Escuela Superior de Mecánica de la Armada* (the Higher School of Mechanics of the Navy), before the military coup d'état in 1976. Located in the capital, nowadays the cultural heritage is a symbol of *Memoria, Verdad y Justicia* ('Memory, Truth and Justice') in Argentina.

Cultural memory and heritage play an important role in present-day Argentina. Only in Buenos Aires there is a variation of places where one might reflect on the past and commemorate the victims. There is furthermore an increasing number of foreign people visiting these sites. Some authors even speak of a process called 'heritage tourism' (McKerchner & Du Kros, 2002; Palacios, 2010; Babb, 2011; Marschall, 2012; Várques, 2016). There are various theories about cultural memory, understood as a collection of places, objectives and practices that a society considers important to preserve. However, the specific components are subject to scientific debate.

Therefore, this research investigates memory tourism and cultural heritage in Argentina. It analyses the question if there is a 'touristification' of cultural memory. It focuses specifically on the period of the military dictatorship (1976-1983). It researches the relationship between this historical moment and the way in which the present-day society looks at it. On the one hand, it focuses on memory tourism, a phenomenon that has developed itself as more important. Memory tourism is a typical example of how a determined image of the past is shown. It is based on the idea that all important factors of tourism are part of a process of merchandizing. On the other hand, it analyses the symbolic elements of the places of memory, the so-called '*lieux de mémoire*' (Nora, 1989). Furthermore, it examines the actors of importance in not only creating and maintaining cultural heritage, but also in attracting tourists to certain places of memory.

The first chapter concentrates on the theoretic encounter of cultural memory, heritage and tourism. It provides definitions for important concepts like cultural memory, memory tourism, touristification, dark tourism, *lieux de mémoires*, and so on. Moreover, it sets out the academic debate around important actors of creating and promoting places of memory regarding tourism. The second chapter contextualizes the collective memory

in post-military dictatorship of Argentina. It describes the committed crimes during the military dictatorship and the actions of the state after 1983 to convict the perpetrators in a political context. It also examines the resistance movements against the policies of the state, with human rights organizations as the most significant feature. The third chapter analyses memory tourism and present-day heritage policies. It looks at objectives of former clandestine centres ex-ESMA, El Olimpo and Mansión Seré. It furthermore investigates the objectives of human rights movements and the state. Lastly, it describes the influence of the civil society and if there exists a 'merchandizing' of cultural memory. The final section provides a conclusion to the main question of memory tourism and cultural heritage.

This research was realized with academic literary sources to create a general insight in cultural heritage tourism in Argentina. In addition, information provided by interviews held during a field work research in Buenos Aires will be analysed. The method of research, which is used to collect data, is a qualitative research in which several semi-structured interviews were conducted in Argentina in the period of mid-November 2018 until mid-January 2019. The list of interviewees can be found in annex 1 and the guideline of questions used during the interviews can be found in annex 2. Aside from these interviews, the official political programs regarding cultural memory and tourism and documents describing the development of the memory policies have been reviewed to evaluate the several impacts on the subject. Evaluations on the basis of these dates will be constructed in combination with employing the framework of theories and concepts of chapter one and the provided context of chapter 2. These results together will eventually provide the answer to the main question of this research, which will be presented in the conclusion.

CHAPTER 1

CULTURAL MEMORY, HERITAGE AND TOURISM: A THEORETIC ENCOUNTER

1.1 Definitions of memory and tourism

There are different aspects to the concept of memory tourism. Important to know is that there is a variety of characteristics. This research is in the first place part of a movement called cultural memory studies. According to French philosopher and sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1950), cultural memory is always a collective memory. There is no individual memory on its own. Halbwachs defines collective memory as a collection of memories shared by groups of people. These memories can be remembered consciously or unconsciously. Collective memory conveys through forms of cultural expressions.

Central to the concept of collective memory, are the places of memory. These form part of cultural expressions of memory. In *Lieux de mémoire*, Pierre Nora (1989) explains that places of memory emanate from the fear of losing memory. Human beings are natural to forgetting certain details about the past. He argues furthermore that there is a difference between history and memory. Nora relates history to collective memory, and memory to individual memory. Individual memories are subjected to interpretation, religion, experience and political background. Moreover, memories are emotional matters. Nevertheless, memories will, after a certain period, belong to history. People want to conserve memory, and therefore establish *lieux de mémoire*. The next generation is not to forget the past through these memorial places. For the next generation, this is not their memory, but a part of history. For them, history is determined by the image they have in their individual memory. This image, however, is the result of external factors like media, education and stories told by others. Nora concludes his work by stating that the memory places are evidence of a lost memory. If memory would exist forever, the places of memory would not be required to save it. That is the reason why patrimonialization turns memory into history, because it is not subject to manipulation. History is analytic, critical and is always in search for the best possible reconstruction of the past. This results into a universal science that is accessible for everyone. Nora explains two conditions for *lieux de mémoire*. The first one is a will to remember. The second condition is an evolution of a certain place of memory throughout time. He furthermore distinguishes three types of *lieux de mémoire*: practical, symbolic and functional.

This research further focusses on the concept of heritage tourism. Sabine Marschall defines heritage tourism as the phenomenon where “historical sites and preserved artefacts as embodiments of collective memory are commodified to attract tourists” (2012:1). In other words, tourists are drawn to visit cultural heritage sites to experience a country or region’s memory of the past. Florence E. Babb (2011) investigates the relationship between tourism and memory. She tries to explore the new forms of cultural

representation and historical understanding that accompany and contribute to the growth of tourism in post-conflict nations. This is an element of memory tourism. She argues that tourism often takes place in nations that have experienced periods of conflicts, terrorism and rebellion.

This relatively new phenomenon, of people visiting places where cruel events took place throughout history, is part of a concept called 'dark tourism'. John Lennon and Malcolm Foley (2000) analyse the attraction of death and disaster. They try to look at possible reasons why tourists visit these attractions. They conclude that dark tourism is a "fundamental change in the way in which death, disaster and atrocity are being handled by those who offer associated tourism 'products'" (p.3.). Politics, economics, sociologies and technologies of the modern-day world have a big influence on dark tourism. According to the authors, dark tourism must warn people and prevent disasters from happening in the future. Nevertheless, dark tourism-sites also cause moral and ethical dilemmas to the authorities. Lennon and Foley argue moreover that dark tourism is often associated with commercial development and exploitation. In other words, they also see a process of merchandizing at the sites of memory.

Pablo Isla (2016) researches the concepts of *patrimonialization* and *fossilization* of repression memories. In his opinion, there is a process of merchandizing to create a distinguished identity for, for example, victims of a certain conflict. Fossilization means the complex process of constructing symbolic meanings. Mas (2016) likewise underlines the importance of the process of marketing and merchandizing in tourist places.

In conclusion, this research understands cultural memory as collective memory, accordant to the ideas of Halbwachs. Important for analysing collective memory are the places of memory, which turn memory into history, as Nora argues. In the past few years, there has been a large growth in memory tourism. This phenomenon concentrates on foreign and domestic visitors attending at the places of memory. Very popular among tourists are places that radiate a component of dark tourism. People seem to prefer learning about the disastrous conflicts of a country they are visiting. Because of this, a certain 'mercantilization' of the *lieux de mémoire* emerged. The merchandizing of certain symbols of conflict and repression creates a distinguished identity.

1.2 Around the decisive factor in creating and maintaining cultural memory

There exists an extensive scientific debate regarding the concept of cultural memory. Various authors express different opinions on the creation and maintenance of places of memory. Actors that are of importance for memorialization are called 'entrepreneurs of memory' (Jelin, 2003: 3). Firstly, this subchapter will explain this discussion, and set out the different arguments about the most decisive factor in determining the cultural or collective memory of commemoration places. Afterwards, it amplifies this argumentation by relating it to tourism.

Falser and Juneja (2013) evaluate the 'heritage industry' that has emerged in the last two centuries. They argue that cultural memory is interpreted and used differently in every country or region. Falser and Juneja research a few important themes in their work: 'archeologizing', 'virtualizing', 'restoration/interpretation' and 'commemorating/memorializing'. They furthermore state that different cultures in a certain region affect each other. In the end, however, they lay out that the way in which a country looks at its past is mostly determined by local costumes. Local costumes, nevertheless, are always part of a larger picture of 'visible culture'. Salamurović (2015) agrees that cultural memory has to be accepted by both the country and foreign nations. She emphasizes that cultural memory exists for a group of people to identify and distinguish themselves. This way, collective memory creates a unique national identity. Nevertheless, she underlines that ideological motives change continuously as well. Jelin (2002) concurs more or less with Falser and Juneja, and Salamurović. She writes about the importance of remembering the past and explicates that forgetting is something negative; hence, one has the obligation to record cultural memory. A way to do this, is constructing places of memory. In her other work (2002), she argues that a different way to record cultural memory is by naming special memorial dates.² In addition, she states, "remembering and acting accordingly is the product of a community from which the past has a moral presence in the present, based on the existence of a collective identity" (2002: 136). Therefore, Jelin believes that the presence of a commune with a collective identity is the most important actor for creating cultural memory. This commune can be of impact on a national, regional or even local scale.³ Seydel (2014) coincides with all of the above named authors. He states that people are not interested in the past as reconstructed by archaeologists and historians, but in the memory of the commune. He argues furthermore that the individual and collective memory construct the different symbolic representations of memorable historic events.

There furthermore exists an amount of scientists who stress the importance of the human rights movements in the creation of cultural heritage and memory. Levey (2016), for example, investigates the concept of memory from a political perspective. She concludes that human rights organizations have a key role in maintaining places of memory and commemorating the military dictatorship in Argentina and Uruguay. Mas (2016) likewise concludes that the influence of human rights movements is of great importance to places of memory. Tanchini (2003) concurs with Levey and Mas. Tahir (2012) coincides with the authors named above as well, and adds that the human rights movements used cultural memory to oppose against the policies of 'pardon', developed by certain Argentine governments from the 1990s onwards.

² In the case of Argentina, this would be March 24. This day is better known as the 'Day of Remembrance for Truth and Justice'. It is a public holiday, commemorating the victims of the Dirty War. March 24 is the anniversary of the *coup d'état* of 1976, which marked the beginning of the military dictatorship.

³ Eline M. Tanchini (2003) confirms the emphasis on the importance of a national or collective identity: "the culture of memory and the memory of the dictatorship constitute communal identities that define the Argentine cultural democracy and the recent Argentine history" (p. 4).

In other words, in the 1990s the state started to realize more policies to record collective memory. This created a so-called 'boom of memory' (Jelin, 2003).⁴ Tandeciarz (2007) underlines this act of the state taking responsibility for the genocide as well. Nora (1989) likewise believes the state has the task of maintaining the *lieux de mémoire* and recording history.

In conclusion, there is a spacious debate surrounding the actors of importance in composing cultural memory and building places of memory. The discussion mostly revolves around the local commune, human rights organizations and the state. However, there exists influence from the outside as well. Other cultures or nations likewise affect the formation of cultural memory of a country. Nevertheless, an important question remains: what is the relationship between cultural memory and tourism, according to the scientific debate? In other words, what are the objectives of heritage tourism?

McKerchner and Du Kros (2002) identify heritage tourism as visiting historical sites, places of cultural interest, assisting in special events or festivals or visiting museums. The people who take part in heritage tourism want to understand profoundly the culture or patrimony of a destination. These authors declare that cultural tourism causes more 'cultural heritage management'. Cultural heritage tourism has various consequences. On the one hand, it provides more income and resources to maintain cultural patrimony. On the other hand, the tourists damage the places of memory as well. Várques (2016) likewise describes the phenomenon of memory tourism: "memory tourism can be defined globally as the practice that encourages the public to explore the patrimonial elements put in value, in order to extract all the civic and cultural enrichment that gives us the reference to the past" (p. 1270). He furthermore argues that memory tourism supports the territorial development of a country. Babb (2011) states that heritage tourism can help a country, with a conflictive historical past, to make the social transition to a democracy. Through the exposition of the past of dictatorship to foreign visitors, a nation can identify itself in a certain way.

Isla (2016) takes it even further by arguing that there is a process of merchandizing of heritage sites. Because of this, a consciousness is evident in the country. The victims, in this case, form a symbol of national identity. The patrimony must guarantee the 'spiritual' value. This way, the historization of repression memories are institutionalized in cultural heritage. Palacios (2010) agrees with Isla by stating that there is indeed a 'touristification' and 'merchandizing'. She defines 'touristification' as a process where places of memory are turned into tourist attractions. Mas analyses the influence of neoliberalism in tourism and emphasizes that "the construction of an image of a place is fundamental for its communication and commercialization" (2016: 324). The image of a memory place is important to distinguish itself, but also to raise awareness for human rights.

Besides the argument of merchandizing cultural memory, there is another important objective of places of memory. Rajca (2010) researches in which way the consequences of the military dictatorship influence the formulation of the most important

⁴ The most famous example, which has already been named, is that of Néstor Kirchner and his *perdón en nombre del Estado* in 2004 (Levey, 2016).

ideas of present-day human rights organizations. A significant part of his conclusion is the exploration of the concept of *nunca más* (never again). People never want a historical past like this, with its many disasters and atrocities, to happen again. Ros (2012) amplifies this by arguing that through the concept of *nunca más*, the past is in the present and in the future. She concludes that the places of memory have to prevent a new military dictatorship. In other words, the cultural sites of patrimony form a lesson for the future. Várques (2016) confirms that an important object for memory tourism is civil education for the tourists. According to Tahir, the places of memory are established to “give visibility to the disappeared persons” (2012: 841). She believes that the memory places are therefore created to fight for justice and find out the truth.

To conclude the second part of this subchapter, the debate about the relationship between memory and tourism revolves mostly around national identities, merchandizing, ‘touristification’, the educational concept of *nunca más* and the quest for truth and justice. Important actors seem to be the state, human rights movements and Argentina’s civil society.

1.3 The role of the state in maintaining and promoting places of memory as tourist attractions

The national state has been mentioned several times as one of the actors of importance for creating and maintaining places of memory and attracting tourists to these memorial sites. In this part, the information provided on the debate around the policies of the state will be expanded.

Jelin and Lorenz (2004) start off by writing that the official story of the military dictatorship is part of a project of the state. In other words, the state takes responsibility for creating the ‘official memory’ of the dictatorial regime during the 1970s and 1980s. They conclude that the state displays the past to prevent something similar from happening in the future. Therefore, the educational component of *nunca más* again plays a very significant role. Ros (2012), who explains that the state gradually accepted more responsibility for the genocide under the military dictatorship, confirms the notion of never again. She writes: “failure to connect a painful past experience to the present and to articulate it in such a way that others can understand and respond to it often results in collective forgetting” (p. 9). Therefore, the state started to work harder to maintain cultural memory. The state needed to listen to the memories of survivors. Levey (2016) nevertheless believes that Jelin and Lorenz did not realize enough detailed research on the dialectics between local and national government actors.

Jelin and Lorenz (2004) furthermore argue that the state uses cultural memory and patrimony to demonstrate the greatness of its country. This way, the state tries to use heritage tourism to create a distinguished national identity. Isla (2016) shows that memorialization has allowed the state to formulate principles and ideals of conduct and to strengthen the self-image of a country. Nora (1989) concurs with this argument. The state in particular wishes to preserve a memorial conscience in society. He writes that

through the *lieux de mémoire*, the state can strengthen its own image and the national sentiment.

Babb concludes her research by arguing that areas that have undergone recent political upheavals “have turned to tourism both as a development strategy and as a way to refashion nationhood in a time of neoliberalism and globalization” (2011: 3). However, cultural differences within Latin America make that tourism causes unequal effects. She furthermore states that there is no guarantee that regions and nations will “make the same marketing decisions to promote tourism and advance broader plans for stabilization and development” (p. 176). Because political landscapes were in transition in several Latin American countries, the policies towards memory tourism change continuously. Levey concurs with Babb and argues that the future of places of memory is always dependent on “specific policies or actions of political actors, who are vulnerable to change with each elected local and national government” (2016: 251). She moreover emphasizes that projects, like inaugurations of memorial museums, only became a reality when the local government took a proactive stance on memorialization.

Palacio (2010) affirms in her article that the state is responsible for the development of certain places of memory as tourist attractions. According to her, this is part of the implementation of the government memorial policies. The state promotes these sites through various means. They use, for example, tourist flyers, information laid out on the internet and special guided tours. This way, Palacio explains, memorial policies become part of tourism policies.⁵ However, Palacio emphasizes as well that the motives of the memorial places are dependent on the debate between the actors that are in charge of managing it (the national state, the municipal state and various human rights organizations).

According to Levey, these memorial policies are “motivated by the search for justice and restitution” (2016: 6).⁶ Villalón (2013) likewise stresses the importance of the political search for justice by the state. She researches the second wave of memory politics in Latin America. Furthermore, writes Levey, the Argentine government approaches to commemoration during the 1990s and the 2000s were closely connected to the support for judicial impunity. In other words, the sites of violence formed evidence for the national trials of the criminals of the military dictatorship. Because of this, the state made possible an institutionalization of memory of state and societal actors: “specific government actors have been instrumental in recovering sites linked to state repression, in sanctioning memorials, in declaring them of national interest or even establishing commissions to administer them” (2016: 249).

In short, there are several motives for the state to be of significance in the creation of collective memory and memory tourism. Firstly, governments have an educational

⁵ Palacio gives the example of the *Espacio para la Memoria* in Buenos Aires. She observes the reason for its creation, formulated by the state: “the *Espacio* has been designed to be a centre for social, cultural and political debate and for the transmission of memory and the promotion of human rights” (p. 271).

⁶ Levey also underlines that the memorial policies show the post-dictatorship struggles for justice by the Argentina state: “although local and national governments have, in recent years, increasingly sanctioned, supported and acknowledged commemorative sites, their precarious future is indicative of the lack of a clear official policy on commemoration” (p. 3).

motive to maintain places of memory. The concept of *nunca más* has to protect society from again suffering a military dictatorship. Another important factor is the creation of a national identity through the exhibition of cultural memory of the past. This is an element of a development strategy. As part of a project called *políticas de memoria*, the state provides federal funding for the places of memory. This way, an institutionalization of cultural memory takes place. Nevertheless, the policies of memory are always subject to changes depending on which government is in charge.

1.4 The impact of human rights organizations on places of memory

Human rights movements have always been of great importance. They play a role in particular when it comes to places of memory. What exact influence did human rights bodies have on the culturalization of memory, according to the academic debate? More importantly, how did this contribute to the growth of memory tourism?

Levey (2016) explains that human rights movements were such a key factor in cultural memory because they simply never gave up. They succeeded in keeping the question of human rights abuses alive, until the government finally answered their call. Levey continues arguing human rights movements that surged, among which the most well known the *Madres de Plaza de Mayo* (Mothers of Plaza de Mayo) and *Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo* (Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo), called for international attention. The most important motive of human rights organizations was obtaining answers to their questions from the military *junta*. Mas (2016) agrees, and states that places of memory are needed to raise awareness for the message that human rights communities wish to transfer.

Villalón emphasizes that the human rights organizations were mostly of such significance for the memorialization of history because of the *Nunca Más* report. The *Nunca Más* report, published in 1984, not only formed “evidence in the first round of trials against the military, but also as a model for other Latin American countries going through similar processes” (2017: 11). According to Ros (2012), the *Nunca Más* report uncovered the truth of the existence of a systematic plan of the extermination of dissidents. Ros continues that the *Nunca Más* report turned the *desaparecidos* into the emblem of the human rights movements. This way, argues Villalón (2017), Argentina became an example on how to memorialize a conflictive past. Tahir (2012) believes that, after the democratization of 1983, human rights groups used places of memory as a symbol of fight and resistance.⁷

Do human rights movements, however, also give an impulse to heritage tourism? Babb argues that heritage tourism mostly takes place in countries or regions that have had troubled, conflictive pasts. She calls this “the allure of the once forbidden” (2011: 2). Because human rights movements made former prohibited places accessible to people, one could state there is indeed an influence of human rights organizations on cultural

⁷ Human rights movements mostly fought against the policies of pardon of certain post-dictatorship governments. They were against the impunity of ex-criminals of the dictatorship.

heritage tourism. A great example of this is ex-ESMA.⁸ Through memorial centres, explicates Rajca (2018), tourists and other visitors contemplate and reflect upon broader notions of human rights.⁹ This way, there is a direct relationship between tourists and human rights movements. Andermann describes the increase in memorial museums, caused by a “market globalization of memorial representation” (2012: 92). He provides a critical view on capitalism and its influence on heritage tourism to sites of horror and atrocity. However, not only the sites of horror are accessible for visitors. They can choose to visit cultural centres with art exhibitions and archives regarding the military dictatorship and the genocide as well.¹⁰ Cultural tourism thus focusses on more than horror sites alone. It likewise stimulates other forms and perspectives of memory.

In conclusion, human rights organizations affect cultural memory and memory tourism in several ways. First, human rights movements were a key factor in developing cultural memory of the dictatorship because they never abandoned their goal of obtaining answers. With the help of the *Nunca Más* report, they resisted the policies of pardon of post-dictatorship governments, and turned Argentina into an example of memorialization. One can furthermore not deny the relationship between human rights bodies and tourism, even if it is an indirect one. Human rights movements succeeded in making former sites of horror into present-day memorial museums, archives or art exhibitions. These are open to all people who desire to visit them.

1.5 The influence of civil society on places of memory

This part focusses on the impact of civil society on the *lieux de mémoire* and the potential ‘touristification’ of it. It examines in which way the ‘ordinary citizen’ affects the culturalization of memory. It evaluates furthermore which actors among the local commune are important.

Falser and Juneja (2013) emphasize the importance of local costumes in cultural memory. Jelin (2002) agrees, and states that the citizens are the ones responsible for recording memory. Memories are different depending on different societies. Not only states use cultural memory to identify themselves. According to Jelin, local communes likewise desire to construct a distinguished identity. This consists of individual memories and the relationships with other individual memories. Individuals are always part of a social group within society.

⁸ *Escuela Superior de Mecánica de la Armada (ESMA)*, Higher School of Mechanics of the Navy.

⁹ “Espacio Memoria makes possible a critical engagement with the global tourism to sites of horrors, performing contradictions between multiple notions of victim and politics and indeed offering a critique of capitalism within the dual goals of recuperating memory of state terrorism and promoting human rights in the present” (Rajca, 2018: 145).

¹⁰ In the case of ex-ESMA, this would be the *Centro Cultural de la Memoria Haroldo Conti* (Haroldo Conti Cultural Centre of Memory). According to Rajca, the goal of the Haroldo Conti Cultural Centre of Memory is “with the challenge of contributing to redefining this site of horror, a space of creation reflection, and dissemination of the culture of memory and human rights was created...” (2018: 158).

An important question that remains, however, is that of who are the people that record memory. Levey (2016) argues that victims, their families and survivors are indispensable for the creation of cultural memory. According to Isla (2016), there are two types of victims: the *desaparecido* and his or her closest environment. They are the ones that provide evidence of what happened in the past. Because of this, argues Levey, they are the primary sources of collective memory of the military dictatorship. Families of victims moreover partook in the *escraches*. Even though human rights movements organized this form of protest, civil society witnessed or even partook in these events. She consolidates her view by writing that “the struggles for memory are related to the ways in which groups and individuals contest and scrutinize that past” (2016: 15). Ros (2012) agrees that civil society plays an important role in creating cultural memory in the form of protests.¹¹

Ros moreover states that the *desaparecidos* evolved from being ‘innocent victims’ to ‘activist victims’ within the process of memorialization. She appends that because of the emphasis on the *desaparecidos*, a hierarchy of people emerged who had experienced the military dictatorship. Survivors who were not *desaparecidos* or who had not been in a clandestine torture centre were suspected of having collaborated with the military regime. Because they had to save themselves from social exclusion, argues Ros, people started to reflect differently on their past. Ros thus states that civil society can also have a negative impact on collective memory. Survivors tended to adjust their words, causing the upsurge of the image of the victims as ‘heroes’ and the military regime as ‘demon’. This changed the public understanding of the military crimes into “simplistic and incoherent” (2012: 18). Rajca (2018) affirms the notion of victims as heroes. He argues that the “foundational heroic/victimised subjects of militants and *desaparecidos*” (2018: 142) are being shown in ex-clandestine centres.¹² Rajca furthermore adds that the “draw for most first-time visitors to the Espacio Memoria is the site most directly connected with the detention, torture and disappearance of over five thousand individuals during the military dictatorship” (p. 143). Isla agrees, and writes that the process of merchandizing takes place because of the sacrificial identity of the victims of state terror. They were transformed into “emblematic subjects” (2016: 11) of the repression under the military regime.

In short, civil society affects cultural memory and places of memory in various ways. Like the state, local communities use cultural memory to create a distinguished identity. They create collective memory through the merging of individual memories. Victims and their direct environment are the most important actors of culturalizing memory, because they carry the evidence of the events that occurred under the military dictatorship. Civil society plays a significant role in resistance as well. They for example join in protests or *escraches*. Civil society furthermore caused the simplified image of

¹¹ Ros (2012) gives the example of the massive popular demonstrations caused by the politics of pardon under the government of Carlos S. Menem (1989-1999).

¹² An example of a state terrorism victim turned hero is Rodolfo Walsh, who wrote the *Carta Abierta a la Junta Militar* (Open Letter to the Military). His face is now an emblematic symbol of resistance, exhibited in an artwork at the ESMA museum.

victims as heroes and the state as demon. Memorial museums, for example, are currently presenting these images to tourists as well. This way, the creation of a hero on the one hand, and a demon on the other, attracts tourists to places of memory. However, the concept of civil society is a fluid understanding. Parts of civil society belong to human rights movements as well, and because of the human rights movements, civil society is able to play a part in memory tourism.

CHAPTER 2

COLLECTIVE MEMORY IN POST-MILITARY DICTATORSHIP ARGENTINA

This part focusses on the events regarding collective memory and tourism from the military dictatorship until the present day. It will explain the proceedings made by the several governments after 1983. I consciously chose to exclude the presidents Fernando de la Rúa (1999-2001), Federico Ramón Puerta (2001), Adolfo Rodríguez Saá (2001), Eduardo Oscar Camaño (2001-2002) and Eduardo Duhalde (2002-2003). These politicians occupied the presidential office for only a short time, and therefore are less significant for this research. I furthermore exclude current president Mauricio Macri, for he has not been in power long enough to have influenced human rights discourses severely. In chapter 3, more will be explained Mauricio Macri and the current situation.

2.1 The military dictatorship (1976-1983)

The systematic state repression during the military dictatorship found its origins in the policies of the *Proceso de Reorganización Nacional* (Process of National Reorganization). This project was implemented by the military regime after the *coup d'état* in 1976. Argentine society was to be transformed as a whole (Ros, 2012). The process would demobilize the population under a centralized, authoritarian regime in which political parties were prohibited. Moreover, Congress and the Supreme Court were suspended (Brysk, 1994). The new regime installed a free market-economy and opened up Argentine economy to foreign markets. Restoring the economic order became priority number one (Levey, 2016). The military *junta* desired to destroy the ideas that were formed under the first government of Juan Domingo Perón (1946-1953). During his second term, the paramilitary groups *Alianza Anticomunista Argentina* (Triple A) and the *Comando Libertadores* had established themselves. For the military regime, “leftists groups were corrupting the country with ideologies adverse to national values, and the dictatorship restored order, thereby saving the population from the Marxist threat” (Ros, 2012: 14). Measures taken to destroy the ‘internal enemies’ were part of the ‘dirty war’ in the logic of de Doctrine of National Security. The military *junta* perceived, among others, communists and Jewish people as enemy. Furthermore, the idea of the non-Argentine ‘other’ affected society strongly. According to Finchelstein (2014), “the perceived enemies were considered to be the personification of the *anti-patria* (the anti-homeland) and therefore opposed to the specific Argentine conflation of God and homeland that the military state represented” (p. 123).

Moreover, the Argentine military *junta* often cooperated with other Latin America dictatorships in a transnational alliance titled Plan Cóndor. This plan operated mostly

throughout the Southern Cone, including Argentina, Chile, Brazil and Uruguay (Finchelstein, 2014). By 1977, the leftist resistance movement was defeated by state repression (Levey, 2016). Argentine society lived in an atmosphere of constant threat. Juan Corradi describes the situation as a 'culture of fear', in which "citizens do not have to be excluded from the political realm; they exclude themselves because they feel so incompetent in the face of such danger" (1992: 1). This way, opposition was non-existent and society would obey in fear.

The greatest fears revolved around the systematic disappearance of people. No one knew of their whereabouts, condition or fate. This way, the perpetrators could not be held accountable (Levey, 2016). Jorge Rafael Videla, dictator and member of the first military *junta* (1976-1980), stated the following about the *desaparecidos*: "It is a mystery, a *desaparecido*, a nonentity, it is not here: they are neither dead nor alive, they disappeared" (quoted in Böhmer 2009: 90). However, kidnappings occurred in the streets and were seen by the public. Witnesses nevertheless chose to ignore atrocities and crimes out of fear (Taylor, 1997). Detainees were taken to clandestine detention centres that functioned outside the regular legal and penal systems. Detention centres were often military or police locations, or private properties that the state rented to execute the repression (Calveiro, 2004).

Within the clandestine centres, torture took place if prisoners did not provide the right answers. Prisoners for example underwent beatings, stabbings, suffocation and electric shocks (Justo, 2003).¹³ The goal was to humiliate the 'enemies', and demonstrate the logic and the greatness of an ideology. In this case, the degradation of the prisoners was justified in the eyes of the regime (Finchelstein, 2014). After the interrogations and systematic torture, the state wanted to dispose detained persons. At times they were buried anonymously in mass graves. Others were drugged and put in to airplanes. They were thrown in the river *Río de la Plata*. These executions were called *vuelos de la muerte* ('death flights'). Another phenomenon that occurred during these years were 'appropriations' of around 500 babies by officials of the military regime. Imprisoned women who were pregnant, had to sit on mats and await the birth of their children (Finchelstein, 2014). Born in captivity, the children were taken away from their detained mothers. They were illegally 'adopted' by families of military officials or other sympathizers of the dictatorship (Levey, 2016).

Despite of the constant danger and repression, relatives of the *desaparecidos* started to organize themselves during this period. They resisted against the state terror. An early example of resistance groups, as stated before, were the *Madres de Plaza de Mayo* and the *Abuelas of Plaza de Mayo* (Ros, 2012). They had started their peaceful walking protest already in 1977. Because of economic mismanagement, a domestic opposition to the established order emerged in the beginning of the 1980s. Likewise, the calls for clarification on the situation of the disappeared became more evident.

¹³ In several ex-clandestine centres like ex-ESMA, Mansión Seré and El Olimpo information panels explain the various ways of the practice of torture and the means used.

In March 1982, the *de facto* president Leopoldo Galtieri (1981-1982, third *junta*) and his government were questioned widely in Argentine civil society. To prove its strength and to create national unity, the military *junta* started the Malvinas/Falkland war against Great Britain in June 1982. However, the state had miscalculated the situation and within a few weeks the British soldiers had won. This contributed heavily to the collapse of the military regime (Levey, 2016).

These different conditions helped realize the *junta* that a regime collapse was inevitable, and the state started to prepare itself on a transition to a democracy. However, they wanted to do it on their own terms. In 1983, just before the democratization, the military regime passed a report named 'Final Document of the Military Junta on the War Against Subversion and Terrorism'. This was part of *junta's* 'Law of National Pacification'. With this document, the military regime tried to amnesty themselves for the violence, repression and terrorism they had caused. They defended their cause by stating that the human rights violation were 'acts of service to the nation'. Finally, they released Decree No. 2726/83, "ordering that incriminating documentation be destroyed" (Levey, 2016: 58).

However, resistance among victims and relatives of disappeared people emerged even before the democratization. These people were called the *afectados directos* ('directly affected') (Levey, 2016). Several human rights bodies led by the *Madres* "denounced the crimes of the armed forces, asked for their children's return and demanded punishment" under the idea of *Verdad y Justicia* (Truth and Justice) (Ros, 2012: 15). They overcame their fear to resist against state repression. Several human rights movements had "stepped up their operations and denunciations", as repression worsened during the years (Levey, 2016: 59). They submitted cases to the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, Amnesty International and the Red Cross. This way, the call for Truth and Justice became increasingly evident in Argentina.

2.2 Government of Raúl Alfonsín (1983-1989)

Raúl Alfonsín was the first president of Argentina after the military dictatorship. He was elected for the presidential office in October 1983. He was a human rights lawyer, and wanted to achieve justice after the years of state terrorism. His objectives were finding out the truth on the disappeared and to prosecute the perpetrators (Levey, 2016). He repealed the 'Law of National Pacification' and ordered a trial against the seven main leaders of the urban guerrilla groups and the members of the first three military *juntas*. Alfonsín charged the leaders of the urban guerrilla groups for "homicide, illicit association, public instigation to commit crimes, apology of crime, and other attacks against public order" and the members of the first three military *juntas* for "homicide, unlawful deprivation of freedom, and torture" (Lessa, 2011: 52). However, his policies were part of a limited justice. This meant that conviction only came to the persons most responsible for the military dictatorship.

Alfonsín laid the basis for the ‘two demons’ theory. The blame was put on the leaders of the urban guerrilla groups and the *juntas*, who fought against each other and caused the many human rights violations. This left the Argentine society as a “passive victim of their violence” (Ros, 2012: 16). Like shown before, the *Nunca Más* report, published in 1984, confirmed Alfonsín’s ideas. The CONADEP, the commission that wrote the report, heard many testimonies from survivors and families of victims (Ros, 2012). The CONADEP staff furthermore listed mass graves, clandestine detention centres and important documents. In the same year as its publication, Alfonsín presented the rapport in a television broadcast. This way, he formally acknowledged the brutality of the state repression (Crenzel, 2011).

However, there was criticism on the *Nunca Más* report as well, mostly provided by other human rights movements. According to them, the report lacked a complete list of military personnel involved in human rights violations (Crenzel, 2011). They furthermore accused the CONADEP of being left-wing sympathizers and revenge-seekers. Finally, the report was “limited only to investigating forced disappearance (excluding torture and illegal detention) and did not examine the *desaparecidos*’ political affiliations” (Levey, 2016: 61). This way, the *Nunca Más* report contributed to the idea of the disappeared as ‘innocent victims’. Because of this, “political involvement became a taboo topic” (Ros, 2012: 17-18).

In 1985, the trial of the military *junta* took place. Argentina was at this point the only country in Latin America that prosecuted the leaders of the dictatorship. Human rights movements nevertheless felt that this was not sufficiently executed for two main reasons. Firstly, they felt that all perpetrators needed to be put on trial, and not only the leaders in the hierarchy. In other words, they wanted to expand the limited justice-approach of Alfonsín. Secondly, they were disappointed in the verdicts of the judges. They had expected more and heavier punishments for the ‘dirty war’ criminals. The *fuerzas armadas* (armed forces), on the other hand, decried the trial because an increasing number of charges emerged against their members. Alfonsín’s government had two choices: either to allow the escalation of the number of trials to happen or to restrict and control it. The government decided to limit the charges by implementing several laws. Human rights movements were especially angered by the ‘Full Stop Law’¹⁴ (1986) and the ‘Due Obedience Law’¹⁵ (1987), controlling the number of new charges against military criminals. The ‘Full Stop Law’ had set a deadline of 60 days to bring new cases to the courts. This, however, created an explosion of new charges and judicial personnel had to work endlessly.

The *Nunca Más* report proved that “there had not been a war but a systematic plan of extermination of those considered political enemies” (Ros, 2012: 17). However, political activities and preferences of victims were withheld from the report and the trials. The media presented testimonies, exhumations and forensic discoveries to Argentine and international spectators. Moreover, movies were made on the subject of the military

¹⁴ *Ley de punto final* (Law 23.492, promulgated on 24 December 1986).

¹⁵ *Ley de obediencia debida* (Law 23.521, promulgated on 4 June 1987).

dictatorship. Protest remained from both human rights movements as the military. The *fuerzas armadas* felt threatened by the increasing perceptibility of the *desaparecidos* in the public sphere. In 1987, Alfonsín sent another decree to Congress to limit even further the scope of new charges. In 1989, he was forced to resign six months before the end of his presidential term, due to the bad economy that was tormenting the country (Lessa, 2011).

2.3 Government of Carlos Saúl Menem (1989-1999)

Carlos Saúl Menem was elected for the presidential office and succeeded Alfonsín in 1989. He wanted to end the problems and social unrest in Argentine society as well. Nevertheless, he used different methods than his predecessor. He granted pardons to the guerrilla leaders and the military *junta* that were already convicted. These actions formed part of trend known as the *políticas de perdón* (policies of pardon). His strategy became known as the 'forgive-and-forget approach' (Lessa, 2013).

As a neoliberalist, Menem wanted to create political stability in Argentina to attract foreign investments. To achieve this, reconciliation was necessary in his beliefs (Ros, 2012). He furthermore desired to restore the military's faith in the government, and wanted to forgive past crimes by granting pardons but punishing present and future disobedience (Lessa, 2011). Although Menem's government had declared the pardons irrevocable, the *políticas de perdón* aggravated massive popular demonstrations. In July 1989, Menem announced his first set of pardons, benefitting 277 military personnel involved in human rights violations; some of those sentenced for the failure of the Falklands War or for participating in the 1980s military rebellions; Uruguayan military officers accused of illegal repression in Buenos Aires; and 64 *guerrilleros*. As a result, the first round of rebellion emerged in Argentine society. However, this event was followed by another wave of pardons in December 1990. This time, Menem pardoned perpetrators who were already convicted. Nearly 80 percent of the Argentines opposed to these pardons (Lessa, 2011). 'National reconciliation' became Menem's primary objective over pursuing further judicial investigation (Méndez, 1987). In December 1990, the most bloody rebellion, led by Mohamed Alí Seineldín, took place. Mohamed Alí Seineldín was a Christian Argentine nationalist and army colonel who was involved in two uprisings against respectively Alfonsín and Menem. He opposed the legal proceedings made by the Argentine government against army officers accused of human rights abuses during the military dictatorship. This uprising was defeated violently by the armed forces. To control the country, Menem's administration made a deal with the military: they would have to obey the governments orders on preventing chaos, and in return they would be granted pardons (Lessa, 2011).

Due to Menem's pardons and impunity laws, the human rights community underwent serious damage in their quest for conviction. Until the mid-1990s, they lacked visibility in the public sphere (Jelin, 1998). Because human rights movements did not have access to the national jurisdictional institutions, they successfully started petitioning

foreign courts to investigate their cases. In 1992, the Menem government partly implemented a policy of reparations for victims. The state did not, however, actively pursue clarification on the disappeared at this point (Levey, 2016).

In 1995, a former naval officer called Adolfo Scilingo confessed the human rights violations in an interview with Horacio Verbitsky. In this televised broadcast, he admitted his involvement in the notorious death flights. He confirmed he had participated in two death flights in 1977. He had thrown approximately 30 people, who were still alive but drugged, in the *Río de la Plata* (Lessa, 2011). The news was published in Argentine newspaper *Página 12* and in a book titled *El Vuelo* (Banega, 2006). By confirming what was widely suspected, he broke the military's 'pact of silence' and marked a "turning point in the formation of collective memory" (Ros, 2012: 20). Other officers followed Scilingo's example. Among them were naval captain and former *junta* member Massera, navy member Julián Simón and police chief Victor Ibáñez. Chief of Staff of the Army Lieutenant General Martín Balza likewise acknowledged the role of the army in the state repression on national television (Levey, 2016). This way, the perpetrators could no longer deny the state repression, and human rights movements were finally believed in their statements. Menem, however, remained opposed to the investigation of the past. He explained that the dictatorship marked a period of 'massive confrontation'. He used the 'two demons theory' as justification for not pursuing justice (Levey, 2016).

On the other side of society the *Madres and Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo* started 'Trials for Truth' and accused perpetrators of taking prisoners' babies and giving them to supporters of the regime. This act was called 'appropriation' (Ros, 2012). They did not necessarily charge to convict, since that was not possible due to Menem's pardons. Their demand for trials however contributed to public knowledge, pressure on the military and eventually the reopening of cases. A new group of human rights movements emerged from the children of the *desaparecidos*. An example are the *Hijos e Hijas por la Identidad y la Justicia contra el Olvido y el Silencio* (H.I.J.O.S.).¹⁶ One of the ways in which human rights communities, like for example the H.I.J.O.S., received their attention was by organization *escraches* ('public denunciation', 'exposure protest'). These are "noisy demonstrations in which participants identify and publicize the homes and workplaces of those accused of human rights abuses" (Levey, 2016: 9). Other resistance movements soon joined the H.I.J.O.S. This post-dictatorship generation raised once again awareness for the need for *Memoria, Verdad y Justicia* (Memory, Truth and Justice). This way, human rights movements that had been pushed to the background by the *políticas de perdón*, were now again in the centre of the public sphere. The period of 1995 to 2003 became later known as the 'boom of memory' (Jelin, 2003). In this fertile period, the media created reconstructions of the crimes of the dictatorship, art revolved around human rights violations and memorial services attracted almost all parts of society (Ros, 2012). Nevertheless, the traditional idea of the disappeared as innocent the victims started to change. People began to take into account the political activity of victims of the state terrorism (Levey, 2016).

¹⁶ Translation: Sons and Daughters for Identity and Justice against Oblivion and Silence.

Places of memory and archives were inaugurated on a national scale. An example is the *Parque de la Memoria* (Memorial Park) in Buenos Aires, which was opened on July 21, 1998. The opening, however, caused an intense debate on how to remember the past of military dictatorship. The growing popular support for truth and justice was reinforced by the prosecution of Jorge Rafael Videla on charges of participation in Operation Cóndor. He was arrested and charged with the aid and complicity of kidnapping children in 1998. The same year, the Buenos Aires Federal Court decided that the Due Obedience Law did not cover this act. Because Operation Cóndor was an international criminal complot, it could not be protected by national amnesty laws. Videla's arrest was followed by many other cases. The result was that Congress repealed both the Due Obedience Law and the Full Stop Law. This decision was, of course, not retroactive. It did, nevertheless, prevent future applications of it to past crimes. Furthermore, the judiciary now became the most dominant factor in deciding over the conviction of perpetrators from the military dictatorship. The government could no longer overridingly use the policies of impunity (Levey, 2016).

From the year 2000 onwards, people started to compare victims of the military regime with current victims, like people who suffered from social exclusion. In 2001, an economic crisis caused by the neoliberalist policies of Carlos Menem led to unemployment, poverty and hunger. This way, people linked the problems of the past to that of the present. The *desaparecidos* now became a symbol for social justice (Ros, 2012).

2.4 Government of Néstor Kirchner (2003-2007)

Néstor Kirchner became president on May 25, 2003. He would not be *otro gobierno, otra impunidad* (another government, another impunity). During his presidential campaign, he announced to repeal the 'forgiveness laws' implemented under Carlos Menem. In his inaugural speech on the Plaza de Mayo, he declared the "continuation of the Peronist legacy and vindication of past militancy, closely allying himself with the victims, survivors and activists" (Levey, 2016: 87).

He abolished the non-extradition decree, which authorized the automatic denial of extradition requests of members of the military. This decree was signed by his predecessor Fernando de la Rúa. Furthermore, he replaced the top of the military and the Supreme Court justices who had supported Menem's pardons of the 'automatic majority' (Ros, 2012). *De facto*, he forced 27 army generals, 12 air force brigadiers, and 13 naval army admirals into retirement. He also 'purified' the federal police. This way, Kirchner removed the last remaining connection with the dictatorship (Lessa, 2011). Most importantly, he performed significant symbolic acts of reparation for the victims. Firstly, he ordered the takedown of the portraits of former dictators Massera and Videla of the Military College building. His most famous action regarding the military dictatorship, however, is the opening of ex-ESMA (*Escuela Superior de Mecánica de la Armada*), a former clandestine detention centre, in 2004. At this location, people who were suspected of state betrayal were held captive. It was infamous for the cruelty of its tortures. Kirchner placed

the memorial site under civilian control (Rajca, 2018). During this event, he asked for forgiveness for the genocide in name of the Argentine state. According to Ros, “this institution joined smaller *lugares de memoria* and inspired the creation of others” (2012: 22). In addition, Kirchner provided federal funding “to establish it as a space of cultural memory, the buildings used for detention and torture during the dictatorship, the varied activities of the different human rights organizations housed at the site, exhibits and archives related to the disappeared” (Rajca, 2018: 143). For the first time, the state participated in projects relating to state terrorism, creating monuments that provide “a site of mourning, personal, familial, social and national, recognizing the private drama of relatives and allocating a space for national mourning” (Lessa, 2011: 77).

Kirchner furthermore declared March 24, the National Day of Memory, as a national holiday. In 2005, Kirchner’s administration signed a decree with the local government, ordering that former torture centre El Olimpo was converted into a memorial museum (Jorquera, 2005). In 2006, he ordered the rewriting of the CONADEP prologue of the *Nunca Más* report. This stated that “left-wing violence was not equivalent to that committed by the state” (Levey, 2016: 87). This counterattacked the prevailing idea of two demons confronting each other. In 2007, he signed an agreement between the federal government and the provincial government of Córdoba, declaring former clandestine centre La Perla as a memorial site. He moreover attended the opening of La Perla, and used his appearance to reiterate his support for the trials. Néstor Kirchner’s various initiatives were emblematic for a new approach towards the past, heralded in by *kirchnerismo*.

Nevertheless, Néstor Kirchner also received a lot of criticism on his policies. People feel he had taken credit for the enormous judicial changes that had developed long before he ever started his presidential office. He was, moreover, criticized for using the human rights issue to win over public opinion during his campaign (Majal, 2007). In other words, critics felt like he had abused the past for his own political purposes. People questioned the depth of Kirchner’s commitment to human rights. Some of them pointed out that Kirchner never had been preoccupied with human rights before he ran for president (Lessa, 2011).

However, the majority of public opinion experienced his continuing judicial efforts to convict criminals of the dictatorship. Particularly human rights organizations were rejoiced they had found a president who, after years of fighting decisions the state, was finally willing to take up their cause and facilitate justice. For example, Kirchner played a significant role in the conviction of former navy commander Ricardo Cavallo. Cavallo had been arrested in Mexico in 2000, and was charged with torture (Piqué, 2003). Kirchner moreover retired a number of military personnel and appointed a civilian politician to the Ministry of Defence (Roehring, 2009). This way, he expressed his oppositional stance on the Due Obedience and Full Stop Laws. Congress approved Law 25.779 in August 2003, annulling the Due Obedience and Full Stop Laws. In June 2005, Supreme Court decided that amnesties given by Congress were unconstitutional. Because of this, pardons were withdrawn. In other words, Supreme Court nullified the impunity laws. From 2006 onwards, more trials took place for the first time in twenty years, including on civilians

like members of the clergy or the judiciary (Rebossio, 2014). For the first time, people started to describe and perceive the atrocities of the military dictatorship as a genocide.

Nevertheless, the trials also conceived negative consequences. People stressed that not every victim wanted to go to court. Some of them just wanted to find out the truth instead of being caught up in long-term trials. In other cases, witnesses felt intimidated by their opponent (Lessa, 2011).

In 2007, Néstor Kirchner attended the inauguration of the Monument for the Victims of State Terror. Together with his wife, whom had just been elected for the next presidential term, he joined the opening ceremony. The ceremony took place in the Memorial Park in Buenos Aires. In his speech, he emphasized his support for human rights trials and his explicit criticism of slow judicial processes. By doing this, he reinforced the government's commitment to human rights (Kirchner, 2007).¹⁷

2.5 Government of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (2007-2015)

As her husband's successor, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner continued Néstor's work. She continued the federal funding for memorial places and human rights activities. Because human rights movements demanded its opening as a memorial place and visitors centre, ex-ESMA became more accessible to tourists. In 2008, the *Centro Cultural Haroldo Conti* (Cultural Centre Haroldo Conti) was inaugurated. Named after the disappeared writer and activist Conti, the cultural centre explains its main objectives:

“With the challenge of contributing to redefining this site of horror, a space of creation, reflection, and dissemination of the culture of memory and human rights was created... Transforming this emblematic space of imprisonment, exclusion, and death into a space of life open to the community is the most important commitment and challenge to the construction of memory, truth, and justice”.¹⁸

In 2011, the government administration approved Law No. 26.691 that “gives any sites that operated as clandestine detention centres prior to 1983 the title ‘site of memory’ and guarantees their protection against commodification and destruction” (Levey, 2016: 195). In 2012, a permanent exhibition titled *El terrorismo de Estado en la Argentina* (state terrorism in Argentina) was installed in the *Cuatro Columnas* building, the most famous building of the memorial site. Information panels and images provided an insight to the history and consequences of state violence in Argentina. Next to providing information on ex-ESMA, the exhibit focused on other memorial sites in Buenos Aires as well. Examples

¹⁷ “Discurso de Néstor Kirchner en la inauguración del Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado, en el Parque de la Memoria” (2007)

¹⁸ Original text: “Con el desafío de contribuir a la resignificación de este predio al horror, se construyó... un espacio de creación, reflexión y difusión de la cultura de la memoria y los derechos humanos. Transformar este lugar emblemático de privación, exclusión y muerte en un espacio de vida abierto a la comunidad es el mayor compromiso y desafío para contribuir a la construcción de memoria, verdad y justicia” (introduction posted at the entrance to the Conti building, 2018).

are Automotores Orletti, Garaje El Olimpo and Club Atlético. In 2010, families of victims, survivors, neighbours and other affected people were allowed to spray graffiti on the walls of these smaller ex-clandestine centres. Up until today, visitors are able to see artworks on state terrorism, repression, abduction and murder during the military dictatorship, from the perspective of the artists. This way, the community was able to leave its cultural and artistic mark on the former detention centres. In 2014, control over ex-ESMA was given to the federal government. The Space of Memory Institute was furthermore incorporated into the national Advisory Council for Public Memory Policy (Rajca, 2018).

Rajca confirms that “small guided tour groups can view the building where most of the torture and detention occurred in the ESMA complex” (2018: 143). Nevertheless, the tour groups not only consist of tourists. The groups are often composed of people who were tortured in the space or knew someone who was as well, and younger people who learn about the military dictatorship in school. Graduate students, who provide basic information about the ex-clandestine centre, lead the groups (Rajca, 2018).

From 2009 onwards, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner furthermore started trials for employees of detention centres or accomplices of repressive events during the military dictatorship. These trials were divided among cases and ‘mega-cases’, and were carried out on a national scale (Ros, 2012). The trials took place at the same locations as where the crimes were committed. Although the crimes were executed three decades ago, the sites could still establish the environment in which the human rights violations took place. This would make up for the temporal remove of the trials. All Argentines were allowed to witness the proceedings. However, people had to explain whether they were on the side of the victims/prosecutors or the accused. The answer decided their seating within the courtroom (Kaiser, 2017).

The Centre of Legal and Social Studies (CELS) published its annual report in 2010, expressing criticism on the progress of reparation of the past. They believed that there existed a shortage in courtrooms for trials. Moreover, the system of formal justice developed rather slowly. Most importantly, witnesses were easy to intimidate, causing a deficiency in the truth (CELS, 2010). Furthermore, of the persons charged with crimes committed during the dictatorship, many could not be brought to court. They were either waiting for their extradition or had already passed away (Levey, 2016). Nevertheless, Cristina continued her efforts. In March 2011, civilian collaboration in the human rights violations were investigated. In July 2011, 187 out of 1757 persons were convicted. Moreover, 427 were put in preventive custody (Ros, 2012). Although there was still criticism of the inertia of sentences, in the report of 2013, the government received more praise (CELS, 2013). In October 2014, the Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo had recuperated 115 children that were appropriated by the military regime (Kaiser, 2017). Between 2008 and 2015, 500 perpetrators had been convicted and 213 trials were announced (Levey, 2016).

People were furthermore able to question the role of society as an innocent victim, without being perceived as defenders of state terrorism. A more critical approach towards the memory of the military dictatorship became possible. Under the presidency of both

Néstor Kirchner and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner the “traditional banners of truth, justice and memory championed by activists have been now elevated to national duties by the government” (Lessa, 2011: 79). Justice was now finally within reach, and justice for the crimes of the dictatorship had now become part of the official state policy. However, warns Levey (2016), this does not mean the definitive end of impunity.

2.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, several events that took place from the military dictatorship until the present-day government shaped Argentina’s cultural memory. This chapter firstly discussed the developments under the military regime. It explained about the new economic structure and the rejection of leftist ideas, and people suspected of being a Marxist. The idea of the ‘internal enemies’ formed part of the ‘dirty war’. Human rights violations that took place during these years consisted of kidnapping, disappearance, unjustifiable imprisonment in clandestine detention centres, tortures, the stealing of babies, execution and the notorious death flights. However, in this atmosphere of constant threat, resistance emerged against the state repression. In 1983, when it was clear the military regime was going to collapse, the *junta* passed the ‘Law of National Pacification’ to avoid prosecution. Nevertheless, human rights bodies kept on demanding truth and justice, and started to submit cases to foreign courts.

Under first democratic president after the military dictatorship, Raúl Alfonsín, the ‘Law of National Pacification’ was repealed. He ordered trials against several criminals. Furthermore, he laid the basis for the ‘two demons’ theory. This was confirmed by the *Nunca Más* report of 1984. Alfonsín acknowledged the atrocities of the military dictatorship in a life television broadcast. However, there existed many criticism on the report as well. Alfonsín’s administration later decided to limit the accessibility of trials by signing the ‘Full Stop Law’ (1986) and the ‘Due Obedience Law’ (1987), which contributed to the idea of limited justice.

As part of the policies of pardon, Carlos Menem granted pardons to perpetrators of the military *junta*. He wanted to establish national reconciliation to create political and economic stability. The *políticas de perdón* aggravated massive popular demonstrations. Until the mid-1990s, human rights movements and their demands were pushed to the background. However, after a few perpetrators broke the military’s ‘pact of silence’ by admitting to their crimes, human rights movement could once again demand for truth and justice. A famous strategy were the *escraches*. Menem nevertheless, used the ‘two demons theory’ to not pursue justice. On the contrary, places of memory and archives were opened during Menem’s presidency, like the Memorial Park in Buenos Aires. Even more, Videla was arrested and convicted.

Néstor Kirchner used a completely different approach. He repealed the impunity laws signed by Menem. Moreover, he performed symbolic acts, like the opening of several ex-clandestine detention centres. At the inauguration of ex-ESMA, he asked for a pardon

for the human rights violations in name of the state. He furthermore provided federal funding for the places of memory and declared March 24 as the National Day of Memory.

Néstor's wife and presidential successor Cristina Fernández de Kirchner continued the commitment of the state to human rights. For example, Cultural Centre Haroldo Conti was opened in 2008. In 2011, all former clandestine detention centres were declared 'site of memory' by law. During this period, the memorial sites were open to visitors, and there were organized tours available at ex-ESMA, for example. In 2009, she initiated trials against employees of detention centres and accomplices. In March 2011, civilian collaboration in the human rights violations were investigated. People were now allowed to question the role of society as an innocent victim, without being perceived as defenders of state terrorism.

In short, the creation of cultural memory and the quest for memory, truth and justice had already started during the military dictatorship. Afterwards, different governments took different approaches on the subject. However, memory tourism became only possible after the opening of clandestine detention centres, cultural centres and archives, more or less during the Kirchner governments.

CHAPTER 3

MEMORY TOURISM AND PRESENT-DAY HERITAGE POLICIES: AN ANALYSING ENCOUNTER

This chapter provides an analysis of cultural memory policies in Argentina. Furthermore, it will describe the objectives of the places of memory. Additionally, the relationship between cultural patrimony and tourism will be examined in order to evaluate which actors are of importance to the creation of cultural memory.

The method of research, which is used to collect data, is a qualitative research in which several semi-structured interviews were conducted in Argentina in the period of mid-November 2018 until mid-January 2019. The interviewees consist, among others, of a group of employees and/or guides at the ex-detention centres ESMA, El Olimpo and Mansión Seré. Additionally, several professors of Universities have been interviewed to include a perspective from an academic level. Furthermore, several of the interviewees are participants of the CONICET/IDES: *Núcleo de Estudios sobre Memoria*.¹⁹ With the information provided by the interviewees, an analysis will be constructed.

3.1 Places of memory in the Argentine context

In Argentina, people prefer referring to places of memory as ‘sites of memory’ or ‘spaces of memory’. Pierre Nora’s terminology of *lugares de memoria*, however accurate, is used much less in Argentina. In the first place, sites or spaces of memory are the places where state terrorism took place. It is a place where the past is being set out. They are places that demonstrate death and atrocity. An important concept is that of hostile patrimony. Because of this, they are part of the movement called ‘dark tourism’. The spaces of memory exist to maintain the national conscience of history and recuperate the victims. They remind its visitors of what history took place at this particular location. They furthermore have been turned into memorial sites, to commemorate the people who suffered under the military regime. The idea is that everyone could be an ‘internal enemy’ and victim of state terrorism; hence, the scale of victims is very large. Nevertheless, visitors should know the identity of the victims. The memorial sites mark their footsteps in society. However, the debate on places of memory is very large. A few important differences need to be taken into account.

There seems to be a debate on what belongs to the concept of spaces of memory. Spaces of memory are the places where the crimes committed during the military

¹⁹ The Core of Memory Studies brings together researchers and university professors interested in addressing, from an academic perspective, studies on memory, with emphasis on the Southern Cone of Latin America. This Centre was created in the year 2001, in the context of the Institute of Economic and Social Development (IDES) (*Núcleo de Estudios sobre Memoria*).

dictatorship took place. These ex-clandestine detention centres are converted into spaces of memory by the efforts of human rights movements. Following this definition, however, *Parque de la Memoria*, a park that commemorates victims of the military regime as well, would not be marked as space of memory. However, places of memory are not only ex-detention centres. There is a discussion among several human rights movements and involved state institutions on if memorial parks, monuments or museums of sites are part of places of memory. The answer depends on what definition of places of memory is used. This research will reason from the following definition:

“A site of memory is a place where the incidents of the military dictatorship are being commemorated” (Nuria Burak, interview with the author, 2018).²⁰

In this way, all places that commemorate and honour the victims of the military regime will be adopted as places of memory. Furthermore, places of memory are sites where the state realizes its policies of memory. For example, many places of memory are open to social projects, supported by the state. In addition, there are two ways of describing places of memory:

“The first is theoretical: they are museums and other patrimonial sites. The places of memory need to be supported by the state. The second is empirical: they are places of truth and justice. There is much dispute on the empirical definition. Therefore, the places of memory are hotspots for discussion” (María Jazmín Ohanian, interview with the author, 2018).²¹

In other words, the theoretical definition focusses more on the official requirements for being registered as a place of memory, while the empirical definition is more about the discussion on the functions of the memorial places. There is, however a third way to distinct the concept of places of memory:

“It is a space that can be defined in three ways: spatialization, territorialization and patrimonialization. All ways exist for recovery, so one can rebuild the past. Spatialization means the materials, texts and photos of a certain place make it what it is in the present. This could be shaped by the artistic interventions from the neighbourhood. For example, the paintings on the walls of the clandestine centres. This furthermore evaluates how policies had given the painters the opportunity to do this. Territorialization emphasizes the institutional role. It takes a look at the question on how human rights organizations deal with the places of memory. Patrimonialization is a part of memory strategies. Then there exists a relationship between memory and patrimonialization. Important for the places are access, memory policies, preservation, and conservation and so on. However, every clandestine centre is different, so there exists no ‘Argentine case’” (Silvina Fabri, interview with the author, 2019).²²

²⁰ Own translation from Spanish.

²¹ Own translation from Spanish.

²² Own translation from Spanish.

By giving places a certain status, they are being officially recognized by both state and society. Therefore, patrimonialization protects memorial sites from political changes in the future. In short, there are different costumes regarding cultural memory in other regions, which are reflected in the way places of memory are being maintained and displayed. Furthermore, memorial sites can be in operation because of demands from civil society, actions of human rights bodies or policies of the state. In other words, the definition of places of memory differs depending on the location or dominant actors in the creation of them.

In conclusion, although Nora's title of *lugares de memoria* is being replaced by *sitios de memoria* or *espacios de memoria* in Argentina, it is still the accurate starting point for the definition. Notwithstanding that, there is a debate on what phenomena regarding cultural memory belong to the definition, places of memory are the places where the events of the military dictatorship are being commemorated and the victims of the military regime are being honoured. This way, not only ex-clandestine detention centres are part of places of memory, but monuments, memorial parks and museums as well.

There is, furthermore, a distinction between the theoretical approach, which focusses on the juridical terms of a place of memory, and the empirical approach, which underlines the immaterial significance. This coincides with Nora's argument on how *lieux de mémoire* turn memory into history. The ex-clandestine centres are not subject to manipulation and measure up to Nora's two conditions for being a place of memory: a will to remember and the evolution of a certain place throughout time. Lastly, there exists a division in the categories of memorial sites: spatialization, territorialization and patrimonialization. However, the exact definition and meaning of a place of memory depends on several matters and is never the same.

3.2 Functions of former clandestine centres: ex-ESMA, El Olimpo and Mansión Seré

At ex-ESMA, the objectives of *memoria, verdad y justicia* are written on several information panels at the memorial site. However, the ex-detention centres have several and complex functions. According to Ignacio Modenesi, guide at ex-ESMA, it is like a cube in the soup²³: the number of objectives increase and ferment each other. In the first place, ex-ESMA contains and explains the history of what happened at this location during the military dictatorship. Telling the story of the events that occurred seems to be the most important objective of these sites of memory.

“Visitors must understand that, in this place, systematic crimes took place against humanity, planned and organized by the state” (Roberto Bertellotti, interview with the author, 2018).²⁴

²³ Original text: *es como un cubo en la sopa*.

²⁴ Own translation from Spanish.

By the recuperation of memory, the places of memory honour the victims by giving new meaning to the sites. Furthermore, another significant objective is the condemnation of human rights violations (Espacio Memoria y Derechos Humanos ex ESMA). Another important goal of the former clandestine centres, is the demanding and providing of justice. It not only promotes the battle fought by human rights movements, it provides evidence for trials against perpetrators of the Dirty War as well. Moreover, it provides materials to study. The concept of *nunca más* (never again), which has been discussed earlier in this research, seems to have a dominant influence in the guidelines of the former clandestine centres. An important goal is that visitors should learn from the past, to prevent it from happening in the future:

“The places of memory have a clear objective in relation to the education, awareness and reflection of the traumatic events of the recent Argentine past; that's why I think they are presented to the visitors as educational spaces oriented to awaken a critical look at the historical past” (Florencia Larralde Armas, interview with the author, 2019).²⁵

Through political reflection, provided by the memorial sites, visitors must try to understand the past profoundly. Although it is never possible to understand everything that happened in one visit, one must think on how the past influences us. Moreover, visitors must pass on the message to following generations, in order that the human rights violations of the military regime will never be forgotten. However, the past is never a guarantee for the future.

“People change and ideas as well. After the First World War, people never wanted to experience such atrocities again. However, twenty years later, the Second World War still took place” (M.J. Ohanian, interview with the author, 2019).²⁶

Nevertheless, the past can provide a lesson for the present. It can present an insight on the current situation. In other words, the past can provide answers to present problems in not only Argentina, but in the rest of the world as well. This is part of a ‘pedagogy of memory’ (Bertellotti, interview with the author, 2018). For example, the idea of the ‘internal enemy’, which was applied to leftists during the military dictatorship, is still present in Argentine society anno 2019.

“Nowadays there is a lot of protest against poor immigrants, who are seen as dangerous. I think we need to apply the idea of 'never again' to this phenomenon. We have to see what society did during the dictatorship to allow human rights violations. During the dictatorship, the 'internal enemy' were the communists. Another example of a present-day 'inner enemy' is Santiago, a boy who was killed by the police. He was Mapuche, and that is why a part of society do not believe it was wrong. The Mapuches, from the perspective of the 'internal enemy', are dangerous. There is furthermore a stigmatization on poor

²⁵ Own translation from Spanish.

²⁶ Own translation from Spanish.

immigrants from Bolivia, or poor black people. This way, the concept of 'internal enemy' can be applied to many groups in Argentine society" (Maryline Joncquel, interview with the author, 2019).²⁷

However, the idea of *nunca más* does not limit itself to the memorial sites. The concept is dominant in the memorial policies movement as a whole. Besides the universal objectives of the ex-clandestine centres, there are noteworthy differences between the larger, better known ex-ESMA on the one hand, and the smaller centres of El Olimpo and Mansión Seré on the other. Firstly, it is important to take into account that all sites of memory have their own, specific functions. Ex-ESMA is a national emblem of cultural memory of the dictatorship (Adriana d'Ottavio, interview with the author, 2019). Because of the many survivors, ex-ESMA is the most well-known site of memory.

"ESMA is the most important space in Argentina, because there are the most survivors. That is why there are also many stories to construct memory. There is a big financial circulation to maintain ESMA. That is why ESMA is like the vitrine of the memory of the military dictatorship and human rights" (M.J. Ohanian, interview with the author, 2018).²⁸

In short, there is a large focus on ex-ESMA. In comparison, El Olimpo and Mansión Seré have a local significance. An important objective of El Olimpo is the inclusion of the neighbourhood community in the recognition and legitimization by the district as a place of memory and political organization that contributes to rebuild the social bond that was devastated by the dictatorship (Report on ex "Olimpo"). There exists a relationship between the neighbourhood, society and the former clandestine centre during and after its operation.

"I would prefer to see ex-Olimpo as one of the rings of a chain. The chain represents the persecution, terrorism of the state and the dictatorship in general. During the military dictatorship, there was a profound plan on what the dictatorship was. There was an economic model that was necessary to end the struggle of the classes from the left. In conclusion, it [Olimpo] was not a big symbol of the dictatorship, but one of the parts of a process" (M. Joncquel, interview with the author, 2019).²⁹

In this way, Mansión Seré was likewise one of the spokes of the hub. Mansión Seré, located in the Municipal Sports Centre Gorki Grana, was in the year 2000 the first ex-clandestine centre where a memorial museum was established. Mansión Seré wants to take things a step further by fighting until discrimination and violence will not occur anymore (Ballestero, 2013). In both Mansión Seré and El Olimpo, there exists a major influence of the neighbourhood. In Mansión Seré, the local community organizes regular reunions. They focus for example on the preservation of the indigenous culture. One can encounter many works of art on the walls of the former clandestine centres El Olimpo and Mansión

²⁷ Own translation from Spanish.

²⁸ Own translation from Spanish.

²⁹ Own translation from Spanish.

Seré. These are often made by local artists who express their vision on the state terrorism of the military dictatorship.

In conclusion, several objectives are important for the previously named former clandestine centres. All ex-detention centres explain the crimes that were committed during the military dictatorship. Justice is a significant concept when it comes to the main goals of these memorial sites. The places of memory provide evidence for trials and materials to study. This coincides with Levey, who states that the sites of memory formed evidence for the national trials. It furthermore honours the victims of state terrorism by recuperating memory, and it promotes the fight that has been executed by human rights movements. This way, both Ros (2002) and Rajca (2012) are right by claiming that an image emerged of the victims as 'heroes'. Isla (2016) is likewise right by explaining that victims were transformed into 'emblematic subjects' due to the places of memory.

Moreover, the idea of *nunca más* is present in the memorial places. Notwithstanding that, the past can never guarantee the future; it can always provide a mirror on what is happening in the present. There is an interaction between past and present. The past can provide examples of similar phenomena that occurred earlier in history, whereas the present can provide an insight in the past through still existing evidence. This affirms the notion of Rajca: people never want a conflictive past like this to happen again. It furthermore confirms the argument of Várques (2016), who writes about the educational component of *nunca más*. Ros, however, is not completely right by explaining that the patrimonial sites form a lesson for the future. The future, as argued before, can never be guaranteed.

However, there is a slight difference between ex-ESMA on the one hand, and El Olimpo and Mansión Seré on the other. Ex-ESMA is better known for two reasons. Firstly, there exist many survivors; hence, there is a lot of evidence on what happened in this particular centre. Secondly, ex-ESMA has turned into a national emblem, a symbol of Argentina's cultural memory of the dictatorship. Here, as Rajca argues, tourists can reflect upon broader notions of human rights. This way, there seems to be more of a relationship between human rights movements and tourism, notwithstanding that it is an indirect relationship. El Olimpo and Mansión Seré were part of a systematic process, organized by the military regime. They have a local significance, and are more linked to their neighbourhoods. Therefore, participation of local residents is more important in these smaller sites of memory.

3.3 Evolution of memory tourism, 'touristification' and 'merchandizing' in Argentina

In the last few years, international interest in the memorial sites of Argentina has increased significantly. In 2000, the first ex-detention centre opened. In the last four years, tourists started visiting ex-ESMA. However, this does not specifically mean there is a process of 'touristification'. Tourism seems to be more a consequence of certain state policies than a goal. There is an increasing foreign interest in Argentina's places of

memory. They are the result of the opening of the different ex-clandestine centres. Because the ex-detention centres were finally made accessible for people to see, more tourists started to visit the places of memory, curious about Argentina's clandestine political past.

It is important to distinguish the better-known ex-ESMA and *Parque de la Memoria* from the lesser-known 'local' sites like El Olimpo and Mansión Seré. In the case of ex-ESMA, there seems to be an expanding memory tourism. The same applies to the *Parque de la Memoria*, which is visited broadly by presidents from other countries. However, these places of memory are not designed as tourist attractions. Tourist purposes are not the goal of ex-ESMA. Furthermore, ex-ESMA is not only being visited by tourists, but by other people as well. For example, many schools or leftist students visit the ex-detention centre to learn more about the past. This way, one can speak of an 'academic tourism'. However, ex-ESMA does contain a European design to facilitate an easier access for the international tourists (M.J. Ohanian, interview with the author, 2018). Furthermore, in ex-ESMA, tours are available in Spanish, English and Portuguese. Moreover, there is a museum located on the terrain. Ex-ESMA is currently consulting with tourist agencies, but in an independent way. The objective of this, nevertheless, is not stimulating tourism. For the places of memory, there would still be no economic gains. It is stimulating knowledge: all visitors need to know what happened. This way, one could argue that ex-ESMA or *Parque de la Memoria* have more educative objectives than touristic. This can be illustrated with an example explained by Florencia Larralde Armas.

"Firstly, at the national level the objectives were articulated with the Ministry of Education and not with tourism and secondly there is no policy in which the Ministry of Tourism intervenes to provide information, brochures and more for foreigners who come to the country" (F. Armas, interview with the author, 2019).³⁰

One could argue that there exists a marginal 'touristification' in the case of *Parque de la Memoria* and ex-ESMA. Ignacio Modenesi provides the following example:

"I think the 'touristification' is very marginal here. Not like in Auschwitz or Sachsenhausen. Here is more respect, content and a lot of attention is paid to the stories of the survivors. It exists so that the Argentines can say: "I survived the military dictatorship". There are no hotels near ex-ESMA, and people don't take selfies or photos. For example, in Auschwitz many people take pictures with the *Arbeit Macht Frei* poster" (I. Modenesi, interview with the author, 2018).³¹

María Jazmín Ohanian shows another example:

"One exception to this is ESMA, which perhaps has a small-scale touristification. Nevertheless, it is not like the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam. However, for ESMA to

³⁰ Own translation from Spanish.

³¹ Own translation from Spanish.

become the Anne Frank House, it only lacks time” (M.J. Ohanian, interview with the author, 2018).³²

In conclusion, there will be an augmenting interest from international tourists in ex-ESMA. Because of this, tourism will increase in the future and the process of ‘touristification’ will most likely accelerate. The cases of El Olimpo and Mansión Seré are, as explained before, different. There is almost no tourism in El Olimpo and Mansión Seré, because a visit to these places does not seem to be part of a vacation in Argentina. The majority of the visitors are students, schools and neighbours who want to learn more about their own past and the history of the neighbourhood. Maryline Joncquel explains that if there even exists tourism in El Olimpo, it is improvised:

“In Olimpo texts are only in Castilian, not in English. We are working to improve that, but now they do not exist. We have guided tours, but more for schools. However, if someone wants to, we try to do the tour in English or Portuguese. Nevertheless, there is not an official guided tour in English. Therefore, that is the exception” (M. Joncquel, interview with the author, 2019).³³

In Mansión Seré there are likewise no promotions for tourists to visit the memorial site. The only form of promotion of these kind of places are for schools to visit the memorial sites. In both smaller ex-detention centres, the activities and museums do not have tourism as a specific goal. Therefore, ‘touristification’ is non-existent in the smaller ex-clandestine centres:

“I think the concept of ‘touristification’ is not a notion that makes sense in the practices that have been carried out in the country. There is an effort for the world to know the recent past of Argentina and foreigners are encouraged to visit the sites, but this phenomenon is very incipient and is not institutionalized as a state or civil policy or objective” (F. Larralde Armas, interview with the author, 2019).³⁴

Next to the difference between ex-ESMA and smaller ex-clandestine centres, this research furthermore takes a gaze at the role of the market and a potential merchandize of cultural memory in the case of Argentina.

There exists a small market on the margins of Argentine society. For example, people can buy t-shirts with a drawing or image of a *pañuelo*³⁵ online. This market, however, seems to be from outside, caused by increasing globalization. From globalization, the circulation of images has emerged. Examples are the image of Che Guevara or the *pañuelo*. However, this market of political images is not initiated by the state, human rights movements or the *Madres* and *Abuelas* themselves. The only way in which there would be a market, is when one would buy *pañuelos* or t-shirts with certain

³² Own translation from Spanish.

³³ Own translation from Spanish.

³⁴ Own translation from Spanish.

³⁵ A *pañuelo* is a white headscarf the *Madres* and *Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo* wear during their silent protest. Nowadays it is a symbol of resistance against the military regime.

logos for protest marches. For example, the green *pañuelos* represent the struggle for legalization of abortion in present-day Argentina. This way, organizing groups can pay the costs. There is, nevertheless, not a pursuit of profit. It is undeniable that certain emblems of the Argentine struggle for justice exist on the market. The question, however, seems to be how much time is needed for these symbols to turn into merchandized logos. Nevertheless, at present the *pañuelos* are a political symbol, and not a souvenir:

“I don’t think if that there is a merchandizing. Anyway, not at the level of Che Guevara, for example. Buying images of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo is not part of a merchandizing, but rather a political symbol. That way, with the images etcetera, the fight is recognized. For example, many people who buy a T-shirt with the image of Che do not know who he was and what he had done. However, people who buy a *pañuelo* or a T-shirt with the image of a *pañuelo* know what the symbol stands for. They know who the Mothers were and what they are still doing. In this case, there is a political and military conscience about the product they buy” (M. Joncquel, interview with the author, 2019).³⁶

“I do not think there is a merchandizing of memory, because there is not enough capacity or interest to do this. The memory debate is complicated in Argentina. Yes, you can buy things that symbolize the fight against dictatorship, but it is part of a self-invented and unauthorized circuit. Therefore, you can buy these things on the margin of the market. Perhaps a merchandizing will arise in the future, but in my opinion, it is a negative process” (R. Bertellotti, interview with the author, 2018).³⁷

There likewise does not seem to be a process of merchandizing at the ex-detention centres. There are no souvenir shops located on the terrains of the memorial sites. The entrance is free, because the state finances everything. Because of this, the state has a large influence in Argentine society concerning cultural memory:

“The market does not have a role. All of the memorial sites are free. Yes, there is a bar, but one does not have to pay for the entrance. The state finances all of this” (Gabriel Tchabracian, interview with the author, 2018).³⁸

“No, to me there is no merchandizing. The spaces of memory are free, by money of the state. In these spaces, you cannot buy merchandizing. This happens for example in Chile, because here there is not much financial support from the state” (Adriana d’Ottavio, interview with the author, 2019).³⁹

The state wishes to preserve its influence in society. Therefore, it tries to limit the influence of a potential market. However, there is a current problem of inflation, which causes changes.

³⁶ Own translation from Spanish.

³⁷ Own translation from Spanish.

³⁸ Own translation from Spanish.

³⁹ Own translation from Spanish.

In conclusion, there is a small-scale process of touristification and merchandizing. However, this is caused by external actors and not by the memorial sites. Tourism seems to be an unintended consequence of state policies. However, tourism is more present in ex-ESMA and *Parque de la Memoria* than in the smaller sites El Olimpo and Mansión Seré. In the latter, there is a more local and neighbourhood influence. Most visitors in ex-clandestine centres are not foreign tourists, but students and schools. However, ex-ESMA has been developing goals to make it more accessible to tourists. There exists a small-scale merchandizing-process as well. This merchandizing is caused by globalization. However, the logos that are for sale are more a political symbol than a market product. The reason for the limited market in the case of cultural memory is the influence and financial support of the state.

This does not completely concur with Marschall's definition of heritage tourism, who argues that the sites are commodified to attract tourists. Tourism is not the main goal; it is a consequence of globalization and state policies. In the case of ex-ESMA, however, her definition could be applied. Babb is right by arguing that tourists seem to form interest in the conflictive history of Argentina. Argentina's heritage tourism could potentially be a part of 'dark tourism', described by Lennon and Foley. They argue that dark tourism must prevent disasters from happening in the future by warning people. This seems to be the objective of the ex-clandestine centres as well. However, at times the goal of warning or prevention can be combined with commercial development. The process of merchandizing, nevertheless, seems to only be happening on a small scale in Argentina.

3.4 Influence of the state

The previous subchapter has already explained some information on the state's intervention in cultural memory in Argentina. This part takes a closer look at the impact of the official declarations of the Argentine government in memory tourism. It furthermore takes a gaze at state responsibility regarding the military dictatorship, through the creation of places of memory.

An important period in the political history of Argentina is the opening of several ex-clandestine detention centres during the presidency of Néstor Kirchner (2004-2007). Both Néstor Kirchner and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner financed the recuperation and called for memorial policies. They did this, in the first place, for the victims and their families. From this moment onwards, it was possible for people to visit these memorial sites. This had a large impact on Argentine society. However, it created an augmentation of foreign tourists visiting the places of memory as well. A process of memory tourism slowly started to take shape. This was an unintended consequence of the memorial policies of Kirchner's administration. There were several categories of tourism that had been influenced by Kirchner's memorial policies:

“Since the government of Néstor Kirchner there were many presidents who visited these spaces. In this way, the official narrative of the dictatorship is built. These places mark the

definition of the military dictatorship abroad. For example, Obama visited the former ESMA in 2015 with Macri. That was part of the politics and other projects of memory in Argentina, but Obama saw that and in that way transferred his own message to the world. Another way that could have influenced foreign tourism in the former clandestine centres was perhaps exile. During the military dictatorship, many people were exiled. In foreign countries, these people could be politically active. Therefore, the exiled people also had influence. For example, there were many exiles to Italy and France. However, there were also internal exiles, from one region to the other.

Finally, there are foreign visitors from Argentina's neighbouring countries with a dictatorial past. Many visitors come from Brazil, Chile and Uruguay to learn about the cultural memory in Argentina. They want to see the way of recovery in Argentina, because Argentina is the most progressive country in this regard. That is why Argentina is an example of recovery and memory for other Latin American countries" (M. Joncquel, interview with the author, 2019).⁴⁰

In short, the three ways in which Argentina's cultural memory received international attention was through diplomatic tourism, exile and its exemplary role to other countries. An important question that remains, nevertheless, is if the state assumes any responsibility for the events that occurred during the military dictatorship. This depends on which government is being evaluated. Alfonsín's government started to take a degree of responsibility by executing the trials for the military *junta*. However, he only prosecuted the highest military officials. During his administration, there were reparations and money was given to victims. Menem, on the contrary, went the other way. He wanted to destroy the sites after the *punto final* in 1986. Menem for example closed ex-detention centre ESMA. Furthermore, he announced a pardon in 1990, marking his government period as the period of impunity. By asking for forgiveness in name of the state at the opening of ex-ESMA in 2004, Néstor Kirchner marks one of the most important events in the history of cultural memory of Argentina. By doing this, he assumed a significant degree of responsibility. He did not do this personally, but in name of the state.

However, there currently exists a more tense relationship between the government and human rights movements regarding places of memory. Macri, who started his presidential office in 2015, has other interests and focusses on other parts of society. The sharp contrast between the Kirchners and Macri is very evident:

"ESMA's opening was an instrument for assuming some degree of responsibility. The state has a significant role, because it [a site] needs the signature of the state for being patrimony. Therefore, there is a relationship between the state and human rights organizations, and they both have influence one another. During the governments of Alfonsín and Kirchner, there was a good relationship between the state and human rights organizations. Now, with Macri's government (which is a government of the right), there is a tense relationship. Therefore, the extent of assuming responsibility for the military

⁴⁰ Own translation from Spanish.

dictatorship depends on the moment in history. It depends on the ideology and interpretation of different governments” (M.J. Ohanian, interview with the author, 2018).⁴¹

Important to note is that the process of the acceptance of state responsibility started slowly, and was not initiated by the state. Human rights movements had fought for decades to realize this. This process was complex and difficult, because the state did not want to assume responsibility. However, they want problems neither with the human rights movements nor with the rest of society. Therefore, the state started to take more efforts for recovery. In this way, in the words of Gabriel Tchabrossian, “the state finished what the human rights organizations had started” (interview with the author, 2018).

In conclusion, tourism seems to be an unintended consequence of public policies by the government. Especially the opening of ex-detention centres as places of memory by Kirchner had a significant influence on the increasing memory tourism in Argentina. This way, as Jelin and Lorenz (2004) argue, an institutionalization of memory took place as an official project of the state. Villalón (2017) is also right by explaining that the state used the places of memory for the political search of justice. There exists an increasing number of trials in Argentina, where the memorial sites form the evidence of the atrocities.

International attention to Argentina’s places of memory emerged in three ways: by diplomatic tourism, exile and Argentina as an example for other countries. The acceptance of state responsibility for the military dictatorship depends on the sort of government. In general, the governments of Alfonsín and Kirchner seem to have the best relationship with human rights movements, helping them in their quest for justice. Especially the efforts of Néstor Kirchner and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner are widely looked upon as revolutionary, although their motives are, at times, being questioned. Their heritage towards the cultural memory of Argentina’s recent political history is that of a national institutionalized program for the recuperation of the victims of the military dictatorship. However, it is arguable that this heritage derives from only two government administrations, each dominated by one party. In other words, if Kirchner’s policies of memory are adopted as the national direction of the official history of the military dictatorship in the case of Argentina, is still debatable.

Under the current government of Macri, there is a more tense relationship. Taking Macri’s administration into account, Ros’ argument (2012) of the state taking more responsibility over the years, seems to be expired. Under Macri, the state takes less responsibility than under his predecessor. Levey seems to be right by stating that “specific policies or actions of political actors, who are vulnerable to change with each elected local and national government” (2016: 251) cause a constant change in the debate on cultural memory. Babb (2011) concurs by explicating that from the beginning, because of the political transition, policies towards memory tourism changed continuously. This research, however, proves Palacio’s argument (2010) to be not completely true. The memorial sites are not designed as tourist attractions, as Palacio argues. They seem to be

⁴¹ Own translation from Spanish.

more sites that happen to attract tourists. Nevertheless, this seems about to change for the future.

3.5 Influence of human rights organizations

Human rights movements have a fundamental role in the creation and the maintaining of places of memory. The *Madres* have been fighting for justice since the military dictatorship. Other human rights bodies later started helping them in their fight. During the 1990s, the sons and daughters wanted to *escrachar*: going to domiciles of genocides. They wanted to talk to the murderers and the phenomenon of public shaming emerged.

In the present, the human rights organizations are the institutional voice of the places of memory and they take the final decisions. They organize themselves for the recovery of the memorial sites and consult the state on activities, for example. Furthermore, the organizations are responsible for the transformation of memory into justice. Nevertheless, not all human rights institutions support each other's objectives. All the same, the human rights organizations have the most direct role giving symbolical meaning to the memorial sites in Argentina:

“The human rights organisms are the ones that have driven the creation of the sites and places of memory in Argentina. Many of them are managed by directories or commissions integrated by human rights organisms and distinguished departments of the state” (F. Larralde Armas, interview with the author, 2019).⁴²

There exists a clear relationship between human rights movements, the community and the state. Whereas the human rights organizations and civil society demand actions from the state, the state listens to them and responds.

“Important actors are the human rights organizations, the community and the state. There is a relationship between these actors. Human rights organizations and the community demand things from the state regarding cultural memory in spaces of memory. Human rights organizations have a political and social role. The state does not determine what is told in the former clandestine centres. The survivors determine the story, because they are the voice of the memorial sites. Therefore, they are the main source. Ex-Olimpo employees, for example, have a relationship with the survivors on the one hand, and the state on the other. They have a 'contract' with both. The state provides money, but it does not have a substantive role. Governments change, and with them you can change the story. But in ex-Olimpo we know our own perspective, independent of the state” (M. Joncquel, interview with the author, 2019).⁴³

Therefore, next to the influence of the state and human rights institutions, victims and their families play a major part as well. However, there exists a debate on which actor has

⁴² Own translation from Spanish.

⁴³ Own translation from Spanish.

the most influence. Moreover, the relationship between the three actors changes constantly. At times, the state does not accept responsibility, for example. There does not seem to exist touristic objectives among the human rights organizations. The fight delivered by the human rights institutions, however, attracts unwarily many foreign tourists as well:

“In Argentina in general there is a lot of recovery at the international level because of the *Madres*. Indirectly this also attracts tourists. For example, many foreign visitors want to see the poverty in the La Boca neighbourhood. However, there is a difference between ‘tourist attractions’ and places that happen to attract tourists. Memory sites are places that attract tourists, but they are not tourist attractions because they are not a product” (G. Tchabrossian, interview with the author, 2018).⁴⁴

Moreover, there exists a certain kind of ‘brotherhood’ between human rights organizations in Argentina and human rights organizations abroad. This likewise attracts foreign visitors to the places of memory.

In short, human rights movements have a crucial role regarding memorial sites and cultural memory in Argentina. They started the fight for justice, and are very persistent. This concurs with Levey’s argument that the human rights movements were of so much significance because they never gave up. This appears for example from the practice of *escrache*. Because of the human rights movements, as Villalón (2017) argues, Argentina became an example for other countries with a conflictive past. Important to notice is the relationship between the human rights organizations, the Argentine community and the state. The community, as both Levey (2016) and Ros (2012) describe, most importantly includes victims of the state terrorism and their families. They are the most valuable source of information.

Human rights movements do not take into account touristic motives while fighting for justice. However, as Babb (2011) states, human rights organizations made places of memory accessible to tourists. Furthermore, human rights bodies organize, as Andermann (2012) explains, cultural centres and art exhibitions for people to spectate. Instead of a direct relationship, as Rajca (2018) describes, there seems to be an indirect relationship between the impact of human rights institutions and heritage tourism. All the same, their efforts attract foreign tourists to the places of memory. Tourism is partly caused by the international ‘brotherhood’ of different human rights institutions as well.

3.6 The role of cultural patrimony in creating a distinguished national identity

This subchapter focusses on the question if there exists an influence of cultural patrimony in the creation of a distinguished national identity. In other words, it evaluates the effects of the places of memory on the idea of the nation. It is true that the cultural patrimony

⁴⁴ Own translation from Spanish.

emits the political history of Argentina. Therefore, cultural memory definitely stimulates the idea of a distinguished national identity. In the case of Argentina, the *Madres*, the *desaparecidos*, the clandestine detention centres and the *pañuelos* are national symbols for the struggle for justice. Furthermore, Argentina's human rights recuperation forms part of the national identity. Because of this, Argentina is an example for other Latin American countries.

On the other hand, there is much discussion on the meaning of a national identity. This makes it a conflictive concept:

"Ideas about national identity are always changing. It is determined by social structure, cultural history and conflict in a country. In the case of ESMA, people know about this institution, but do not know the details. This is for Argentines the reason to visit ESMA. Heritage provides places where history can be interpreted. Therefore, I think it has an influence on national identity, but this concept is conflicting all over the world" (R. Bertellotti, interview with the author, 2018).⁴⁵

There is no conformity on the definition of a national identity. It seems there are too many differences within Argentina to speak about one national identity. Cultural memory, however, is able to influence a certain class identity:

"There is no distinguished national identity, because the concept of nationality is different in Argentina. There are many immigrants from all over the world here. Maybe you can talk about an identity of a distinguished class. People want to recover a liberal Catholic and Western society. The patrimonialization gives tools to the classes of Argentina to understand how it resisted to the neoliberalism during the military dictatorship" (I. Modenesi, interview with the author, 2018).⁴⁶

One could furthermore speak of the formation of a distinguished local identity. According to this concept, the local community is being influenced by the cultural memory of Argentina. S. Fabri provides an example:

"An example of that is the art that the neighbours made. That way they share in the identity issue and the community. All people can value the spaces; and so a memory, shared by the neighbourhood, emerged. Nevertheless, that is at a local level. It is different case by case. Sharing in memory is easier in a neighbourhood, where spatialization takes place" (S. Fabri, interview with the author, 2019).⁴⁷

In conclusion, because the cultural patrimony expresses national history, it has an impact on identity formation in Argentina. The symbols of the fight for justice are very significant theretofore. Nevertheless, it does not seem to be a merchandizing that creates a distinguished identity. Isla (2016) explicated that the process of merchandizing of victims as sacrificial symbols of state terrorism, created a distinguished identity for them.

⁴⁵ Own translation from Spanish.

⁴⁶ Own translation from Spanish.

⁴⁷ Own translation from Spanish.

However, there is a discussion on what is included in the definition of 'identity'. Because Argentina contains so many different classes and regions, it is hard to speak of a national distinguished identity. One could however, lay more emphasis on class- or local identity. In these areas, the places of memory seem to have a larger impact. This concurs with the argument of Falser and Juneja (2013), who underline the importance of local costumes in creating cultural memory. Jelin (2002) likewise argues that the citizens are the ones that make collective memory. Moreover, memories are dependent on different types of communities. Local communes desire to construct a distinguished identity.

In short, a relationship between the official history and a national identity exists. The official history, among other things, creates a national identity. A national identity has impact on the official history as well. However, both the official history and the national identity are not one authority. They consist of various actors, together determining the definition. Regarding the ex-detention centres, ex-ESMA is definitely a national symbol. However, there are more local alternatives to the official, general story. These alternatives are performed in for example El Olimpo, Mansión Seré or any of the other 337 smaller ex-torture centres in Argentina.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this research was to provide an answer to the question if there is a 'touristification' and 'mercantilization' of places of memory in Argentina. Its focus laid in specific on the cultural memory of the military dictatorship (1976-1983). Therefore, the emphasis throughout the analysis has been on places of memory and their functions on the one hand, and the potential emergence of heritage tourism on the other hand. Whereas most literature on the topic is either focused on cultural memory or on heritage tourism, this research has provided an insight on both subjects and emphasized the importance of the relation and collaboration that exists between them. Therefore, the research has expanded the understanding of how cultural patrimony is being created, and furthermore, why it attracts visitors.

Throughout this research, a few actors were of significance in the creation of memorial sites and therefore, cultural patrimony. Both the state and human rights movements have a major influence on the patrimonialization of cultural memory. Furthermore, local communities and foreign visits are of importance.

Human rights movements were an indispensable factor in the creation of places of memory in Argentina. Because of their sustained fight for memory, truth and justice, as Levey describes, they are the ones that initiated cultural patrimony regarding the military dictatorship. Because of this, Argentina became an example for other Latin American countries who had suffered a military dictatorship in the past. This concurs with the statement of Villalón. Even though human rights movements did not anticipate memory tourism, they did have an indirect role in its augmentation. Because human rights organizations made access to former clandestine centres possible, more tourists started visiting them. Furthermore, as according to Andermann, human rights bodies organized activities and art exhibitions in cultural centres. Moreover, human rights institutions have contacts with other human rights institutions abroad. This causes international attention as well.

However, the state likewise plays a significant part. Public policies of several governments caused an enlargement of memory tourism in Argentina. The main example of this is the opening of ex-ESMA by former president Néstor Kirchner. Because of this, as Jelin and Lorenz correctly conclude, an institutionalization of memory occurred as an official policy by the government. Furthermore, under the administrations of Alfonsín and Kirchner, the sites of memory were used as evidence for the judicial trials. This coincides with the argument of Villalón and the opinion of the interviewees. The state attracted international attention to Argentina's places of memory in three ways. The first is through diplomatic tourism. Presidents of other countries, for example, visit former clandestine centres. For example, Macron and Obama have both visited ex-ESMA. Secondly, Argentines who were exiled became politically active abroad, causing new interests in the situation. Lastly, as explained before, Argentina took on an exemplary role regarding cultural memory. Therefore, many visitors from surrounding countries visited to see how

Argentina deals with its past. Nevertheless, the acceptance of state responsibility for the genocide under the military regime is, as Levey and Babb both explicate, dependent on the government. The administrations of Alfonsín and Kirchner seem to have the best relationship with human rights organizations. Under the governments of Menem and Macri, there seems to be a more tense relationship. Especially the current relationship proves that the development of cultural memory does not consist of a straight line. It contains ups and downs throughout time. This does not concord with Ros's argument, who writes that the state takes more responsibility with every government. However, this provides evidence that not only in Argentina, but in the rest of Latin America as well, the fight for justice is never-ending. In this way, one could argue that Argentina has currently lost its exemplary role in the creation of cultural memory. Human rights movements continuously have to make efforts to influence in the creation of the official history of a country.

Civil society, or the local community, is likewise of great importance. Firstly, among them are the victims and their families who construct the history of the military dictatorship. They are being honoured by the memorial sites, and are the most important source of information. The victims and their quest for justice furthermore form national symbols of Argentina. These symbols are, on a rather small scale, being merchandized. However, they are being merchandized from the outside. It is not the human rights movements or the state who is responsible, because they both want to limit the influence of the market. However, the symbols do contribute to creating a distinguished identity. This is, nevertheless, more an identity on a local level than on a national one. In this way, Juneja and Falser, and Jelin, are right by arguing that local costumes are very important in the creation of cultural memory. Local communes desire to construct their own history. They do this, for example, through artworks on the walls of ex-detention centres El Olimpo and Mansión Seré. Furthermore, they organize activities.

In short, this research has demonstrated that there exists a clear relationship between the state, human rights organization and the local community. Human rights organizations listen to, and at times consist of, the victims and their families. This way, the local community is the primary source of cultural memory. Together, they demand things from the state. The state listens to them and responds. The state provides financial support for the memorial sites. However, they do not have an institutional voice. The human rights organizations decide what is being told in the spaces of memory, based on the stories of the survivors.

Because there are many survivors of ex-ESMA, this former detention centre is the most well-known among people. Because of its symbolic meaning, ex-ESMA is the flagship of cultural memory of the military dictatorship in Argentina. This is, as Rajca correctly explains, the best place for international visitors to reflect upon broader notions of human rights. There are tours available in several languages, and there is a memorial museum. El Olimpo and Mansión Seré were more a 'ring within the chain', the chain being the systematic process of persecution during the military dictatorship. They have a local significance, and are more linked to their neighbourhoods. Therefore, participation of local residents is more important in these smaller sites of memory.

However, this research has shown that the ex-clandestine centres are not designed as tourist attractions, as Palacio states. They are just sites that have been designed for several reasons, but happen to attract tourists. All ex-detention centres are different and have different objectives. Nevertheless, there are a few corresponding goals in Argentina. In the first place, the sites of memory display the cruelties and atrocities that happened under the military regime. They want to tell what happened in these places. The *lieux de mémoire* are designed for justice as well, as Levey argues, considering they provide evidence for trials against perpetrators. They furthermore honour and recuperate the victims of state terror.

This way, both Ros and Rajca are right by claiming that an image emerged of the victims as 'heroes'. Isla is likewise right by explaining that victims were transformed into 'emblematic subjects' due to the places of memory. Moreover, the idea of *nunca más* is present in the memorial places. Notwithstanding that, as Ros argues, the past can never guarantee the future; it can always provide a mirror on what is happening in the present. Therefore, as Várques explains, places of memory contain an educational component as well.

To conclude, the memorial sites have different and corresponding objectives, because they are different places. The actions undertaken by the state, human rights organizations and the local communities affect the sites. These three actors have a direct influence on Argentina's cultural memory, since they together decide what belongs to Argentina's cultural patrimony. They furthermore have an indirect impact on memory tourism. In current society, there does not seem to be an intended 'touristification' or 'mercantilization' of Argentina's conflictive past. However, it seems that for this process to happen, it only lacks time.

ANNEX 1

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

The interviews were part of a fieldwork project, executed in Buenos Aires, Argentina between November 2018 and January 2019. Below the list of interviewees:

Name	Profile	Date and place
Ignacio Modenesi	Historical tour guide ex-ESMA History and Language Education	Centro Cultural de la Memoria Haroldo Conti, Buenos Aires 13-12-2018
Gabriel Tchabrossian	Historical tour guide ex-ESMA	Centro Cultural de la Memoria Haroldo Conti, Buenos Aires 20-12-2018
Maryline Joncquel	Visiting guide and research assistant Places of memory: El Olimpo	Ex-centro clandestino El Olimpo, Buenos Aires 10-01-2019
María Jazmín Ohanian	Anthropologist of the University of Buenos Aires Specialized in the memoirs of former students of ESMA CONICET/IDES: Nucleus of studies on memory	Libros del Paisaje, Librería y café en Palermo, Buenos Aires 27-11-2018
Roberto Bertellotti	Coordinator of visitors relations ex-ESMA	Museo Sitio ex-ESMA, Buenos Aires 06-12-2018
Silvina Fabri	Professor of the University of Buenos Aires: Faculty of Philosophy and Letters Places of Memory: Mansión Seré	Mansión Seré, Buenos Aires 03-01-2019
Adriana d'Ottavio	Sociologist by the University of Buenos Aires CONICET/IDES: Nucleus of studies on memory	All Saints Café Belgrano, Buenos Aires 27-12-2018
Nuria Burak	Coordinator of <i>Area de Cine</i> at the Cultural Centre of Memory Haroldo Conti	Centro Cultural Haroldo Conti, Buenos Aires 13-01-2018
Florencia Larralde Armas	PhD in Social Sciences and Master in History and Memory from the National University of La Plata CONICET/IDES: Nucleus of studies on memory	Interview delivered through e-mail 04-01-2019

ANNEX 2

GUIDELINE FOR THE INTERVIEWS

The following questions were part of the guideline during the interviews conducted in Buenos Aires, Argentina. As the research consisted of semi-structured interviews, the questions sometimes derived from this guideline depended on how the interviewee responded or where more details about a certain topic were necessary. The questions are in Spanish, because all the interviews were held in Spanish.

1. ¿Cómo podría usted definir el concepto ‘lugares de memoria’ como patrimonio en el caso de Argentina?
2. En su opinión, ¿cuáles son los objetivos de instituciones como la ESMA o las diversas organizaciones de derechos humanos en relación con la memoria histórica de la Argentina?
3. ¿Cuáles son los últimos avances en cuanto al turismo de memoria en el país, según su parecer? Me refiero tanto al actual como a los anteriores gobiernos.
4. Actualmente hay más o menos un mercado alrededor de los lugares de memoria. Por ejemplo, se puede comprar camisetas con el logotipo de pañuelos de las madres de Plaza de Mayo. ¿Se puede decir que hay un proceso de mercantilización del asunto de la memoria? ¿Se puede, en otras palabras, hablar de un merchandizing de la memoria cultural a gran escala en Argentina?
5. A su juicio, ¿de qué manera los ‘lugares de memoria’ están siendo presentados a los turistas? En otras palabras, ¿cuál es el mensaje que los lugares de memoria en este país quieren transmitir a los turistas?
6. Muchos aspectos de la dictadura militar han tenido un gran impacto a nivel internacional. ¿Cree usted que también tienen impacto las declaraciones oficiales del Gobierno argentino en los años pasados en el turismo relacionado con los lugares de memoria?
7. ¿Opina usted que se ha generado una especie de ‘turistificación’ del patrimonio de memoria? Me refiero al fenómeno en el cual el Estado u otras organizaciones estimulan las visitas de los turistas mediante la promoción de ciertos lugares de memoria.
8. En relación con lo anterior, ¿qué rol le cabe al mercado en la turistificación?
9. En su opinión, ¿qué papel cree usted que tienen las organizaciones de los derechos humanos en el turismo y los lugares de memoria?
10. Hay un gran debate sobre los actores de importancia del turismo y la memoria cultural. En su opinión, ¿quién es o quiénes son el factor decisivo en cuanto a conmemorar el pasado de la dictadura militar y mantener los lugares de memoria?

11. ¿Se puede decir que los lugares de memoria sirven para educar a los visitantes sobre el pasado de la Argentina? Me refiero tanto a la idea de ‘nunca más’ que existe sobre la dictadura militar. Entonces, ¿sirve los patrimonios de memoria como una lección para el futuro?

12. Muchos hablan de que la lucha por los derechos humanos constituye una especie de patrimonio inmaterial de cada país. ¿Se podría decir que la patrimonialización de la memoria cultural sirve para crear una identidad nacional distinta?

13. Hay algunos que opinan que los lugares de memoria son un instrumento para exigir justicia para el pasado. Por ejemplo, algunos autores dicen que la memoria cultural, en primer lugar, fue para oponerse a las políticas del ‘perdón’ de los gobiernos después de Videla. A su juicio, ¿se puede decir que, con el proyecto del turismo y memoria, desde más o menos a partir del gobierno de Néstor Kirchner, el Estado asume algún grado de responsabilidad respecto de la dictadura militar?

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