

Telling the Inexpressible: Trauma, Memory, and Dictatorship in Argentina

By Gloria Y. Losada

This dissertation examines new ways to think about postdictatorial memory, subjectivity, and cultural production. I explore memory discourses after the most recent military dictatorship in Argentina, compiled in three novels: *El fin de la historia* by Liliana Heker, *La casa de los conejos* by Laura Alcoba, and *Diario de una princesa Montonera - 100% verdad-* by Mariana Eva Perez. My research concentrates on the possibility of postdictatorial cultural production being a constantly transforming space, in which the meaning of the dictatorial past is actively produced. Drawing from interdisciplinary theoretical considerations, I examine the relationship between memory and cultural production in postdictatorship through such themes as subalternity, power, representation, discourse, and trauma. I suggest that cultural production that explores the impossibility to fully represent the past through the use of fragmented narratives, memory lapses, silences, and inconsistencies constitutes a space to examine the construction of memory about the dictatorial past and to destabilize dominant versions of the traumatic experiences. The dialogue with critics and the analysis of testimonial narratives allows me to answer these questions: Is the labor of trauma of the postdictatorial experience similar in all individuals? Is the impossibility to talk or write about the past traumatic experience a given characteristic of postdictatorial trauma? The research demonstrates how some postdictatorial literature offer an opportunity to activate memory for new uses and explore the residual effects of dictatorship in the present society with a view towards the future.