

Ideology vs. Practice in Argentina's Dirty War Repression

A Senior Honors Project
in Partial Fulfillment of
Bachelor of Arts with University Honors
in History
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Keith Hollingshead-Cook
December 5, 2006

Senior Project Committee:
Dr. Todd Diacon, Chair,
Department Head, History Department
Dr. Michael Handelsman,
Professor, Modern Foreign Language and Literature Department
Dr. Chad Black,
Assistant Professor, History Department

Abstract

This project analyzes the repression associated with Argentina's Dirty War in the years from 1975 to 1983 by considering the ideology justifying the repression alongside the actual practice of repression. The governing military junta based its infamous authoritarian rule on the need to root out the elements of society presumably responsible for the tumultuous situation that characterized Argentina in the early 1970's. Many of the junta's actions of repression, however, were not justifiable simply according to its ideology. This project suggests that other factors such as self-interest, political ambition, and the desire to conceal the security forces' crimes, rather than any ideological intentions, played a significant role in motivating many of the repressive acts carried out by the nation's security forces.

Ideology vs. Practice in Argentina's Dirty War Repression

Introduction

"In Latin America, we learn early that our lives are worth little."¹ Argentine theater director Laura Yusem's words are no doubt the result of a long Latin American tradition of violent authoritarianism. Extending from the 19th century regional strongman *caudillo* to the numerous military dictatorships of the 20th century, Latin American politics have been dominated by authoritarian figures that often utilized violence against their enemies in order to further their own ends. Argentina is no exception to this regional trend. For example, Juan Manuel Rosas' personal will reigned over Argentina from 1829 to 1852, largely supported by violent acts of terrorism and assassinations committed by his personal police force, the *mazorca*.² Juan Perón later dominated Argentine politics in the 1940's and 1950's through his populist appeal to the masses. Despite widespread support, he too resorted to violent repression and purges of his political enemies.³ Most recently, the 1976-1983 military junta government proved the veracity of Yusem's statement as it adopted an authoritarian means of administering the nation and implemented a broad repressive apparatus that tortured and murdered thousands of Argentines.⁴

This authoritarianism lent itself to misuse. Typical of such governments, the military junta's authoritarianism allowed it to ride roughshod over all the nation's institutions that might have served to check its power. Immediately following its

¹ Laura Yusem quoted in Marguerite Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 3.

² David Rock, *Argentina, 1516-1987: From Spanish Colonization to Alfonsín* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987), 106.

³ Ibid., 280, 302, 307.

⁴ Ibid., 367-370; Paul H. Lewis, "The Right and Military Rule, 1955-1983," in *The Argentine Right: Its History and Intellectual Origins, 1910 to the Present*, eds. Sandra McGee Deutsch and Ronald H. Dolcart (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1993), 172-173.

assumption of power in 1976, the junta moved to consolidate its control. It purged all levels of the judiciary, closed the nation's parliaments, and banned all political parties. In addition to decimating the branches of government that might curb its power, the military also silenced the press, the primary public watchdog against government wrongdoing.⁵ The military government and the security forces underneath it, then, had no real opposition. No institutions or laws existed to temper the application of the repression. Instead, the whims of the security forces themselves became the law of the land. Such a power structure in which one group exercised supreme authority perhaps inherently led to abuse, as it did in Argentina.

Highlighting the abuses of authoritarian power, this project analyzes the repression associated with the military junta's Dirty War in the years 1975-1983 by examining the ideology justifying the repression alongside the practice of repression.⁶ The military government based its actions on the necessity to save Argentina from the chaotic situation that prevailed in early 1970's. In order to do so, it sought the destruction of all aspects of society that had contributed to the chaos, from the guerrilla combatants to any who might support them. Many of the actions that became incorporated into the practice of repression, however, were not justifiable according to the junta's ideology. Other factors such as self-interest, political ambition, and the desire to conceal the security forces' crimes, rather than any ideological intentions, played a

⁵ David Rock, *Argentina, 1516-1987*, 367-368; *Nunca Más: Report by Argentina's National Commission on Disappeared People*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1986), xii, 386.

⁶ Considering the various definitions of the term "ideology" that sociologists, philosophers, and other thinkers have put forward, it is worth defining how it functions in this project. Meaning what one might deem the layman definition, the term here refers to the general body of concepts, doctrines, opinions, and modes of thought that provided the basis for the military's justifications of its actions and for its blueprint of how Argentine society should function.

significant role in motivating many of the repressive acts carried out by the nation's security forces.

Despite the fact that this sort of abuse commonly appears in authoritarian regimes, the discrepancies of the ideology and practice of the Dirty War repression have been overlooked by the prominent students of the time period. Instead, authors have focused on other aspects of the repression. Perhaps the most pronounced theme of these works is what Donald Hodges calls the "Two Devils Thesis."⁷ According to this analysis which appears most markedly in *Nunca Más* and Martin Edwin Andersen's *Dossier Secreto: Argentina's Desaparecidos and the Myth of the "Dirty War"*, Argentina of the 1970's was enmeshed in a web of gratuitous violence perpetrated alternately by leftist guerrillas and the security forces fighting them.⁸ As Tulio Halperin Donghi summarized this approach, "...it tended to dismiss the deepest crisis in Argentine history as merely a succession of meaningless episodes in which the country had been victimized by rival gangs of kidnappers and killers coming apparently out of nowhere."⁹ In these works, value judgments concerning the two main perpetrators of violence abound, condemning the acts of terrorism on both sides as an unfounded and unjustifiable means to an end. Furthermore, they consistently refer to the necessarily demonic nature of anyone who could commit these acts. As Donghi's comment suggests, these evaluations preclude any real understanding of the historical experience of the numerous Argentines that came to participate in acts of terrorism and the situation that this terrorism created.

⁷ Donald C. Hodges, untitled review, *The American Historical Review* 99, no. 2 (1994), 701.

⁸ *Nunca Más*; Martin Edwin Andersen, *Dossier Secreto: Argentina's Desaparecidos and the Myth of the "Dirty War,"* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993).

⁹ Tulio Halperin Donghi, "Argentina's Unmastered Past," *Latin American Research Review* 23, no. 2 (1988), 15.

Andersen's *Dossier Secreto* also serves to illustrate another common theme in Dirty War literature: the idea that there was no real war at all. This argument, first elaborated in Daniel Frontalini and Maria Cristina Caiati's *El mito de la guerra sucia*, asserts that the situation of war which the military used to justify its seizure of power and its implementation of state violence to salvage the nation did not exist. Instead, it was a fabricated state of war which in reality resembled a one-sided witch hunt more than anything. The military fashioned and popularized this supposed war only to mobilize support for its rule.¹⁰ Andersen takes this argument one step farther and lays the blame for the creation of the imaginary war at not only the feet of the military but also at the feet of the guerrilla leaders. He claims that the two forces in many cases worked together to create widespread fear and to stimulate a popular belief in the necessity for the military's Dirty War on leftist subversion. As accomplices to the military regime, the leftist leaders supposedly were to be rewarded handsomely for their assistance. The major downfall of these works, as Donald Hodges suggests, is the gross underestimation of the guerrilla threat in Argentina. Just like in Nicaragua and El Salvador, Argentina's guerrillas had the real capacity to provoke a full-scale civil war.¹¹

Other works have sought to integrate the violent experience of the 1970's into the nation's and region's broader historical context. Primary amongst these are Paul Lewis' works. In *Authoritarian Regimes in Latin America: Dictators, Despots, and Tyrants*, Lewis places the junta responsible for the Dirty War repression in a context of Latin

¹⁰ Daniel Frontalini and María Cristina Caiati, *El mito de la guerra sucia*, (Buenos Aires: Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales, 1984).

¹¹ Donald C. Hodges, untitled review, 701.

America's long authoritarian tradition.¹² In *Guerrillas and Generals: The "Dirty War" in Argentina*, Lewis similarly seeks to place the violent events in historical context, but this time limits his scope to simply the history of Argentina. The author characterizes the Argentine military's actions in their long-standing role as a political arbiter between various pressure groups in national politics. He uses this analysis to shed light on the 1976 coup, suggesting that the military was this time, like several times previously, mediating the power struggle between Peronist masses and conservative elites.¹³ Despite a mostly successful attempt to maintain historical perspective in his works, Lewis's *Guerrillas and Generals* does at times offer hints of the moralization associated with the "Two Devils Thesis". For instance, at one point he considers the guerrillas necessarily had to "suspend normal human feelings" in order to commit such atrocious acts, implying their lack of humanity or their monstrosity.¹⁴

The current project seeks to avoid the moralization and value judgments that have plagued so many works on the Argentine Dirty War repression. By accepting the internal logic of the repression on its own grounds and viewing it together with the practice of repression, the project endeavors to further an understanding of the historical processes and motivations that drove the repressive machinery.¹⁵ Although several scholars, namely Paul Lewis and Marguerite Feitlowitz, have hinted that the military's repressive

¹² Paul H. Lewis, *Authoritarian Regimes in Latin America: Dictators, Despots, and Tyrants* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006).

¹³ Paul H. Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals: The "Dirty War" in Argentina* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2002).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 68.

¹⁵ This acceptance of the military's argument for the necessity of slaughtering thousands of Argentines is a purely academic acceptance. This project in no way seeks to serve as an apologia for the military's actions, and it does not suggest that the repression was morally acceptable as long as it stayed within its ideologically justified bounds. It instead accepts the junta's ideological justifications in order to bring to light the inconsistencies that exist between the stated ideological aims of the repression and the practice of repression.

actions at times did not match their ideological justifications for the repression, no study has attempted to expound upon these intimations.¹⁶ This project's juxtaposition of the ideology and practice of repression does just that. Its findings suggest that factors other than ideology, such as opportunities for financial gain, political ambition, and desires to cover up the security forces' crimes, played a central role in driving aspects of the repression.

Context of Repression

By early 1976, Argentina was in a state of chaos. Primary amongst the factors contributing to the tumult were guerrilla violence and the aggressive response it engendered from the political right. Spiraling inflation and increasing unemployment, accompanied by the general spread of leftist ideas throughout the hemisphere, led many groups in Argentina to take up arms against the government and the forces that backed it.¹⁷ Kidnappings, ransoms, executions, bombings, and street shootouts became commonplace. Groups such as the Montoneros and the People's Revolutionary Army led the myriad guerrilla groups in both numbers and capacity to carry out elaborate missions against the Argentine government.¹⁸ For example, the Montoneros counted 5,000 active members in their ranks in 1975 and undertook 500 distinct guerrilla operations in that

¹⁶ Paul H. Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals*, 182; Marguerite Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror*, 194.

¹⁷ Richard Gillespie, *Soldiers of Perón: Argentina's Montoneros* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 30-32; Thomas E. Skidmore and Peter H. Smith, *Modern Latin America*, 6th ed., (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 97-98; Paul H. Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals*, 20-23.

¹⁸ The People's Revolutionary Army, operating primarily around Córdoba and in other areas of the interior, represented a militant wing of the Workers' Revolutionary Party. Alternately dubbing itself Trotskyite and Guevarist, the militants sought a wholesale revolution in Argentina. Contrastingly, the Montoneros were concentrated around Buenos Aires and based their ideas for revolution on the urban, populist, and nationalist principles of Peronism. See David Rock, *Argentina, 1516-1987*, 352-354; Paul H. Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals*, 20-22; Paul H. Lewis, "The Right and Military Rule, 1955-1983," 171; Juan Carlos Torre and Lilian de Riz, "Argentina since 1946," in *Argentina since Independence*, ed. Leslie Bethell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 308.

year alone, many of which were quite successful. They amassed over \$60 million in ransoms of high profile businessmen, raided arms producers (gaining the capacity to manufacture their own extensive weaponry), and roundly embarrassed the armed forces and police through covert assassinations, public destruction of military equipment, and conventional battles.¹⁹ Although the leftist guerrillas never succeeded in obtaining any of the political aims to which they aspired, they were extremely effective in accomplishing the goal of sowing fear and terror amongst Argentines, especially the far right. Rightist factions of society responded to the guerrilla threat with paramilitary groups of their own, most notably the Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance (AAA). The AAA security force employees organized death squads that attempted to hunt down guerrillas and engage them in open combat.²⁰ In this context, political violence only escalated, eventually amassing one fatality every eighteen hours by early 1976.²¹

This atmosphere of rampant violence was accompanied by an equally turbulent political and economic situation. In July of 1974 President Juan Domingo Perón, in whom many Argentines had placed their last hopes for a solution to the nation's crises, passed away and left the presidency in the hands of his wife and Vice President Isabel Perón. A former nightclub dancer with little education, she proved to be an inept leader and was paralyzed by the political problems that confronted her.²² At a loss as to how to deal with the prevalence of violence in the nation, in 1974 she gave the military full reign

¹⁹ Gillespie, *Soldiers of Perón*, 178, 180-1, 193. Estimates of Montonero strength vary from the hundreds to over 10,000. The low estimates seem to neglect the numerous *milicianos*, primarily political activists that could be called upon for armed operations as necessary, whereas the higher numbers seem to be an extrapolation deriving from the degree of complexity required for many of the group's operations or simply based on the government security forces' estimates, which likely inflated the guerrilla threat. See, for example, Marguerite Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror*, 6; and Gillespie, 178 footnote 46.

²⁰ Juan Carlos Torre and Lilian de Riz, "Argentina since 1946," 322; Paul H. Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals*, 97; David Rock, *Argentina, 1516-1987*, 360.

²¹ Paul H. Lewis, *Authoritarian Regimes in Latin America*, 214.

²² *Ibid.*, 213; Thomas E. Skidmore and Peter H. Smith, *Modern Latin America*, 97-98.

to proceed against the guerrilla organizations, calling on the armed forces to “annihilate” the groups that were apparently responsible for the havoc in Argentina.²³ In addition to the increased bloodshed that followed the military’s engagement in the fighting, Argentina’s economy continued to plunge downward at an alarming rate. Inflation increased throughout 1975 at an average rate of 30% per month, and the national deficit had soared to an overwhelming \$1 billion.²⁴

Amidst this atmosphere of widespread violence, ineffective political leadership, and a plummeting economy, a situation that one reporter referred to as a “political and economic wasteland,” many Argentines, especially middle class sectors of society most threatened by the guerrillas’ revolutionary aims, began to look to the armed forces for guidance.²⁵ The appeal of a military intervention was not overly novel in a country that already had seen the military engineer five coup d’états since 1930.²⁶ The masses’ suspicions of a pending coup were well-founded, for the three branches of the armed forces ousted Isabel Perón in the early morning hours of March 24, 1976, and established military rule in a joint endeavor to rectify the nation’s tribulations. The Argentine people’s profound desire for order after so many years of chaos was expressed through the praise and optimism that followed news of the coup.²⁷ The famous author Jorge Luis Borges, for example, hailed the actions of the men in uniform, commenting, “Now we are

²³ Directiva No. 404/75, Comandante General del Ejército, *Lucha contra la subversión*, October 1975, <http://www.nuncamas.org/document/militar/40475.htm>; Unless otherwise noted, all translations are the author’s own.

²⁴ David Rock, *Argentina, 1516-1987*, 365.

²⁵ “Short, Sharp, and Clean,” *The Economist*, 3 April 1976, 14; Thomas E. Skidmore and Peter H. Smith, *Modern Latin America*, 99.

²⁶ Rita Arditti, *Searching for Life: The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo and the Disappeared Children of Argentina* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), 7; Juan Carlos Torre and Lilian de Riz, “Argentina since 1946,” 327.

²⁷ Thomas E. Skidmore and Peter H. Smith, *Modern Latin America*, 99; Marguerite Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 6.

governed by gentlemen.”²⁸ It would not be long, however, before many of the coup’s initial supporters would come to regret these lauding remarks, for the overthrow of Isabel Perón ushered in one of the most brutally repressive regimes that Latin America has known, characterized by what some scholars consider “a total abandon of legality” in order to combat guerrillas.²⁹

The Ideology of Repression

The military junta government was led initially by the Army’s General Jorge Rafael Videla, the Navy’s Admiral Emilio E. Massera, and the Air Force’s Brigadier General Orlando R. Agosti. These men justified the coup and the repression that followed it, which came to be known as the military’s “Dirty War,” according to an ideology founded on the twin pillars of the national security doctrine and the Process of National Reorganization. These provided the military, from the top brass to lowly conscripts, with a foundation for action in its campaign to save Argentina. Furthermore, the doctrines were so central to the military’s goals in Argentina that, as the journalist Jacobo Timerman recalled from his experiences in captivity, most military personnel involved in the repression received routine classroom instruction on these principles in order to create the necessary uniformity and motivation to successfully carry out its task.³⁰

The most basic aspect of the national security doctrine, first significant in Argentine politics under General Onganía’s 1966-1970 military government and amongst

²⁸ Quoted in Marguerite Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror*, 6.

²⁹ Boris Fausto and Fernando J. Devoto, *Brasil e Argentina: Um ensaio de história comparada (1850-2002)*, 2nd ed. (São Paulo: Editora, 2005), 397.

³⁰ Jacobo Timerman, *Prisoner without a Name, Cell without a Number*, translated by Toby Talbot. (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), 102-3.

the rightist Nacionalistas that supported him, was the assumption that homegrown enemy forces existed within Argentina and that they sought to undermine the traditional values of Argentine society.³¹ These enemies, or “subversives” as military jargon classified them, were linked to the spread of international communism. As such, they were ideological enemies that were inherently against what the regime considered “the essential values of the nation.”³² Although the junta never clearly defined these values, it often referred to Argentina’s Christian and Western heritage, a heritage that Buenos Aires Provincial Police leader Ramón Camps considered to be steeped in “goodness, charity, love for fellow man...and the exercise of spiritual free will.”³³ The regime deemed the assertion of communist and other leftist-inspired ideologies, with their emphasis on secularism, to be an assault on the values that provided the supposed foundation for Argentine institutions.

Moreover, the military considered its attacks on subversive groups as actions of national self-defense rather than as a war waged on its own people. Throughout the years of the junta government and even afterward during criminal trials against the generals, the military considered its war against subversion as legitimate as any war in which an alien aggressor sought the dominance of the Argentine nation.³⁴ Defending the regime’s policies before members of the Organization of American States, Minister of Foreign Affairs Vice Admiral Oscar A. Montes emphasized the regime’s belief in the rectitude of

³¹ Leonardo Senkman, “The Right and Civilian Regimes, 1955-1976,” in *The Argentine Right: Its History and Intellectual Origins, 1910 to the Present*, eds. Sandra McGee Deutsch and Ronald H. Dolkart (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1993), 128-9.

³² “Acta fijando el propósito y los objetivos básicos para el proceso de reorganización nacional,” Military junta, 31 March 1976, <http://www.derechos.net/koaga/ageitos/1.html>.

³³ Ramon J.A. Camps, *El poder en la sombra: el affaire Gravier* (Buenos Aires: RO.CA Producciones, 1983), 192.

³⁴ Amnesty International, *Argentina: los militares ante la justicia*, (Madrid: Amnesty International Publications, 1987), 54-5.

its actions by equating them with the exercise of a “legitimate right to defense.”³⁵ In a further effort to highlight the war’s legitimacy and in light of the international cold war context of the time, the regime called the violence in Argentina the initial battlefields of “World War III”, a war which was not simply a result of events isolated to the one South American nation but rather an integral part of the superpower struggle for world dominance.³⁶ This amounted to a war of Good and Evil in which enemy aggression forced the generals into what they believed was a “struggle for liberty, justice, and the right to life.”³⁷ Accordingly, common soldiers involved in the repression usually followed their superiors’ orders without question, just as they would in any other war, and perceived the extreme violence which they were called on to commit as a necessary aspect of waging this unique war on internal subversion.³⁸

In addition to combating the immediate threat of subversion in order to defend Argentina, the military government also sought to ensure that the disorder that afflicted the nation of late would not repeat itself again in the future through the implementation of the Process of National Reorganization. The Process called for a wholesale restructuring of Argentine social, political, and economic institutions to avoid the political stalemates and corruption that presumably gave rise to the chaos. With regard to the repression, the armed forces’ means of accomplishing the aims of the Process was violence. As the military declared within weeks of the coup in its “Act Establishing the Purpose and the

³⁵ Organization of American States, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, *Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Argentina* (Washington, D.C.: Organization of American States, 1980), 23.

³⁶ Ramon J.A. Camps, *El poder en la sombra*, 197, 200-1; Juan Carlos Torre and Lilian de Riz, “Argentina since 1946,” 333.

³⁷ Ramon J.A. Camps, *El caso Timerman: punto final*, (Buenos Aires: Tribuna Abierta, 1982), 21; *Documento final de la junta militar sobre la guerra contra la subversion y el terrorismo*, 28 April 1983, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB85/830428%200000B044.pdf>.

³⁸ Horacio Verbitsky, *The Flight: Confessions of an Argentine Dirty Warrior*, translated by Esther Allen, (New York: The New Press, 1996), 20-21.

Basic Objectives for the Process of National Reorganization,” a reconstruction of the nation called for the use of “severe force to completely eradicate the vices that affect the country.” The same document linked these vices with not only subversion but also with “its causes.”³⁹ Although this document was vague, other statements by junta leaders later associated these causes with all sectors of Argentine society that were even remotely sympathetic to subversive actions or ideologies. General Videla asserted that “anyone who disagrees with our way of life must be detained,” identifying even peaceful political critics of the government as enemies of Argentina.⁴⁰ In perhaps the most often quoted statement of the military regime, General Ibérico Saint-Jean delineated the extensive scope of the repression by declaring, “First we will kill all the subversives; then we will kill their collaborators; then...their sympathizers; then...those who remain indifferent; and, finally, we will kill those who are timid.”⁴¹

Through this broad definition of the enemies to any future order and prosperity in Argentina, the Process of National Reorganization unleashed a repressive apparatus that targeted large sectors of society. It called for an unrestrained purge primarily amongst students, teachers, laborers, religious officials, lawyers, judges, and journalists; all of whom were, for the military regime, centers of opposition to traditional Argentine society. In fact, the Process of National Reorganization’s repression was so wide in reach that no Argentine institutions went untouched.⁴² The military believed that only through this repressive purge and complete removal of all contributors to the “institutional, social,

³⁹ *Documento final de la junta militar sobre la guerra contra la subversion y el terrorismo.*

⁴⁰ General Jorge Rafael Videla quoted in “Why Argentina Declared War on ‘Guerrillas of the Mind’,” *The London Times*, 20 April 1977, 16.

⁴¹ General Ibérico Saint-Jean quoted in “Avoiding the Worst in Argentina,” *The New York Times*, 25 May 1977, 26.

⁴² Paul H. Lewis, “The Right and Military Rule, 1955-1983,” 172; David Rock, *Argentina, 1516-1987*, 367; *Nunca Más*, 337.

and administrative chaos”⁴³ could Argentina have prospects of reconstructing the former “grandeur of the republic.”⁴⁴

An animated cartoon of the era titled “The Struggle against Subversion” graphically summarizes the military’s ideology based on national security doctrine and the Process of National Reorganization. As the 40 second cartoon opens with the narrator announcing, “Argentina, land of peace and enormous wealth,” the audience sees a fat, healthy cow grazing in a lush pasture. In the distance, a large factory operates efficiently. Suddenly, however, a band of black-clad men with baleful countenances emerges from hiding. As the narrator explains, this group represents the “international subversion” that seeks to “weaken the nation in order to dominate it.” The men, all with gnashing fangs and a bucket in hand, beset the helpless cow and begin to milk it. The cow grows increasingly thin as the gang incessantly exploits it, and the scene turns grim and ominous. The factory in the background crumbles, and the cow, now emaciated from the abuse it has suffered, converts into a raging bull. With a cry of anger, it violently bucks its assailants and chases them away, goring one of the men. After this scene of aggression, the narrator tells the audience that “peace returns” while the landscape appears verdant once again and the factory returns to work. The cow, though still sickly, is quickly restored to health by the efforts of a young cowboy. The cartoon ends with the command “Let’s unite” written across the screen, an entreaty to the Argentine people to make a stand against subversion.⁴⁵

⁴³ Military speech quoted in “Mrs. Peron Overthrown by Military in Argentina and Reported Arrested,” *The New York Times*, 24 March 1976, 1; *Proclama del 24 de marzo de 1976*, <http://www.nuncamas.org/document/document.htm>.

⁴⁴ *Estatuto para el proceso de reorganización nacional*, 24 March 1976, <http://www.nuncamas.org/document/document.htm>.

⁴⁵ *Lucha contra la subversión*, http://www.24demarzo.gov.ar/listas/lista_f251.htm.

This bit of military propaganda illustrates the most important aspects of the military's ideology concerning its role in governing Argentina. First, the animated cartoon expresses the national security doctrine's perceived internal threat of subversion through the sinister men that appear out of hiding from within a peaceful Argentina. The supposed incompatibility of their aims with the good of the nation becomes apparent as the men rapaciously milk the cow, symbolic of Argentina, with no thought for the animal's well-being. The subversives are the root of the recent economic and political chaos as they strain Argentina's infrastructure and economy, represented by the factory in the background, to the extent that they collapse. Second, the generals' ideas of the Process of National Reorganization also find expression in the animation. Only through an act of wrenching violence does the cow, and thereby the nation, rid itself of the parasitic subversives plaguing it. With these people completely exterminated from Argentine soil and with only faithful servants of the country remaining, the state can expect a future of peace and prosperity similar to that which existed before the presence of subversion. In retrospect, the concluding command calling for unity is especially chilling. On the one hand, it simply calls for support of the government in the war against subversion. On the other hand, considering the junta's definition of its opponents to be any who do not support it, the plea for unity becomes an ultimatum which declares that Argentines either unite with the military dictatorship or suffer the same violent fate as the subversives in the cartoon. Despite the violence of the cartoon, the typical Argentine would not have known enough, however, to read this as an indication of the wide scale repression that the military government was carrying out in clandestine torture centers around the nation.

The Practice of Repression

The military junta's ideology sanctioned considerable violence when it came to the Dirty War repression. Most of the acts that the international human rights community condemned during and after the military dictatorship, however appalling they may have seemed to outsiders, were justifiable according to the military government's belief system. Indeed, the violent measures were implemented in the first place because they were effective in accomplishing the national security doctrine's aims of destroying the subversive threat and in working toward the Process of National Reorganization's desires for a more homogenous and therefore peaceful Argentina. Yet this project argues that the repression was not motivated entirely by ideology, but rather it points to several institutionalized practices that the internal logic of the ideology of repression alone did not validate. As we shall see, the Dirty War's exploitation of the repressive machinery for financial gain, fulfillment of political aspirations, and convenient concealment of crimes all find no justification in the military's ideology. Other factors such as individual and collective greed, political ambition, and the abuse of impunity to cover up crimes, and not simply ideology, drove these aspects of the practice of repression.

The case of Dr. Norberto Liwsky illustrates well many of the main aspects of the general practice of repression that the military dictatorship's ideology validated. Liwsky, a medical doctor known for his social work with a school for the integration of handicapped children and for his offering of medical services to the lower class members of a Buenos Aires housing project, was kidnapped as he returned to his apartment at 10 p.m. on April 5, 1978. Upon entering the doorway, he soon realized that armed men were waiting for him inside, and he attempted to flee. The kidnappers fired a bullet into

each of Liwsky's legs and succeeded in ending his flight, but the doctor still continued to resist being captured. As the captors hooded and handcuffed him, he shouted to his neighbors for help and for them to inform his family of what was happening. While the men subdued Liwsky and began to drag him toward the street, they informed him not to worry about his wife and two daughters because they were already kidnapped and "disappeared." Before the men threw Liwsky on to the floorboard of a car, he overheard his captors conversing with what he deduced to be the local police. The group soon piled into the car around him and sped off.⁴⁶

As soon as they arrived at what turned out to be a clandestine torture center, Liwsky's captors removed the prisoner from the vehicle and immediately placed him on a table, tying his hands and feet to the corners. A doctor informed him of the poor state of his leg wounds and encouraged him not to resist. Next, a man notified him that they knew he was not involved in guerrilla activities, but because of his opposition to the Process of National Reorganization—apparently his involvement with the poor—he would "pay dearly." Immediately they commenced a days-long regimen of electric shock torture, focusing the charges on Liwsky's gums, nipples, genitals, abdomen, and ears. The torturers alternated this treatment with a barrage of blows from wooden clubs to the point that the prisoner lost all sensation. When he was not being tortured, Liwsky was left to hang by his arms on metal hooks affixed to the wall.

The assailants did not stop at just shock treatments and beatings. They soon incorporated other means of torture by burning Liwsky with a hot metal object, stripping the skin off the soles of his feet, crushing his testicles, and even raping him with an

⁴⁶ The details of this case are drawn from *Nunca Más: Report by Argentina's National Commission on Disappeared People*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1986), 20-26; and Norberto Liwsky, personal testimony, <http://www.nuncamas.org/testimon/testimon.htm>.

electrified metal rod. Later, as a brief respite from the various forms of torture, Liwsky's tormentors showed him bloodied clothing and informed him that they had belonged to his wife. Without providing any more details concerning his spouse so as to augment his suffering, the men immediately resumed torturing him.

After enduring 25 days of torture broken by periods of solitary confinement, the torturers moved the doctor to a cell with another man. Although the security forces still subjected him to torture sessions every few days, he began to recover from his injuries. Soon, however, Liwsky's exhaustion and maltreatment led to a bout with typhoid fever in addition to chronic kidney problems the routine beatings had caused him. After several more weeks, the torturers transferred him from the clandestine prison to a regular police prison, where he remained for two months. During this time, prison guards forced him to sign a statement that he was not permitted to read, a statement that the security forces later used against him in a trial before a military court. After lingering in the prison system for over four months, Liwsky became one of the lucky prisoners who regained his freedom after eventual release.

This case demonstrates several common themes of the practice of repression which were justifiable according to the military's ideology based on the urgent necessity to protect Argentina and to root out the regime's opponents. First, a group of armed security forces, cooperating with local police, forcibly entered and then staked out a target's residence, taking captive anyone who might be in the home or arrive there before the person they sought to kidnap.⁴⁷ Liwsky's experience further reveals the military's broad definition of subversion at work, as he was targeted simply for being involved with the poor. Captors then typically hauled the prisoner off to a clandestine location where

⁴⁷*Nunca Más*, 15.

torturers utilized various gruesome techniques, with absolutely no regard for the prisoner's life, to destroy the person and his identity.⁴⁸ Often, torturers took advantage of prisoners' helplessness to force them to sign documents, ranging from admissions of guilt in legal statements to denunciations of other Argentines.⁴⁹ Prisoners remained disappeared, subjected to general mistreatment and abuse when they were not involved in torture sessions, for a period of time ranging from several days to many years before they surfaced in the court system or were simply executed by the security forces.⁵⁰ All these practices of repression that emerge from Norberto Liwsky's experiences, however abusive or violent they may seem, were justifiable according to the military's ideology, for they were the supposed necessary means to the creed's pressing end of protecting and reconstituting the nation. By breaking and remaking Norberto Liwsky and others like him, the torturers were breaking and remaking Argentina, so to speak.⁵¹

Other repressive acts, however, were not simply motivated by the military's ideological aims. For instance, the commonplace theft and looting of property belonging to the kidnapped were unjustifiable ideologically as the security forces implemented them. Desires of financial gain, rather than ideological intentions, were likely central to the motives behind such acts of repression that constituted common aspects of the repressive *modus operandi*.

⁴⁸ Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror*, xi, 66-67; Arditti, *Searching for Life*, 17.

⁴⁹ Amnesty International, *Report of an Amnesty International Mission to Argentina, 6-15 November 1976*, (London: Amnesty International, 1977), 37; *Nunca Más*, 32-33.

⁵⁰ Alicia Partnoy, *The Little School: Tales of Disappearance and Survival*, translated by Alicia Partnoy, Lois Athey, and Sandra Braunstein, (San Francisco, CA: Cleis Press, 1998), 14-15; *Nunca Más*, 64-66.

⁵¹ *Nunca Más* contains a litany of cases like Liwsky's that illustrate the ideological applications of repression in the Dirty War. See, for example, the cases of Antonio Horacio Miño Retamozo, 29-33; Santos Aurelio Chaparro, 34-35; Luis Alberto Urquiza, 27. Jacobo Timerman's experiences related in *Prisoner without a Name* and Alicia Partnoy's experiences related in *The Little School* also serve as exemplary of the general ideological use of the repression against subversives.

During and after the raids that netted prisoners and transported them to clandestine torture centers, the security forces typically entirely looted victims' residences. Everything of the slightest value, from mundane objects like water pumps to rare valuables such as antique editions of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, ended up in the hands of the repressors.⁵² This looting was not spontaneous, but instead an orchestrated and deliberate practice. For example, the security forces made several trips to the country home of Antonio Bettini in order to gut fully the estate of its valuables, even going to the extent of unearthing the home's electric generators that were buried underground and loading them into the numerous military trucks that were present for the sole purpose of transporting the plunder. When the property's caretaker surveyed the ransacked house, he noted that packages of the family's belongings were arranged around the residence as though the military planned to return to complete the looting.⁵³

The seizure of property in this manner was justifiable under the military ideology as long as the security forces targeted only the people they defined as subversives and used the profits to further the aims of the Process, as scholars like Paul Lewis have suggested was initially the case.⁵⁴ Certain nuances of the process of theft and looting, however, proved the practice to be unwarranted even if one subscribed to the ideology behind the repression. For instance, many prisoners like Juan Carlos Rossi who were kidnapped without cause, a fact that the security forces admitted by releasing such detainees soon after they had captured them instead of maintaining the prisoners' subversive status, still lost all their possessions to the repression's thievery. Rossi

⁵² *Only Emptiness Remains*, VHS, directed by Rodolfo Kuhn, (Televisión Española, 1984); *Nunca Más*, 18.

⁵³ *Only Emptiness Remains*.

⁵⁴ Paul H. Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals*, 182.

himself lost every bit of his print shop machinery, what he considered to represent “a whole life’s work,” when the repressive apparatus pillaged his home.⁵⁵

These acts of plunder, which were not designed to raise funds directly for the Process, were an institutionalized aspect of the repression and not merely sporadic excesses, as the military publicly claimed.⁵⁶ For example, in the distribution of loot those involved in the raids of prisoners’ homes respected the established military hierarchy and passed on the profits to their superiors.⁵⁷ As the regime’s policies of repression became more widely suspected throughout the nation, Argentines believed that the fur coats which increasingly marked a woman’s status as the wife of an officer were usually plunder from raids on rich homes.⁵⁸ These personal profits emerge as central to the security forces’ motivations in initiating kidnappings and raids, a fact to which many prisoners testified after overhearing repeated quarrels over the distribution of loot.⁵⁹ The reality of what some prisoners called the “mercenary characteristic” of repression moved Alejandro Lanusse, an Army general and former Argentine president who was progressively critical of the junta’s policies, to remark, “What can you do with an army in which the officers ride around in stolen cars and their wives serve tea from sets seized during raids?”⁶⁰ The looting of prisoners’ homes as the security forces practiced it, therefore, often proved to be an aspect of repression that the military’s ideology did not

⁵⁵ *Nunca Más*, 276. *Nunca Más* documents many similar cases of theft committed against people whom the security forces deemed innocent. See the cases of Frederico Manuel Vogelius, 275; Carlos Alberto Mazza, 278; the wife of Jorge Eduardo Alday, 17; also Olga Del Valle Paz de Campero, <http://www.nuncamas.org/testimon/testimon.htm>.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 272-273.

⁵⁷ Amnesty International, *Testimony on Secret Detention Camps in Argentina*, (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1980), 29.

⁵⁸ *Only Emptiness Remains*.

⁵⁹ Amnesty International, *Testimony on Secret Detention Camps in Argentina*, 28-29. See also Paul H. Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals*, 182.

⁶⁰ *Idem*; Alejandro Lanusse quoted in Paul H. Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals*, 167.

sanction. Instead, opportunistic financial gain was more likely the motive behind this practice of base theft.

In addition to committing acts such as these out of desires for individual financial gain, the security forces also perpetrated aspects of the repression out of political ambition, a motive which also found no justification under the military's ideology. Perhaps the most illustrative instance of political motivation driving the practice of repression concerns the actions of Admiral Massera. Realizing that the military regime would not remain in power forever, Massera began laying the foundation for a future political career under a civilian government. Primarily, he sought to create and lead the Party for Social Democracy. Exploiting his powers over the repressive apparatus, the admiral staffed the party's new downtown Buenos Aires office with what amounted to be slaves taken from clandestine torture centers. Additionally, these political slaves were primarily Montoneros, the military's most significant ideological enemy. Not only did Massera award these Montonero prisoners a favored status and greater freedoms than their counterparts who remained in prison, but he also sought to build alliances with the groups of Montoneros that the security forces had not yet captured, an aim which the employ of Montonero prisoners in his offices advanced.⁶¹ Furthermore, Massera orchestrated the July 1977 kidnapping of the junta's ambassador to Venezuela, Hidalgo Solá, who had learned of Massera's political aspirations and his means of accomplishing them.⁶²

⁶¹ Paul H. Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals*, 166; Juan Carlos Torre and Lilian de Riz, "Argentina since Independence," 338.

⁶² Paul H. Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals*, 166; "Argentina: The Navy Way," *Latin America Political Report* 11, no.29 (1977): 225.

Several aspects of Massera's manipulation of the repressive apparatus for his personal political ambition contradict the military's ideological justifications of the repression. First, Massera opportunistically exploited the presence of prisoners and used them as slave laborers for his own personal ends, not as a means of reforming them so they might contribute to the brighter Argentine future that military ideology sought. What is more, he sought to use his control of the repression and these favored prisoners to build bridges to the regime's ideological opponent, the Montoneros, an act that clearly was at odds with the junta's creed that called for the eradication of this group and all its supporters. Additionally, Massera utilized the repression simply to eliminate Solá, who could have potentially exposed Massera's actions and become an obstacle to his political designs. Massera did this despite the important function the ambassador performed in maintaining positive relations with Venezuela at a time when the international community was increasingly mobilizing opposition to the military junta's policies, an act that was clearly in disagreement with the advancement of the government's goals.⁶³

Indeed, the exercise of the repressive apparatus for political ambition was not limited to only Admiral Massera's actions. When chief of the Army's general staff General Roberto Viola appeared as if he would be Videla's successor as president in 1981, political rivals within the military activated the repressive apparatus to frustrate his appointment. In hopes of gaining political dirt against Viola and damaging the general's credibility, his opponents kidnapped Ramón Miralles, a provincial Minister of the

⁶³ "Argentina: The Navy Way," *Latin America Political Report* 11, no.29 (1977): 225.; Rita Arditti, *Searching for Life*, 37-40; Amnesty International, *Report of an Amnesty International Mission to Argentina, 6-15 November 1976*, 5; Juan Carlos Torre and Lilian de Riz, "Argentina since Independence," 333; David Rock, *Argentina, 1516-1987*, 383.

Economy under one of Viola's close allies who was a provincial governor.⁶⁴ The torturers focused their efforts on forcing Miralles to denounce Viola's ally in a money laundering scheme in hopes of sullyng Viola, going so far as to torture all the members of his family in front of him so as to help him "recall" the governor's fraudulent actions. Nevertheless, Miralles never provided his tormentors the details they wished because the scheme to which they referred simply did not exist.⁶⁵ Demonstrating the singular motive for which the security forces had kidnapped and tortured Miralles, his torturers repeatedly told him that "as soon as [he] started to reveal the facts and denounce the people, it would create a more favorable situation for [him]."⁶⁶ Viola's political opponents, therefore, implemented the repression against Miralles not because of any threat he posed to the regime or because of his incompatibility with the military's ideas for the future of Argentina, the reasons for which the military justified its repression, but precisely because Viola's opponents sought to further their political agenda.

Besides serving as a means for financial gain and the fulfillment of political ambition, the repression also functioned as a means to conceal the security forces' crimes, a means which was in practice often untenable according to the military's creed. The case of Navy Lieutenant Jorge Devoto best illustrates this unideological component of the motivations driving the repression. Early in 1976, Lieutenant Devoto's brother-in-law Marcelo Bettini became a victim to the repression. Because the military government was still in the initial stages of broadening its repression to include aspects of society other than just guerrillas and because the reality of disappearances was still new to

⁶⁴ George D.E. Philip, *The Military in South American Politics*, (Dover, NH: Croom Helm, 1985), 263; Jacobo Timerman, *Prisoner without a Name*, 146-148.

⁶⁵ Ramón Miralles, personal testimony, <http://www.nuncamas.org/testimon/testimon.htm>

⁶⁶ Idem.

Argentines, Marcelo's family was at a loss as to how to react to the incident. Devoto volunteered to call his superiors in the Navy's headquarters and ask for assistance in locating his missing brother-in-law. It is important to note that Devoto did not confront his superiors with a denunciation, for he had no reason to believe that they were culpable for the disappearance of his brother-in-law, but rather he called to simply ask for help. Although the lieutenant received no immediate assistance, his Navy colleagues told him they would let him know if they were to learn something of Marcelo's fate. Days later, the Navy called Devoto and informed him that Marcelo had turned up dead in a confrontation with the security forces and that he was located in a local city cemetery. His colleagues invited Devoto to come to the cemetery and identify the body so that he may return it to his family, a special privilege that was extended to very few during the course of the repression. When Devoto arrived at the burial ground, the attendant had to unearth several bodies from unmarked graves before they found Marcelo's corpse.⁶⁷

Soon after this incident, the long-time chauffeur of Devoto's in-laws disappeared. At this, Devoto accompanied his father-in-law Antonio Bettini, a prominent lawyer and university professor, to the local police station. These authorities proved to be of little use in determining the fate of the chauffeur but did direct the pair to another nearby police station. On the drive to the next station, a car full of armed men stopped the two men and, after forcing Devoto at gun point to drive to a secluded part of town, kidnapped his father-in-law. Days later Devoto again turned to his Navy superiors for help. This time he went personally to the Navy's headquarters in Buenos Aires to meet with officials in

⁶⁷ The details of this case are drawn from *Only Emptiness Remains*; and Marta Bettini de Devoto and Marta del Carmen Francese, personal testimony, <http://www.nuncamas.org/testimon/testimon.htm>.

the naval intelligence service to ascertain the destiny of his father-in-law. Lieutenant Jorge Devoto disappeared during this visit in the naval headquarters, never to reappear.

Considering the impunity that the security apparatus exercised throughout the junta's governance, Lieutenant Devoto's questions as to the whereabouts of his father-in-law posed no threat to the military government. Quite the contrary, he was a valuable asset to the Navy's mission in Argentina. His wife later recalled that he was a well-known official in the armed forces and "he had been congratulated by Massera for his brilliant performance."⁶⁸ The favored treatment he received in having the benefit of reclaiming his brother-in-law's body further testifies to the esteem he had earned amongst his peers in the Navy. At a more basic level, the fact that Devoto was inculcated enough in the military's value system to have progressed to the rank of lieutenant casts doubt on any argument that suggests he was not fully committed to accomplishing the military's goals. Rather than being an application of the repressive system to further the military's ideological objectives, the capture of Jorge Devoto was instead something of a convenient means to hide the truths of the repression and to avoid answering uncomfortable questions. In other words, Devoto, a respected and accomplished naval officer, was kidnapped not to "cleanse" Argentina, but rather to cover up previous disappearances.

Others' experiences during the Dirty War prove that the use of the repressive apparatus in this manner was not isolated to the case of Devoto. For instance, naval authorities disappeared conscript Pablo Alberto Finguerut after they accused him of being involved in a planned terrorist attack. When his father, Eusebio Finguerut, approached Navy headquarters about the disappearance of his son, he too was captured. After a year

⁶⁸ Marta Bettini de Devoto, personal testimony, <http://www.nuncamas.org/testimon/testimon.htm>.

of imprisonment, the security forces exiled the father to England where he later learned that his son had died during a torture session.⁶⁹ Similarly, three police officers involved in the repression witnessed other security forces participating in what the officers called “kidnapping for extortion.” Opposed to this apparent misuse of the repression, the officers reported the events to the Army and their police superiors. Immediately, however, they were kidnapped and tortured.⁷⁰ Just like Devoto’s experience, these cases represent a use of the repression not to accomplish the ideological aims of eliminating the subversive threat and reconstructing the nation, but simply to conceal other crimes that the security forces had committed by eliminating witnesses.

Conclusion

As the Dirty War continued, Argentina gradually slipped farther into chaos. Rather than curing all the ills that afflicted the nation, from the struggling economy to the deadlocked political scene, the generals only succeeded in worsening the situation. Their ineffectiveness in stabilizing the nation along with a botched effort to seize the British Falkland Islands in 1982 led to the military’s return to the barracks in 1983.⁷¹ By the end of the military’s time in power, the nation’s foreign debt stood at an astronomical \$35 billion, and inflation had reached 310% annually.⁷² Further indicative of the military’s failure to accomplish a change in Argentine society, the political parties that reemerged to

⁶⁹ *Nunca Más*, 356.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 244.

⁷¹ Thomas E. Skidmore and Peter H. Smith, *Modern Latin America*, 101; David Rock, *Argentina, 1516-1987*, 383; Juan Carlos Torre and Lilian de Riz, “Argentina since 1946,” 338-339.

⁷² Juan Carlos Torre and Lilian de Riz, “Argentina since 1946,” 339-340.

take the reins from the military, primarily the Peronistas and the Radicals, were the same political actors that had been at loggerheads under Isabel Perón's government.⁷³

In addition to these often cited reasons for the fall of the military junta, the contrast in ideology and practice in the Dirty War repression also played a role in the demise of the military government. As the repression extended beyond the military junta's initial ideological aims to include acts committed out of self-interest and as the contrast between the ideological motivations for the repression and the practice of repression became more glaring, some in the security forces called into question the purpose of the repression. They felt betrayed as they observed "their superiors becoming wealthier, the generalized corruption of those of their own rank, and the loss of the aims which had originally been given as motivation for the struggle."⁷⁴ Others felt used as the risky missions in which they were involved turned out to be political or economic schemes committed for their superiors' benefit.⁷⁵ Furthermore, as the pursuit of personal interests through the repressive apparatus increased, the military government lost control of its security forces. Rather than the professional, orderly institution it purported to be, the security forces' actions increasingly resembled what one scholar called "pure gangsterism."⁷⁶ This corruption that increasingly characterized the security forces undermined the junta's support and contributed to a division in the military, moving some like General Lanusse to call for a return to civilian government.⁷⁷ The gap between the ideological motivations for the repression and the practice of repression, therefore, played a role in the eventual downfall of the military junta and its Dirty War.

⁷³ Paul H. Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals*, 193-194.

⁷⁴ Testimony quoted in *Nunca Más*, 241.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 242.

⁷⁶ Paul H. Lewis, *Guerrillas and Generals*, 182.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 166-167.

Despite the fact that the Dirty War only lasted from 1975 to 1983, it is undeniable that the experience of these years has had a significant impact on Argentina's recent history. This is no surprise, considering that up to 30,000 Argentines were disappeared before the military left office in 1983.⁷⁸ National politicians still have to define themselves in relation to the impunity that the military has heretofore enjoyed despite considerable factions of the country, and indeed the world, calling for the punishment of all those responsible for the repression's crimes against the nation.⁷⁹ Human rights groups such as the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo and the accompanying Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo continue to protest regularly the actions of the junta as they persist in the struggle to locate their missing offspring.⁸⁰ The fact that the general violence and anguish of the 1970's are recurring themes in artwork of various media, ranging from the written word to film to sculpture, further attests to the central position the time period occupies in the nation's consciousness.⁸¹ Undoubtedly, the repression left an indelible mark on Argentina which will long continue to influence the experience of the country and its inhabitants.

⁷⁸ The number of the disappeared is a highly contested issue. Estimates range from a few thousand to tens of thousands. See Arditti, *Searching for Life*, 43-44 for a discussion.

⁷⁹ Rita Arditti, *Searching for Life*, 159-161.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 163-167.

⁸¹ Ksenija Bilbija and others, eds. *The Art of Truth-Telling about Authoritarian Rule*, (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2005).

Bibliography

Primary Sources

“Acta fijando el propósito y los objetivos básicos para el proceso de reorganización nacional.” Military junta. 31 March 1976.

<http://www.derechos.net/koaga/ageitos/1.html>.

Amnesty International. *Argentina: los militares ante la justicia*. Madrid: Amnesty International Publications, 1987.

———. *Report of an Amnesty Internacional Mission to Argentina, 6-15 November 1976*. London: Amnesty International Publications, 1977.

———. *Testimony on Secret Detention Camps in Argentina*. London: Amnesty International Publications, 1980.

Camps, Ramón J.A. *Caso Timerman: punto final*. Buenos Aires: Tribuna Abierta, 1982.

———. *El poder en la sombra: el affaire Gravier*. Buenos Aires: RO.CA Producciones, 1983.

Directiva No. 404/75. Comandante General del Ejército. *Lucha contra la subversion*, October 1975. <http://www.nuncamas.org/document/militar/40475.htm>.

“Documento final de la junta militar sobre la guerra contra la subversion y el terrorismo,” 28 April 1983,
<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB85/830428%200000B044.pdf>.

“Estatuto para el proceso de reorganización nacional.” 24 March 1976.
<http://www.nuncamas.org/document/document.htm>.

Lucha contra la subversión. http://www.24demarzo.gov.ar/listas/lista_f251.htm.

Nunca Más: Report by Argentina's National Commission on Disappeared People.

London: Faber and Faber, 1986.

Only Emptiness Remains. VHS. Dir. Rodolfo Kuhn. Televisión Española, 1984.

Organization of American States, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Argentina. Washington, D.C.:

Organization of American States, 1980.

Partnoy, Alicia. *The Little School: Tales of Disappearance and Survival.* Translated

by Alicia Partnoy, Lois Athey, and Sandra Braunstein. San Francisco, CA: Cleis Press, 1998.

Personal Testimonies of Marta Bettini de Devoto, Marta del Carmen Francese, Norberto

Liwsky, and Ramón Miralles, <http://www.nuncamas.org/testimon/testimon.htm>.

Proclama del 24 de marzo de 1976. <http://www.nuncamas.org/document/document.htm>.

"Short, Sharp, and Clean." *The Economist*, 3 April 1976, 14.

Timerman, Jacobo. *Prisoner without a Name, Cell without a Number.* Translated by

Toby Talbot. Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002.

Verbitsky, Horacio. *The Flight: Confessions of an Argentine Dirty Warrior.*

Translated by Esther Allen. New York: The New Press, 1996.

Secondary Sources

Andersen, Martin Edwin. *Dossier Secreto: Argentina's Desaparecidos and the Myth of the "Dirty War."* Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993.

Arditti, Rita. *Searching for Life: The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo and the Disappeared Children of Argentina.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999.

Bilibija, Ksenija and others, eds. *The Art of Truth-Telling about Authoritarian Rule.* Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2005.

Donghi, Tulio Halperin. "Argentina's Unmastered Past," *Latin American Research Review* 23, no. 2 (1988), 3-24.

Fausto, Boris and Fernando J. Devoto. *Brasil e Argentina: Um ensaio de história comparada (1850-2002).* 2nd ed. Translated by Sérgio Molina. São Paulo: Editora, 2005.

Feitlowitz, Marguerite. *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Frontalini, Daniel and María Cristina Caiati. *El mito de la guerra sucia.* Buenos Aires: Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales, 1984.

Gillespie, Richard. *Soldiers of Perón: Argentina's Montoneros.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982.

Hodges, Donald C. untitled review. *The American Historical Review* 99, no. 2 (1994), 701.

Lewis, Paul H. *Authoritarian Regimes in Latin America: Dictators, Despots, and Tyrants.* Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006.

- . *Guerrillas and Generals: The "Dirty War" in Argentina*. West Port, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2002.
- . "The Right and Military Rule, 1955-1983." In *The Argentine Right: Its History and Intellectual Origins, 1910 to the Present*, eds. Sandra McGee Deutsch and Ronald H. Dolkart, 119-146. Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1993.
- Philip, George D.E. *The Military in South American Politics*. Dover, NH: Croom Helm, 1985.
- Rock, David. *Argentina, 1516-1987: From Spanish Colonization to Alfonsín*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987.
- Skidmore, Thomas E. and Peter H. Smith. *Modern Latin America*. 6th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Senkman, Leonardo. "The Right and Civilian Regimes, 1955-1976." In *The Argentine Right: Its History and Intellectual Origins, 1910 to the Present*, eds. Sandra McGee Deutsch and Ronald H. Dolkart, 119-146. Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1993.
- Torre, Juan Carlos and Liliana de Riz. "Argentina since 1946." In *Argentina since Independence*, ed. Leslie Bethell, 243-363. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.