AMA y No Olvida
Collectivizing Memory Against Impunity:
Transmedia Memory Practices, Modular Visibility,
and Activist Participatory Design in Nicaragua

EMILIA YANG RAPPACCIOLI
University of Southern California, USA

In 2018, families of victims of lethal state violence in Nicaragua organized as the Association Mothers of April (AMA) to collectively search for truth, justice, and reparations. This article analyzes the development of the transmedia project *AMA y No Olvida*, *Museum of Memory against Impunity*, created for remembering and dignifying the victims by an interdisciplinary team in collaboration with AMA. The digital archive hosts the results of transmedia memory practices engaged by the community: accounts about the deaths via hand-drawn maps, digital maps, video testimonies, and a photographic archive of each victim. In the creation of the archive, the community's needs were centered, and we proposed "modular visibility" against the revictimization caused by the circulation of media that represented the victims' violent deaths. The contribution is centered on the use of participatory design methods to create a community digital archive and a temporary exhibition fostering transmedia activist memory practices that turned the private grieving of AMA members into public mourning, building wider mnemonic communities.

Keywords: Transmedia, memories, media practices, mapping, memory, museum, archive, video, portraits, testimonies, Nicaragua, Latin America, digital media, digital humanities, participatory design, visibility, data, maps, GIS, human rights, violations, dictatorship, necropower, race, gender

> "Recuerdo, recordamos, hasta que la justicia se siente entre nosotros."
> ["I remember, we remember, until justice sits among us."]
> Tlatelolco Memorial
> (Castellanos, 1972, p. 31)

Every Thursday of May 2018 at 4:00 p.m., a group of mothers gathered in a roundabout in Managua popularly known as *Metrocentro* to denounce the killings of their children by the Nicaraguan state. Weeks earlier, combined police and paramilitary forces started using lethal force to quell popular protests, killing

54 people in the span of four days.[1] In addition to a pattern of killing protesters, the state was accused by international human rights organizations of committing "crimes against humanity," with a pattern of actions that included extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, obstruction of access to medical care, illegal detentions, instances of torture and sexual violence, violations of freedoms of peaceful assembly and expression, including the criminalization of social leaders, human rights defenders, journalists, and protesters considered critical of the government (Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts [GIEI], 2019, p. 222). Even though gathering was very dangerous as state repression remained ongoing, once the group of mothers started confronting the state publicly, more families joined the Thursday sit-ins. They gathered solidarity and started calling themselves "Mothers of April." The mothers called for a march on Mother's Day, May 30, 2018, known popularly as "the mother of all marches," to demand justice. Attendance peaked at around a half-million people in Managua—a city of 1.5 million—and ended in the massacre of more than 18 young people (Luna, 2020). After this event, the mothers had to find new ways to protest and demand justice for their children.

The Nicaraguan government denied the existence of the mortal victims of state violence and criminalized protesters by framing them as "terrorists, vandals, criminals" (Amnesty International, 2018a, p. 12). In the midst of the ongoing police brutality, the Mothers of April raised their voices demanding that state authorities and international human rights organizations investigate the events that occurred and continue happening currently. This public and collective search for justice was a new path in Nicaragua (Nuñez, 2014). Amnesty International found a failure to pursue any investigation by the Public Ministry. Instead, they found concealment and obstruction of due process (Amnesty International, 2018a). In addition, families of the victims have been subjected to various forms of intimidation (jailing, policing, and harassment) meant to silence their demand for justice and their efforts to construct spaces for remembrance. In September 2018, the collective adopted by consensus the name Association Mothers of April (AMA), which translates to "love," and defined its purpose: "the union and representation of the mothers and relatives of the people assassinated by the state repression in Nicaragua" (Association Mothers of April, 2018, p. 1). Even though it is a women-led organization, fathers and other family members play active roles (Lopez, 2019). The Mothers of April follow a tradition of parents whose children have been killed and who have tried to publicly search for justice such as the Mothers of the *Plaza de Mayo* in Argentina, the parents of the *normalistas* of Ayotzinapa[2] in Mexico, and in the United States the parents of victims of racialized police brutality, part of the movement for Black Lives (Crenshaw & Ritchie, 2015; Rankine, 2017).

I came to AMA before it was a formal association, first as a volunteer to document its activities and then as an active member after the state killed my uncle Vicente Rappaccioli on June 26, 2018, while he

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[1] The protests ignited for multiple reasons: an IMF-mandated austerity reform to the social security system that required higher payments by the employers and employees, cuts to benefits to elderly pensioners by 5%, and a wildfire in Indio Maíz Biological Reserve—located in indigenous Rama-Kriol territory, the largest of the country. Scholars have included other reasons, such as the interoceanic canal concession, extractivist and antilabor policies, antiwomen policies, and the popular discontent that had been boiling in Nicaragua since Ortega's return to power (Mayer, 2018; Morris, 2018).

[2] Forty-three students disappeared by police were handed over to the *Guerreros Unidos* drug cartel, linked to the mayor of Iguala (Valenzuela, 2015).

was passing a paramilitary checkpoint in our native town of Diriamba, Carazo (Romero, 2018). These events made me reorient my work and resources to become engaged as a participant of this group as an activist and a researcher and align my research project with our collective goals. I include my personal experiences here to position this work and myself as a participant, creator, and researcher. The "autobiographical example," says Saidiya Hartman, "it's really about trying to look at historical and social processes and one's own formation as a window into social and historical processes as an example of them" (as cited in Saunders, 2008, p. 5). Like Hartman, I include my views of the events "to tell a story capable of engaging and countering the violence of abstraction" (as cited in Saunders, 2008, p. 5).

In our *Manifesto for Truth, Justice, and Comprehensive Reparations,* we proposed the active construction of memory as one of the organizational objectives: "to create a memory bank against oblivion and impunity" (Association Mothers of April, 2018, p. 4). On September 27, 2019, a year after the release of the manifesto, we launched the transmedia digital project *AMA y No Olvida*, translated as "Love and do not forget," *Museum of Memory against Impunity*, composed of an archival website[3] and physical temporary exhibition with the objective to dignify the mortal victims of the state of Nicaragua and to honor their memory. The museum aims to "counteract the official narrative that criminalizes citizens who participated in civic protests and that fosters the climate of impunity promoted by the current regime" (Museo de la Memoria, 2019, para. 1). Its route:

> allows visitors to get to know, through the voices of their families, who were the students, workers, artisans, indigenous people, peasants, producers, women, and political prisoners who made use of their citizen rights to civic protest and were killed by the state (Museo de la Memoria, 2019, para. 2).

For AMA, this was our first collective memory effort that gathered our voices and made them public, as stated by Francys Valdivia, president of AMA and sister of Franco Valdivia, a 24-year-old student killed on April 20: "We have carried this endeavor out under the repression and persecution of the Ortega-Murillo dictatorship, which demonstrates our unwavering will that, despite so much pain, we make our commitment to freedom, justice, and democracy stronger than ever" (Museo de la Memoria, 2019, para. 6). The physical temporary exhibition was displayed at the Institute of History of Nicaragua and Central America at the University of Central America (UCA) and received around 10,000 visitors, more than 20,000 virtual visits on its website, and wide coverage in the national and international press.

Transmedia Memory Practices

Marsha Kinder first used the term "transmedia" to describe the intertextuality created by an "ever-expanding multisystem of entertainment" (Kinder, 1991, p. 1). Henry Jenkins (2006) reintroduced the term in the context of storytelling (movies, digital media, and games) to describe "a process where integral elements of a fiction get dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels for the purpose of creating a unified and coordinated entertainment experience" (p. 95). Some of the characteristics Jenkins

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[3]   The   museum's   English   version   of   the   website   can   be   found   at: https://www.museodelamemorianicaragua.org/en/home/

(2007) described included being based on "complex fictional worlds which can sustain multiple interrelated characters and their stories" instead of the individual character story (para. 3). For him, transmedia is "the ideal aesthetic form for an era of collective intelligence" (Jenkins, 2007, para. 8).

Even though transmedia started as a way of thinking about fictional worlds that generally are created by production companies and media corporations, others have thought of the potential of this procedural medium in other social arenas. Transmedia producer Lina Srivastava (2016) has described transmedia activism as "the coordinated cocreation of narrative and cultural expression by various constituencies who distribute that narrative in various forms through multiple platforms" (para. 12). Sasha Constanza-Schock (2014) introduced the term "transmedia organizing" to talk about how "savvy community organizers engage their movement's social base in participatory media-making practices" (p. 47) across media platforms. In this way, they link organizing with media activism and challenge the power relations vis-a-vis media corporations and the nation states.

Arely Zimmerman (2016) coined the term "transmedia testimonio," in which DREAMER activists give accounts of their immigration experiences, reveal their legal status, and document their participation in civil disobedience (p. 1). For her, their "personal narrative represents a collective experience that is shared across various media platforms" (Zimmerman, 2016, p. 1886) beyond the confines of formal and state-sanctioned public spheres, challenging their own media representations. By doing so, they "use testimonio to make claims to citizenship as new rights-bearing subjects, even if the state has not legitimized them as such" (Zimmerman, 2016, p. 1886). I join their efforts in trying to think and understand media practices from the points of view of the activists who coordinate, mobilize, and build common identities through the telling of their stories.

Others have engaged with transmedia theory to think about memory and historiography. Elmo Gonzaga (2019) thinks about transmedia memory "as the creation, storage, and distribution of historical and cultural knowledge using the specific protocols of various media modalities, each of which has something distinct to contribute to the larger aggregate" (p. 150). Freeman (2019) talks about "transmedia historiography," as

> the coordinated use of digital platforms and nondigital materials—integrated dialogically
> in ways that encourage audience appropriation—to transform how people make sense of
> a historical moment, encouraging more active ways of learning about the complex,
> multiperspectival components that make up a given history. (para. 5)

Interestingly, both consider Marianne Hirsch's (2012) theory of postmemory for succeeding generations that have not experienced firsthand the past realities being recollected.

My use of transmedia memory practices emphasizes the practices that the members of AMA undertook to create community and center ourselves, challenge the media representation and the revictimization of our family members created by the government communication apparatus, as well as the transmedia universe, which is created by the practices, and how each element helps transform the story of each victim into a collective experience. Transmedia memory practices can be analyzed as sites of narrative

production, storing, and delivering on the side of the media activists and victims, as well as sites of convergence of the stories on the side of the audiences (circulation, interaction, connection, and cocreation). Jenkins (2006) defines convergence as the flow of content across various platforms and networks, which rests on the active participation of users.

Here, the term transmedia practices is intertwined with the Latin American tradition of media practices, assuming activist practices are located in people's lives, built from their own knowledge. Thus, "when media practices are studied and analyzed, what we really understand is people's ways of narrating, of exposing their bodies and politicizing their lives from and in communication" (Rincón & Marroquín, 2019, p. 43). A media practices approach allows for an analysis of a scenario of expression in people's own codes, symbols, and rituals. The framing of the media making practices engaged by the mothers and other family members of AMA as transmedia memory practices adds transmedia storytelling to the repertoire of traditional activist practices that they also engaged with (marches, sit-ins, etc.).

This article presents and analyzes the development of the digital project *AMA y No Olvida*, *Museum of Memory Against Impunity*, and the transmedia practices engaged by the members of AMA that made public their private grieving. In the following, the article first delineates an accounting and typifying of the state violence in its physical and symbolic forms. I describe the racial and gendered characters of the necropolitics of state violence, as well as the possibilities of activists to enter the political public sphere in the repressive communicative ecology created by the government both in traditional media and online. Then I move to describe the interdisciplinary relationship among activist media memory work, grief, and mourning and open up the process to share the design methods to create the transmedia memory practices:

– Data gathering and management: This includes the mapping of the violence, the video testimonies, and the gathering of the personal archives of the victims. The process of archival creation and data management highlights the importance of community control and ownership against revictimization and retraumatization with what I call "modular visibility."
– The participatory website design to host all the materials and the convergence that takes place once these transmedia memories are out in the public, since they become connective and usable for future projects.

Throughout the text, I am interested in the politics of transference of knowledge and power inherent in archival procedures that takes place in the entanglement of stories, memories, people, media, and things; the critical use of corporate technology, taking into consideration commodification, exploitation, and censorship of data and images of suffering; and the possibilities of continuing the work of construction of memory and human rights pedagogy with the research created.

Historical Structural Violence and the Necropolitics of State Repression

The afterlives of colonialism have multiple ways that structure Nicaraguan reality. Contemporary state violence in Nicaragua is just one expression of a great repertoire of violence, racism, discrimination, exclusion, and dispossession deployed over several centuries on poor, Black, and indigenous communities and their territories. Racism in Nicaragua is present in myriad ways, especially present by practices of settler colonialism

on the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua, the racist ideology that has reaffirmed the colonial "Spanish" to remain the superior race and language (Cunningham Kain, 2006) and continued to perpetuate the belief that the country is an all Mestizo (mixed race) people (Hooker, 2005), erasing the multiethnic and multicultural diversity of the country. Scholars have argued there are ethnolinguistic hierarchies (based on skin color, language, or accents, among others; Figueroa Romero & Gonzalez, 2021), a "pigmentocratic" structuring of the sociopolitical order, a verticalized social structure, in which Whites and Mestizos are positioned at the top while indigenous people and African descendants remain at the bottom (Zeledon, 2021, para. 1).

There are various manifestations of anti-Blackness and anti-indigenous racism in Nicaragua that range from invisibility to sociopolitical and economic exclusion to what I argue is the possibility of valuing the lives and bodies of those who are in the bottom position of the social structure when facing violence. Violence, control, dispossession, and denial were deployed with particular force against darker-skinned Mestizos and indigenous communities during the 2018 uprising, in an intersection between class and race, when state violence extended to urban centers across the country. Necropolitics is a term used by Achilles Mbembe (2019) that characterizes the state's sovereign power to control, regulate, and legitimize mortality in states of exception without any responsibility or justice. As presented by the testimonies of the victims starting in April 2018, the current Nicaraguan state governs by massacre, by the disposal of the victims' bodies, and by dehumanizing them through discourse, as well as the circulation of images of their deaths in the name of "peace, tranquility, and the circulation of goods" (Chávez, 2018, para. 1; El 19 Digital, 2018, para. 1). The research of the museum made evident how most of the victims represented in the museum were from marginal and precarious neighborhoods as well as from indigenous communities, such as Monimbó in Masaya and Subtiava in León.

Gender also plays a role in contemporary forms of violence faced by activist Nicaraguan women. During the uprisings' organizational process, women have been denied a voice and place in the political sphere, arguing their demands are divisive, a struggle present during the Sandinista Revolution (Díaz Reyes, 2021). The current regime has inherited a militarized and male-dominated exercise of power from the Sandinista Revolution and the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) party (Blandón, 2016, Lacombe, 2010; Rodríguez, 1996). Others trace this structural violence to a hegemonic masculinity model with historical roots based on Catholicism, colonial patriarchy, Hispanicism, and militarism (Antillón, 2016; Gómez, 2015). The violence of the current state specifically targets women who defend rights, with actions that include kidnapping, torture, sexual violence, raids, smear campaigns, harassment, and surveillance of defenders and their families (GIEI, 2019). In the case of the families of victims of state violence, it is important to highlight the psychological and physical effects of state terror on the communities of those killed. In response, young feminists have brought to the fore the issues of care and self-care as part of our current resistance, recognizing needs for well-being, tranquility, and security (Núñez et al., 2020). This was present in the streets, where women resignified the slogan "*Patria libre o morir*" (Free fatherland or death) into "*Matria libre para vivir*" (Free motherland to live), presenting an "ethic of life" that critiques the heroic martyrdom and militarism of the revolutionary past, and the extractivism and heteropatriarchy of the contemporary state (Bran Aragón & Goett, 2020, p. 1; see also Agudelo Builes & Cruz, 2018, p. 33).

Media Ecology in Nicaragua: State Official Media and Digital Abuse

International Human Rights organizations have received reports of attacks on media and journalists who are critical of the Ortega-Murillo government. At the start of the crisis, on April 21, 2018, the Nicaraguan reporter Ángel Gahona[4] was shot and killed in the South Caribbean Autonomous Region of Nicaragua (RAACS) while covering the protests. His family is part of AMA. Another nine journalists were wounded on the same day. Police officers and paramilitary groups have attacked, burned, and raided the offices of multiple news outlets such as 100% News Channel, *Radio Darío, La Prensa,* and *Confidencial*. Various independent journalists and political commentators have been arrested and accused of "incitement to commit acts of terrorism" (Amnesty International, 2018a; Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [UN Human Rights], 2018).

The Ortega-Murillo project has bought or claimed more than 10 news outlets, many of them managed by the children of the Ortega family (Enríquez, 2013). All of them are considered "official media" that present only positive information about the government with approval of the government's spokeswoman and first lady, Rosario Murillo. Part of the government's communication strategy is to deny media reports of malfeasance by the government. The government's attitude was defined as a "politics of amnesia" (Martínez, 2014, para. 2). I contend that there's an illegitimate historical revisionism since the government is writing news as the truth as it suits it, a strategy that also takes place online. In October 2021, Facebook's company Meta made public that it removed a troll farm run by the government of Nicaragua that was started in 2018 after the protests. Meta stated it was conclusively "the most cross-government troll operations disrupted to date" with around 1,000 accounts suspended (Alonso & Nimmo, 2021, p. 4). This campaign was cross-platform as well as cross-government, including multiple government branches using multiple platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube). According to Facebook, the network was removed because it was "part of a coordinated effort to manipulate public discourse using fake accounts" that intended to flood the Internet environment with "progovernment and anti-opposition content" (Alonso & Nimmo, 2021, p. 4). This content included fake news, promoting violence against protesters, accusing protesters of violations and crimes, dehumanizing and denigrating them, and in some cases even impersonating them.

The Labor of Memory, From Grieving to Mourning,
From Individual to Collective Experience

The government denied the families the right to mourn and declared war against the memories of the victims, our loved ones. The lives of the victims became unrecognized as lives, devalued, and therefore "ungrievable" (Butler, 2006, pp. 35–36). There is a violent dispute over public spaces that prevents the construction of memory marks or memorials. Spontaneously, people planted crosses with flowers on roundabouts as spaces for grieving and memory. They were later ripped off and smothered with oil by government forces (Moncada, 2018). Moreover, as GIEI (2019) reported, funerary rituals, so important in the elaboration of mourning for family members and the community, could not be carried out in peace since

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[4] Angel Gahona's profile in the museum: https://www.museodelamemorianicaragua.org/perfiles/angel-eduardo-gahona-lopez/

they were the objects of terror and threats. In many cases, the families had to perform the wakes of their loved ones in their houses behind closed doors, under siege from paramilitary groups that fired gunshots outside. In other cases, paramilitaries even entered the place. In some burials, there was little participation of members of the community because people were afraid to be attacked. This prevented the families from having the necessary support networks to process their grief. There emerged stories of desecrated tombs (Medina, 2020). Many families chose to bury their relatives without performing autopsies because they did not trust the Institute of Legal Medicine. This means burying their loved ones with the expectation that the body will have to be exhumed in order to carry out a reliable autopsy. As a result of this, the grieving process remains pending, traversed by the absence of justice.

According to Alan Wolfelt (2016), people use grief and mourning interchangeably, but they contain subtle differences. Grief is internal after the loss of a loved one. Our initial, private response is grief. Mourning, which is external, is the next step in the process. Mourning is the shared social response to loss, or grief gone public. Mourning takes our internal grief and externalizes it in the form of an action, a symbol, a ceremony, or a ritual that activates social support. It is essential to mourn for creating forward movement in a state of grief. Without external mourning, grief turns into "carried grief" (Wolfelt, 2016, para. 3). The families of the association started their own private acts of mourning, moving within the lines of private and public. In this context, these personal acts were also political acts (Sturken, 1997) since they defied an unwritten rule that they were not allowed to perform any type of memorialization or gathering in public or decorate their tombs for an anniversary or birthday (Medina, 2020).

Team and Research Methodology

I had the privilege to lead a multidisciplinary technical team to do the museum project that included members of the Directive Council of AMA, sociologists, architects, human rights defenders, psychologists, artists, designers, and archivists. This project was made in collaboration with the Academy of Sciences of Nicaragua with the Nicaraguan Center of Human Rights (CENIDH)[5]. This collaboration gave the project a human rights framework by centering and not revictimizing the victims.

The conditions to do this project were dangerous since the team had to travel to each department with film production equipment. This automatically would be ground for detainment by police. The gatherings took place clandestinely in six departments[6] (Managua, Masaya, Chinandega, León, Carazo, and Jinotega), and each territory had around 20 to 30 family members, who represented 10–15 of the victims. In the first meeting, held in the department of Chinandega, Susana López, mother of Gerald López, a 20-year-old university student who was killed in a paramilitary attack at the National University (UNAN), gave the following introduction to the project:

As a mother, I thank you for welcoming us and starting this important work. I know it will be painful. We have to do it together, to clean the memory of our sons, murdered by the Ortega-

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[5] In 2018, CENIDH's offices were confiscated by the government and their legal entity removed (Amnesty International, 2018b).
[6] Nicaragua is divided for administrative purposes into 15 departments and two autonomous regions.

Murillo regime. We will be firm until the last consequences. I stand here today and will stand firm with you. We will continue to represent our children with great pride. Even though they will not see the fall of this regime, they will be seeing what we are doing from above.

Her framing of memory work as one of "cleaning the memory" and to be "in presence of our loved ones" was present throughout the rest of the project. Memory becomes a public matter when there are injustices in the past that have not been rectified or accepted in the social arena in which they take place. Elizabeth Jelin (2003) calls "laborers of memory" those who engage in the processes of symbolic transformation and elaboration of meanings of the past. The memories of the injustices usually emerge with a double intent: "that of asserting the truth of events, and that of demanding justice" (Jelin, 2003, p. 29). The participatory model, which recognizes and centers the knowledge of the victims' families, required a theoretical-methodological approach based on the acknowledgment of the victims/survivors as subjects of rights. The main research questions were:

RQ1:   *How do we support future processes of truth and justice?*

RQ2:   *How do we conceptualize memory and memorialization practices in an organic and participatory way?*

RQ3:   *How do we care as practice, in the design, and in our thinking?*

In the following, I describe how we answered these research questions through the mapping practices, the archival practices, and the different transmedia memories created, shared, and then connected online.

Narrative and Mapping Practices of the "Routes of Pain"

This section describes the mapping process, called by the team as "the Routes of Pain." They were meant to give a tool to the families of AMA to structure their testimonies for future legal process, as to gather information about the events in a territorial manner. Members of AMA created hand-drawn memory maps of the events that happened, shared their testimonies collectively with the other families of the same locality, and then referenced the places into traditional cartography to create geographic information systems (GIS), which allowed us to find patterns in the repression and attacks.

At the beginning of the workshops, members of AMA introduced one another by stating their relationships to the victims. For many, this was the first space given to talk about their relatives' murders, what happened to them, and how they lived it, in front of a group of people. There was a psychotherapist on site who helped contain the emotional outbursts that sometimes erupted. The technical team presented the methodological guide and gave drawing supplies and support to the families. Then families drew maps that graphically captured the events related to the murders of their relatives in the sequence established by the methodological guide. The guide recommended trying to tell the story from the time the victim left their house until they were wounded or killed, if they received any medical support, if they were able to perform a wake, and when they were buried.

Generally, one or two relatives proceeded to draw. This was a process of reflection and discussion among family members, visibly emotional for all. They presented the story mapping of the events that occurred and, in some cases, that they witnessed. Both the map and the oral narrative of the story were rich in graphic details. Sometimes, they would place a picture of their relative or include a nickname. Families gave accounts of their perceptions of events and places through graphic representation details, for example, by adding flowers and color to the homes and the names of the victims. In contrast, state offices like the Institute of Legal Medicine (IML) were painted in gray, suggesting sadness. See Figure 1 for an example of a hand-drawn map.
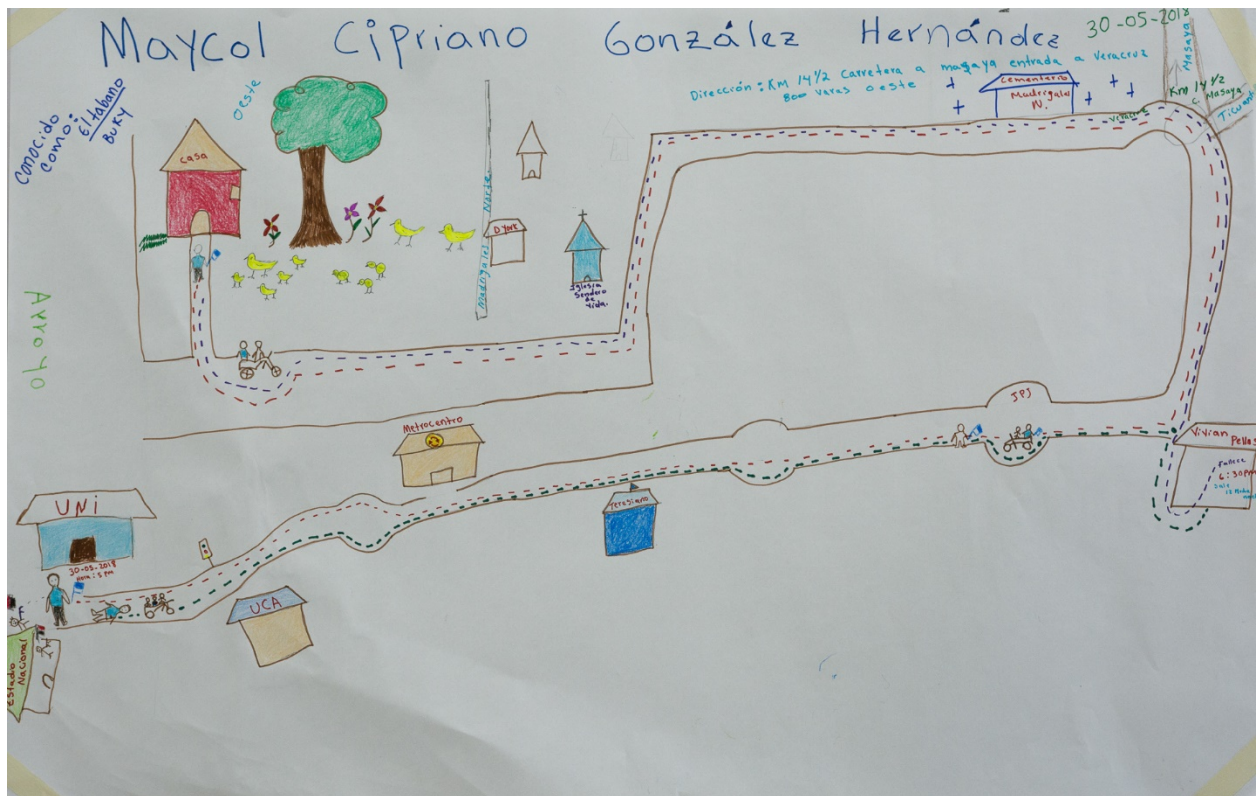

Figure 1. Map of Maycol Cipriano González Hernández, murdered on May 30, 2018.

The presentations helped the victims' families create community by learning one another's stories in each territory. The participation of relatives of other victims created a "mnemonic community," with a shared past they all seemed to recall (Zerubavel, 2012, p. 4) among the territorial groups, thus generating an interdiscursive narrative at the territory level. The shared knowledge of the spaces allowed for them to create a shared topography of the violent events. The meetings would end with a breathing exercise and repeating the phrase, "I am here for me, as I am here for you," a mantra-like phrase that invited victims to support one another. It was evident that this was a hard process for the members, but they received collective strength from one another as well as the process of creating a shared social identity.

The maps were georeferenced with the objective of supporting the narratives with scientific tools, locating as precisely as possible the places where they occurred. This forensic evidence will act as support for the narratives for the building of legal cases in the future. In this innovative methodology, different methodological tools intervene, including the mapped account, the collective testimonies, and GIS. To geo-reference the sites noted by the relatives, the families were not able to do GPS (Global Positioning System) references on site because of the dangerous conditions. The maps drawn were referenced with scale maps produced by conventional cartography. The victims' families helped locate the events indicated on the freehand maps on the printed maps. The information displayed on the printed maps was manually entered into the open-source program QGIS Software Madeira to create the GIS maps. The GIS maps show the collective events and allow for identification of spatial patterns of protest and repression. In later workshops, family members learned about basic mapping techniques using GIS to update and add more information to the maps. Map creation was once the exclusive privilege of the state or corporations (Milan & Gutiérrez, 2018), but families of AMA took an active role in making the maps and displayed critical information about these killings.

Testimonios

Testimonio has an important relevance in Latin American tradition since it "is a form of political action" (Zimmerman, 2016, p. 1892) and has allowed victims to voice their experiences in state-sanctioned spaces such as truth commissions, leaving marks on their national hegemonic memories and ultimately allowing those to "assert their dignity while also becoming cognizant of their rights to speak and to be heard" (Stephen, 2013, as cited in Zimmerman, 2016, p. 1,893).

In the case of AMA members, we have not yet been called to testify or give our testimonies because there has not been any type of investigation by the Public Ministry. Instead, human rights defenders first gathered our testimonies when the events happened via oral stories and transcribed them. With the research process of the memory museum, the testimonies were recorded on video in the presence of human rights defenders. This way, new information could be added to the file without interviewing the victims twice. The questions first gathered information about who the victims were, what happened to them, and what kind of memory and justice they want. These interviews were cut to five- to eight-minute clips to tell the story of each victim. At the end, the team took a portrait of the family members holding a picture of their relative and demanding justice. See Figure 2 for an example.

Figure 2. Portrait demanding justice, family of Cruz Alberto Obregon Lopez, 23 years old, killed on May 30, 2018.

Community Archiving Practices, Modular Visibility, and the Politics of the Archive

The gathering and organization of the data were part of the creation of the community archive. This part was essential for the construction of the digital online museum and the decision-making process of what data were made openly accessible to the public and what was kept in private. The types of data gathered in the workshops were divided into two categories:

1) Forensic evidence such as files, documents, and accounts of the traumatic events for the search for justice and reparations.

2) Memorialization, which included video and images for the visibility and ethical reparations of the victims. This included the photographic archives of the victims, pictures and videos of life milestones, birthdays, graduations, and newspaper clippings.

Through the creation of the museum, the AMA organization created its own archive building on a set of ethics of media representation and forms that I call "modular visibility." *Modular visibility* counters impunity and state surveillance by centering the victims and their relatives' testimonies and modulating the information released in a way that makes sense to the community. The main principle is that the community

has control, access, and ownership of the narratives and materials. Safiya Noble critically talks about the virality of Black deaths and proposes a Critical Surveillance Literacy in Social Media since "community control over images and identity is under threat in an unregulated technology sector that affords little rights to the subjects, their families, or their communities in the circulation and narrative surrounding digital images" (Noble, 2018, p. 158).

The community decided to make public the mapping and short clips of video testimonies but would not give to the public the evidence that will be part of future processes of justice or the images of their relatives dying, creating a private archive of all the evidence. This meant rather than re-representing the traumatizing experiences of their deaths and how they got injured (which had already been streamed via social media), people could learn the stories of their family members while they were alive and the struggles they fought for protesting against the regime. In other words, we actively refuse to make visible and reproduce their cruel deaths. Instead, we emphasize their absence, making that absence into a political statement and taking advantage of the affordances of digitality to modulate visibility.

Later on, the public and private information was organized to international archiving standards, creating descriptors for metadata and the use of thesauruses of human rights organizations for thematic analysis and searches of documents. Multiple thinkers have noted an important shift in the social archivization of memory: Collecting and storing were traditionally specialized practices of the ruling elite, but now have become common and popular (Nora, 1989). For Amit Pinchevski (2019), the archive in itself "has become an eminently social practice, a veritable living memory" (p. 254). The previous practices, which include the mapping, testimonies, and creation of the archive allowed for the collectivization of memories with the team and the territorial networks, and the digital museum allowed for them to reach a wider audience.

Museum and Digital Altar: Participatory Design

"The museum is showing what we did at home, what we naturally did to remember. So that our own traditions are not forgotten."
—Francisca Machado, mother of Franco Valdivia

Another part of the workshop entailed the participatory design of the digital website of the memory museum. This process was informed by participatory art and design methods, which emphasize collective exchange and collaboration. A key aspect of participatory projects is that they allow input from other participants besides the maker, by learning from and building on insights, experiences, and practices of others (Huybrechts et al., 2014) in varying constellations. The mutual interactions between the technical team and the families of victims that participated, as well as the transmedia memories, defined the design and communication strategy of the project.

The aesthetics of the archive were designed by researching the forms of memorialization used by the victims' families. In a brainstorming session, AMA members were asked what memory was for them, why we should remember, and in what ways we remember the victims in our homes. The overarching feeling was that we should remember "for them to be present," "to prove the lives they had," "to continue their struggle for freedom," "to give them a place in history," "to have equal rights," and "for this not to happen

ever again." In the remembering practices mentioned, most, if not all, had altars in their houses where they placed the victim's belongings, such as books, perfumes, trophies, and protest materials, as described in this vignette by Carolina Carrión, mother of Jasser Zepeda Carrión, also known as Chavelo:

> He was well known in Masaya; in the beginning of the protests he was already known because he organized people. When they murdered him, the people felt it, and we as a family felt that he was not ours, he belonged to the people. I did not even get involved, it felt like it was a great loss for everyone. After the burial, I set up an altar and placed the Virgen Mary of Sorrows, Saint Michael and flowers and candles that I never took away, and people brought me more stuff. We were accumulating things, basically his own museum. We put his things on a shelf with his photos facing the street. People go down the street and say there's Chavelo and recognize him. Since we placed it there, he is always there and for us he is there. He has taken care of us. When they came to attack again in the Operation Clean up, I was the only woman and at the time of the massacre we held hands and he protected us. Out of fear I was going to remove the altar, but my son told me not to, that he would take care of us. They passed in front and did not touch us, for that day they could have killed us. We believe that he protects us.

AMA members state they like to have altars because they feel the presence of their loved ones and they feel comfort in knowing "they will not be forgotten." The decision was to create an altar museum concept, grounded in the cultural practices, but secular to respect the diversity of religions in the organization. The altar concept also represents the labor we undertake in our gestures of remembering. This alludes to the performative and embodied aspect of memory, what Diana Taylor (2003) calls the "repertoire of the archive" (p. 20). Later on, in the temporary exhibition created, the altar became an actual space that allowed for a further ritual of collectivization of grief and mourning.

Connective Transmedia Memories

"By always honoring them as we walk, we will continue to sow the memory of our relatives so that they flourish, grow, and live full of truth and justice."
(Yang, 2019, para. 5).

Once the museum was designed and validated by the families, it was launched online and exhibited in a temporary exhibition. The digital museum project (Museo de la Memoria, 2019) comprises 100 profiles of victims in which the online user can learn each one of their stories through a video of the testimony, a biographical written profile, and their photographic archive, and then learn about their killing, with both the hand-drawn and digital maps, and a section called "memory," which is dedicated to the homages. The website also has a space called "About the Museum" (Museo de la Memoria, 2019), for media and future research. The website is what Jenkins (2009) calls "the mothership," meaning the primary media platform that anchors the rest of the transmedia story and which all other platforms build upon (as cited in Freeman, 2019, para. 13). The temporary exhibition and subsequent projects such as the interactive art book "AMA Constructing Memory," and the podcast called *Barricades of Memory* are different forms of transmediality that the archive takes.

Once these mediated memories are in the ecology of news and information, they become connective memories. Hoskins (2016) posits that "new" memories are evolving as they are continually emerging in connection with media and technologies. De Kosnik (2016) also develops a theory about archontic production, in which memory is not only the record of cultural production, but also its base for remixing. The pursuit of memory work is increasingly fostered by social media platforms (Kaun & Stiernstedt, 2016). In the case of the museum, the memories of each victim are shared weekly on its social media channels. According to its Creative Commons licensing, it is intended for people to use and share the museum archival material in a noncommercial way. Various journalistic initiatives have started using the data of the museum for their investigations.

Conclusions

This article presents the repressive conditions in which AMA continues the active construction of memory of our loved ones and how we tried to confront both the structural and state violence through transmedia memory practices designed to take the community's needs and well-being into careful consideration. Integral parts of the reparations that are still due from part of the Nicaraguan state are the acknowledgment of the facts and the symbolic reparation of the characters of the victims, who were framed by the state as "vandals, delinquents," etc. The members of AMA were intent on creating a "memory bank to fight against oblivion and impunity" (Association Mothers of April, 2019, p. 4) that turned into *AMA y No Olvida, Museum of Memory Against Impunity*. This project has multiple media forms and texts that interweave multiple layers of practices of collectivization of grief and memory. The organization lived through a process of creating territorial networks of support for our individual mourning and later involved the population at large. In the interviews presented, the mothers make evident that memory work invigorated their agency, allowed them to resist together, to care in relationship, and to perform practices of collective identification and individual transformation.

Transmedia memory practices supported and organized the members of AMA to recognize ourselves as part of a political collective by sharing our stories and deciding how to represent the lives of our family members and what happened to them. The narrative and digital mapping practices allowed for the collectivization in the territorial groups, while the testimonials, community archiving, and participatory design practices allowed for the collectivization of grief with a wider national and international audience. The theoretical and practical contributions here lie in the descriptions and inclusions of design methods that can prompt these practices and detailed descriptions and analyses of the different practices in their roles of collectivizing the grief. The building blocks of Transmedia memory practices in this case are:

1) Narrative mapping practices and video testimonies that mediated the memories of human rights violations.

2) Participatory creation of the archive and the website to host and archive the transmedia texts in the form of an altar. Both were created based on the community's needs and traditions. The altar concept was organically presented by the family members as their way for remembrance and was reinterpreted to do a collective altar.

3) New transmedia memory practices that are anchored in these mediated memories once they connect online and in public spaces.

In this article, I highlight the practices and bodies that created situated knowledge, moving away from the centrality of networks, discourse, and media texts. The power dynamics of these activities shifted since they are usually performed by technical experts and government officials, but in this case were taken on by AMA members, who in this process became memory and media activists. We also center the community needs by countering the hypervisibilization and commodification of the death images created by the government as well as social media platforms, without representing their violent deaths. This is a tactic that I have called "modular visibility." The transmedia memories that AMA decided to circulate in a larger ecosystem of media can hopefully become seeds for future projects.

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