

“AH315 Beyond Crisis: South American Memory Politics and Art

Seminar Leader: Haley Stewart

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Course Hours: Wednesdays, 15:45-19:00

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 19:00 - 20:00, or by appointment

Course Description

In this course, we will explore some of the roles historical memory and memory politics have played in artistic production in Chile, Bolivia and the wider Andean and Southern Cone regions of South America since the 1970s. The aim of the course is to introduce students to the way in which art in these regions has memorialized, responded to, critiqued and imagined a beyond to past and ongoing crises like the histories of violent Southern Cone dictatorships, the histories of economic exploitation and environmental degradation at the hands of extractivist industries, and the longer legacies of dispossession and colonial violence against indigenous and Afrodescendant populations. Central to our study are these questions: How does art capture, invoke and critique the historical past? How does it offer alternatives to this past and envision possibilities of healing, repair and growth beyond crisis? How do different artistic and cultural media like painting, sculpture, land art, performance art and film, as well as Andean-indigenous (Aymaran and Quechuan) forms of making (i.e. textiles, quipus/kipus) often in productive tensions with terms like aesthetics or art, reflect and develop different concepts of historical memory? Each week, we'll discuss specific artworks from artists, artistic groups and movements like Cecilia Vicuña, Seba Calfuqueo, Daniela Catrilea Cordero, Luis Bernardo Oyarzún, Elvira Espejo, Antonio Paucar, Raúl Zurita, and the CADA and *avanzada* movements in Chile, and discuss them with the help of readings providing necessary context, critical perspectives and theory. When English translations are available, the readings will privilege the writings of critics and scholars from these regions like Nelly Richard and Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui.

Requirements:

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Accessibility

Bard College Berlin is committed to inclusion and providing equal access to all students; we uphold and maintain all aspects of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and Section 3 of the German Disability Equality Act of April 27, 2002 (Federal Law Gazette I p. 1468). If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, please contact the Disability Accommodation Coordinator, Atticus Kleen, (accommodations@berlin.bard.edu) to request an official accommodation.

Requests for longer-term accommodations should be made as early as possible to ensure adequate time for coordination and planning. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and may require advance notice to implement.

If you have already been approved for accommodations with the Disability Accommodation Coordinator, please arrange to meet with me outside of class so that we can develop an implementation plan.

Students may face extenuating circumstances related to various personal or external factors, which impact their academic performance. While these circumstances often do not fall within the legal framework of Disability Accommodations, Bard College Berlin is committed to supporting students experiencing such circumstances. A student needing a short extension or a replacement assignment because of an extenuating circumstance is encouraged to make arrangements directly with instructors if possible. If further support is needed, please visit the [Bard College Berlin Accessibility page](#). Questions about this process can be directed to James Harker (j.harker@berlin.bard.edu) or Maria Anderson-Long (m.andersonlong@berlin.bard.edu).

Attendance

Attendance is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. Attendance to all classes is expected, but to account for minor circumstances, one absence will not affect your participation grade or require documentation.

Beyond one excused absence, other absences will require documentation (of illness etc) to not significantly affect participation grade. Please send me a notification via email before the beginning of class.

Unexcused absences will affect the participation grade in the following way:

- 1 unexcused absence - won't affect grade
- 2 unexcused absences - 5% off of participation grade
- 3 unexcused absences - 10 % off of participation grade
- 4 unexcused absences - 20 % off of participation grade

Missing more than 4 classes, EVEN if these are excused, will mean I cannot offer your credit for the course. Bard College Berlin may not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8. Students are advised to consult the Student Handbook for regulations governing periods of illness or leaves of absence.

Assessment

Each student will give two presentations and complete three writing assignments. Detailed instructions and expectations for these assignments will be discussed in class at the time of their assigning.

Presentations:

1. Presentation on an artist (doesn't have to be from South America) whose work you admire that connects to the topics and readings we've been discussing. Your presentation should make explicit how it connects to these topics and how this shows up in the work of the artist. This will probably require presenting some sort of context for the artist and their work and will definitely require a 'close reading' of their work, preferably one, at most two pieces. Will be graded on a pass or fail basis. *Weeks 10*
2. Final paper topic presentations. You will share your developing work with the class as a way to help formulate your ideas and receive feedback and as a way for the class to take final stock of the ground we've covered over the semester. *Weeks 12 and 13*

Writing Assignments;

1. One short, 2-page, double-spaced commentary on one of the art works we've discussed in class. This will be graded on a pass or fail basis and is a chance for me to check in on how you're engaging with the material in class and with your ability to communicate your ideas in writing. The point of this assignment is to do a close reading of the artwork and connect it to the topics of the course. *Due 10/4*
2. Midterm essay requiring no further research beyond what we've read in class. You are, however, expected to cite at least two of the readings we've done in class. 2000 words. *Due 10/18*
3. Final semester research essay. Requires research beyond what we've read in class. The expectations are that you consult and engage with at least 3 academic sources (book chapters or articles) in writing your paper. At least one of these should be an academic source we haven't consulted in class. 2000 words. *Due 12/11*

Essays should include footnotes/references, and bibliography. You are welcome to discuss the structure of your essay with me during office hours and/or to consult with writing tutors/use the Learning Commons.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

All written work must be submitted electronically and on time. Essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

Papers will be submitted online on Google Classroom.

Office Hours:

My office hours are Wednesdays after class, 19:00 - 20:00, or by appointment. If you're struggling with the material, have questions about your progress or about the assignments or would like more feedback on the assignments you've turned in, please come see me.

Grade Breakdown

Participation (including the presentations and the short writing assignment): 30%

Mid-term essay: 30%

Final essay: 40%

Reading Materials

Reading materials will be distributed on Google Classroom. No purchase of books is necessary.

Semester Schedule:

***Listed readings are what should be read and prepared for class that week. I have curated selections from the cited readings for the sake of clarity and to keep the reading each week between 20-35 pages**

Part I: Introductions

Week 1, 9/4: Introduction to Course

Reading:

- Selection from Néstor Perlongher's poem, "There are Cadavers" ("Hay cadáveres" in Spanish, 1981)
- Cecilia Vicuña's poem, "On Behalf of Seeds" (1971)

Images:

- Alfredo Jaar, *Geometría de la Conciencia* (Geometry of Conscience, 2010)
- Gil Imaná, *Cristo de Ñancahuazú* (1968)
- Illustrations from Guáman Poma/Waman Puma's text *Primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (1615). You can look up information about them if you'd like, though it's not necessary, but first please look at them with a 'naive' eye and see what you notice

Week 2, 9/11. Looking Back, Looking Forward: Memory Politics from Southern Cone and 'Global' Perspectives

Reading:

- Elizabeth Jelin, selections from Introduction and Chapter Three ("Political Struggles for Memory", pages) from *State Repression and the Labors of Memory* (2003)
- Andreas Huyssen, "Present Pasts: Media, Politics and Amnesia" from *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (2003)
- Very short selection from Walter Benjamin, selection from "Theses on the Philosophy of History" (1968)

Week 3, 9/18: Revolutionary Memories: Memories of Salvador Allende's Chile, Unidad Popular Film and the New Latin American Cinema movement

Reading:

- Maria Luisa Ortega. "The Battle of Chile/La Batalla de Chile" in *The Cinema of Latin America*
- Sergio Roncallo and Juan Carlos Arias-Herrera. "Cinema and/as Revolution: The New Latin American Cinema"
- Selections from Benjamin's "The Work of Art in the Age of Technological Reproduction"
- *Optional but interesting:* Julianne Burton's Interview of Patricio Guzmán

Images:

- Please watch the first hour of *The Battle of Chile*, Part 1. We'll finish watching the remaining thirty minutes in class

Part II: Artistic Responses to Dictatorship

Week 4, 9/25. Aesthetics of Resistance, Aesthetics of Fracture. The Chilean 'new scene' ('escena de avanzada') and CADA movement

Reading:

- Nelly Richard, Introduction and "Performances of the Chilean Avanzada" in *Margins and Institutions* (1986)
- Richard, "Destruction, Reconstruction and Deconstruction" in *The Insubordination of Signs: Political Change, Cultural Transformation and the Poetics of Crisis* (2004)

Images:

- Carlos Leppe, *The Hanger/El perchero* (1975)
- Art Action: *To not die of hunger in Art/Para no morir de hambre en el Arte* (1979)
- Art Action: Lotty Rosenfeld, *A mile of crosses on pavement/Una milla de cruces sobre el pavimento* (1979)
- Art Action: *Oh, South America!/Ay Sudamérica!* (1981)

Week 5, 10/2: Chilean arpilleras and El Siluetazo in Argentina

Readings:

- Marjorie Agosin. "The Texture of Memory" in *Tapestries of Hope, Threads of Love: The Arpillera Movement in Chile* (2007)
- Holly Eva Ryan, "Political Street Art in Social Mobilization: A Tale of Two Protests in Argentina" (2020)
- Jessica Paolo Marina, "Outlining the Victims of the Holocaust and the Argentinian Dictatorship: Jerzy Skapski's *Kazdy Dzién O'swiecimia* and Rodolfo Aguerreberry, Julio Flores, and Guillermo Kexel's "El Siluetazo"" (2023)

Images:

- Anonymous, Examples of arpilleras (1976-2019)
- *El Silhuetazo* as completed and while being completed (1983)
- Jerzy Skąpski, *Kazdy Dzień Oświecimia* (1974)
- Józef Szajna, *Wall of Shoes* (1970), *Replika* (1973), *Silhouettes* (1976)

2 page, pass/fail commentary due Friday of this week, 10/4

Part III: Post-Dictatorship Memory Art

Week 6, 10/9: 'Post-memory' Argentinian and Chilean Film

Readings

- Marianne Hirsch. Introduction to *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust* (2012)
- Geoffrey Maguire. "The Copyright Generation. Historical Memory and the Children of the Disappeared" in *The Politics of Postmemory: Violence and Victimhood in Contemporary Argentine Culture* (2017)

Images:

- Watch *The blondes/Los rubios* (2003)
- Watch *Chile, Obstinate Memory/Chile, la memoria obstinada* (1997)

Week 7, 10/16. When Memory becomes Monumental. Chilean Monuments, Museums and Land Art

Readings:

- Nelly Richard, "Sites of Memory, Emptying Remembrance" in *Telling Ruins in Latin America* (2009)
- Richard, pages 34- 37 of "Border Citation: Between Neo- and Post-Avante Garde" in *The Insubordination of Signs* (2004)
- Jens Andermann, "Expanded Fields: Postdictatorship and the Landscape" (2012)

Images:

- Photos of Parque de la Paz Villa Grimaldi
- Photos of the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Chile
- Photos of Raúl Zurita's *escritura material* (1993) in the Atacama Desert

Mid-term essay due Friday of this week, 10/18

10/23, NO CLASS, Fall Break

Week 8, 10/30: 'Arte precario' (Precarious Art) and Cosmic memory. The Alternative Aesthetic Trajectory of Cecilia Vicuña

Readings:

- Selection of poems by Vicuña from her anthology "The Precarious" (2016)
- Please poke around on Vicuña's website
- The "No Manifiesto" of La Tribu-No (1967)
- Juliet Lynd. "Precarious Resistance: Weaving Opposition in the Poetry of Cecilia Vicuña" (2005)
- Candice Amich. "*Menstrual Threads and Utopian Trash: Cecilia Vicuña and the Reconstruction of Cultural Memory*"

Images:

- See the selection of photographs of the precarios Vicuña made in the mid-sixties
- See photographs of Vicuña's installation "Otoño" (1971), which was dedicated to the project of socialism in Chile
- See photographs of Vicuña's performance in Tunquén (1981), which was dedicated to the memory of the desaparecidos
- See Vicuña's *Quipu Menstrual* (2006/2021)

Part IV: Decolonial Memories, Decolonial Forms

Week 9, 11/6: Multi-horized Memory. Cultural Memory and the Spark of Insurgency. Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, the Andean Baroque and Contemporary responses

Reading:

- John Alan Crider. Read section "Iconography and Style of the Andean Baroque" (pages 60-63) in *Indians and Artistic Vocation in Colonial Cuzco, 1650-1715* (1991)
- Selections from Verónica Gago's Introduction to Cusicanqui's work "Ch'ixinakax Utxiwa: On Practices and Discourses of Decolonization" (2019)
- Cusicanqui, pages 1-8 and 12-14 to of "Ch'ixinakax Utxiwa: On Practices and Discourses of Decolonization"
- Poems "The Last Supper," "God Shows Paradise to Adam and Eve" and "Studies of Angels" from Odi González's *Birds on the Kiswar Tree* (2014)

Images:

- Links to 16th century paintings from the Escuela Cusqueña
- Images from Guamán Poma's/Waman Puma's text (1615)
- Selection of Gil Imaná's paintings
- Selection of José Ballivián's paintings

Week 10. Re-Appropriating the Image. The “New Latin American Cinema Movement,” Andean-style, and Contemporary Bolivian Video-Art

Reading:

- Jorge Sanjinés, “Problems of Form and Content in Revolutionary Cinema” (1976)
- Michel Rolph-Trouillot, Introduction to *Silencing the Past: The Power and Production of History* (1995)

Images:

- Selections from the film *El coraje del pueblo/The Courage of the People* (1971)
- José Ballivián, “Procesión”

Presentations on an artist

Week 11, 11/20: Cultural Memory and Re-interpretation. Andean Quipu/Kipu-Art and Textiles

Readings:

- Denise Arnold. Selections from the Introduction of *Situating the Andean Colonial Experience* (2021)

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Images:

- Selection of Elvira Espejo textiles
- Jorge Eielson, *Quipus 58 B* (1990)
- Ronny Quevedo, *los desaparecidos (the arbiter of time)* (2018)
- Vicuña, *Quipu Menstrual* (2021)
- Vicuña, *Paracas* (1983)

Week 12: Cultural Memory and Re-interpretation. Performing Memory

Readings:

- Thomas A. Abercrombie, Selections from Introduction to *Pathways of Memory and Power* (1998)
- Diana Taylor. Introduction to “The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas” (2003)

Images:

- Selected performances from Antonio Paucar
- Vicuña, *Kon Kon* (2010)
- Vicuña, *Un nudo vivo/A Living Knot* (2017)

Final presentations

Week 13 Mapuche and Afrochileno Artists. Decolonizing Memory in Chile

Reading:

- Selections from *Üi: Four Mapuche poets: an anthology*. (1998)
- Cristian Vargas Paillahueque, “Contemporary Mapuche Art and the Cycle of Decolonization” in *Dismantling the Nation: Contemporary Art in Chile* (2023)
- Antonio Catrileo Araya, Manuel Carrión Lira, and Marcelo Garzo Montalvo, “Shileyem (Chile se acabó, The End of Chile): Indigenous Media and Decolonial Futurities beyond the Settler State” in *Dismantling the Nation: Contemporary Art in Chile* (2023)

Images:

- Bernardo Oyarzún’s, *Werken* (2017) and *Under Suspicion/Bajo Sospecha* (2022)
- Daniela Catriela Cordero’s, *Llekümün* (2020)
- <https://www.pueblosoriginarios.gob.cl/multimedia/llekumun-daniela-catrileo-cordero-axre-nacer-con-la-tierra-2020-primer-lugar>
- Selection of Seba Calfuqueo’s installations and video-art performances
- Jocelyn Reyes and Javiera Asenjo, *Recordis: Small fragment of a weave waiting to be named/Recordis: Pequeño fragmento de un tejido para nombrar* (2020)

Final presentations

Week 14, 12/11: Wrap-Up and TBD: Discussion with Bolivian and Chilean artists living in Berlin

Final Papers due today before class, 12/11