

**PERU POST-INTERNAL CONFLICT:  
AN ANALYSIS OF VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF MEMORY**

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of  
University of Pittsburgh in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Bachelor of Philosophy in International and Area Studies Thesis

University of Pittsburgh

2015

University of Pittsburgh  
University Honors College

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This thesis examines the role that visual art plays in the formation of the memories of Peru's internal conflict. From 1980 until 2000, Peru endured a period of arm conflict that involved several different political actors including the State, The Shining Path, The Revolutionary Movement Túpac Amaru, various indigenous communities, and the general Peruvian public. After this event subsided, the government formed a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in order to analyze the past and discover what had happened during this time period. The TRC also issued recommendations for the government to take into consideration in order to prevent a future outbreak of political violence. I examine several case studies of visual art encompassing photography, theatre and film and analyze their representations using the TRC's final recommendations as a frame for analysis. While some of the visualizations constructively work toward achieving the TRC's goals, others contradict these societal reforms. First, I study the photography exhibit *Yuyanapaq: para recordar*. I then discuss two plays performed by Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani, which include *Contraelviento* and *Antígona*. Finally, I conclude by exploring possibilities for further study, and briefly analyze more recent representations, the play *La cautiva* written by Luis Alberto León and the film *La teta asustada* by Claudia Llosa. I argue that visual art serves as a valuable political tool by providing a space for reconciliation, social justice, and cultural repair in the aftermath of violence that can potentially aid the Peruvian community to prevent future political conflict.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Armando García for his aid in every step of the process of completing my thesis. Without his inspiration, encouragement, and outstanding dedication this project would not have been possible. I would also like to thank my committee members Elizabeth Monasterios, Neepa Majumdar, and Ariana Vigil for providing constructive feedback on my research and for suggesting creative routes to continue my work in this field. Without the financial support from the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Latin American Studies, I would not have been able to travel to Lima to pursue international study and greatly enhance my research. I would also like to thank Dr. Matthew Rhodes for encouraging me to begin research in the field of memory studies in the first place and for his continual support of my ideas and academic pursuit. Additionally, I am appreciative of Peruvian photojournalist Óscar Medrano for allowing me to shadow him at work in Peru and giving me access to his archival photographs from the time of the conflict, which provided much insight into the study of *Yuyanapaq*. Through the support that I received both at the University of Pittsburgh and while studying abroad at the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru, I was able to successfully research and defend this thesis.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

*The right to remember does not figure among the rights consecrated by the United Nations, but now more than ever we must insist on it and act on it.*

(Galeano 210)

Internal terrorism and political violence swept across Peru in a wave of destruction between 1980 and 2000. Peru's communist party, better known as *Sendero Luminoso* (the Shining Path), attempted to incite a communist revolution through violence, targeting rural indigenous communities and killing and torturing those who would not join their cause. Soon after the violence began, the Peruvian government responded by sending armed forces to the countryside to combat the guerrilla forces. This maneuver only caused more confusion and increased incidents of violence, as military personnel fought against unarmed indigenous peoples and against the guerrillas of the Shining Path. Over the span of the twenty-year conflict, all groups involved in the violence were considered guilty for countless deaths. The revolutionary political organizations were not the only ones to use guerrilla warfare to attack both indigenous communities and organized armed and state forces. Indeed, the state government can be held accountable for the unnecessary deaths of many Peruvian citizens as well. Indigenous peoples also took up arms in defense of their communities, killing both guilty and innocent people in the process. No group was safe from harm and none of the perpetrators could be considered entirely innocent or guilty due to their actions. During this period of Peruvian history the confusion led to the death and disappearance of almost 70,000 people ("Truth Commission: Peru 01). This time of intense insecurity and violence left a traumatic mark on the national psyche and called for an investigation into the causes of the internal war.

In the aftermath of violence, the concept of memory is often linked to both human rights and art. The epigraph by Uruguayan author Eduardo Galeano illustrates the connection between memory and rights. He states that although memory is not considered a human right by the United Nations, it is nevertheless an important right that individuals must insist upon at the grassroots level in order to insure other rights. Galeano's words illustrate the inevitable link between art and memory, and they push me to think more critically about them. I first began exploring traumatic memory in Argentina in 2013, where I conducted a small field study on postmemory among university students in Rosario. Postmemory is categorized as the memory of the generation that follows the initial event, for example in the case of Argentina, the memory of the children of those that lived during the military dictatorship. While visiting the country's Museo de la Memoria, I could not help but be overwhelmed by the strikingly visual nature of memory. I expected to see documents and hear testimonies, but was surprised that photographs dominated the majority of the museum's space. When I explored the concept of postmemory, I discovered that memory has an inevitable connection to its subject's political views, and is seen as a type of political right for its subjects. Each narrator of memory politicizes his or her version of it, and therefore an artistic representation may be used as a vehicle to portray the artist's version of the story. Art can be utilized as an important political tool for the witnesses and survivors of such atrocities in examining the past and creating a new future and thus claiming their human rights.

In *Peru Post-Internal Conflict: An Analysis of Visual Representations of Memory*, I examine the role that photographic and dramatic forms of art have played in Peruvian cultural politics in the aftermath of the Shining Path. After the Shining Path crisis came to a slow halt in 2000, the Peruvian government created a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to

examine the rise of the Shining Path and the reasons for which it was able to exist for such a prolonged period of time. The commission collected testimonies from the witnesses of the violence so that it could reformulate the historical “truth” of the time of fear. Along with the collection of verbal and written testimony, the TRC assembled a compilation of photographic testimonies from the war years (“Presentación”). One of the cases that I examine, Yuyanapaq, is a photography archive composed of roughly 1,700 photographs and compiled by the TRC. To supplement their solicitation of witness testimony, the TRC worked in conjunction with artist groups, including the Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani. This theatre and community group served as middlemen connecting the urban-based board of commissioners with the nation’s indigenous populations. Members of the TRC recognized the role that art could potentially play in repairing the torn nation, and in addition to its analysis of the roots of internal conflict, the TRC’s final report contained several recommendations for the nation to prevent the repetition of such waves of violence in the future.

### **1.1 The Causes and the Aftermath of the Violence**

University professor Abimael Guzmán founded the branch of the Peruvian Communist Party (PCP) known as *Sendero Luminoso* in the early 1970s. The Arequipa native split from the established branch of Peruvian communism due to ideological differences. Guzmán believed that revolutionary change could only be achieved through organized armed struggle, and he sought to “destroy the ruling social order to escape from the vicious cycle that reforms offered peasants” (Hazelton 65). Guzmán’s movement brought the ideas of Maoist communism to Peru. The Shining Path, named after José Carlos Mariátegui’s idea that Marxist-Leninism would be the “shining path” to Andean revolution, believed that a social revolution could occur through

violent, rural-based insurrection (Roncagliolo 61). The group targeted indigenous communities for support, taking advantage of the overwhelming physical and social divide that existed between the rural and urban areas of Peru. After attacking the countryside, Shining Path would eventually attempt to destroy urban areas in order to incite popular revolution.

Guzmán's organization began its path of destruction in Ayacucho in the early 1980s, but it was not until 1992 that the Shining Path targeted citizens of the city of Lima. Prior to this, the violence was isolated to the jungle and mountainous regions of the country. On July 16, 1992 an infamous car bomb killed about 23 people in the Lima neighborhood of Miraflores (Roncagliolo 61). This event called the limeño city-dwellers' attention to the severity of the threat posed by the communist guerrillas, a threat that had gone somewhat undetected while it only targeted marginalized indigenous populations. The government became involved in the armed conflict, sending specially trained forces into the countryside to stifle the movement's growth. However, this only complicated the internal conflict. The lack of a clearly defined enemy facilitated the military's rape, murder, and torture of uninvolved indigenous peoples throughout the country. The confusion penetrated all sides of the conflict; language and cultural barriers also caused indigenous community members to harm military personnel and others who were mistaken as "the enemy."

In 1990, Alberto Fujimori came to power as the democratically elected Peruvian president. His presidency was marked by a dark time of political corruption – he dissolved the Peruvian congress in 1992, acting as a pseudo-dictator under the assumption that absolute control would help him end the internal conflict. Fujimori received criticism for this political maneuver, but he quickly proved himself to the Peruvian public by capturing Abimael Guzmán, the Shining Path's leader. After Guzmán's capture, the Shining Path movement faltered, splitting into two

groups. In turn, violent guerrilla attacks also slowed to a stop, even though the political turmoil that reigned in Peru continued throughout the 1990s. In 1996, the *Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru* (Revolutionary Movement Túpac Amaru) seized the Japanese ambassador's residence in Lima, holding 72 hostages for a period of four months. Fujimori's administration successfully freed the hostages, once again prevailing over left-wing guerrillas. As the decade came to a close, Fujimori's popularity dwindled as allegations of spying and bribery surfaced. In 2000, he fled to Japan, bringing an end to his presidency and the time of political chaos. Fujimori was later tried for abuse of power and authorizing death-squad killings. These and other human rights abuses, such as the organization of forced sterilizations of indigenous women, lead to his 25-year prison sentence in 2009 ("Profile: Alberto Fujimori").

In post-conflict Peru, the concept of memory has been a point of frequent controversy. After President Alberto Fujimori was ousted from his position in late 2000, Valentin Paniagua's interim government immediately moved to repair the country's decimated psyche. The TRC was inaugurated in 2001 in response to public pressure demanding the state address the issues that caused the violence and to seek justice for the victims. The organization's goal was to determine the actors who were responsible for the deaths and disappearances during the time of violence. In order to do so, they collected testimonies in an attempt to uncover the ever-subjective "truth" of what had occurred during these years. In the Latin American political context, memories often come from the witness, and testimony is the dominant form of collecting survivor's stories. This geographic region has historically suffered from military dictatorships and coups, which has led to a distrust of state-sponsored sources. Members of the public search for another source when piecing together its violent past and thus turn to the witness, a fellow member of civil society as a trustful source of memory. The TRC's final report, released under Alejandro Toledo's

government in 2003, revealed that there had been about 70,000 deaths and disappearances between the years of 1980 and 2000. It also concluded that despite the fact that the Shining Path was responsible for the majority of these deaths (54%), the government and other state organizations had also caused a large portion of the deaths and disappearances (44.5%) (“Conclusiones generales”). The statistical findings of the final report show that both governmental and non-governmental actors caused and perpetrated the violence that occurred between the years 1980 and 2000. Few were safe from or unaffected by the violence that occurred during the time of fear, and the nation and its people suffered from trauma in the aftermath of the conflict.

As implied by its name, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission sought to unveil the truth of the time of terrorism in order to reconcile Peru’s past and to prevent a similar event from occurring in the future. Many questions were raised in response to the TRC’s final report: Who would be responsible for repairing the tortured nation? How could such an atrocity be prevented from ever occurring again? What problems had caused such a widespread ignorance and fear, and how could they be solved? In order to address these questions, the TRC proposed several recommendations for the nation to set as its goals as it moved into the future. The TRC’s recommendations focus on implementing institutionalized changes that target the causes of the conflict. The TRC suggested that the government prosecute those responsible for the violence during this time. Additionally, the commission called attention to the fact that impoverished indigenous people had been targeted as the victims of the majority of the violence.

To address cultural and social inequalities between the indigenous and other communities of Peru, the TRC recommended various changes that dealt with the theme of “national reconciliation and acknowledgement and acceptance of Peru’s multiethnic and multilingual

composition” (“Truth Commission: Peru 01”). For example, Recommendation A10 calls for the “recognition and integration of indigenous peoples and communities’ rights in the national legal framework” (Macher 52).<sup>1</sup> Although I do not analyze the effectiveness or implementation of these institutionalized recommendations, my thesis examines artwork using these themes as a framework for analysis. The responsibility to change the discriminatory attitudes that allowed the violence to reach such a grand scale should not only fall with the government but actors of civil society as well. Other recommendations focus on “the elaboration of a reform that assures a quality education [and] that promotes democratic values: respect for human rights, respect for differences, the valorization of pluralism and cultural diversity, and the real and complex experiences of Peruvian life, specifically in rural zones” (CVR 133).<sup>2</sup> In order to achieve these goals, other members of society in addition to the government must also create a dialogue that addresses these themes. I will return to these recommendations later in my argument as I analyze specific works of art and the messages that they portray.

*Peru Post-Internal Conflict* focuses on the photography exhibit, *Yuyanapaq*, and the theatrical works of Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani, specifically *Contraelviento* and *Antígona*. My study analyzes how these works of art, one commissioned by the State (*Yuyanapaq*) and one that functioned independently from it (Yuyachkani), address the issues and conclusions outlined in the TRC’s final report. *Yuyanapaq* is a photography exhibit that was created by the TRC as a supplement to its final report. The installation commemorates various aspects of the time of terror by compiling photographic archives extracted primarily from media outlets. Although the

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<sup>1</sup> Translated from original: “reconocimiento e integración de los derechos de los pueblos indígenas y sus comunidades en el marco jurídico nacional.”

<sup>2</sup> Translated from original: “Recomendaciones para la elaboración de una reforma que asegure una educación de calidad, que promueva valores democráticos: el respeto a los derechos humanos, el respeto a las diferencias, la valoración del pluralismo y la diversidad cultural; y visiones actualizadas y complejas de la realidad peruana, especialmente en las zonas rurales.”

exhibit attempts to portray a range of topics from this complex time period, it also fails to delve into important themes, such as rape and the forced sterilization of women and the active role of the military as perpetrators of the violence. The photographs do not address the causes of the conflict, but rather illustrate themes that occurred throughout these years. In some ways, these depictions may work against the recommendations of the TRC, by reinforcing the social divides that caused the violence. On the other hand, Yuyachkani's work addresses themes of guilt and responsibility that cause the viewer to reflect upon his or her role in relation to the conflict. Yuyachkani promotes cultural diversity by using symbolism that originates from indigenous roots, connecting urban and rural populations through its performances. I will analyze two specific works from their repertoire, *Contraelviento* and *Antígona*, which were both written and performed during the twenty-year span of violence. Both of these works discuss aspects of the internal war but do so in two distinct ways: one from an indigenous perspective, while the other from a limeño's perspective. Yuyachkani's work has the ability to be understood by both urban limeño and rural audiences and thus through ethnographic performance studies, this theatre group seeks to bridge the cultural differences that exist in Peru through performance art. Each of these examples contributes to the overall conversation of post-conflict memory and reparations, envisioning possible situations for Peru's future.

The TRC attributed the temporary success of the Shining Path to the cultural and linguistic divides that exist throughout Peru, concluding that these differences must be acknowledged and accepted in order to prevent another violent outbreak of political turmoil. I argue that in spite its own advice, the TRC's photographic collection, *Yuyanapaq*, continues to illustrate and support the existing paradigms that caused the initial violence. I also examine ways in which the work of Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani works within these existing structures, but also

breaks free from the mindset that caused Peru's internal conflict. By analyzing these two cases, I speculate possible alternative modes of visual representations that may be added to Peru's archive of communal memory in order to help this nation truly confront the issues that have caused so much suffering throughout its history.

*Peru Post-Internal Conflict* stems from this historical and discursive context, but rather than discussing historical events from the period of violence, I will analyze the memories that have emerged from the time of the internal conflict. Chapter One serves as a theoretical basis for the rest of the analysis, and examines the concepts of trauma, memory, and visuality. In this introductory chapter I seek to connect these concepts to validate my reason for choosing these types of artistic representations as my focal point. The first chapter marks the beginning of the case studies through an analysis of the photography exhibit *Yuyanapaq: para recordar*. The second chapter will examine two of the plays performed by Grupo Culutral Yuyachkani. The conclusion shares the results of my research and briefly analyses two more recent works, a film by Peruvian director Claudia Llosa, and a play by Luis Alberto León entitled *La cautiva*. These two works mark a point of departure for possible future research, which is also discussed in the concluding chapter.

## 2.0 CHAPTER ONE

### The Intersections of Trauma, Memory, and Visual Representations of Violence

#### 2.1 Defining Trauma

After witnessing violence, such as that which occurred in Peru, the victims of atrocities often relive the experience through traumatic memories. The term “trauma” widely encompasses many different types of violent experiences. In *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996), Cathy Caruth begins her explanation of “unclaimed experience” by citing Freud’s psychoanalytic approach to defining trauma. She argues, “in its most general definition, trauma describes an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena” (Caruth 11). The subject of a particular trauma cannot fully perceive the effects of the event as it happens, and the event therefore comes back to haunt the subject after a period of departure. For Freud, this period of time, the limbo between the occurrence of the event and the moment in which the effects of the experience are realized, becomes known as “latency”: “the time that elapsed between the accident and the first appearance of the symptoms is called the ‘incubation period’ (...) It is the feature which one might term latency” (Caruth 17). On the individual scale, a person who suffers from a catastrophic event re-experiences the tragedy through memory *after* temporal distancing from this event, and in doing so she gives meaning to the consequences of violence. This statement holds true for society as well, for when an event occurs at a particular point in time, the affected groups cannot possibly perceive the totality of its implications during the actual occurrence. The Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, an organization founded by the state itself, focuses on repairing the issues that are

deeply rooted in the nation, and therefore attempts to address the trauma of both the community and its individuals. It is not until time passes, until society psychologically relives the event and realizes its importance, that this event becomes part of the archive of history. This re-experience takes many possible forms, from pervasive media repetition, mental reliving for those who had experienced the event first-hand, oral retellings from primary and secondary sources, or images from various sources. For example, Peggy Phelan speaks of performance as a repetitive medium that allows those who missed an event to access it once more. She states, “The aftermath of having missed the initial warning involves entering the realm of the copy and the multiple, which form the recursive algorithm of violence itself, the belated attempt to return to the event one missed” (Phelan, “Haunted Stages” 60). Since photography is an easily reproducible representation, it lends itself to depict incidents of violence and trauma. A photograph may be revisited at any time, and each time its meaning may change. As the victim of trauma attempts to understand what has happened, visual sources allow him or her to return to the moment that once escaped. Phelan also claims that performance has the ability to capture these fleeting moments as well. She states, “performance enacts the fragile and ephemeral nature of each moment and frames its passing” (Phelan, “Haunted Stages” 51). Due to the bridge in time and space that visual representations such as photography and performance provide between a survivor and the violence, I have chosen to study these forms of art as tools that facilitate the processes of memory, repair and reconciliation in post-armed conflict Peru.

Using these general definitions, History itself may be perceived as nothing more than an unending stream of reoccurring trauma: only events with lasting significance become what we know to be history. Caruth argues that “[f]or history to be a history of trauma means that it is referential precisely to the extent that it is not fully perceived as it occurs; or to put it somewhat

differently, that a history can be grasped only in the very inaccessibility of its occurrence” (18). For Caruth then, history must be created through memory, and since we do not perceive history as it occurs, we must access the event in our minds in order to enunciate what has happened. History is inevitably linked to memory, for memory is what creates, sustains, and even changes history. Eduardo Galeano wrote that “[w]hen it’s truly alive, memory doesn’t contemplate history, it invites us to make it. More than in museums, where its poor old soul gets bored, memory is in the air we breathe, and from the air it breathes us” (210). Galeano’s anthropomorphic description of memory aptly describes its ever-mobile state. Similar to a human being, memory grows and changes with time. Memory must also be distrusted as something that changes frequently. It cannot be seen as an objective truth, for each version is told from a specific subject’s point of view. Even collective memory is neither objective nor entirely inclusive. Although it may contain many different memories combined into a larger story, it still portrays the biases of the group that tells it. For Galeano, memory makes history, alluding to the fact that all history is relative depending on its subject. Caruth, in turn, borrows from Freud when she states that “historical memory [...] is always a matter of distortion, a filtering of the original event through the fictions of traumatic repression” (15). The truth behind this statement may be proven by the hotly contested nature of memory. This often-elusive concept—memory—cannot easily be placed into a single category. Memory is simultaneously individual, collective, private, public, official, unofficial, inclusive, exclusive, etc. The concept’s subjective nature calls into question the notion of truth since it varies from subject to subject, with each agent of memory recalling a different version of the same event. “History” and “truth” are narrated according to each subject’s preferences, and mediated and expressed through images, words, actions, or a combination of multiple mediums. As the subject of a memory becomes distanced by time from

the initial onset of trauma, memory itself becomes increasingly mediated. This affects the way that later generations process the trauma, thus allowing for history to be used as a tool to orient the future. In *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination*, Jan Assmann uses a socio-constructivist view of the past. This idea may better explain why the past and future are so closely related. Assmann argues that “[the past] is a social construction whose nature arises out of the needs and frames of reference of each particular present. The past is not a natural growth but a cultural creation” (33). Both the past and the future are constructions based on the present needs of society, and therefore the construction of the past can also affect the orientation of the future.

## 2.2 Trauma’s Witnesses

In light of communal trauma, society encounters a moral standpoint as questions of responsibility, justice, and reparation arise from the debris of violence. In Peru’s case, multiple actors were deemed responsible for the violence that occurred during this time, making it difficult to name and hold a sole perpetrator as responsible. The TRC’s final report centers on the idea that the nation must reflect upon the causes and results of the internal war with the goal that it never again be repeated. According to the report, “[w]e have tried to look at ourselves in the mirror of the past and the face that has appeared is far from being pleasant. We must accept it; not only does it become imperative to avoid the repetition of tragic moments in our history, it is necessary to delve deeper” (La Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación 105).<sup>3</sup> Faced with these moral issues, the Peruvian government recognized the need for a diverse committee to explore

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<sup>3</sup> Translated from original: “[h]emos intentado mirarnos en el espejo del pasado y el rostro que ha aparecido está lejos de ser agradable. Tenemos que aceptarlo; no solo resulta imperativo evitar que se repitan momentos trágicos en nuestra historia, es necesario calar más hondo.”

the underlying causes of the chaos, and thus began to craft a memory of the event. The TRC was used as a tool to break the silence and vocalize the deeply rooted structural problems that had allowed the nation to spiral into political and social turmoil. The commission perhaps acted as a witness for the community, one who was present during the time of war and who now also had to face the delayed consequences of trauma.

Giorgio Agamben defines the complex role of the witness using the case of the Holocaust in *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, where he argues that in relation to trauma, only one subject can occupy the role of the “complete witness” (39). In the case of the Holocaust, the victims who were starved and malnourished to the verge of catatonia, those who had lost almost all human characteristics and survived only as physical beings fragilely balanced on the precipice of death, could be named the true witnesses of Auschwitz:

The “true” witnesses, the “complete witnesses,” are those who did not bear witness and could not bear witness. They are those who “touched bottom”: the Muslims, the drowned... The survivors speak in their stead, by proxy, as pseudo-witnesses; they bear witness to a missing testimony (...) Whoever assumes the charge of bearing witness in their name knows that he or she must bear witness in the name of the impossibility of bearing witness (34).

The “muselmann” or “Muslims” were named after the prayer-like trance from which they suffered, exhibited by the fact that all signs of human consciousness had been extinguished from their behaviors. Most who reached this state did not survive to create the language necessary to voice their experience. Agamben describes the state of the muselmann and the moral issue that their suffering implied in order to explain the paradoxical role of the witness.

The space between the witness and the victim is the space from which testimony emerges; it is the place that must be filled by the one who was present during the trauma and yet did not fully experience this condition. The paradox of suffering forces those who cannot speak to serve as catalysts for those who *can* speak but have neither the words nor the experience to do so. “Witness” becomes a term to describe those who have seen and can authenticate the existence of such horrors. The witness often assumes this role out of guilt, the shame for having lived in the place of others causes a sense of responsibility, and thus the witnesses feel as though they have lived to tell others what had occurred.

Agamben also describes the situation from which a necessity to bear witness arises. Traumatic events often create experiences in which the subject witnesses that which has not previously occurred. He states that “only if language is not always already communication, only if language bears witness to something to which it is impossible to bear witness, can a speaking being experience something like a necessity to speak” (Agamben 65). Prior to the Holocaust, recent history had not experienced such mass scales of destruction, such inhuman cruelty. In Peru, such a mass wave of violence and deaths had never plagued the nation to such a large degree in modern times. During the Holocaust, those who bore witness to the trauma of the concentration camps faced the impossibility of bearing witness to the epitome of the genocide – the complete witness, the *mussleman* – in that most survivors never reached this state. Those who had seen what had happened then faced this necessity to speak, to create the language to communicate what had occurred, and to speak in place of those who could not:

To speak, to bear witness, is thus to enter into a vertiginous movement in which something sinks to the bottom, wholly desubjectified and silenced, and something subjectified speaks without truly having anything to say of its own. (...)

Testimony takes place where the speechless one makes the speaking one speak and where the one who speaks bears the impossibility of speaking in his own speech... (120).

Agamben extends the definition of the witness to those who have seen violence's desubjectifying effects and thus feel compelled to speak on behalf of the voiceless. The victims, the true witnesses (muselmann), are desubjectified in that once dead, they no longer exist as physical beings. The living have been subjected to the horrors that the dead have experienced, therefore becoming the subjectified witnesses.

The true witnesses and the witnesses become entwined in an intricate web of language, experience, silence, sight, and guilt. The two can no longer exist alone and thus become dependent upon one another in order to formulate the words to express the experience that has occurred. This definition of "witness" raises a particular question: can those who have seen an event —not by being directly present then and there, but through images of it— also be considered witness? Agamben argues, "the witnesses [...] are neither the dead nor the survivors, neither the drowned nor the saved. They are what remains between them" (164). What authenticates the occurrence of an event is not the people but the irresistible need of people to narrate what has happened. The "witness" becomes the human desire to enunciate the experience. Art, and specifically visual interpretation, serves as a medium for those who wish to express their experiences. In this way, photography, performance, film, and other artistic representations can be seen as witnesses. They are the physical manifestations of the experiences of those who have lived through or seen traumatic events. Using Agamben's argument, the term "witness" can be extended not only to the complete witnesses of the event, but those who see and

feel compelled to enunciate what happened, and the product that comes of this enunciation, which in this case is art.

### 2.3 The Temporality of Memory

As Caruth explains, trauma is inevitably experienced through a temporal displacement from the actual event, and its realization is reliant upon memory. The subjects and witnesses of trauma must experience it through mental re-imaginings of the event. As such, she demonstrates that historical memory is always created first through a mental filtering of the event. The concepts of history, trauma, and memory inevitably become intertwined as codependent phenomena. The temporality of these concepts also becomes complicated, as they become almost independent of time, existing always simultaneously in the past, present, and future. Similarly, Agamben states, “one cannot want Auschwitz to return for eternity, since in truth it is always already repeating itself” (101). Auschwitz repeats itself through the constant re-narration of its witnesses’ testimonies. Although the physical event of the Holocaust took place in the past, its existence pervades present society as well the community’s imagined future.

In the context of historical trauma, perhaps one of the most prominent forms of memory is what Marianne Hirsch has called “postmemory,” a term that identifies the memory of the generation that succeeds the one who suffered the original trauma. In *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust*, Hirsch argues, “like other ‘posts,’ ‘postmemory’ reflects an uneasy oscillation between continuity and rupture (...) [postmemory is] a *structure* of inter- and transgenerational return of traumatic knowledge and embodied experience. It is a consequence of traumatic recall but (...) at a generational remove” (5). In relation to Peru, this term would refer to the generation born after the peak of the Shining Path’s

terrorism. This generation was often displaced from the event not only temporally but also physically after many families migrated away from the violent rural areas to the outskirts of Lima. This second generation must live both independently of, yet inevitably linked to the past and thus their relationship to history becomes mediated through a variety of sources. More often than not, this younger generation experiences what happened through a combination of primary and secondary sources, such as family members' testimonies, newspaper articles, and photographs. These sources become essential for creating and maintaining the memory of what happened during the traumatic past, linking the past and present and serving as a bridge to the future.

This generation's unique position at the crossroads of past trauma and present issues allows for it to also become a bridge to the future. The postgeneration may use the memory of what has come before in order to shape the politics of the future and in order to prevent the repetition of traumatic political violence. Hirsch argues that "the work of postmemory [...] might constitute a platform of activist and interventionist cultural and political engagement, a form of repair and redress, inspired by feminism and other movements for social change" (6). Art that responds to trauma can act as an important agent for social change, revealing structures and issues that have caused and perpetrated previous conflicts. Those who are born during or after the trauma may use the mediation of memory to create a specific political platform.

## **2.4 Visualizations of Memory**

As Caruth argues, memory can obscure as well as reveal, making each narrative rhetorically charged. For Hirsch, "postmemorial work [...] strives to reactivate and re-embody more distant political and cultural memorial structures by reinvesting them with resonant individual and

familial forms of mediation and aesthetic expression” (33). Postmemory aims to commemorate through art forms that communicate to their audience in a poignant way. By doing this, visual representations of memory can be used as political tools to inspire their audiences to activism. Hirsch claims that postmemory often comes into being when a second generation survivor of an event is faced with the reality of what happened before they existed and because of an emotional shock, feels responsible for remembering these times. Postmemory is sometimes marked by the first generation’s lack of desire to remember the initial event. Children, driven by their parents’ passive memory, retaliate against amnesia and fight to remember the event in ways distinct from those of the first generation that experienced it first-hand. Postmemory is thus marked by activism, a conscious effort of the younger generation to remember their parent’s tragedies. This activism can be tied to political ends, and is often connected to an effort to prevent the event from being forgotten.

Visual representations of traumatic events have provided unique links between their viewers and the event itself, authenticating its existence as well as providing a space for interpretation. In Peru’s case, photographs and performance art have functioned as part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s efforts to reveal the truth behind the time of fear. Both mediums raise interesting questions in relation to the event and the concept of truth itself. Photographs may represent events that have happened, facts that are literally presented before the lens of the camera itself. However, one must bear in mind that each image is a subjective representation, the viewer cannot see beyond the limitations of the frame and therefore these images perhaps may be categorized as witnesses themselves, in that they reflect the remains between living and dead, and the need to relay the occurrence of an event to others.

As Roland Barthes argues in *Camera Lucida*, photographs possess an overwhelming power to authenticate their own subjects. For Barthes, a viewer of a photographic image knows that the contents of the image have existed, that they were at one point present in front of the camera: “in Photography I cannot deny that *the thing has been there*. There is a superimposition here: of reality and of the past” (76). In a photograph, the viewer knows that the scene must have existed at one point in time, which makes the image’s content appear verisimilar. This allows for this medium to play an integral role in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s goal of truth seeking. However, due to this authenticating nature, photography can often be mistaken for reality itself, rather than a representation of it. Barthes also states that “the important thing is that the photograph possesses an evidential force, and that its testimony bears not on the object but on time. From a phenomenological viewpoint, in the Photograph, the power of authentication exceeds the power of representation” (88). In relationship to the past, photographs are seen as witnesses of time, attesting that the time portrayed within the image indeed has existed.

This fragile line between reality and image makes photography one of the principle mediums for memory. Perhaps conversely, some such as Roland Barthes and Susan Sontag argue that photographs can actually inhibit memory, violently pushing personal memories from one’s mind, replacing them with widely reproduced images. Although images may seem objective in their power of authentication, they always portray the subjective viewpoint of the photographer. Viewers must remain conscious of not only what is depicted within the image’s frame, but also what remains unseen, confiscated from the viewer’s gaze. Susan Sontag challenges the effectiveness in utilizing photographs to depict pain and torture to send an anti-violent message. In *Regarding the Pain of Others*, she argues that:

What we call collective memory is not a remembering but a stipulating: that this is important, and this is the story about how it happened, with the pictures that lock the story in our minds. Ideologies create substantiating archives of images, representative images, which encapsulate common ideas of significance and trigger predictable thoughts, feelings” (86).

Sontag illustrates that what society may account for as memory is actually a carefully constructed set of ideas that guides the way in which a community may interpret an event. As time distances an event that has passed, images give society a false sense of memory. Narratives and other depictions of memory often have clear goals behind their rhetoric, and this allows for images and other visual representations of memory to become potent political tools utilized by different actors for varying political means.

Taking into account that images supply subjective points of view, photographs and other visual depictions of violence and trauma can often promote forgetting. Those who suffer from traumatic events, often revisit these memories, retrieving, retelling, and altering the memory before returning it to storage. Memories are therefore easily influenced by outside sources, if one hears a story or sees an image, he or she may unconsciously remember it as their own experience. Images can also have this effect on those who witnessed an event. Barthes argues that the photograph itself is of a violent nature:

Not only is the Photograph never, in essence, a memory (...), but it actually blocks memory, quickly becoming counter-memory. (...) The Photograph is violent: not because it shows violent things, but because on each occasion it fills the sight by force, and because in it nothing can be refused or transformed (Barthes 91).

The mistakenly interpreted truthful nature of photography allows this medium to have priority over the faulty testimony of the mind's eye. Therefore, those who provide first-hand accounts may doubt their own experiences when shown a photograph of what happened during that time. Repeated images can quickly overpower the mind's only once-seen images, forcing them out of memory. Sontag also warns against this effect of photography, stating, "The problem is not that people remember through photographs, it is that they remember only the photographs" (89). Once again, images do not simply act as objects that trigger memory but often falsely become memory themselves, or rather collective instruction that overpowers memory.

Memory manifests itself in many ways, through narratives, oral tradition, state-issued reports, and artistic interpretations. In relation to the notion of a collective memory, Susan Sontag warns that "strictly speaking, there is no such thing as collective memory (...) But there is collective instruction" (85) The politics of memory mimic the politics of everyday life, and thus the power struggles that are present in society are mirrored in the fight for control over memory. While some political actors will seek to homogenize the internal war, other sources will fight to share their individual stories. Sontag's words allude to the fact that each version of a memory is carefully constructed, and does not reflect simple truths but rather the processes of rhetorical creation. Each visual representation that I will analyze presents a unique interpretation of what happened during Peru's internal conflict. While the TRC seeks to educate the public through its images about the historical aspects of the event, Yuyachkani seeks to understand the cultural differences present in Peru. Each of these organizations addresses the concerns of the TRC's final report, but through their own subjective interpretations. The collective instruction that each provides must be analyzed to reveal the themes that they both address and hide, in

order to understand the impact that they have on their audience and its understanding of the time of internal conflict.

### 3.0 CHAPTER TWO

#### *Yuyanapaq: para recordar*

The TRC chose to include a photography exhibit to supplement their final report in order to reach a larger audience. I first visited the photography exhibition, *Yuyanapaq: para recordar*, in September 2014. To my surprise, the Peruvians in attendance knew little about the time period depicted by the photographs. As I read the excerpts from the final report that are mounted upon the walls, two young Peruvian men approached me and asked if I knew what the acronym “CVR” stood for. Despite the urge to drop my jaw in disbelief, I politely smiled and told them that it stood for *la Comisión de la verdad y reconciliación*, or the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I began studying this topic knowing that many people, both Peruvians and non-Peruvians, knew little about the internal conflict. This situation proved that this aspect of the final report was necessary and indeed there is a large lack of knowledge about this time period, especially among the post-generation of the internal conflict. However, this experience proved that the situation was even graver than what I had originally believed. I was a foreigner in this country and I was more aware of the nation’s recent past than these men were. (The two men also later asked me what PCP-SL, the acronym for the Peruvian Communist Party-Shining Path, represented.) This situation evidenced that the public dialogue about the internal war does not reach everyone. The men’s lack of knowledge also demonstrates that students most likely do not learn much about the issue from the educational system. Perhaps even worse, this exhibit, which portrays a limited point of view of what happened during this time period, may have been one of their few sources of knowledge on the subject. Because the violence was heavily concentrated in the rural areas of Peru, the urban populations may not have access to personal testimonies or

family memories of the violence, therefore this population may rely heavily upon secondary sources of memory.

*Yuyanapaq* presents its viewers with a readily consumable, abbreviated version of the historical “truth” of the internal conflict. The title itself reveals its intentions, to create memory. The Quechua word “yuyanapaq” and the Spanish phrase “para recordar” both translate in English as “to remember”. This permanent exhibit, which is currently housed on the sixth floor of El Museo de la Nación in San Borja, Lima, attempts to piece together fragments of this time period in search of the “truth.” The exhibit first opened in August 2003 in Casa Riva Agüero, Chorrillos, and stayed at that location until March 2005 (El Museo de la Nación). The exhibition was re-inaugurated at the Museo de la Nación in July 2006 (“Muestra fotográfica Yuyanapaq”). Although the complete image bank includes 1,600 photographs, the exhibit displays only 179 of these images. The exhibit’s accompanying informational pamphlet seeks to represent the images as a memory aid. Written next to the map is the phrase: “To look, understand, and process through the images and testimonies implies the Peruvian society’s preoccupation with knowing its history, with approaching the truth. In this sense, to decide to tour this exposition is to opt for memory.”<sup>4</sup> The exhibit presents itself as memory, a dangerous assumption based on the incompleteness of its representational scope. The exhibit only includes 179 photographs, a small amount in relation to the large scale of the crimes committed and in relation to the diversity of those affected by the violence. By representing itself as truth, the TRC privileges its own version of the truth as a singular source and thus discredits other interpretations of the violence.

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<sup>4</sup>Translated from original: “Mirar, entender, procesar a través de imágenes y testimonios, implica una preocupación de la sociedad peruana por conocer la historia, por acercarse a la verdad. En ese sentido, decidir recorrer esta exposición es optar por el recuerdo.”

The entire sixth floor of this museum is dedicated to this particular exhibit. The space itself creates a mood for its audience: the gray, cracked cement walls keep the floor cool and make the space seem somewhat neglected, and some photos hang haphazardly from their mountings, as if they were hung in a hurry and then left unadjusted. However, this chilly atmosphere creates an apt environment for the subject matter of this exposition. As the viewer moves throughout the space, a solemn sentiment of mourning and remembrance grows stronger with each shiver caused by the cold. There was speculation that the exhibit would be moved to the completed Memory Museum, El Lugar de la Memoria, la Tolerancia y la Inclusión Social, but the ministry of culture signed a document that will extend *Yuyanapaq*'s inclusion in el Museo de la Nación until 2026 ("Muestra fotográfica Yuyanapaq"). Currently, El Lugar de la Memoria remains in a sparse state. The Peruvian government originally did not want to build a memory museum, due to the fact that the events of the internal war are hotly contested. After pressure from the prominent public figure Mario Vargas Llosa, the government accepted a grant from Germany to build el Lugar de la Memoria. Since its slow completion, the museum has housed some film events but lacks structure for more permanent exhibits.

Upon entering the National Museum, visitors are directed toward the elevators to ascend to the famous sixth floor. The elevator doors open to reveal a small foyer, where the museum guard directs you to sign the visitor book and take an informational brochure. The tour begins by turning to the right and immediately encountering a wall plastered with one of photojournalist Oscar Medrano's famous photographs depicting a man salvaging a poster of President Fernando Belaúnde from the crumbling ruins of a municipal office that had been attacked by terrorist forces (Figure 1).



Figure 1

The image shows a perhaps futile attempt to save democracy during this time. The symbolic act of preserving the poster represents a will to maintain democracy amongst destruction and disorder. The image frames two men in the center, one an unidentifiable figure dressed in dark colors that appears to be a peasant based on his dress, and the other a bright portrait of a well-dressed public figure. In this image alone the viewer can see the social divisions that exist in Peru between the wealthy and the poor, the rural dwellers and the urban elite. The man rolls up the poster amidst a mound of rubble, depicting the destroyed reality that surrounds him and highlighting the futile nature of his actions. The first room contains a video that summarizes important events from the internal struggle. Next, the viewer continues into a room with a timeline of the major events ranging from 1980 to 2000. The rest of the exhibit is divided into small rooms, each with a different theme from this period. The photographs are also interspersed with excerpts from the TRC's final report which explain aspects of the event such as who was

found responsible for the deaths, where the attacks were located, and who was affected by the terrorism and military counter-attacks. The final room is perhaps one of the most powerful in the exhibit. Portraits that appear to be taken from identification cards are hung in light boxes around the room, combined with a soft humming sound. The viewer must approach the boxes to realize that each one has its own voice, and is recounting part of his or her testimony that was given at the public hearings. In a literal sense, this final room gives a voice to some of the victims of the time of armed conflict.

*Yuyanapaq: para recordar* accomplishes its goal of conveying the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to the public in a manner that is accessible to many. While housed at El Museo de la Nación, the photography exposition is free to the public. The visual nature of the material presented also may facilitate understanding the issue for some, such as youth who were not alive at the time or were too young to remember the violence and therefore can only access information about the event through others' stories and testimonies. Seeing images from the time of conflict may allow youth to better understand the complexities and the gravity of what happened. The captions of the exhibit are written in both Spanish and English, in order to reach both a local and foreign audience. Many of those affected by the violence, however, were native Quechua speakers. The TRC estimated in its final report that 75% of those affected spoke Quechua as their native language ("Conclusiones generales"). During the violence, a census taken in 1993 reported that 16% of the population spoke Quechua, which demonstrates that this population was disproportionately targeted, almost in a genocidal manner. The choice to exclude Quechua from the captions is a decision that perpetuates the linguistic discrimination against these populations. Although the exhibit may be targeted to reach the urban, Spanish-speaking population, it excludes those whom it represents, objectifying the

indigenous peoples that it portrays. The TRC's final recommendations stress that the nation acknowledges its multicultural and multiethnic composition. The exclusion of Quechua from the Lima-based exhibition contradicts this recommendation by making the text inaccessible to Quechua-speaking visitors. While the exhibit may seem more accessible to the public in some aspects, it also appears to be catered to a Spanish-speaking, urban, formally educated audience whose experience of the exhibit may be enhanced through their literacy. By including English, the exhibit also seeks to reach an international audience, a seemingly paradoxical goal considering that it excludes part of its own population from the audience.

Although the photography exposition *Yuyanapaq* enhances the written final report of the TRC by providing a visual interpretation of the history of the conflict, there have been critiques of the exhibit's intentions and content. Deborah Poole and Isaías Rojas Pérez, for example, criticize the exhibit for several shortcomings. The authors argue that the TRC's attempt to create memory through a photography collection shows that the Commission assumes that a collective memory or identity exists among its audience. They also claim that the photographs omit many themes and issues from this time, creating a problematic interpretation of the memory of the internal war. According to Poole and Rojas Pérez, "the viewer's relation to the subject of the photograph is framed *not* as an experience of either encounter or disorientation (...) but rather in terms of a collective identity whose stability and cohesiveness remain largely unquestioned" (5). The exhibit assumes that those affected by the violence belong to part of an un-fractured collective group, perhaps united by their mutual suffering. This assumption, however, appears to be contrary to the TRC's own findings, which attributed the cause of the war to the cultural, linguistic, geographic, and ideological differences that mark the Peruvian nation. Poole and Rojas Pérez also criticize *Yuyanapaq* for forcing the photographs' meanings upon the viewer

without allowing room for individual interpretations. “By thus providing clues as to how the images should be ‘read,’” they argue, “the textboards seemed to suggest that photographs should be scrutinized in terms of their specific, agreed upon ‘meanings’” (Poole and Rojas Pérez 7). Not only does the exhibit assume that its audience is a cohesive group, it also assumes that a singular meaning may be applied to each photograph. The captions of each photo leave little space for subjective interpretation, preferring instead to feed the viewer with a pre-established version of the image’s meaning.

In the current exposition, boards with excerpts from the final report stated that The Shining Path was responsible for 54% of the total deaths resulting from the violence between 1980 and 2000. In order to avoid promoting a polemical discourse, the board strategically omits the other statistics that reveal that the Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru was held accountable for 1.5% of the deaths and that the remaining deaths, 44.5%, are collectively attributed to the governments during this time, police, military, and other security forces (“Truth Commissions: Peru 01”). In contrast, the exhibit contains many photographs depicting the members, actions, and violent aftereffects of MRTA. Taking into account that MRTA caused 1.5% of the total deaths from this time, *Yuyanapaq* exaggerates the role of MRTA during these years. Out of the 179 images presented in the Museo de la Nación, 21 of the photos in the exhibit portray aspects of the violence related to MRTA. About 12% of the photos depict this organization or mention it in the caption, making the involvement of this group seem like a larger part of the violence. The text that accompanies the room about Caso Molinos, states, “While the Shining Path favored its ‘popular war’ in the country, MRTA developed violent actions in the capital against symbols of the State, foreign capital and forces of order” (Figure 2). Perhaps due to the MRTA’s involvement in Lima and the principal exhibit’s location, the exhibit

disproportionately focuses on this aspect of the violence. However, if this is the case, the exhibit should clarify that it has attempted to portray the events of this time period from a limeños' eyes, rather than presenting itself as an objective representation of these years.

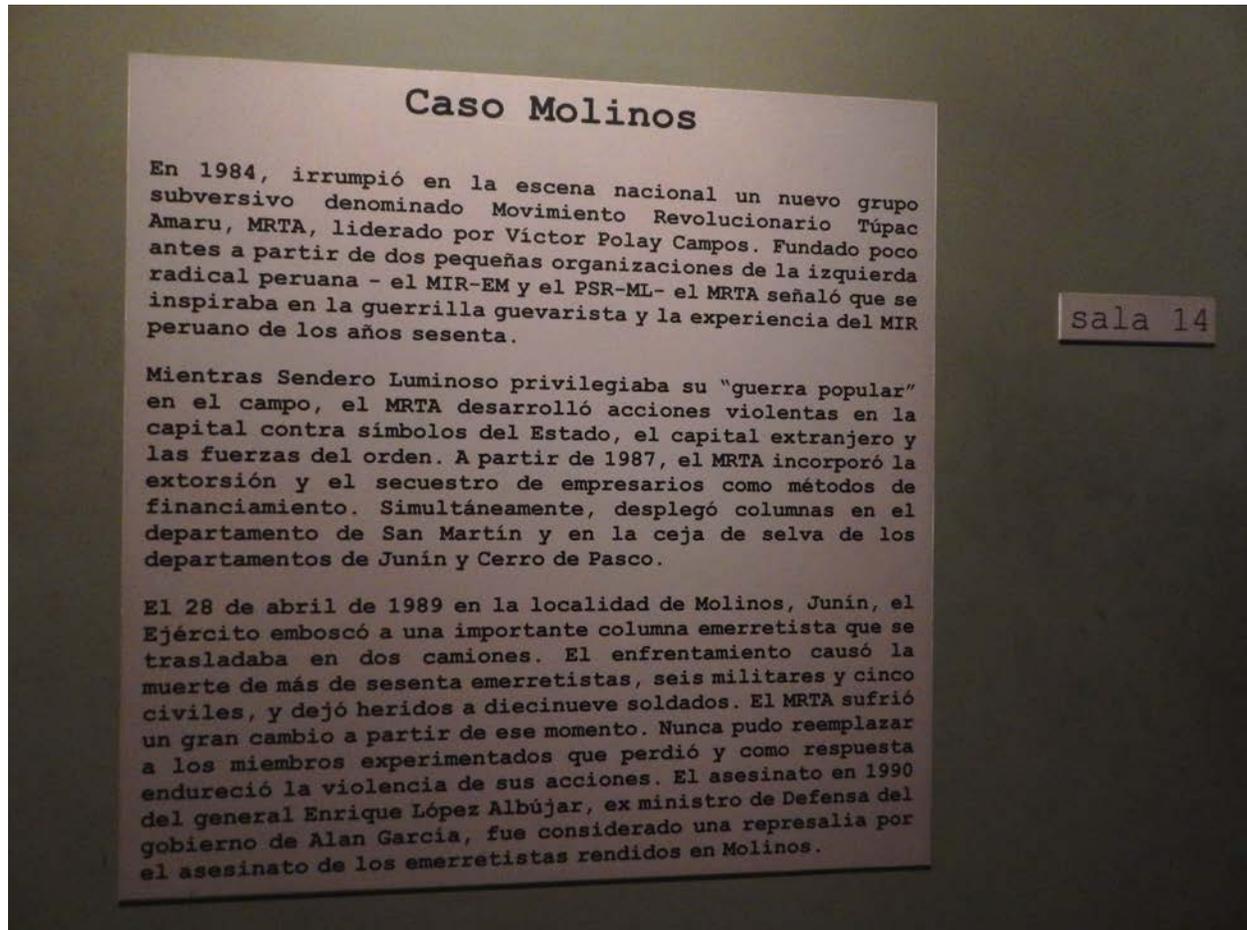


Figure 2, Author's own photograph

Indigenous peoples, the main demographic affected by the internal conflict, appear in the majority of the photos in this exposition. The ways in which these subjects are portrayed may be viewed as problematic. In one such photograph by Alejandro Balaguer, an indigenous Asháninka woman holds a child to her breast as she stares toward the ground, avoiding direct eye contact with the camera. As Poole states, “[t]his passive quality of the peasant subject (...) is reinforced by a photographic tradition in which rural, indigenous subjects are rendered voiceless as anonymous, racial ‘types’” (Poole and Rojas Pérez 10).

Indigenous subjects are portrayed as passive, as subjects to be viewed and therefore objectified as different, as the “other.” As with the incongruence between the historical facts about MRTA and the exhibition’s photos, this visual portrayal appears contradictory to the TRC’s recommendations. By representing members of indigenous communities as passive subjects without individual agency, *Yuyanapaq* continues to reinforce common prejudices against this group that have existed before, during, and after the violence. The representations become a type of pseudo-inclusion. While the indigenous subjects are being included in the exhibit, they are also being objectified and simultaneously excluded from participation in the viewing of the photographs.

However, the exhibit does simultaneously acknowledge the positive involvement of some indigenous people and groups. For instance one photo portrays the founding women of the National Associations of Relatives of Kidnapped, Detained and Disappeared Peoples of Peru (ANFASEP), an organization that was founded by the mother of a disappeared man and that was characterized by heavy female involvement.<sup>5</sup> In this photo, indigenous women are portrayed as strong, independent, and active subjects. While this exhibit objectifies some, it empowers others, sending perhaps an unclear message to its viewers. Just as the violence was a complex time marked by disorder, *Yuyanapaq*’s portrayal of what happened during these years appears to be an attempt to collect specific glimpse of the chaos and organize them into an a complex collection of images.

Susan Sontag states that photography can sometimes be a tool of the middle class that objectifies those of lower social or economic status: “Social misery has inspired the comfortably-

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<sup>5</sup> To view the image of the Asháninka women by Alejandro Balaguer and the image of the ANFASEP women by Nancy Chappell, as well as other photographs from the *Yuyanapaq* collection, please visit <http://www.yale.edu/macmillan/lais/YuyaExhibitBook.pdf>.

off with the urge to take pictures, the gentlest of predations, in order to document a hidden reality, that is, a reality hidden from them” (55). Similarly, *Yuyanapaq: para recordar* has become a space for Lima’s upper classes to come and gaze at the misery of others, a misery that was hidden from them during the internal war. This problematizes the exhibit and calls its purpose into question. Women are also portrayed in problematic ways, either being represented as victims or as the perpetrators of violence. The viewer notices that exhibit shows the involvement of women in the Shining Path, but fails to provide any explanation or analysis of their role in the violence. The exhibit also largely ignores the issue of sexual violence and only portrays one photograph of a woman holding a child that was born as a result of rape. The military used rape as a terror mechanism during this time, but it is only acknowledged once throughout the entire exhibit.

The problems associated with *Yuyanapaq: para recordar* can be attributed to the fact that while the time of violence was an extremely multifaceted series of events, it is represented as a singularized truth in this series of photographs. While the exhibit assumes that there is an unfractured collective of the experienced events, in reality, there is a fractured collective that witnessed this time period. Thus, emphasis must be placed on the fact that this exhibit only portrays a fraction of the multiple truths of the internal conflict, rather than a singular truth. In *On Photography*, Roland Barthes warns that “the photograph is violent: not because it shows violent things, but because on each occasion *it fills the sight by force*, and because in it nothing can be refused or transformed” (91) The Truth and Reconciliation must be aware of this violent nature of the photograph and its ability to force itself upon its viewers. As Barthes warns, the photograph has the potential ability to be violent toward its viewers and force itself into the minds of those who see it. In the future, once those who have survived the violence are no longer

living, later generations will only have the archives that the older generations have left behind. Thus the photographs compiled by the TRC have the potential to become a valuable resource for representing the period of armed conflict and terrorism. If the TRC wishes to preserve the truth, it must realize this potential and do its best to include multiple perspectives of the event. In the future *Yuyanapaq* may be the only form of memory that some have of this event and thus the TRC should reanalyze its aesthetic and contextualizing choices throughout the exhibit in order to emphasize the complexity of the event and the plurality of truths that compose the reality of the time of violence.

## 4.0 CHAPTER THREE

### Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani

Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani was founded in 1971 by a small group of theatrical performers and directors, including Miguel Rubio, Teresa Ralli, Kike Soria, Gilberto Hume, and Doris Portocarrero. The group formed in direct response to Peru's various political problems, which it hoped to address through the medium of performance art. The group's name, "Yuyachkani," comes from a word in Quechua which simultaneously means "I am thinking," "I am remembering," "I am your thought." Actress Teresa Ralli recalls that before the group had even begun to perform, they identified with this name and used it as their own (Taylor 196). Since its founding, Yuyachkani has created 29 performances that have been shown across Peru, both in Lima and in the country's provinces (Yuyachkani, *Yuyachkani.org*). Over the past 42 years, in order to educate both rural and urban audiences and to enrich their own knowledge as cultural performers, Yuyachkani has extensively researched the different cultures, languages, and artistic practices that are found in Peru. Yuyachkani holds a unique position as an artistic group based in Lima, but also as a group that has strong ties to the rural provinces of Peru. They have performed throughout the country and, they have also completed ethnographic cultural studies as part of their creative research process. The group's ability allow it to cross the many boundaries fracturing the Peruvian nation's cohesiveness, and this is the reason the TRC turned to the group to collect testimony from the survivors of the internal war in 2001 (Garza 201). The group performed acciones escénicas to rural communities to show the victims of the violence that they could trust the government-affiliated commissioners who had come to collect testimonies. Without the help of Yuyachkani as the middlemen, the TRC may not have been as successful in gaining the trust of rural-dwelling survivors.

I have chosen to include Yuyachkani's work in my analysis of visual representations of memories because they are an independent organization whose work has been recognized as a powerful tool for political advocacy, as recognized by the TRC. The performance scholar, Diana Taylor, has argued that "Yuyachkani attempts to make visible a multilingual, multiethnic praxis and epistemology in a country that pits nationality against ethnicity, literacy against orality, the archive against the repertoire of embodied knowledge ... its self-naming is a performative declarative announcing its belief that social memory links and implicates communities in the transitive mode of subjective formation" (Taylor 192). Perhaps coincidentally, Taylor uses the same phrase to describe Yuyachkani's work that appears in the TRC's final report recommendations: multilingual and multiethnic. She illustrates how Yuyachkani's work transcends the imaginary divides that mark the nation and caused the initial outbreak of political violence in the 1980s, and thus seek to use active memory and political performance to unite a divided community.

Of the many texts that Yuyachkani has produced, I will focus on two plays created during the time of violence as defined by the TRC, works that represent two drastically different perspectives of the violence: *Contraelviento* (1989) and *Antígona* (2000). *Contraelviento* was inspired by a massacre that occurred in Soccos, Ayacucho, and it portrays the point of view of the indigenous peoples that lived in this community to highlight the tensions between the miner and the legal system. *Antígona* is an adaptation of Sophocles' tragedy, *Antigone*. Rather than portraying what happened during the violence, this play seeks to reveal the feeling of guilt that is felt by those who were both direct and indirect witnesses of the violence and did nothing to stop it. By telling the story through an adaptation of *Antigone*, *Antígona* represents the more westernized, urban perspectives that most limeños experienced during the period of armed

conflict. In distinct ways, each of these visualizations recognizes the social, cultural and linguistic tensions that existed in Peru before, after, and during the violence, and therefore constructively work toward the TRC's goal of multicultural acknowledgment in Peru.

#### **4.1 *Contraelviento***

*Contraelviento* strives to reveal the marginalized point of view of the Peruvian indigenous natives through the narrative of an Ayacucho massacre and by embodying indigenous, pre- and post-colonial modes of performance. *Contraelviento* begins with the narrator, Equeqo, telling the audience that this story comes from a woman who came from the mountains and gave him corn. The Equeqo is a popular Andean figure known as a God of Wishes, and he grants the desires of those who seek his blessings. *Contraelviento* tells the story of a family that is torn apart by the winds of violence and must fight for life in order to reunite. Coya, Machula's daughter, sees horrible visions of a world torn apart by violence and left without life. Coya, with her father, Machula, and her sister, Huaco, interpret this dream as a sign and decide to go in search of the seeds of the corn of life. Before they depart on their journey, the wayra, or the evil winds, come and separate the family – Coya is taken away by the wind, and Machula sends Huaco to find her sister. Once swept away, Coya encounters an archangel, a devil and a Caporal, or a chief devil. She thinks that these spirits have saved her, and in repayment she cures the sick Caporal. Coya dances with these beings and is once again swept away by the winds. Machula is reunited with Coya, who continues to see various ominous visions of death and destruction. When she finds out that Coya has aided the Caporal, an evil being in the catholic-indigenous transcultural tradition that has killed members of her community, she leaves Coya in search of the corn of life. Coya then seeks the help of a judge to punish the Caporal for his actions, but she is ridiculed for

not speaking Spanish in the courtroom. Afterwards, Coya reunites with Huaco, who reveals that the secret to keeping the devils away from the town is to fight them with fire. She leaves her sister once more to continue in her fight against the evil forces. In the end, Huaco, Machula, and Coya are all united. While Huaco and Coya sought justice and defense, Machula found the seeds of life. Together, the three family members plant the seeds, and three spirits, the devil, the Caporal and the archangel, emerge with fire to destroy the world, but Coya, Huaco and Machula are buried beneath a mountain. Coya gives the seeds to the Equeqo, who obliges her final wish and sows the corn of life.

Yuyachkani's play crosses the divides between Peru's indigenous and urban cultures by referencing popular indigenous myths and symbols. The play's title, *Contraelviento*, translates to "against the wind," and references the story that Equeqo tells Coya about a condor who was forced to fly against the wind: "Once there was a condor that never completely opened its wings, one day its chicks were pulled from its nest, and the condor had to unfold its wings like it never had before, so that it could retrieve them. That day the condor learned to fly against the wind" (Yuyachkani 37). *Contraelviento*'s title sends a positive message to those who have suffered from loss and violence, telling them that resistance is possible. Equeqo's lines, in particular, are Yuyachkani's way of encouraging those who have been affected by terrorism not to react with violence, but to instead fly against the malignant winds that have harmed them. Those familiar with Andean myths and culture may easily identify with the symbolism throughout the play via figures like the equeqo, the archangel, the China Diabla and the Caporal. The three forces of evil –the archangel, the little devil (China Diabla), and the Caporal (the Chief Devil)– are figures in the popular dance known as the Diablada and traditionally danced at the Fiesta de la Candelaria in Puno.

The play contains dialogue in both Quechua, one of Peru's indigenous languages, and Spanish. In the trial scene, Coya is asked to address the judges, and instead of speaking to them in Spanish, Coya plays a wooden flute known as a quena, and in doing so she demonstrates the symbolic linguistic and cultural divide between the justice authorities and those affected by the violence during the time of war. Felipe, a translator, comes onto the scene and listens to Coya's flute, and then translates her words to both Quechua and Spanish. When the judge makes fun of her story, ridiculing her for not wanting to speak directly to the authorities, Felipe makes a humble attempt to defend her, although he fails and the judge does nothing to ameliorate Coya's complaint (Yuyachkani 36). This scene represents the stark divides that inhibit understanding between the different cultures in Peru. Yuyachkani parodies these issues, drawing attention to the sad reality of Peru's social and political state during the time of internal conflict. The theatre group's effort to make its work accessible to a diverse audience fulfills the TRC's recommendation to acknowledge Peru's diversity: Yuyachkani embodies indigenous forms of performance, but the group does so in a way that the material is consumable for urban audiences. The combination of languages does not isolate one group or the other, but facilitates understanding across cultures. As Jill Lane argues in her reading of *Antígona*, "[Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani] drew on Andean performance form and mythologies as forms of embodied knowledge that might help them face, narrate, and understand the complexity of Peru's past in present" in both of these pieces (519). *Contraelviento*, in particular, is telling of Yuyachkani's efforts to reveal and eradicate the social and cultural divides that lead to the civil war, which also evidences that the group's theater works in conjunction with the TRC's goals and recommendations by encouraging its audience to resist violence and imagine an end of triumphant peace and justice.

## 4.2 *Antígona*

*Antígona* similarly creates a dialogue that deals with the themes that the TRC highlights in its final report. The TRC highlighted that various different members of society were found responsible for the deaths and perpetration of violence during the years of terror. This play utilizes the classic Greek tragedy of Antigone to elicit the themes of guilt and responsibility that cut across members of Peruvian society. The classic myth tells the story of Antigone, a woman who renounces authority and sacrifices her life in order to give her rebel brother the honor of a proper burial. During Thebe's civil war, two brothers, Polyneices and Eteocles, led opposing forces and killed one another in battle. Creon, the king, decides that Eteocles's death will be honored and given a proper burial, where Polyneices will be shamed even in death and his body left out to rot in public. Antigone meets with Ismene to ask for her help in burying Polyneices' body, but Ismene declines to help out of fear of defying King Creon. Antigone is caught in the act of stealing her brother's body, and is buried alive in a cave as punishment. The prophet Tiresias tells Creon that burying Antigone alive has displeased the gods, and that he will be punished for his actions. In the end, Creon loses his only son, Haemon, who killed himself in the attempt to free his fiancée, Antigone.

In Yuyachkani's *Antígona*, a single actress, Ralli, narrates the entirety of the tragedy, and she performs all of the roles, including, the narrator, Creonte, Antígona, the guards, Hemón, and Tiresias. Peruvian poet José Wantabe specifically wrote this piece for Ralli to perform. In contrast to the original piece, however, this adaptation culminates by revealing that the entire play has been narrated by Antígona's sister, Ismene, who is shamed by her compliance and inability to react to the injustice that has come to her family. Ismene relays Antígona's story of valor, but laments to her sister: "I already have a great punishment:/ To remember your act

everyday/ Which tortures me/ And shames me” (Wantabe). Ismene’s passivity haunts her just as many Peruvians’ inability to acknowledge the violence as it occurred later haunted their own consciences. Teresa Ralli, stated in an interview that “[w]e Peruvians were all Ismene; we all needed to start making the symbolic gesture to complete the burial” (362). Peruvian society must accept its errors in order to bury its past and continue in the process of grieving its dead.

*Antígona* was originally inspired by a photograph that Ralli saw of a woman running among the shadows in search of her disappeared family in Ayacucho. Throughout Latin America, the image of the solitary mother has become a symbol for military dictatorships, violence, and oppression. In Argentina, for example, the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo are a well-recognized political force of protesters who challenged the military government in place from 1976-1983. In a similar way, the mothers left widowed or childless by the violence in Peru are symbols of the suffering and devastation that took place in the past and continue to exist today. The story of Antigone is also a story of loss and defiance, one that was written centuries ago but is still relevant in today’s context. In order to create the Peruvian version of this character, Ralli interviewed women who had lost their families during the terrorism (Ralli 361). Lane observes that *Antígona* highlights the political role of women at this time: “Indeed,” she argues, “women—particularly indigenous women from the communities most affected by the war—found themselves playing new political roles as the conflict unfolded (...) it was from their ranks that human rights activism emerged in Peru” (520). The adaptation of this work points to a larger trend of female political activism in response to the oppression of the state and terrorist forces. Within the play’s story, *Antígona* represents the Peruvians who fought for their families and their rights, while Ismene symbolizes those who remained passive during the war, and thus must live on with the guilt that is a product of inactivity.

Yuyachkani's ability to create unique pieces that address the issue of violence in varying ways allows for it to reach a diverse audience and therefore include many different sectors of Peruvian society. As seen through these two examples, Yuyachkani's theater raises many issues associated with those that the TRC outlined in its final report. In the case of *Antígona*, Yuyachkani targets a limeño audience by adapting a familiar tragedy and infusing it with the emotions felt by many limeño Peruvians during the time of violence. *Contraelviento* uses popular national myths and symbols that can be understood by both rural, Quecha-speaking audiences and urban viewers alike. The dialogue of the text is in both Spanish and Quechua (although it is mainly Spanish), which facilitates access for Quechua-speaking viewers. In many of their performances, and specifically in the aforementioned cases, Yuyachkani makes use of its comprehensive ethnographic cultural and linguistic research to create theater that combines both westernized and indigenous modes of performance. Therefore, this group embodies the goals of the TRC by acknowledging the multiple cultures and languages that exist throughout the Peruvian nation. Their artwork attempts to unite the nation despite its differences for the common goal of a Peru free of political violence.

Theater creates a unique space to discuss problems such as violence, guilt, responsibility, and cultural differences. Miguel Rubio, Yuyachkani's theater director, has stated, "Specifically against violence, I think that in art is the only space where the problem of violence does not arise as a law enforcement problem. Artists, and in good time, are interested in asking themselves about the causes that have brought this violence and the reasons of those who have exercised it to perpetuate this social order or the reasons of those who rebel against it" (70). According to Rubio, Yuyachkani does not explicitly portray the violence as a policy problem. Rather, they create visual interpretations of the memories and the emotions that have come to be associated

with this time period. Yuyachkani's work complements the TRC's final report by expressing remorse for some Peruvians' inability to react to the armed conflict and by portraying an indigenous perspective of some of the events. Although I only explored two of the plays from their repertoire, Yuyachkani has produced many other works that confront these difficult themes in Peruvian history. In *The Archive and the Repertoire*, Diana Taylor states, "The archive (...) can contain the grisly record of criminal violence—the documents, photographs, and remains that tell of disappearances. But what happens, Yuyachkani asks, when there are no photographs, no documents, when even the bones lay scattered by the wayside?" (193). Yuyachkani serves as an example of the practical importance of visual representations. How can one cope with trauma and violence when there is no physical trace that it once existed? Yuyachkani embodies the absence of missing Peruvians and the emotions that cannot be contained in the physical archive through its repertoire of thought provoking performance.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

Although each of these visual representations may depict the violence and its aftermath in distinct and even opposing ways, each brings the events of this time period into dialogue with the public. Due the complex nature of collective memory, it is unlikely that a single work of art will perfectly depict every aspect of this event. Taken in its totality, the various visual representations of this event form an ongoing political discussion of the violence and its aftermath.

In addition to analyzing the causes of the event in the past, the community and individuals who suffered from the violence during the time of fear must also attempt to imagine a future free of political violence. How can a victim move beyond trauma if he or she cannot imagine a life without it? The word “reconciliation” itself implies both the past and the future; an acceptance of the past and a projection into a new future, however reconciliation cannot be achieved if a future free of political violence cannot be imagined. These four examples of visual representations of the time of terror depict memory in diverse ways, dependent on the authors and voices represented in the works. Art provides the space necessary to foster this creative thinking. Through artwork, members of the Peruvian community may participate in an ongoing dialogue about the nation’s past, present, and future in relation to the violence that once occurred. This study may also be thought of in broader terms, examining the ways in which art can serve as a medium for political repair in the aftermath of conflict and violence. Political violence strongly affects not only Latin American countries, but also many other regions throughout the world. Administrative justice cannot possibly address every case of human rights violations and political conflict and thus art can serve as a space for victims to seek repair and reconciliation.

Seeing as there are many potential problems associated with the topic of visual representation in the context of violence, I would like to continue the study of war and its ramifications in order to propose alternative methods of visualization and distribution that are emerging from Peru today. I argue that these new visualizations of memory and loss confront the issues of the past to create a new political future for the country and its people. As Peru comes to terms with its past, more visual interpretations of the violence are being produced by many different sources. In the future, I would like to continue my research by analyzing these more recent visual interpretations as they come into being. One of these is *La teta asustada* (2009), by the Peruvian filmmaker Claudia Llosa, whose film has been widely and positively received by both Peruvian and international audiences. More recently, Alberto Luis León's play, *La cautiva*, has also gained popularity in Peru just over the past year. Both the film and the play have generated dialogue about the country's internal conflict and how this period will be remembered moving into the future. In doing so, *La teta asustada* and *La cautiva* function as visual representations that continue the work of *Yuyanapaq* and *Yuyachkani*.

### **5.1 *La teta asustada***

*La teta asustada* (*The Milk of Sorrow*) is a moving representation of the after-effects of the internal armed conflict. Llosa's film premiered in 2009 and won the Golden Bear award at the Berlin Film Festival that same year. Instead of portraying the actual violence that occurred in the early eighties, the film focuses on the trauma that has been transmitted to the post-generation as a result of war. The film tells the story of Fausta, a young woman who lives in a shantytown on the outskirts of Lima. Her family comes from one of the provinces, but moved to the city to escape the violence of the war when she was a young child. In the first scene of the film, Fausta's

mother, Perpetua, passes away and she is left to live with her uncle and his family. Before her mother dies, she sings the lugubrious narration of her rape by soldiers and the murder of her husband during the time of conflict. Through a song sung in Quechua, the audience discovers that Perpetua was raped while she was pregnant with Fausta. This becomes a central detail of the film since Fausta remembers being raped from inside of her mother. Fausta also suffers from nosebleeds and fainting spells, and when taken to the doctor, her uncle attributes her ailments to a disease called “la teta asustada” which is fear that is transmitted to children who feed from their scared mothers’ breasts. Although the indigenous characters in the film strongly believe in this disease, the urban-dwelling doctor discredits the illness as mere fantasy. As a result of this trauma-related illness, Fausta places a potato in her vagina so that no men will want to rape her. The potato threatens her well-being as the film progresses, with the possibility of causing an infection in her vagina and uterus.

After Fausta’s mother dies, the protagonist must begin to work in order to raise money for her mother’s proper burial. She finds employment as a domestic worker in the home of a wealthy limeña of assumed European descent. In order to work, Fausta must confront her intense fears of leaving her home and travelling alone through the city. Her employer, Aída, is a cold, distant woman who cares little about Fausta until she discovers her beautiful voice. Aída, a prominent pianist, and demands that Fausta sings traditional indigenous songs to her and offers to give Fausta a pearl each time she sings. While working here, Fausta gradually begins to overcome her fear of men by befriending the gardener who works at Señora Aída’s home, Noé. He also comes from the countryside and is a native Quechua speaker, which creates a sense of trust between Fausta and him. In the end of the film, Aída exploits Fausta for her cultural background, and uses her self-invented songs to create her piano compositions. Fausta

acknowledges that Aída stole her melodies, and gets fired from her position. Fausta finally overcomes her fears and retaliates by stealing the pearls that Aída had promised her. After becoming ill, the potato is removed from her vagina and the traces of fear and violation have left her body. Fausta can learn to live with the memory of her mother but not be inhibited by the same fear that her raped mother had manifested all her life.

*La teta asustada* is similar to *Antígona* in that it portrays the memory of the event rather than the event itself, as is the case with *Contraelviento* as well. *La teta asustada* also differs from *Contraelviento* and *Yuyanapaq* because it is a representation of memory from the perspective of someone who witnessed the horror of war in a more direct manner. *La teta asustada*, which in a more literal sense translates to “the frightened tit,” addresses the issues of psychological trauma and gendered violence, which were left largely untouched by *Contraelviento* and *Yuyanapaq*. Although Yuyachkani’s oeuvre confronts the pain of guilt, it does not bring a clear gender-specific perspective into its representation of memory. The main characters of the Yuyachkani’s plays may be female, but their femininity is not a focal point of the narrative, and gender does not appear to play a large role in their identity or actions. In comparison to the plays produced by Yuyachkani, *La teta asustada* blatantly centers on the relationship between gender and violence by making the topic of rape central to the protagonist’s inner struggle. The film also adeptly highlights the disparities between the diverse social classes and racial groups that exist in Peru. In this way, *La teta asustada*’s portrayal of the nation’s current conditions seeks to expose the very issues that the TRC claims were at the root of the initial conflict. By using the frame of post-memory to confront these issues, Llosa elicits a dialogue of the present day implications of the war and invites her viewers to question the existing narrative of the internal conflict.

Through her choice to focus on a female, indigenous protagonist in *La teta asustada*, Llosa revealed a side of the internal conflict, which was previously not often discussed: gender violence. Although the TRC added a Gender Line to its final report, this body of the commission was implemented after the research had begun and did not include many aspects of the gender-related violence that took place during the time. The report did address the areas of rape but left other topics, such as the forced sterilization of women under the Fujimori administration, without discussion. Llosa also gives her indigenous subject agency by making her the focus of the film. In other representations of indigenous women, such as many of the photographs included in *Yuyanapaq*, the women are seen as passive to the point where they are objectified. Fausta fights this imposed objectification by confronting her fear of rape. Although she lives in fear for much of her life, in the end she is able to live beyond the fear of the past. The film ends with Fausta receiving a blooming potted potato plant from Noé, a symbol that implies future growth and a flourishing future for Fausta.

Throughout the film, the rotting potato that Fausta has placed in her vagina becomes a pressing issue. The potato, although no longer in its natural environment, continues to sprout and protrude both deeper into and outside of Fausta's body. The potato becomes a phallic symbol of patriarchy. Fausta was traumatized by her mother's rape, and therefore uses the potato as a way to avoid possibly facing the same fate as her mother. She believes that any man who attempts to rape her will be repulsed by the potato and therefore will not complete the action. Fausta admits that she was inspired by a story that her mother told her of the time of violence in which one of the women in the village would use this method to avoid sexual violation. Fausta calls this woman intelligent and admires her for her clever alternative to experiencing the horror of rape. The potato consumes her, both protecting her but ultimately causing her illness. Although not a

blatant comparison, the potato metaphor may also be interpreted to symbolize the State's involvement in the internal conflict. Despite the fact that military and police personnel were sent to rural, isolated regions to combat guerilla terrorism, these State-mandated forces also caused harm to the citizens that they sought to protect. The case of Fausta's mother was the case of many women during this time, in fact it is estimated by the TRC that 83% (La Comisión de la Verdad y la Reconciliación Vol. 6, 277) of sexual violations committed during this time were by state forces. Just as the potato inside of Fausta is a cautionary measure gone awry, so were the military troops during the time of conflict.

*La teta asustada* ends by Fausta stealing Señora Aída's pearls and then having the potato removed from her body. While the potato represents a masculine force that causes Fausta to internalize her fear, the pearls symbolize a feminine empowerment that allow for her to overcome her trauma. Both objects cannot remain in her possession at once; after claiming the pearls as her own, the potato must be taken out from inside of her. Performance scholar Peggy Phelan speaks of the gender politics associated with performance in her book *Mourning Sex*. Phelan claims that the idea of corporealizing trauma and other psychological phenomena is a coping mechanism that helps victims visualize their pain and break the cycle of trauma. She states, "The psyche has no material form and yet in describing it we tend often to give it a body [...] we talk about the psyche as something subject to wounds, to tears, to traumas. We believe it can be made healthy" (Phelan, *Mourning Sex* 5). *La teta asustada* portrays psychological torment through the embodiment of fear. Fausta's phobia of rape has physical repercussions, but by making her fears part of her body, she eventually is able to overcome her fear. By removing the potato from her body, she saves both her mental and physical health. By taking the pearls, Fausta not only rejects the masculine force inside her and claims her feminine independence, but she

also stands up to the repressive upper-class figure of Aída. Throughout her entire life, Fausta has been marginalized by her race, culture, language and gender. This final act of the film allows Fausta to reclaim her identity as an indigenous, Quechua-speaking woman from a rural region of the country. Instead of rejecting these aspects of her identity, she accepts them and in doing so is able to reject the fear that lives inside of her.

Llosa's film also makes a bold statement about the inequalities that exist in Peru and the emerging commodification of indigeneity. The social, racial, economic, cultural, and linguistic divisions that exist between Fausta and Señora Aída are blatantly portrayed. Rather than simply exposing these disparities, the film also reveals the exploitative nature of the relationship between the wealthy, light-skinned, Spanish-speaking upper class and the impoverished, indigenous, Quechua-speaking lower class that is a prominent issue in Peru. Señora Aída claims Fausta's beautiful melodies as her own when she performs a piano composition to the public that uses the mermaid song that Fausta sings throughout the film. This is the moment in the film when Fausta confronts Aída for her robbery and loses her job as a result. The issue between Fausta and Aída represents an issue that exists on a much larger scale in Peru today. While in actuality many privileged members of Peruvian society discriminate against those who come from rural regions and indigenous ethnic backgrounds, they use this aspect of Peruvian culture to promote tourism, commercialization, and capitalism. Rich cultures are exploited for their crafts, foods, and traditions, yet scoffed at when performed in informal public spaces. Particularly in the city, indigeneity has become commodified, something to be consumed when desired but ignored and discarded of when unneeded. This symbol also appears again at the end of the film, when Fausta receives a potted potato plant. Potatoes are traditionally grown in the earth, intended to be part of the pachamama, the mother earth. However, just like Fausta, this potato has been

displaced from its natural environment and commodified. Both must adapt to their new environments in order to survive.

Fausta's story is a product of the traumatic after-effects of rape, a topic that is often ignored or downplayed in other visual representations of the internal conflict. By choosing the persistent memory of her mother's rape as the focal point of the film, Llosa creates a metaphor for war as a patriarchal phenomenon while memory becomes feminized. These binaries become broken as Fausta physically embodies her memories and gradually overcomes her fear of men and rape. In an analysis of gender and performance, Peggy Phelan states, "patriarchal culture's violent renunciation of femininity has helped to create a feminine body capable of renouncing that renunciation. The feminine body is, profoundly, an auto-reproductive body, one that continues to reproduce symptoms and movement phrases that dance across the slippery stage of the paternal order" (68). Fausta's body renounces the patriarchal suppression of her femininity, and she transforms her role from a victim to an empowered political actor. In the end of the film, Fausta refuses to let her fear dictate her life, and thus becomes a more independent woman.

Throughout the film, however, Fausta cannot break the cycle of trauma by herself. Her uncle and the gardener, Noé, encourage her to live her life free of fear. This film suggests that members of the indigenous community must come together to live beyond the violence of these years. Fausta breaks the cycle of trauma by admitting to herself and to those around her that she has been both mentally and physically affected by the violence. This film shows the survivors of the violence that by coming forth and telling their stories, they may be able to live in freedom from the fear of the past. Fausta finds comfort in her family and other members of her community. Through the symbolic act of claiming the pearls that are rightfully hers, Fausta claims her memories and defies the social and cultural hierarchies that caused the internal

violence. *La teta asustada* serves as a symbol of hope for displaced and disenfranchised indigenous communities that have been affected by the violence, encouraging them to use their memories as a means of empowerment in order to obtain their political human rights.

## ***5.2 La cautiva***

*La cautiva*, a play written by Luis Alberto León, also addresses the TRC's recommendation to acknowledge the multiethnic composition of Peru. The play tells the story of María Josefa, a young girl who is killed along with her parents by military forces. *La cautiva* takes place in a morgue in Ayacucho in 1984, during the height of the internal conflict in Peru. The morgue assistant encounters the body of María Josefa, a 14-year-old girl who was assassinated by military officers. As he prepares to clean the dead girl's body, the corpse suddenly comes to life. María Josefa begins to tell her story, but clearly only the assistant can communicate with the animated corpse while the other characters, including the doctor and the military officer, simply see a lifeless body. The morgue assistant helps María Josefa live out the fantasy of her quinceñera while simultaneously attempting to keep her corpse safe from maltreatment. León's work deals with controversial issues that must be addressed when piecing together the occurrences and formulating a narrative of what happened during this part of Peru's past. He highlights the negative impact of military involvement through the character known as The Captain. This sinister character is portrayed as a drunken authority figure, whose main goal in the action of the play is to rape the corpse of María Josefa. The young assistant realizes that in preparing the girl's body for her executioners, he is also preparing her for her defilement. He defies authority by denying the captain access to the girl's body. *La cautiva* illustrates the fact that both terrorist and governmental groups were responsible for the violence during this time

period. Both *La cautiva* and *La teta asustada* speak of issues such as rape that are often ignored by official sources and other narratives. By including female indigenous subjects as their protagonists, these interpretations give the victims political agency to share their memories of the internal conflict.

The play also generated controversy when Dircote (Dirección contra el Terrorismo), the Peruvian government's anti-terrorism branch of the national police, began to investigate the play due to its polemic message ("PNP investiga la obra 'La cautiva'"). The organization denounced the work and called it an apology to terrorism on the grounds that María Josefa was killed because her parents were considered terrorists. The police interpreted this small detail as a pro-terrorism message, when in fact during this time period many innocent people were killed because of their relationship to Shining Path members, even if they themselves did not participate in the violence. Even fifteen years after the violence has ended, it appears that some groups still cannot accept what happened during this time. Because of this, it is important that the visual representations of the violence address the extreme effects of trauma and the controversies that have emerged from this time period. *La cautiva* depicts various different aspects of this time period, and brings topics such as rape, military involvement, confusion, and the Shining Path's role in rural regions into the spotlight.

The writer and director both admit that this play was a product of their failure to understand what was occurring during the time of terrorism. The director, Chela de Ferrari stated, "For some time I have not stopped asking myself, how could this happen? Where was I then? What was my responsibility in all of this?" León added in response, "I also had a debt with the theme of the internal violence in our country. During this period I was very unconscious of

what was happening. I was submerged in my neurosis.”<sup>6</sup> Just as *Antígona* was a product of Teresa Ralli’s guilt for not responding to the violence at this time, the play *La cautiva* was inspired by similar motives. These writers, actors, and directors share their experience to a limeño audience through a limeño’s perspective. While *Antígona* speaks more directly of the individual’s experience of guilt as a small part of Peruvian collective guilt, *La cautiva* is an attempt to imagine the time of terror from Ayacucho’s point of view. By telling the story through a young Ayacucho girl’s perspective, the play gives agency to her and other victims of the violence. Although she is deceased, María Josefa fights to have her voice heard by the public. Her position as a female, indigenous political actor within a westernized narrative gives urban audiences access to a perspective that may be unique from his or her own perspective.

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By studying the successes and flaws of each of these cases, in *Peru Post-Internal Conflict* I have argued that pieces with governmental ties filter their artistic interpretations and exclude controversial aspects of the event. In contrast, pieces that represent indigenous subjects as protagonists with political agency help to imagine a future where victims may obtain political rights. These cases suggest ways in which the Peruvian nation may utilize art as a political tool of repair and reconciliation in moving toward a future free of political, social and cultural violence. The epigraph written by Uruguayan author Eduardo Galeano, suggests that the right to memory is a fundamental human right, acknowledging memory’s power as a political tool. Only

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<sup>6</sup> Translated from original: Chela: “Desde hace un tiempo que no dejo de preguntarme, ¿cómo pudo pasar? ¿Dónde estaba yo entonces? Cuál fue mi responsabilidad en todo esto? (...) Pepo: Yo también tenía una deuda con el tema de la violencia interna en nuestro país. Durante ese período fui muy inconsciente de lo que sucedía. Estaba sumergido en mis neurosis.”

by exercising our right to remember the mistakes of the past may we hope to secure a future in which we achieve fundamental human rights for those who have been negated access to political agency.

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