

## Aesthetic and affective practices in Latin American feminist movements: transnational perspectives from the intersection of art, activism, and research

### *Abstract*

In recent years, Latin America has seen the emergence of massive grassroots feminist movements. This has notably included Ni Una Menos, a reaction to femicide that emerged in Argentina and soon became a transnational movement for social transformation, and *Un Violador en tu Camino*, a participatory performance by Chilean collective Las Tesis, which stood against gender-based violence and became a transnational hymn. Drawing on theoretical, empirical and audio-visual material from our ethnographic work on performance activism, as well as from our experiences as feminist activists organising in Europe and Latin America, we will discuss how contemporary Latin American feminisms embrace different forms of aesthetic and affective practices as vehicles for envisioning – and beginning to practise, at small scale – more socially just and sustainable ways of living. We ask: What is the role of aesthetic and affective practices in Latin American feminist movements? And what role do these practices play in sustaining movements and building transnational solidarity? Engaging reflectively with our positions as activists/artists/researchers in relation to the conflicts and movements we are working with, we will also look at the methodologies we develop when studying and participating in feminist social movements and developing transnational projects. How do we navigate changing positionalities and geographical locations? And how do activism and research feed into each other?

*Keywords:* Feminism, social movements, affect, Argentina

### *Introduction*

In Latin America, over the last few years, we have witnessed massive grassroots feminist movements occupying public space, gaining visibility, and acquiring legal recognition of their demands for gender and social justice. This has notably included Ni Una Menos, a reaction to femicide that emerged in Argentina in 2015 and soon became a transnational movement for social transformation, and *Un Violador en tu Camino*<sup>1</sup>, a participatory performance by the Chilean collective

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1 You can see a recording of the performance by Colectivo Registro Callejero here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aB7r6hdo3W4&ab\\_channel=ColectivoRegistroCallejero](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aB7r6hdo3W4&ab_channel=ColectivoRegistroCallejero).

Las Tesis, which stood against gender-based violence and became a transnational feminist hymn. These urban feminist actions and movements that today gather thousands of women, *disidencias*<sup>2</sup> and allies, grew from decades of struggles for women's rights in Latin America around issues such as the right to abortion and the fight to end gender-based violence and femicide.

In 2018, the Ni Una Menos movement transitioned into the Marea Verde movement (or Green Tide), which focused on the call for legal and safe access to abortion. The name Marea Verde comes from the iconic triangular *pañuelo verde*, or green kerchief<sup>3</sup>, a transnational symbol for the Latin American reproductive rights movement that, by borrowing the symbolic kerchief from the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo<sup>4</sup>, also shows the deep interconnection between the struggle for abortion and the Argentine human rights movement (Vacarezza, 2021). Indeed, we can see intersectionality in these movements, which connect issues like femicide and abortion to human rights struggles and also to issues of class. A popular chant at protests has been '*Las ricas abortan, las pobres mueren*,' (The rich abort, the poor die), highlighting the differentiated effects of the absence of free and legal abortion.<sup>5</sup>

This chapter emerges from years of conversation and collaboration between the authors which began during the first Political Imagination Laboratory in Perugia in 2016.<sup>6</sup> We build on our shared experiences

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2 By *disidencias*, we mean gender identities and sexual orientations that are outside of heteronormative standards and refuse to submit to them.

3 The colour green was chosen because it was not identified with any particular political alignment in Argentina. Embraced by the Campaign for the Right to Legal, Safe and Free abortion since 2005, green soon became a key element of collective identity for the struggle of reproductive rights worldwide.

4 The Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, now a human rights organisation, emerged in 1977 as a response to the terror tactics of the Argentine civic-military dictatorship (1976–1983), when mothers went out on the streets to demand the safe return of their disappeared children.

5 While in this paper we focus mostly on urban movements, it is important to note that when speaking of feminism in Latin America we speak of a plurality of feminisms. The region has birthed a range of feminist and anti-patriarchal struggles, and these emerge in response to particular cultures, experiences of oppression and violence, and economic and political contexts. Indigenous anti-patriarchal struggles in Bolivia, for instance, link the contemporary forms of patriarchal violence in Bolivian society to the colonisation of the region. Their anti-patriarchal struggles are therefore decolonial, as they understand that without addressing the coloniality of Bolivian society, it is impossible to deconstruct its current systems and dynamics of oppression.

6 The first Political Imagination Lab (<https://www.peasantproject.org/political>)

as feminist activist-researchers and creative practitioners working across Latin America and Europe, and learn from our respective disciplinary perspectives; Konstantina coming from the worlds of dance practice, anthropology and filmmaking and working in Greece and Argentina, and Paula coming from performance activism, anthropology and cultural studies and working in Argentina and the UK. Two main factors have shaped our work and facilitated our ability to reflect together on issues of art, activism and feminist methodology. First, we both inhabit multiple positions simultaneously, moving between the roles of researcher, artist and activist. While our backgrounds differ in many ways, we are committed to applying multi and transdisciplinary perspectives in analysis and action, building from where theory and practice meet, and where art, activism and research merge. Second, we both share a transnational perspective, being in between Latin America and Europe and contributing to building feminist spaces in both places and also in between.

Drawing on theoretical, empirical and audio-visual material from our ethnographic work as well as from our experiences as feminist activists, we approach this chapter as a conversation, where we discuss how contemporary Latin American feminisms embrace aesthetic and affective practices as vehicles for envisioning – and beginning to practise – more socially just ways of living. More concretely, we ask: What is the relationship between aesthetic and affective practices in Latin American feminist movements? How do these practices contribute to the sustainability of movements? And how do they enable the generation of transnational bonds? Engaging reflectively with our positions as activists/artists/researchers concerning the conflicts and movements with whom we are working, we will also look reflectively at the methodologies we develop when studying and participating in feminist social movements and developing transnational projects. How do we navigate changing positionalities? And how can we nurture continuities and commonalities in participatory action as researchers and

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imagination-lab/) was organised in 2016 by Alexander Koensler, Fabrizio Loce-Mandes, Federica Lanzi and Cristina Papa at the University of Perugia as part of the Peasant Activism Project. The authors met during this event and soon after collaborated in the book *artWORK: Art, Labour and Activism* (Rowan and Littlefield International 2017), edited by Serafini with Jessica Holtaway and Alberto Cossu. Bousmpoura contributed a chapter with Julia Martinez Heimann titled 'Working Dancers, contemporary dance activism in Argentina'. Since then, Bousmpoura and Serafini have participated and collaborated in subsequent Political Imagination Laboratories.

activists working in between and with the geopolitics of North-South relations? Throughout the different moments of our reflective narrative, we engage with Rita Segato's idea of 'politics in a feminine key' (Segato 2016), considering how this is embodied in different facets of activism, research and creative practice.

### *Feminist aesthetic and affective practices*

We decided to focus on the aesthetic and affective practices of feminist movements in acknowledgment of the key role of such practices in building and strengthening three main aspects of such movements: the prefiguration of new social configurations, their long-term sustainability, and the generation and nurturing of transnational bonds. Here, we use affect in the way that has been conceptualised by scholars of social movements and feminist activists. Jasper (1998), for instance, explains that affect is a long-term feeling like love. Similarly, Goodwin et al. argue that '[a]ffects are positive and negative commitments or investments—cathexes, in psychoanalytic language—that we have toward people, places, ideas, and things' (Goodwin et al. 2004: 418). In the context of social mobilisation and collective action, affect includes solidarity and trust; hence, we understand the affective as a strategic aspect for sustaining movements (Ahmed 2004; Amin and Thrift 2013). Similarly, we engage with the aesthetic not only as the sensorial dimension of movements but also as an inherently political facet of collective action (Rancière 2010; Webner/Spellman-Poots/Web 2014). Indeed, we argue that the aesthetic dimension of movements is critical to developing and nurturing its affective dimension: feminism(s) reframe images, embodied experiences, gestures, memes and hashtags into consequential political interventions. By circulating these symbols and gestures that make up identifiable political messages in private spaces, on the streets and in the digital realm, feminist movements generate the conditions for identification that enable feelings of community and solidarity among women and *disidencias*, and shape a global feminist community.

An example is the green *pañuelo* or kerchief and its wide use in feminist protests worldwide. When participating in and organising collective actions and events, as feminists, we portray our identification marks, simultaneously extending a message of solidarity to other

feminisms elsewhere. Carrying the green kerchief has been crucial to our feminist practices and network building. As a prominent symbol in the fight for legal abortion in Argentina and worldwide, activists from human rights and other movements recognize the meaning of portraying such a symbol: you look at yourself with other women who wear it and you feel united in the same fight for reproductive rights. The power of the green kerchief as a wearable visual symbol ‘provides forms of identification and connection with the bodies of those who protest that have a force of their own’ (Vacarezza 2021: 81), and in this way strengthen feelings of collective identity and solidarity.

The green kerchief has become an international symbol beyond its Latin American origins. We have witnessed how, for example, Greek human rights activists and feminists have also portrayed the green kerchief in a versatile performance repertoire in Athens and other cities to protest against femicides, sexual abuse, and anti-abortion patriarchal discourses. In the USA, after the Supreme Court decided to strike down *Roe v. Wade* in 2022, the network of solidarity that already existed between Latin American abortion rights organisers and their US counterparts was strengthened. The *Marea Verde* reached the United States, with large numbers of protesters sporting the colour green in abortion rights protests across the country.



Illustration 1 Greek human rights activists protest, portraying the green kerchief in front of the Orthodox Cathedral of Athens during an anti-abortion clerical speech on September 8, 2022. The sign reads: ‘Either with the church or with human rights.’ Image: Konstantina Bousmpoura.

Another way sorority, solidarity and intersectionality are built upon in feminist social mobilisations is through the affective-aesthetic experience of performance. Across continents and different socio-political contexts, performance is often engaged in as a form of creative protest because it brings together emotion and image in an embodied act, giving way to an embodied sense of agency among those who partake in it (Juris, 2008). We can think about these political performances as *performance actions*, actions that emerge from the context of social movements, in this case, feminism, and combine the aesthetic forms and traditions of performance and the performing arts with the ethos of grassroots organising (Serafini 2014).

Latin American feminisms have been notable in birthing a broad range of collective, embodied, and territorial protest forms, including performance actions. These kinds of actions are often underpinned by an understanding of the body as territory (*el cuerpo-territorio*) and of how the roots of violence upon territories are related to the violence inflicted upon feminised and racialised bodies (Segato 2013). The notion of the *cuerpo-territorio* interlinks the different forms of violence in Latin American societies by bringing them back to the political-ontological underpinnings of extractivism, colonialism, and the patriarchal system. Thinking from and with the *cuerpo-territorio* is a way of understanding current forms of oppression and violence, such as those faced by women and *disidencias* at the frontlines of extraction in mining towns or petrol cities. But it is also helpful in understanding violence at the frontlines of neoliberalism, as Segato explains about women in Ciudad Juarez (Segato 2013), or as Gago argues in relation to the indebtedment of impoverished women in Argentina (Gago 2019). At the same time, the *cuerpo-territorio* is a position from which to think politically and affectively, and it is conducive to forms of political action that recognise the body as the first place of political enunciation, and as a vehicle for intervention in the public space (Serafini 2023a).

We can consider, for instance, the case of *Un Violador en tu Camino*, a participatory performance action in public space by Chilean collective Las Tesis first enacted in November 2019 to denounce rape and gender-based violence as political acts. The performance consists of rows of women and other *disidencias*, often wearing blindfolds, following a simple choreography and song in unison to the sound of a basic beat. The song builds on the work of anthropologist Rita Segato to denounce rape as a structural issue and as a political act facilitated by

the different strata of the judicial system and the state security forces. It is also a loud statement against victim blaming, with a chorus that says, 'And the fault wasn't mine, nor where I was, nor how I dressed!' The title of the work, *Un violador en tu camino* as well as part of the lyrics, are a direct response to the hymn of the Chilean police force, the *carabineros*, called *Un amigo en tu camino* [A friend in your path]. This reference, plus choreographic moves that simulate the squatting position forced on women by police officers during the 2019 social uprising in Chile<sup>7</sup>, is a direct challenge to the police and their role in defending and perpetuating gender-based violence.

The combination of words and movement in this action, performed simultaneously by tens and often hundreds of participants, results in a moving and aesthetically stunning vision, despite its simplicity. Indeed, the simplicity and adaptability of the action have facilitated its reproduction in various contexts and are likely one of the reasons why the performance and its recordings went viral. Importantly, through this instance of artistic and political participation, those who take part in the performance become emboldened as political subjects: 'Their bodies in the street are simultaneously demarcating a feminist space of political action and collective creative expression' (Serafini 2020: 294). Thinking with the *cuerpo-territorio*, we can see here how collective performance allows participants to reclaim a piece of the urban territory (in many cases, central urban spaces that have been sites of repression and/or violence, both physical and symbolic). But also, through this taking back, a new (social) territory is created (Serafini 2023b), a temporary feminist affective space that emerges from the spaces between the performing bodies (Butler 2015).

*Un violador en tu camino* went viral worldwide shortly after its first event in 2019. The process of joining this transnational feminist expression consisted of adapting and territorialising the performance, recording it and sharing it with others, who would be inspired to do the same. In each local iteration of the performance, women and *disidencias* would come together, maybe for the first time, to collaborate in a political and creative act. This coming together resulted in generating and strengthening the social and affective bonds of local feminist

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7 The 2019 uprising began when secondary school students in Santiago staged coordinated fare evasions in response to a rise in the price of the metro. It soon became a nation-wide phenomenon against privatisation, cost of living and inequality, and marked a change in Chilean politics.

movements, to then contribute to affective bonds with feminists elsewhere through sharing their recording of the performance on social media (Serafini 2020). We can understand this way of doing politics as politics in a ‘feminine key,’ borrowing from Segato: ‘It is definitely another way of doing politics, a politics of bonds, a management of bonds, of closeness, and not of protocolary distances and bureaucratic abstraction’ (Segato 2016: 27, our translation from Spanish).

In 2019 in Greece, massive mobilizations were held all over the country to protest against femicides and demand the legal recognition of the term femicide for its use by the judicial system.<sup>8</sup> Hundreds of women gathered in Athens and other cities and presented a rendition of *Un Violador en tu Camino*. The protest rally began with the Spanish version of the performance in solidarity with the people of Chile, and protesters then performed it again in Greek. The video of the protest in Syntagma Square went viral.<sup>9</sup> In the same context of massive mobilisations in 2019, in the aftermath of the murder of LGBTQI+ activist and drag queen Zak Kostopoulos<sup>10</sup>, members of the Athens Museum of Queer Arts (Amoqa) performed *Un violador en tu camino* to condemn femicides in front of the Court of Appeals. After their performance, they met enthusiastically with feminists, activists and participants who were attending the program ‘Queer Politics/ Public Memory’<sup>11</sup> (Athanasίου/Papanikolaou 2020) to share with them the video of their performance. This moment was highly emotional, as Athanasίου and Papanikolaou put it, because, in their enthusias-

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8 There has been a large public discussion by academics, feminists, human rights organisations, lawyers, and activists in recent years in Greece to establish the need for legal recognition of the term femicide in Greek penal law.

9 See a video of the performance here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhxUX81xoF8>.

10 On Friday, September 21, Zak Kostopoulos, a greek activist of the LGBTQI+ movement, HIV positive, antifascist and drag queen (Zackie Oh), was brutally assassinated in the centre of Athens in public view. The murder was instigated by ‘outraged citizens’ with the tolerance and complicity of the Greek Police. It was followed by a coverup operation, misinformation of the public, and a re-victimization of Zak. (#Justice4ZakZackie).

11 The Queer Politics/Public Memory project was a public intervention research project organised by Athena Athanasίου and Dimitris Papanikolaou under the auspices of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation – Greek Branch. It drew its inspiration and momentum from the mobilisation, demonstrations, cultural practices and solidarity meetings that followed the murder of Zak Kostopoulos. <https://rosalux.gr/event/queer-politiki-dimosia-mnimi/>.

tic video<sup>12</sup> and sharing, Amoqa members embodied a statement that merges local social claims for justice with the aesthetic and political dimensions of the Chilean performance. The territorialisation and adaptation of the performance action in the Greek public space (*cuervo-territorio*) sought to claim visibility, memory and justice for repression and violence in the same urban space where, months ago, Zak Kostasopoulos had been murdered:

The bodies of AMOQA members and solidarity members in front of the Court of Appeals, singing and dancing to the rhythm of the cry *El violador eres tu*<sup>13</sup> were not just demonstrating, they were demanding: public condemnation and public acceptance of responsibility [for femicides and the murder of Zak/Zackie] but also a claim to the public history that such intervention brings before us (meaning the public memory of similar actions in the present and the past)! (Athanasίου & Papanikolaou 2020: 18, our translation from Greek).

Finally, in the UK, for the last few years, every 8<sup>th</sup> of March (International Women's Day) has seen women coming out on the cold streets of London and other cities to join the call for an international women's strike against patriarchal oppression and gender-based violence. In this context, *Un violador en tu camino* is sung in both Spanish and English by the Latin American diaspora, and by other feminists who have taken the song as theirs too. In London, women come together to stand up against gender-based violence, to defend the rights of migrant women, and also to reaffirm their right to protest in the streets, as changes in UK legislation in 2022 have significantly curtailed the right to protest, an issue affecting migrants more severely.

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12 See the video of the performance here: <https://vimeo.com/380615466>.

13 One of the key phrases in *Un violador en tu camino* is 'El violador eres tu' [The rapist is you].



Illustration 2. Women in Trafalgar Square, London, preparing for an enactment of *Un Violador en tu Camino* during an action to mark International Women's Day on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Image: Paula Serafini.

### *Methodological reflections*

In what follows, we will each share personal reflections on our methodology and positionality in conducting the research discussed in previous pages, before returning to a shared conclusion on the implications of these insights and of our analysis of feminist aesthetic and affective practices. We believe a reflection on feminist methodology is necessary in order to bring into discussion the processes and affective dimensions of research, demystify the supposed objectivity of the researcher, and offer a complete account of the practices we discussed, which necessarily must include a reflective account of how that knowledge was produced. Furthermore, these reflections will illustrate how our involvement in transnational feminist activism has not only allowed us to develop situated ethnographic and creative praxes, but also sustainable approaches to conducting research.

#### *Paula*

For me, as an Argentinian based in the UK, a main concern has been thinking through ways that the concept of *cuervo-territorio* can

be useful in helping feminists of the Latin American diaspora in the UK navigate the lack of the physical connection to their territory back home, and the search for belonging in the new spaces they inhabit. Over the last years, I have led and collaborated in a number of events and projects with different Latin American women and feminist collectives in the UK which included a range of methods, from mappings of the *cuero-territorio* to collage, conversations with feminist land defenders in Latin America, and co-editing a fanzine, all of which allowed me to engage in different forms of *sentipensar* [thiking-feeling] (Escobar 2014) these issues. I also engaged with the concept of *cuero-territorio* in my academic work, in which I was able to work through these questions through a range of media and in regards to different objects of study, from more philosophical pieces on the concept of the *cuero-territorio* to more creative and autoethnographic work reflecting on activist and creative practice. It was by engaging with this matter from different angles and different modalities, both practical and theoretical and collective and individual, that I was able to arrive at an understanding of the potential of the *cuero-territorio* as an organising concept in theory and practice, and to comprehend the potential of feminist organising as a form of territorialising the self in the diasporic collective (Serafini 2023b).



Illustration 3. Collage making during a workshop on ecofeminism in London, January 2023.  
Image: Paula Serafini.

While this has enabled me to navigate the affective dimensions of my positioning as a migrant, there are still ethical questions with which I grapple daily as a researcher and activist working translationally. For instance: What are the implications of working with and in Latin America from abroad? Can we ever compensate for power imbalances in academic research, even if adopting an anti-extractivist, feminist ethics? Does the redistribution of resources I engage in make up for these imbalances if that redistribution can never be total and direct, but is always somewhat mediated and managed from abroad? And what is at risk of being invisibilised by bounding and translocating the notion of Latin American feminism (or feminisms, as I usually write), in terms of geographical differences, racial inequalities and class? Such questions are essential not only in research and artistic practice but also in transnational feminist movement building. Confronting these questions with honesty, and acknowledging imbalances of power, I believe, is imperative to any form of ethical transnational collaboration: an openness around power is paramount to any process of undoing current patriarchal, colonial, and capitalist structures, a task at the centre of Latin American feminisms.

### *Konstantina*

For me, as a feminist filmmaker and human rights activist, it has been essential to incorporate in my ethnographic films embodied politics, collaborative affective methods, and powerful visual elements rooted in the social movements I am immersed in to create meaningful storytelling with social impact. My main concern when filming has always been how I, as a director, participant-observer, and activist, can bring myself and the film subjects together in a genuine, intimate dialogical engagement (Conquergood 1985). While in Argentina, I co-directed the feature-length documentary film ‘Working Dancers’<sup>14</sup> on dance, politics, and labour rights, focusing on shared authorship with the co-director and working in a participatory mode with the performers.

My coming back to Greece in 2015, after 15 years of living in Spain and Argentina, was marked by the violent murder of the queer drag activist Zak Kostopoulos in 2018, for whom social and legal justice has only been partially attributed. The social movement #Jus-

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<sup>14</sup> See the trailer and information on the movie here: <https://asociacionaca.org/en/dance-chronicles/working-dancers/>.

tice4ZakZackie that emerged in response, as well as the public collective actions that gathered feminists, queer collectives, and the LGTBQI+ community to take the streets to mourn and raise awareness on the murder of Zak/Zackie, was unprecedented for Greece. Deeply affected by the strength of this queer public awakening and by the emergent street protest slogan ‘Zackie lives, grief and outrage, our lives matter,’ I found myself immersed in gatherings and social mobilizations wearing the green kerchief and filming the protests. Between 2019 and 2021, I worked with a collaborative international team<sup>15</sup> on the script and co-direction of a short dance documentary film, entitled: ‘36 Months, Fighting for Zak’.<sup>16</sup>

As a feminist activist director, I defended my methodology throughout the film’s entire production. At the same time, I positioned myself critically when decisions on ethical and aesthetic issues had to be taken in the frame of an international co-production. I navigated my different roles by standing firmly for a call to the social movement and community to engage with the movie during and after the production stage. Concretely, the narrative plot included a social protest as a *performance action* (Serafini 2014) inspired by the grassroots social movements’ ethos and aesthetics. All the participants in the protest scene, who emerged from the open call, were aware of a collective embodied sense of agency while recreating actions born from and within the context of the social movement #Justice4ZakZackie in which they had participated. The cry ‘Zackie lives, grief and outrage’ opens the film and composes the rhythm during the screened protest. Rooted in the aesthetic dimension of the social movement, the popular cry had been chanted at all the nationwide street events to claim justice for the murder of Zak/Zackie. Repeatedly singing it on the streets, protesters shared sentiments of identification, sorority, and solidarity, a symbolic affective space of political action.

Similarly to how the green kerchief had been a critical element for the Argentine feminist movement, the slogan ‘Zackie lives, grief and outrage’ had emerged in real life and on-screen as a powerful aesthetic intervention to articulate the demand for social justice, mobilise public mourning, and further claim for the end of homophobic police violence in Greece.

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15 This collaboration took place in the framework of the transmedia cooperation project mAps (<http://migratingartists.com/>).

16 See the trailer of the movie here: <https://vimeo.com/710250233>.



Illustration 4. Shooting day for the film *36 Months, fighting for Zak*. Protesters hold a banner reading 'Grief and outrage. We miss Zackie. Our lives matter' (September 2021).  
Image: Konstantina Bousmpoura.

### *Conclusion*

In the examples discussed in this chapter, we showed how aesthetic practices are critical to the generation and sustainment of affects in feminist movements, be this shared symbology, gestures, or slogans. We demonstrated how those slogans and symbols have travelled and expanded to generate solidarity bonds across borders and unite the causes of different feminisms.

Reflecting further on our analysis, we note that a defining element of Latin American feminisms is their understanding of the significance of building situated forms of politics through their aesthetic and affective practices. Interestingly enough, it is this connection to the territory and rejection of universalist versions of feminism that has led the groups and urban movements we discussed to develop forms of action and expression that are situated in a specific context and history, but at the same time, are fluid and flexible enough to be taken up and recontextualised by others. For instance, 'Un violador en tu camino' responds to the reality of the Chilean context and makes several Chile-specific references in its lyrics and choreography. At the same time, the combination of a powerful message against gender-based violence and an image of collective empowerment that is easily identifiable with, and which is fluid and flexible enough in its format

to allow women to adapt it to their own context, allowed the performance to go viral on a global scale (Serafini 2022). Similarly, the green kerchief emerged as a nod to the struggle of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, but its flexibility as an item that can be worn, fashioned at home, and even adapted, allowed it to be taken up by feminists worldwide. These symbols and gestures, we argue, contribute to generating affective bonds and hence are crucial to feminism's sustainability.

Regarding methodology, as activists, artists, and researchers, we aim to contribute to feminist movements by analysing, documenting, sharing, actioning, and enhancing the forms of aesthetic and affective practices outlined in this chapter using the range of skills at our disposal. Our interdisciplinary positions mean we often approach this as a feminist praxis, where our activist and artistic work builds theory, which then in turn informs practice. Our methods are informed by the ethos of the feminist movements we are part of and shape not only how we understand knowledge-making (as embodied, as sensorial, as affective) but also how we approach every collaboration and relationship built whilst in the field; doing art, research, and activism in a 'feminine key.' Methodology and epistemology are political, and we, therefore, advocate for more open and reflective approaches to social movement research that engage reflectively with methodology.

It is important to mention that as we write this, feminist movements are facing significant backlash. In Argentina, where the ultra-right-wing president Javier Milei came to power in December 2023, feminists and LGBTQI+ people are being persecuted<sup>17</sup>, and long-fought rights like abortion, the gender identity law and integral sexual education are under threat. Moreover, the economic crisis furthered by the shock measures applied by the new government has thrown millions of people into poverty in just a few months, which for women carries an increased burden as the division of labour disproportionately places care responsibilities upon them. Argentina's feminist movements, however, are not backing down. Millions of women have taken to the streets to oppose the new measures, reaffirming the sustainability of their struggle by activating once again feminism's affective and aesthetic repertoires. And in 2025, the streets of Argentina

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17 See for instance <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2024/jan/08/feminists-under-attack-ultra-right-threat-milei-argentina-writer-exile-luciana-peker>.

saw the country's first antifascist, andtiracist Pride march, which gathered a multitude against Milei's far-right programme.

We hope the reflections in this chapter contribute to broader conversations on feminist praxis, the sustainability of movements and activist research. Equally, we hope this work informs and inspires practice in social movements and transnational solidarity through a politics of affective bonds.

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