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“We are the granddaughters of the witches you could not burn”

The Functions of Protest Art in the Argentinian *Green Wave* Movement

Author: Danielè Zubrickaitė

Supervisor: Catia Gregoratti

Abstract

Protest, as a collective struggle to challenge the dominant orthodoxies, involves aesthetics that have the power to articulate the movement's identity, protestors' ideas, preferences, and interests. This research is a case study exploring the functions of art in the reproductive rights movement *marea verde* (en. *green wave*) in Argentina, aiming to fill in the existing research gap on the topic. The theoretical discussion is divided by concepts used by Argentine activist and scholar Veronica Gago and is accompanied with a typology of the functions of protest art by T.V. Reed.

Having conducted semi-structured interviews with 14 Argentine artists, I answer the research question "*What functions has protest art played in Argentine reproductive rights movement seeking to reform abortion law?*", I find that protest art has 6 functions: 1) it unites the movement and creating a collective identity; 2) it increases awareness and visualizes the fight; 3) it breaks the taboos and gives the voice to participants; 4) it acts as a therapeutic experience and gives hope for the future; 5) it opens up the discussions about women's pleasure and sexual desire; 6) it provokes and challenges the existing regime.

Key words: protest art, social movements, abortion, Argentina, cultural politics

Word count: 14,825

The task of art is to transform what is continuously happening to us, to transform all these things into symbols, into music, into something which can last in one's memory.

Jorge Luis Borges, Argentine writer

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Preface

As for May 2022, the global situation of sexual and reproductive rights has reached a crisis moment. In the beginning of the month, people in Turkmenistan woke up to the news that overnight the government issued a law restricting abortion access from 12 weeks to just five (Yaylymova, 2022). Meantime, since Russia's invasion in Ukraine this February, the neighboring country of Poland has accepted a number of refugees fleeing the devastating war. However, because of Polish near-total abortion bans, Ukrainian refugees, raped by Russian soldiers, were denied the access to abortion (Strzyżyńska, 2022). Such impediments as a range of legal and policy restrictions on sexual and reproductive health and rights are severely impacting women, thus political will, policy guidance and robust financial support are imperative to address the concerns.

With the daily horrifying war updates from Eastern Europe, a recent exposé from a different side of the Hemisphere flashed the news: the U.S Supreme Court is likely to overturn Roe v. Wade case. If this were to be undone, 26 states, in which resides 58% of U.S women of reproductive age (Guttmacher Institute, 2021) are expected to ban or restrict access to abortion. Thus, around 40 million women and feminized bodies would have the rights over their bodies restricted and decision-making taken away.

This thesis, named after a quote from Tish Thawer's novel "*The Witches of BlackBrook*", which became a commonly used slogan at feminist protests, pays a tribute to the fight for legal, safe, and free abortion anywhere in the world.

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1. Introduction

Art is a universal language that is able to challenge the status quo: throughout history artists have stood up for the voiceless and marginalized, reacting against oppression, violence, injustice and inequalities. Alvarez et al. (1998) believe culture to be political, because meanings are constitutive of processes that, implicitly or explicitly, seek to redefine social power. Around the world, social movements, seeking to reshape the power relations, have been growing in their size, resonance, and visibility. By expanding the battlegrounds, a myriad of protests have been exposing the chronic problems of violence and inequality while deploying alternative conceptions of women, race, economy, nature or citizenship. These conceptions, unsettling dominant cultural meanings, often use artistic interventions to raise the consciousness of politicians and civil society and bring taboo topics out in the public.

An interesting case to analyze the functions of protest art in social movements is Argentinian abortion law, that was successfully adopted in December 2020, after years of efforts and fight from feminists and human rights activists. Argentina was always considered a progressive country in the Latin American region and has been admired for its human rights policy (Belski, 2018). Since the 1980s, the country has passed progressive laws in areas such as same sex marriage, gender identity, assisted reproduction, parental responsibility, and compensation for domestic workers (ibid). Nevertheless, abortion was still restrictive in Argentina only to the two cases stipulated in Article 86 of the National Criminal Code: when a pregnancy endangers the life or health of a pregnant person and when pregnancy results from rape (Human Rights Watch, 2020).

It is important to understand that illegal abortions do not mean fewer abortions. However, it does mean having the procedure in unsafe, unsanitary conditions. It does mean that a person cannot talk about it at work, at school, it means that there is no right to have a sick leave or health checks. Josefina Martinez (2020) documents that if a woman begins to feel pain or bleeding after having an abortion, she hesitates a lot before going to the hospital, because doctors often report cases like that to the police.

After years of intensive fight rising from the bottom-up level, in December 2020, Argentina's Congress legalized abortions up to the 14th week of pregnancy. This decision was a groundbreaking move for a region that has some of the world's most restrictive termination laws (UN

News, 2020). The strongly Christian country has witnessed a lot of divisions between pro-choice feminist activists and conservative pro-life supporters. Undoubtedly, feminist movements in Argentina achieved a significant victory of gaining the government's "blessing" to access legal and safe abortion.

The movement known as the green wave (es. *marea verde*) is the main pro-choice movement in the country. It framed abortion as an issue of social justice, public health and the economic gap between rich and poor: one of the most popular slogans at demonstrations has been: "The rich abort, the poor die", showing that although illegally, rich women still held a chance to get a safe abortion in some private clinics, whereas females belonging to a lower-income group were destined to both illegal and dangerous procedures (Boas et. al, 2021).

This thesis converges with the Sustainable Development Goal 5, calling to end all forms of violence and exploitation of women and girls, empower and ensure their decision-making. Understanding that there are many ways to do so, this study aims to explore the variety of functions that protest art has played in the reproductive rights movement *marea verde* in Argentina. By conducting this study, I seek to contribute to the research on cultural politics and fill in the gap in academic repositiorium on protest art in the *marea verde* movement. For this purpose, I specifically investigate how Argentinian artists themselves understand the functionality of the cultural expressions and interventions created within the movement.

In line with the aim and the purpose of the study, I will address the following research question:

What functions has protest art played in Argentine reproductive rights movement seeking to reform abortion law?

Having stated the research question, I continue by providing a historical background of Argentina's fight for legal, safe and free abortion, a brief overview of the country's feminist social movements, its political system and the power that Catholic Church holds in it. In Chapter 3, I review the existing literature on protest art phenomenon and its functions in social movements by assessing various forms of protest art. In Chapter 4, I situate protest art within the Argentine activist's Veronica Gago theoretical concepts on modern social movements. I proceed by explaining the methodology of the study in Chapter 5 and presenting the findings and analysis of the study based on the proposed analytical model in Chapter 6. Lastly, in Chapter 7, I conclude the thesis by summarizing the findings.

2. Background

This Chapter presents the context around the case of Argentina's feminist movements' fight towards legalizing abortion. Firstly, the history of feminist social movements in the country is outlined. Then, to grasp a better understanding of relationship between pro-choice movement and the government officials, a short description of Argentina's political system is provided. Finally, the power of the Catholic Church and its role in the reproductive rights movement is discussed.

2.1 Feminist social movements in Argentina: Madres de Plaza de Mayo, Ni Una Menos and marea verde

When the third wave of democratization reached Latin America in the 1980s, social movements began to take place as the response to new governmental reforms (Hagopian & Mainwaring 2005; Stahler-Sholk et al. 2007; Jost-Creegan 2017). In this context, the movements became a platform for citizens to channel their voices and thus contribute to a democratic nation-building. Argentinian history of political and economic instability has deeply impacted social movements, which often were centered around women. Argentine women were key leaders in establishing liberal feminist organizations in South America, having Buenos Aires hosting the First International Women's Congress in 1910 (Marino, 2019). Collective feminist action in modern Argentina has always been creative, and it is important to review one of the first movements that spread the seed of activism across the country, inspired the future generations and is still active today – the Madres de Plaza de Mayo.

In the 1970s, the Argentine military dictatorship kidnapped and murdered about 30 000 people, that later were remembered and referred to as *desaparecidos* (en. *disappeared*) and this so-called "Dirty War" left profound scars on the country (Brysk, 1994). After the massive disappearance of resistance-fighters, in the society where public expression and dissent were forbidden, fourteen women decided to stand near the pyramid of the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires, demanding an answer to their question "Where are our children?" (Eckstein & Merino 2001). A group of mothers – housewives without previous political experience – marching in Buenos Aires with white kerchiefs (es. *pañuelos*) on their heads became a symbol of resistance to military dictatorship (ibid). As Kurtz (2010) explains, their white kerchiefs represented both the diapers of their lost children and also exemplified the banners of peace. As their expression

of protest, Madres maintain an iconic repertoire of marching around the central obelisk in the Plaza de Mayo every Thursday from 3.30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. They were mocked and discredited as “locas”, the crazy women, thus equating them with emotional hysteria rather than political activism (Bouvard, 1994). However, they did not give up – after registering as an official organization in 1979, the next year they were even nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize for their work in international human rights discourse (ibid). Over the years, Madres became a leading voice for truth and justice and played an important role in the democratization process in Argentina. As Scriven (2020) claims, today, the members are involved in the struggle for human, civil and political rights in Argentina and have created their own form of kinship politics and embodied activism that gave rise to other feminist movements, one of which – Ni Una Menos.

According to Annunziata et al. (2016), in Argentina, every 36 hours a woman is killed for the sole fact that she is a woman. Cabral and Acacio (2016) state that these crimes are portrayed in the media as “crimes of passion”, thus the perpetrator’s actions are linguistically justified and it is refused to highlight femicide as part of much larger, patriarchal structures. In 2015, after several murders of young women, including a body found of a pregnant fourteen-year old girl, an Argentine radio journalist Marcela Ojeda sparked an ongoing global movement Ni Una Menos (en. Not One Less), calling attention to gender violence and demanding radical change (Boas et al., 2021).

Fuentes (2019) highlights that as Madres claimed “We Want Them Alive”, a phrase “Not One Less” transcends a communicative function and becomes a performative tactic: Ni Una Menos builds upon the genealogies of feminist activism and creates collective capacity while taking the memory from the past and redeploying it for social and cultural change. Furthermore, while Madres have used a white pañuelo as a shield against repression and a symbol of their motherhood to *desaparecidos*, Ni Una Menos appropriated the pañuelo and took the purple color to represent the struggle against gender violence (Santander, n.d). As Arbat (2018) explains, purple is used to represent feminist movements around the globe, with examples as the English suffragists in 1900s and American Equal Rights Amendment in 1978. The Argentinian pañuelos have become a form of national identity and protest culture: Madres set the path with a white color to represent life and inspire the revolution, and Ni Una Menos took over the symbol and colored it in purple to depict the continuity of this revolution that expanded its angle to the flight for the human rights (Scriven, 2020).

As Fuentes (2019) argues, Ni Una Menos has created an international feminist network, that was started by Madres' discourse, abroad to combat patriarchal violence: citing a march against gender violence held in Mexico, followed Polish women, and supported the First Indigenous Women's March of Brazil in 2019. Utilizing its wide networking power, Ni Una Menos ties feminism to international human rights campaigns and builds protection for other movements globally.

Posters saying "Without legal abortion there is Not One Less" were spotted in feminist social movements in Argentina in the past few years. The relation between the reproductive rights movement and a movement fighting against gender violence is deeply close: not one less necessitates action preventing the death of more women, hence each death caused by unsanitary, clandestine abortion highlights a failure to protect women against preventable deaths (Gritz, 2021).

Since the early 2000s, when the Argentinian women's organizations started to challenge abortion law, the academic debate on movement's impact was opened (Bellucci, 1997; Htun & Mala 2003; Borland, 2004; Mollmann, 2005; Bianco et al. 2007). Marea verde, the movement this thesis focuses on, exploded in 2018, after years of activists' efforts, when the abortion legalization bill obtained approval in the Chamber of Deputies, but failed to pass in the Senate. People took the streets, TV and radio shows, universities, health institutions and artistic arenas, energizing the movement in Latin America and beyond. As more and more people were joining the movement, wearing the National Campaign's for the Right to Legal, safe and Free Abortion (hereafter, – the Campaign) symbol – green pañuelo – the discussion of abortion was opened like never before (Anderson, 2020; Sutton, 2021). The Campaign had a tent set up in front of the Congress and every so-called "Green Tuesday" and "Green Thursday" thousands of women would visit it to show support and solidarity.

An important actor in the Campaign is the Socorristas en Red – Feministas que Abortamos. It is a network of feminist collectives all of whom accompany people seeking abortion (Socorristas en Red, 2018). Furthermore, the collectives within the network advocate for improvement of reproductive health services and rights (Burton, 2017; Piccinini, 2020; Keefe-Oates, 2021). As their mission is to adhere to a feminist agenda in ensuring legal, safe and free abortion, Socorristas have developed a shared set of values and common practices and expanded their

network immensely in the past several years (Keefe-Oates, 2021). According to their website, in 2014 the network provided support and accompanied approximately 1 100 women in their abortion process with medication, and by 2019 the number has increased to more than 12 500 (Socorristas en Red, 2020c). Not only the Socorristas organize trainings for other collectives, engage in advocacy on local and national levels, but they also demand action from the state by organizing local demonstrations, protests, and artistic activism (Keefe-Oates 2021). For example, in 2017 the collective La Revuelta (en. The Revolt) held a demonstration in their city center to denounce patriarchal values while many Socorristas were wearing pink wigs – their signature sign. A workshop was also organized to provide an opportunity for people to sit with the collective’s leader Ruth Zurbriggen to discuss feminist values (ibid, 2021:199). To conclude the protest, the activists burned wooden pallets and created the words MACHO out of the ashes, while singing songs demanding reproductive rights (La Revuelta, 2017).

2.2 The Argentinian political system

Since the Campaign introduced a bill in Congress calling for legalization of abortion by request during the first trimester in 2007, it took eleven years for it to be discussed in a plenary session in 2018. As Anderson (2020) notices, it is quite peculiar that the debate was opened during a Center-Right administration under President Macri (2015-2018) rather than any of the previous three left-wing administrations of Kirchners (Nèstor Kirchner 2003-2007; Cristina Fernández de Kirchner 2007-2015). The weak relationship between the government officials and the activists was not only due to the low capacities of the movement itself, but also because of a fluid, unstable and unpredictable Argentine political system.

Throughout the twentieth century, Argentina underwent six different military coups between 1930 and 1976, the transition to democracy happened in 1983 and even after that – two presidents – Raúl Alfonsín in 1989 and Fernando de la Rúa in 2001 – were forced by political and economic crises to abandon their presidential terms prematurely, thus the country’s political system has been highly turbulent (Anderson, 2020). Various authors (Coppedge, 1997; Moreira-Almeida, 2006; Zechmeister, 2006; Murillo & Levitsky, 2008; Ostiguy, 2009; Kitschelt et al. 2010) have noted that Argentina’s current political system is highly untraditional, in which the usual categories of *left* and *right* do not simply adhere to country’s political parties. It is important to elaborate on Gervasoni (2018) and Mainwaring (2018) ideas that Argentina’s political party system is expressed through personalization and fluidity and is

undergoing a de-institutionalization. Anderson (2020) indicates that although Cristina Fernández government was responsible for passing bills such as extended citizenship and laws of marriage equality and gender identity, she has publicly stated her opposition to abortion. This was one of the main obstacles for leftist government to establish a close relationship with the Campaign for the right to legal, safe and free abortion.

2.3 The Power of the Catholic Church

As Anderson (2020) indicates, around 76% of Argentinians identify as Catholic. Colonial legacy of a strong relationship between religious and political institutions has had a huge impact on the country's political development – up until 1994 Constitutional reform the president had to be Catholic. During 2018, when the Campaign has reached its peak of attention while advocating for abortion reform, feminists began demanding complete separation of Church and state (Anderson, 2020). The current Pope Francis – Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires – is the first non-European Pope since the year 971 and holds a strong significance and pride for Argentinians.

When it comes to Catholic-affiliated political parties, the Argentine government has not had a direct voice of the Church in the government. Gibson (1996), Moressi and Vommaro (2014) explain that the political space of the strong right-wing parties used to be always filled by the military forces, which also prevented the Church from securing a stable position during democratic times.

Although the Church's stance on human rights has not been official within the government, it occupies a vast role in social and cultural life. Blofield (2006) in her book *The Politics of Moral Sin* describe Argentine Church's focus on family and sexual morality by creating a Family Secretariat in the 1990 and forming an Alliance for Life in 1995, lobbying on pro-life themes. A strong anti-choice side, heavily backed by the Church is *Salvemos las dos vidas* (en. *Let's save both lives*) which employs a similar strategy to pro-choice activists. As seen in picture 1, they use similar demonstration tactics: handkerchiefs in light blue – one of the two colors of the Argentine flag. The movement associates itself with national identity and sends the message that gender liberation and abortion are anti-patriotic and to demand for the right of it would mean to stand against your own country (Faúndes & Defago 2016).



Photograph 1. Opponents of legalizing abortion outside the Congress in Buenos Aires, December 2020. Photo credit: Sarah Pabst, The New York Times.

On 29th of December 2020, Argentina passed a bill legalizing abortion up to 14 weeks of pregnancy, despite the objections of its influential Roman Catholic Church. This vote culminated a long struggle that lasted decades. The pictures flooded the internet immediately after the news, conveying marea verde activists with green pañuelos, faces painted in green, with glitter on their eyes and lips. When it was announced on the giant screens installed in the streets, an ovation of joy exploded between thousands of bodies in the vicinity of the Congress in Buenos Aires.

3. Literature Review

This literature review surveys the previous research on the role of protest art in Argentina and the artistic expressions in the *marea verde* movement. It draws upon the literature on gender studies, cultural and identity politics and is limited to publications in English and Spanish, dating from the early 2000s until today. Firstly, a global overview of the existing literature on arts in social movements is presented. Then, I narrow down to the literature on political art used in various social movements in Argentina. Finally, I review the research on the protest art in the *marea verde* movement specifically, naming the various types of protest art.

It is important to note that this review helped to detect the research gap on protest art in the *marea verde* movement in Argentina. While there is an extensive research on social movements being perceived as art of collective action themselves and that the most important impacts they leave are cultural ones (see, i.e., Reed, 2005; Milbrandt, 2019; Almeida, 2019; Alvarez et al., 2018; Amenta & Polletta 2019), the existing literature lacks attention to arts and visual cultures in the battle of adopting abortion law in Argentina. This research gap provides a niche for this thesis, therefore the study will take into account protest art phenomenon in its various forms: performance, photography, movies, music and the visual materials, aiming to find out what functions the protest art has played in the reproductive rights movement in Argentina.

Political discourse is shaped by the images as well as the rationality of argumentation, persuasiveness of words. Arts and visual cultures provide a different angle on political claims and have a strong impact of appealing to emotions. Social scientists agree that compelling pictures of protest, ironic political drawings, lyrical songs and thought-provoking performances invite people to take their stand on the issue (Andrain & Apter 1995; Bosco, 2006; Hohle, 2010). Cultural studies scholars like Jasper (1998), Mayer et. al (2002), Reed (2019) have grounded their work in relation to the institutions and structural social forces that shape and move through arts. Butler's (2004) theory of performativity states that speeches as well as performative nonverbal acts are shaping and maintaining identities. During the political protest, activists' bodily performances produce social, cultural, and political effects (Peterson, 2001). These bodies, whether wounded, tortured or repressed, shape both the political landscape and the embodied consciousness of participants (Sutton, 2010).

The setting of Argentine political history is grounded in episodes of sudden and outpouring political street art as a mode of protest. In general, artistic expressions within the various social movements in Argentina have been well documented. For instance, a huge attention has been directed to art activism in the movement seeking justice for the disappeared people during the “Dirty War” in the 1970s (Longoni & Bruzzone 2008; Pinilla, 2015; Ryan, 2020). These works depict the events of the mothers of the disappeared children coinciding with another public protest where life-sized paper bodies were deployed (Ryan, 2020). Also, artistic expressions were deployed in order to protest during the Argentine economic crisis in 2001 (GG, 2011; Ryan, 2014) and against the Labor law reform in 2012 (Narotzky, 2016).

However, art activism in the *marea verde* movement has not received a lot of scholars’ attention. In regard to the research dedicated to protest art in this movement, the most prominent scholar analyzing it is Argentinian intellectual Barbara Sutton. Throughout the years, Sutton in collaboration with various other academicians have observed the reproductive arts movement in Argentina, dedicating some attention to the artistic expressions within it. For example, in 2019 Sutton and Vacarezza have reviewed visual interventions made by reproductive rights movement activists in Argentina. Using various compelling images as part of their protest repertoires, activists not only communicate the notions of safe abortion, but also articulate the broader democratic agendas that include sexual and reproductive rights as part of expansive human rights. The scholars analyzed three main symbols seen in *marea verde* movements: *pañuelo verde*, LGBT rainbows and pink sneakers. They found that the first two symbols situate abortion rights cause with a wider field of social struggles and democratic political agendas in Argentina, while the pink sneakers refer to the culturally associated *normative femininity* — color pink linking femininity to maternity. Furthermore, Sutton (2021) has investigated the *poner el cuerpo* expression, whose literal translation is “to put the body”, in conveying political messages. Analyzing how body appears in *marea verde* practice as an artistic force for social change, Sutton argues that as protesters decorate their bodies and protest in rebellious and embodied ways by carrying posters with inscriptions like “my body is mine”, they assert their right to sovereignty and bodily autonomy regarding abortion (ibid).

Bonavitta (2020) has also investigated performances in *marea verde* movement during the years of 2018-2019, claiming that these artistic-political feminist performances articulated the joy of future. The scholar claims that the songs, dances and bodily expressions seen during *marea verde* goes from the resistance of feminism to the re-existence of new ways of making

feminism and new public policies. Similarly, Parilla (n.d) also analyzed performances in marea verde and came to the conclusions that they helped to take what is very personal – your own body – and make it political and public.

Thus, the existing literature focuses mostly on the power performance in the marea verde movement, leaving behind a myriad of other types of artistic expressions. This study addresses the lack of research on the artistic expressions in this Argentinian movement by analyzing various types of protest art while conducting interviews with the artists themselves. Moving to the following Chapter, I now will present the theoretical framework of the study.

4. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical discussion for this study builds on the theory of new feminist social movements developed by Argentine activist Veronica Gago coupled with Reed's typology on the functions of protest art in social movements (2019). Firstly, the concepts of power in social movements are analyzed using Spinozian terms *potentia* and *potestas* and also complimented by Negri and Hardt definition of *multitude*. Secondly, I situate the concept of *body-territory* to investigate how modern feminist movements are protesting against various forms of exploitation. Then, using Gago's theory of *poner el cuerpo*, I argue that protest art is interlinked with the embodiment of political messages. Moving to Reed (2019), I elaborate on his ideas about culture being intertwined with political forces and present his framework of ten social functions of art. Finally, I conclude the theoretical chapter by assembling all the concepts and explaining their relation to each other in a graph.

New Feminist Social Movements in Latin America: Theorizing with Veronica Gago

There are quite a few articles looking at *marea verde* through the social movement theory, which is a dominant approach to study movements (see, i.e., Szczepańska, 2019; Daby & Moseley, 2021, Gritz, 2021). Scholars of this meta-theory define movements as networks formed based on shared beliefs and solidarity and the place where collective identities are born (della Porta & Diani, 1999; Whittier, 2017). However, this thesis departs from this meta-theory and analyses *marea verde* through the eyes of Argentinian scholar Veronica Gago. The rationale behind this decision is grounded in the scholar's radical, de-colonial work that resonates in the context of Argentina. Being one of the founders of Argentine Ni Una Menos movement, Gago uses feminist movement as a concept and as a collective experience to provide an angle of organizational dynamic of feminist strikes, debates and meetings. Gago illustrates the Argentine context of the past several years claiming that half a million women, trans people and transvestites came to marches following the 2017 International Women's Strike, 800 thousand more filled in the streets for 8th of March in 2018 and 2019. She looks at the movements of Ni Una Menos and mobilization for the legalization of abortion claiming that these new feminist movements are driven, quite literary, by the slogan "Desire moves us". The next few chapters will try to unpack the concepts Gago uses and situate them within feminist critical theory.

4.1 The power in and of new feminist mobilisations

4.1.1 Feminist potentia and the multitude

Gago (2020) uses the definitions of *potestas* and *potentia*, both translating as *power* in English, by emphasising a sub-category of it – the idea of *feminist potentia*. It draws on the power of the body that is always individual and yet collective. This power allows us to acknowledge that we do not know our capacity to act until we face the limits of what we have been made to believe or to obey to. This power takes into consideration various forms of exploitation and domination that structure “power” as a concept. Gago argues that feminist mobilisations functions as a treshold, an “experience”, after which one cannot go back to having the same relationship with things and with others. In this sense, the mobilization allows us to detect “how certain forms of work and value production are rendered invisible in a diverse range of territories” (ibid:22).

Although in English language Spinozian terms *potestas* and *potentia* both are translated as power, the distinction between the two can be made defining the first one as the power of authority, whereas the latter signifies the actual force and strength (Large, 2017). *Potentia* refers to always acting in a collective dimension, and to a local, immediate and actual force of democratic constitution, while *potestas*, on the other hand, signifies centralized and mediating force of command (Negri, 1999). Field (2020) describes Spinoza as a radical democrat who found true expression of the power as *potentia* in the multitude.

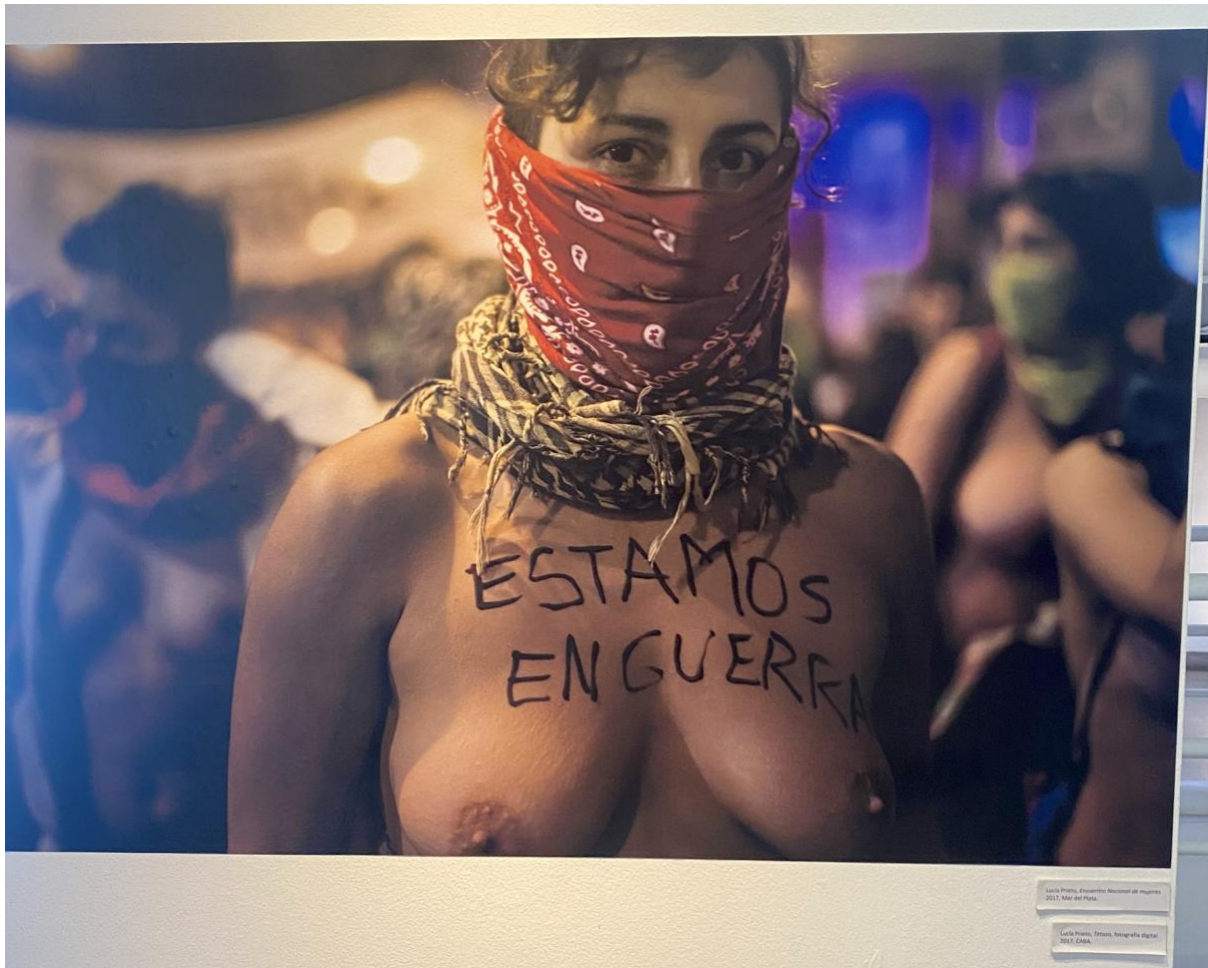
A multitude, or, in the work of Gago, a feminist social movement, exercises *feminist potentia* – a feminist source of power. Hardt and Negri describe multitude as part of the population, composed not of individuals, but rather “singularities that act in common” (2004:156). While remaining different, multitude also provides a commonality which allows to communicate and act together. The multitude also might be perceived as an open and expansive network, in which all the differences can be expressed freely and equally so that we can work and live in common, claim the authors (ibid). Reading Gago we understand that the multitude – a feminist social movement – is necessarily connected to power: it always tries to exercise it in any political expression it performs. The discussion on *feminist potentia* and analysis on why the multitude emerges must also include the theoretical concept of body-territory, which will be assessed in the following section.

4.1.2 Body-territory

Gago uses the concept “body-territory” to refer to the forms of exploitation that women and feminized bodies experience every day. She argues that the old slogan, chanted in all the marches: “If they touch one of us, they touch us all!” reflects politics that makes the body of one woman the body of all. In the meantime, modern patriarchy shows the male body as rational, “with the capacity to create order and discourse” (Gago, 2020:84). Gago states that women and feminized bodies are at the bottom of political hierarchy and will never reach the status of full citizen or individual (ibid). However, modern feminist movements are surpassing victimizing, politicizing sadness and suffering, allowing to transcend the limits of what we are, do and desire. Multitude shows the potentia of an action to go from mourning to taking the range to the streets.

As this thesis explores the case of abortion law, body autonomy is central and thus exceeds the conquest of individual private rights. A picture circulated from an Argentinian National Women’s Encounter in 2017 of a participant with the words “Estamos en guerra” (en. *We are at war*) written on her chest, illustrated the situation well: the war that is happening over women’s bodies is marking a territory of exploitation and violence (see *Photograph 2*).

It is important to note that as the body becomes a battlefield, it also takes upon a class dimension. The clandestine abortion situation directly refers to the costs that make it differentially risky according to one’s social and economic conditions. Religious leaders and some political figures focused their opposition on an argument claiming to be anti-neoliberal: that “the poor do not have abortions”, that abortion is imposed by the International Monetary Fund, and that it is “imperialist” (Gago, 2020:150). The fight for abortion regarding body-territory also opened up spaces for the discussions on sexualities, relationships and corporealities. Gago therefore confirms that the spatiality regarding abortion debates also must be considered in the occupations, assemblies and massive vigils that were carried out in open spaces while the Congress was debating the law.



Photograph 2. A picture taken by Lucia Prieto in the National Women's Encounter in the city of La Plata, Argentina, 2017. Translation of the text in English: "We are at war". Exhibition in el Museo del Libro y de la Lengua, Buenos Aires, 02/2022.

Thus, multitude – a feminist social movement – arises out of body-territory as a form of resistance to the power imbalances and exploitation. Gago's theory reveals that a way to exercise this feminist potentia is through poner el cuerpo – a phenomenon theorized in the following section.

4.2 Protest art: types and functions

The following two sections discuss the types and functions of protest art. Firstly, the phenomenon of poner el cuerpo – the main political and aesthetic expression of the marea verde movement – is analyzed. Then, other artistic expressions such as visual materials, music and dance are debated as extensions of poner el cuerpo. The second section introduces the framework of functions of protest, developed by Reed (2019) and considers its external and internal dynamics.

4.2.1 Types of protest art

i) Poner el cuerpo

Argentinian expression of poner el cuerpo conveys the significance of embodiment. Gago takes this definition to another level arguing that the bodily interventions mark a new type of political cartography, due to private and public spaces in Argentina falling under patriarchal realms: the domestic scene has its sacral “privacy” that does not allow it to be intervened in. Gago gives an example of a senator Rodolfo Urtubey of the Justicialist Party who argued that there can be “rape without violence,” when, and perhaps also because, it occurs within the family (2020:154). This “realm” of home contains the patriarchal meaning in which even the rape is permitted. When the public spaces are occupied by women and feminized bodies it also becomes a domestic space, because of the maneuver of ignoring the masses in the street seeking to render invisible (ibid:156). Gago remembers how Congress was discussing rape in the domestic sphere “as a justification for maintaining the clandestine, illegal, and unsafe status of abortion, while trying to ignore what was taking place on the streets, as if the street were no longer a public space when taken over by the feminist masses” (ibid:156).

Sutton (2007), Conejo and Balaguer (2014), Tarducci (2017), Berenguer and Marchiano (2019) have investigated poner el cuerpo, claiming that it signifies not only thinking or talking, but rather being present and involved. As Sutton (2007:130) states - “to put the whole (embodied) being into action” is to be committed to a social cause. Poner el cuerpo conveys the resistance and implies that material bodies are crucial in the transformation of social relations. Embodiment conveys the experience, not only the shape of political debates on abortion, contraception, sexual education and violence, but also promotes radical social changes while being present in the protests (ibid 2007:138). Wendy Parkins (2000:60) in her article “Protesting like a Girl” states that “we cannot think of political agency in abstraction from embodiment”. Sutton (2007) agrees with this idea claiming that in order to affect the course of society, political resistance involves putting the material body in action.

Politics is not produced solely by the vocalized claims or demands of protestors but by their action. Thus, poner el cuerpo becomes an emblematic type of protest art as it is a feminist expression of potentia. It is a type of artistic expression among the others, enabling movements to flourish, expand and gain visibility. However, there are other types of protest art that need to be considered. Herein lies the critique for Gago’s theory: besides poner el cuerpo, her

postulation lacks the attention to artistic expressions in feminist protests. Therefore, in the following sections, I introduce other types of artistic expressions and provide examples of their realms within marea verde movement, hence highlighting their importance in the fight for legal abortion.

ii) Visual materials, photography and movies

Photos, flyers, drawings, postcards, graphics, slogans and symbols are probably the most vivid resource for protest actors to express themselves. Almost thirty years ago Chaffee (1993:101) wrote that: “[p]robably in no Latin American country have graffiti, posters and wall paintings constituted such a popular expression as in Argentina”. Nowadays, scholars such as Sutton and Vacarezza (2020) explain how symbols are shaped in political struggles and look at Argentinian pañuelo. The green kerchief became a “mandatory” presence inside and around marae verde: it is Campaign’s front symbol and a powerful movement-building tool. Activists use the pañuelo to display it on their heads, around the necks and wrists, to cover the lower part of the face. Its horizontal communication engages activists and supporters and sends powerful messages that are used in the photographs, posters and flyers.

As images have the power to vividly convey and construct political meanings, activist photography is a filter through which a person conveys a moral vision Bogre (2012). Doerr et al. (2013) state that by capturing protest images, photographers communicate ideas about the protestors, raise awareness and visibility, and thus the aesthetics act as a resource for further mobilization. Argentine film director Juan Solanas latest movie “Que Sea Ley” (en. *Let it be law*) about the fight on legalizing abortion in the country debuted in Cannes festival in 2019 (Sigal, 2019). The movie is presented as testimony of thousands of women who took the streets during marea verde movement, fighting for the legal, free and safe abortion. Thus, visual materials can be considered as an extention of poner el cuerpo due to embodiment of feminist potentia in its symbolics.

iii) Music and dance

Mondak (1988), Tia De Nora (1995), Revill (2000), Eyerman and McCormick (2006), Way and McKerrell (2017), argued that music and art should be observed as organized social activity, where individual artists are linked into networks of the creative acts. Hanna (1990: 342) observes that “the turn-of-the-century modern dance was in part a rebellion against male

domination in both dance and society.”. Mathieu (2018) seconds this idea claiming that female dancers’ esthetic innovations such as performing barefoot, braless or corsetless were artistic revolutions combining the emerging feminist concerns about sexual freedom, body pleasure, and emancipation from patriarchy. Luker (2007) describes the Argentine context of tango stating that although the musical genre has not been massively popular since the late 1950s, it reemerged in the 2000s with the devastating Argentine economic crisis in 2001. In this political-economical climate, Argentinians have used musical practice of tango as the means of (re)exploring and (re)articulating a sense of Argentine identity (ibid). In contemporary Buenos Aires tango scene, Liliana Furió is contesting patriarchal tango norms by renting venues “Las Furiosas” that include queer community, provide guidance on how to handle instances of harassment and abuse (Pavez, 2018). Thus, music and dance are interlinked with poner el cuerpo phenomena: by putting their bodies activist challenge the dominant orthodoxies and express the feminist potentia.

As critiqued before, Gago’s work does not spell out the functions of art prominently and focuses solely on poner el cuerpo as the main political and aesthetical expression of protest art within feminist movements. Therefore, this study now resorts to theory of social functions of art elaborated by Reed (2019) to complement the research. As a representative of a different epistemological and disciplinary world than Gago, Reed is brought into this ontology for his theoretical tool to understand the functions that arts play in social movements. His framework uses art to dissect aspects of the movement and political processes and looks at the functions as serving internal and external purposes.

4.2.2 Functions of art

A way to embody the political messages is to use artistic expressions. T.V. Reed in his book *The Art of Protest: Activism from the Civil Rights Movement to the Streets of Seattle* (2019) offers a rich, kaleidoscopic lens of artistic and cultural expressions to analyze the relation between art and politics. He states that the United States was created through a social movement, the American revolution, and social movements have been remaking the nation ever since. Although his theory was developed in Seattle, he also shows how the movements have been connected to global changes. Reed’s (2019) theory provides a tool – a frame of ten social functions of art – which is straightforward and easily adaptable despite geographic location.

He establishes an idea that arts function as cultural forms within social movements in order to transform society in a myriad of ways. He shows the social function of arts, naming ten primary of them: **1) To encourage**, so individuals would feel the strength of the group. Songs in mass rallies can move a person out of the individual self to feel part of a group; **2) To empower**: individuals should feel their own strength. Written texts that appeal to a participant of the movement can empower them to feel more deeply their own commitment; **3) To harmonize**: cultural forms provide overarching connection that may smooth the differences, when emerged; **4) To inform internally** by reinforcing movement values and ideas; **5) To inform externally** by expressing movement values and promoting it to the people outside of it; **6) To enact movement goals**, when art intervenes directly to achieve the promoted values; **7) To historicize** by inventing, telling and re-telling the history of the movement; **8) To transform** the tactics by setting a new emotional tone; **9) To critique** ideology by challenging dominant values; **10) To make pleasure** through aesthetic joy.

This framework delineates what are the functions that art performs internally (within the movement and its members) and externally (in relation to non-activists and the wider political system). The internal functions are the first four, referring and/or affecting to the participants of the movement, whereas the rest help to build the dialogue outside the protest.

Reed uses this framework of artistic functions to study several specific movements throughout the U.S history and shows how art can be used as a tool for social change: to reinforce values, raise questions about current social conditions. The function of setting a new emotional tone is particularly interesting to look at: Reed states that have the power to diffuse tension from anger to focused resistance or redirect the attention of the participants by using a song or an image to signal a next stage of the protest (ibid).

4.3 Assembling the theoretical framework

In this Chapter I aimed to explain the key theoretical concepts used by Argentine scholar, feminist and an activist Veronica Gago, also engaging with the works of complimenting scholars.

To answer the research question of this thesis, in the first part of the theory section I have theorized what the movement is about and the forms of power it exercises. To do so, I employed the concepts of multitude (feminist social movement) and its feminist potentia. Then, I moved to the concept of body-territory, which refers to the various forms of exploitation and violence that women and feminized bodies face. To theorize the protest art, I have firstly discussed poner el cuerpo phenomenon, which is a type of feminist expression of potentia, and discussed other types of art as performance, music and dance, visual materials, photography and movies as an extension of poner el cuerpo. Then, I finalized the Chapter with the functions of protest art, relying on Reed's (2019) theoretical framework. These concepts are the pillars of the theoretical framework used in this research.

Assembling all the concepts together we see that the multitude arises out of the body-territory as a form of resistance to the various ways of exploitation and violence. To do so, multitude exercises its feminist potentia which is expressed through protest art. A type of which is poner el cuerpo - embodiment. Being a type of artistic expression, it also encapsulates other types of art, such as visual materials, extends to movies and activism photography and is brought into music and dance. These types are also complimented by the internal and external functions of art in the social movements. Thus, the relation among these concepts is strong and serves to answer the research question of this thesis, aiming to find out the functions that protest art play in feminist social movements in Argentina.

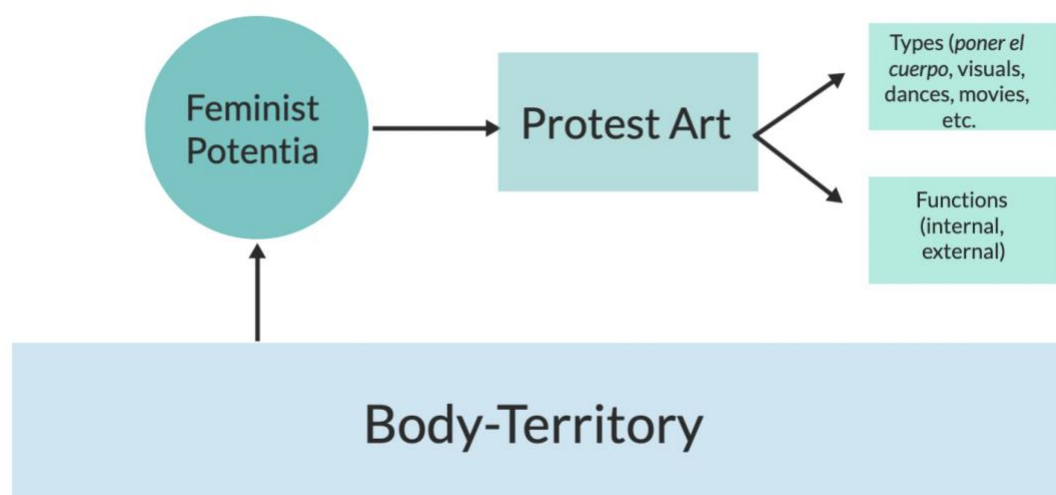


Figure 1 (Made by the author). Functions of protest art.

5. Methodological Approach

In this Chapter, I present the methodology of this thesis, including research design, data sampling, data analysis, ethical considerations and limitations.

5.1 Research design

As Bengtsson (2016) states, qualitative research aims to study humans and analyze how they apprehend or connect to a certain phenomenon and how they understand the world. Therefore, qualitative methods are used for this research in order to gather empirical data. This research aims to explore the functions of protest art phenomena in social movements' struggles in reforming the abortion law in Argentina. Thus, a single-case study was identified as the most suitable one in order to answer the research question and explore the protest art in Argentina's reproductive rights movement.

5.2 Sampling

Purposeful sampling was used to ensure that selected respondents could provide relevant information in response to the research question (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Therefore, aiming to understand the functions that arts have played in the *marea verde* movement, I interviewed Argentinian artists who were involved in the *marea verde* movement and had crafted any kind of piece of art referring to the topic. As artists are the primary information source for this research, target groups of women in arts were asked semi-structured questions during the interview. I acknowledge the choice to interview only artists as a limitation of the study, forming the analysis from a very specific, situated position.

The interview questions were based on the theoretical frameworks explained above. Participants were identified based on their present and (/or) past engagement in protest art and social movements that pushed for legalization of abortion law in Argentina. Members of such feminist art collectives as *Medio Decálogo*, *Urna Verde*, *Actrices Argentinas*, *ARDA*, *feminist circus trupé* were interviewed as well as independent cinematographers, muralists, digital artists and singers. As described and predicted by Creswell and Poth (*ibid*), interviewees also pointed me to further potential respondents through snowball sampling.

After arriving to Buenos Aires, I visited a number of contemporary art museums and galleries in order to look for local feminist artists' work. If their crafted pieces referred to abortion, I

would note their names and contact them afterwards. Also, talking to the curators of galleries was invaluable since they provided me with direct contacts of artists. During my stay in Buenos Aires, I participated in multiple social movement actions and gatherings, such as protests to stop violence against women and marches to decriminalize abortion. Empirical data collection for the visual analysis was gathered from examining websites, articles, and social media accounts from the platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. I joined several Facebook groups such as Movimiento Feminista de Tango, Feministas debatiendo sobre arte feminista, Mujeres públicas, Feministas unidas and closely analyzed the posts looking for potential interviewees.

As I wanted to show a variety of perspectives in the empirical data, I conducted 14 interviews with two muralists/illustrators, one filmmaker, two performers' collectives, one tango singer, one photographer/documentalist, one singer who is also a member of actress collective, a member of feminist circus troupe, one plastic artists, one novelist, one poet, one sound and one plastic artists, who identify as Argentinians and whose artwork refer to abortion. The emphasis I put on nationality is grounded on Dahlgren's (2013:24) idea that the connection to civic identity is important for people to see themselves as "actors of meaningful interventions relevant to political issues". Also, it ensures that the interviewees have a shared understanding of the land's historical development and share direct relation to the country. Before starting to reach out to the artists, I created a table of potential interviewees, where I compiled all the contacts that I have been gathering. The table consisted of 5 columns, providing information on artist's name, type of art they are making, their involvement in marea verde, contact and their reply to my email (if replied). This table consisted of 36 contacts of which I reached out first. Only eleven responded and six were interviewed. To avoid cherry picking individuals in the further data collection, the focus was instead placed on the snowball sample technique. Since all six interviewees directed me to other artists, the snowball effect was started and I contacted the referred individuals.

5.3 Interviews

Regarding preparatory work, a semi-structured interview guide was prepared, whereby semi-structured questions serve as the basis for interviews but are adopted to participants' responses (see, i.e., Esposito, 2001; Temple, 2002; Turner, 2010). The interview guide circulated to my supervision group to evaluate the clarity and the ease of understanding of the questions. By combining structure and flexibility, the approach of using semi-structured questions allowed

me to probe and adapt to participants' responses while ensuring that data is consistent enough to be analyzed. One more reason for deciding to opt for this approach is because it prioritizes the subject's voice, while the researcher gathers the experiences, personal stories, and opinions, which all of this are used as sources of data.

From January to March 2022, I carried out 14 interviews with a duration of approximately 60 minutes. The length of the interviews ranged between 23 minutes to one hour and 24 minutes, excluding the time dedicated before and after the interview for more informal conversations. Ten interviews were conducted online using Zoom, four were conducted in person. The data saturation was reached, and it is believed that the majority of perspectives relevant to the case are included. Interviews took place in person or were conducted online, using a tool of the respondent's choice. As the research was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic, in-person gathering restrictions fluctuated and thus it is important to acknowledge the possible limitation of interviewing individuals in-person.

The first interview piloted the interview guide as I have tailored it afterwards (*Appendix 2*) to ensure that it is in line with my research question and theoretical framework. I tried to refrain myself from speaking off the guide as much as possible in order to not reveal my own perspective in the matter. However, I kept the flexibility in the sense of taking a detour from the guide if the interviewee would say something interesting and I would want to ask questions to follow-up on that. During interviews, I tried to construct a safe space by always introducing myself and my thesis in Spanish and only later switching to English, showing my knowledge about interviewee's previous artwork, and encouraging them to ask me questions if they had any. As I found it extremely crucial that interviewees would feel comfortable talking to me, we communicated a little bit before the interview via Instagram or WhatsApp. I would tell the interviewees about myself, my studies in Sweden, and explain the research aim of my thesis. Before the interview, I indicated how long the interview is expected to last and how many questions I had for them, to ensure that they are aware of what is expected and empower them to manage time themselves while giving answers. Most of the interviews were conducted with three people participating: the interviewee, myself, and a translator. However, there have been two cases where artist collectives were interviewed, hence the number of participants expanded. In an interview with acrobatic performers collective, 6 artists participated and shared their experiences in the fight for legal abortion in Argentina. In a second interview with an audiovisual artist collective, two representatives participated in the study. The dynamics of

group interviews were not much different from one-on-one interviews as the respondents respected each other's opinions, never interrupting nor contradicting the previous statements.

The interviews were conducted in both English and Spanish languages. When the interviews were conducted in Spanish, the help of a translator was used. The translator was a local feminist activist who I met on a feminist walking tour which I booked after arriving to Buenos Aires. It is understood that because of the translation, some definitions and terminology might have lost their direct meaning, and this might have affected the quality of the data. It is acknowledged as a limitation of the study.

I would transcribe interviews on the same or the following day after the interview was recorded. Aiming to systematize fieldnotes and thus improve their reliability, I drew on Silverman (2013) advices suggesting that in order to make deeper and more general sense of what is happening during the interview, the researcher should keep four separate sets of notes: i) short notes made at the time; ii) expanded notes made as soon as possible after each field session; iii) a fieldwork journal to record problems and ideas that arise during each stage of fieldwork; iv) a provisional running record of analysis and interpretation.

I decided to transcribe one interview at a time to ensure a better quality in reflection of it and a better understanding of what interviewee was aiming to convey. I also opted for orthographical technique, meaning that laughter, cry, long pauses, or hesitation would also be put in the transcript. After the transcription, I went through it again to perform open coding where singular ideas are written into a table (*Appendix 3*). Here I drew on Kuckartz's (2014) theory on inductive coding, suggesting that it allows the researcher to move through data in a way that gives meaning. In total 267 open codes were rendered from all 14 interviews, which I categorized using color codes (*Appendix 4*). Further, the codes were interpreted, and subcategories were created (*Appendix 5*).

5.4 Ethics

Before the interviews, I sent out the interview consent form (*Appendix 1*) asking the participants to sign in advance. As most of them did not have a chance to print it out or use an online signature facility, I read out the consent form at the beginning of the interview and would ask for their agreement to participate in the study on the record. Although almost all the interviewees have indicated that I can use their name in the study openly, if I wish, I anonymized all their names in the interview transcription. I did this to ensure them that they

can speak freely and would not hesitate to express their opinion or share personal experiences regarding such sensitive topic as abortion. Furthermore, any detail that might have led to interviewees identification (names of their earlier artworks, the date of the previous movie release, etc.) has also been modified to ensure anonymity.

Furthermore, relying on Scheyvens and Banks (2014), ethical research should at minimum “do no harm” and preferably “do good”. Considering this, it is important to note that all interviewees seemed at ease talking about the topic and were eager to share very personal experiences. As some artists voiced sorrows or secrets held in for many years, cries during our interviews were inevitable. Some women told heavy stories about clandestine abortions and domestic violence, and in a couple of interviews neither could I control the tears. However, this crying was not associated with harm, but rather was perceived as a way to express emotions. Being an utterance of trust, it did not alter the state of mind of the interviewees in a negative way. If an interviewee would get emotional and start crying, I would always ask if a person wanted to take a break or have some water. The interviewees would always wipe the tears away and choose to continue the interview. During the interviews when I myself got emotional, I did not allow the tears to develop into a heavy cry or stop the interview. I believe that the interviewees, seeing my emotions, did not change their answers but rather developed a deeper connection and trust in me.

Also, Scheyvens and Banks (2014) highlight the importance of reciprocity in the research. I was careful not to promise any financial contribution for participation in my study, but when having an interview in person and in English, I would always suggest meeting at the coffee shop, inviting the interviewee for some refreshments as a sign of appreciation for their time.

Moreover, when pursuing cross-cultural interviews, it is important to reflect the positionality the researcher takes. Being aware that power imbalances are not always solely tangible differences, but may also be based in perceived differences from one (or both) parties (Scheyvens, Nowak & Scheyvens, 2003), I, as a white female with an European passport, having lived in countries where abortion is legal, had to guard that my pre-shaped mindset does not influence the outcome of the research. As this study centers around the topic of protest art, which is not considered to be a sensitive one, I believe that the data collection was not affected by my stance as an outsider. However, when observing marea verde gatherings, participating in the strikes to stop the violence against women, or even the 8M march, which celebrates the *International Women’s Day*, I sometimes would question myself: “Is this okay that I am

here in the streets with Argentiniains? It is not my fight, or is it?”. Perhaps being overly cautious, I would start debating the ethics of my presence in the protests and the feeling of being an outsider would get stronger when photographers, documenting the protests, would stop me and ask to take a picture of me, or when other participants of the marches would ask for a *selfie*. Wearing pañuelo verde and colorful makeup, but being much taller than average Argentinian, white and redhead, would show my identification with the struggle and support for the locals, but also reflect my obvious *otherness*. I shared my fear of unbelonging to my Argentinian friends who took me to the gatherings, and they firmly objected to my reasoning, saying that these struggles we are fighting against have no borders and every voice, support and contribution matters equally.

6. Findings and Analysis

Having explained this study's methodology, I now approach the results and the discussion of the findings. Then, the findings are analyzed and organized regarding the theoretical framework. As such, participants' reasons and ways of involvement in feminist activism, and their artistic expressions and contributions to *marea verde*, are addressed using Gago's theory of new feminist social movements and T.V Reed's framework of primary functions of arts in social movements. Analysis is divided into two macro categories, gathering the findings based on their internal dynamics (arts' relation to the movement itself) and external dynamics (relation with the audience, non-activists and the wider political system).

i) Arts and the movement: internal dynamics

6.1 Art to empower: uniting and creating a collective identity

"In the streets we are like sisters, we feel like everything is possible" – said a member of artists collective during our interview (Interview 7). Reed (2019) claims that one of the functions of protest art is to empower, so the individuals would feel their own strength. Looking at the *marea verde* movement, the notion of sisterhood as a collective identity was indicated in most of the interviews. The symbol that united the women and feminized bodies was *pañuelo verde*:

At one point, in 2018, when the Campaign exploded and became massive, the bandana was this kind of sisterhood between women. <...> You go to the streets and you share this sisterhood with a person that you didn't even know, but you are sharing that [pain and sadness regarding abortion]. – Interview 3.

A digital artist explained that seeing another person with a *pañuelo verde* creates a feeling of safety, of not being alone anymore, she feels protected by her sisters (other activists) while participating in marches. A photographer seconded the idea adding that *pañuelo verde* acted as an identification tool, allowing to recognize a person with a *pañuelo verde* "as your own":

It is about being a feminist, it automatically shows what you think and where you stand. <...> You walk into a party, and you automatically know that people who wear it are on your side. – Interview 5.

Thus, *pañuelo* became a symbol allowing to recognize the fellow feminists who share the same values. One of the respondents gave an example how *pañuelo* helped to connect and trust a

person who was a stranger: an interviewee had a small car accident and while exchanging WhatsApp numbers with the other driver for later communication, she noticed that on her profile picture the woman was wearing a pañuelo: “<...> and when I saw it, I was like automatically, [thinking] okay, that’s great. It is a symbol that you instantly know who the other person is” (Interview 5).

Furthermore, interactive art was used as a tool to connect to and to unite the public. The muralist told how much she enjoyed making street art during the protests because people would come to her and ask what exactly is she painting, what is the meaning of it, and she would explain and discuss the topics of abortion, a right to decide over your own body. A member of artists collective said that interactive paintings completed with the public during the march inspired her future artwork: “<...> with visual art itself, a lot of new things happen, new ideas, because we were thinking of art as a community-kind of way” (Interview 7). Another interviewee gave an example of art creating dialogue and educating people:

For March the 8th we hung Ni Una Menos pañuelos on the street in downtown, and people would pass by. There was a group of women who would approach to look at them, then look away, then come back and eventually they asked, “What is femicide?”, and then we talked about it. – Interview 8.

Art was described as a universal language that speaks to everyone. Street art was described as particularly significant because one cannot escape it:

It does not give you a possibility to look the other way. When you are in a museum, if you are in an environment with closed doors, it is controlled. <...> But when you are in the street, you get everyone, no one can look the other way. It is right in front of your face. And that is how it becomes powerful. That’s when you can make a change. – Interview 5.

A member of a feminist circus troupe seconded this idea saying that art is an emotional language which includes everyone in it. She also emphasized the importance of performing in the streets, highlighting the difference between the open areas and theater halls.

These interventions and a symbol of pañuelo verde brought people together and created a collective identity of sisterhood. It shows a strong feminist potentia - a potentia of the body that is both individual and collective, that exists in variation (Gago, 2020). Multitude, as the

group of differences, is innovative in networks and its decision-making ability, and thus makes democracy possible (Hardt & Negri, 2004). By this group of “resistant bodies” the authors imagine individuals becoming political subjects by transferring to the sovereign an authority to use their potentia. At this point it is important to take into consideration poner el cuerpo as a bodily dimension of political resistance. As the term’s literal translation is “to put the body”, it implies that material bodies are crucial in the transformation of social relations. When asked what left the biggest impact from all the protests she has seen, a plastic artist (interview 9) answered that it was “putting the bodies in the streets, the feeling that we were fighting for the same thing. We put our bodies in the street and that made it very strong.”. The tango singer and composer used poner el cuerpo term when talking about transversal communication: she sings her feminist tango songs on tours in the countries where people do not speak Spanish, thus she puts her body into the lyrics, trying to embody them and convey the message. Therefore, interactive, public art helped to embody and shape the collective identity of sisterhood among the activists in the Argentine marea verde movement.

ii) Arts and the movement: external dynamics

6.2 Art to inform: raising awareness and visualizing the fight

As Reed (2019) indicates the social function of arts, two of them refer to awareness raising: art informs internally by reinforcing movement values and ideas (4) and externally by expressing movement’s values and promoting it to the people outside of it (5). Moreover, art is used to historicize by inventing, telling, and re-telling the history of the movement (8), hence visualizing the fight.

A world-wide famous Argentinian movie director said that when he found out about the marea verde, he felt the organic urge to pick up a camera and go to the streets and start filming:

I started filming and thinking that if the law didn’t come out and if the Senate did not approve it, I was going to use this movie as an instrument, as another instrument for fight, for struggle. – Interview 2.

As the Senate did not approve the law in 2018, the filmmaker continued developing a movie and released it just before the Argentine Presidential elections in 2019. It is important to note that before the release of the movie, the issue of illegal abortion was not considered during the Presidential debates. When the movie came out shedding a light on the topic and drawing

international attention to the case in Argentina, the topic entered the country's political space as well. The candidates had to take a stance on the topic of making the abortion legal, which signified the movie acting as an accelerator of political decisions and thus contributed to the electorate getting to know their candidates better.

A singer and songwriter based in Buenos Aires created a song as a reply to an extremely male chauvinist hit and received a lot of Argentinian and international public support. Her song called for respect for women and gender equality and became a *tour de force* in Argentine musical scenery. A singer used her gained fame to raise awareness about *marea verde*:

I understood that I can really help the people who knew me to start listening more about the movement. It was my songs, timely songs, and then this one was like a political action song and I felt like it was bringing something very important to the movement.

– Interview 12.

She was invited to sing at one of the events organized by the Campaign and used her public appearance to bring attention to the issue of illegal abortion and to *marea verde* movement.

Similarly, a photographer who has worked on a myriad of projects tackling gender-based violence and femicide issues in Argentina claimed that she used her art to bring visibility to the movement:

<...> What people, government, media makes invisible, those problems “don't exist” for other people. I mean they exist for you, they exist in reality, but it is not recognized, they make it look that it doesn't exist or that it's not important. And that's why every struggle tries to gain visibility. – Interview 5.

The same artist told me about her projects tackling power relations regarding gender-based violence. A vast issue in the country is child rape: the number of teenage pregnancies in Argentina is so large, that the issue became a dominant one in the fight for legal abortion. “Niñas no madres” (en. *children, not mothers*) – claim the slogan arguing for the justice for raped girls and fighting the forced maternity. Abortion is just a little aspect of the problem, claimed the photographer during our interview. She exemplified one of the stories about a girl who sought help from a doctor to end her unwanted pregnancy and was raped by him. However, because abortion was illegal and she would have not been able to explain why she visited the doctor at the first place, she could not seek justice for being raped.

The government is denying you the same right as the same person because it is illegal. A man would have never gone through that. <...> I feel that a lot of struggles are about that: right, when you fight against violence against women, you are fighting for freedom. And I feel that the struggle for legalizing abortion had a lot to do with that. Illegal abortion is violence. – Interviewee 5.



Photograph 3. Street artwork “En un mundo justo las niñas no son madres” (en. In a just world girls are not mothers) in Salta, Argentina. Picture taken by the author of this research (2022).

The power relations were also tackled by the members of art collective:

What happens is that the power that generates inside or outside the law, but in society, regarding abortion, this way of the law was to keep people with ability to give birth powerless. – Interviewee 7.

To question the role of men in terms of illegal abortion, a muralist (interview 4) started a campaign “Vasectomize”, sending a message that if women are not allowed to get abortions, men should get a vasectomy. The same artist has also made pieces highlighting class issues and women doing unpaid domestic work. A member of performers’ collective (interview 4) noted abortion as a class issue, claiming that “some can get a safe abortion, in a safe way, but other suffer violence because they cannot get safe abortion because of class issue”.

According to the Ministry of Health, since legalization of abortion, there have been 32,758

interruptions of pregnancies carried out in safe conditions in the public system as of November 30, 2021 (Puntal, 2021). However, almost all the interviewed artists agreed that although the abortion is legal in Argentina now, there is a huge need to continue fighting for its equal implementation all over the country. “Argentina is a really big country and the law does not apply equally”, said Interviewee 3, claiming that in more religious states people still cannot have an abortion. Thus, the respondents are not planning to stop doing their activism as a tool for fighting the battle.

There are still a lot of women who don't know that there is a law, and the politics of states are really bad and we are convinced that there is an unwritten, informal agreement between the government and the Church and different power structures so that implementation would not be full now. In Buenos Aires you can find places where they do these practices and everything works but in the rest of the country it is not like that. There is even a prosecution against the doctors, one was recently jailed for making an abortion which is authorized by law. So it's not about the thing if it's law or not, there is a lot to work on in implementation. Also, Catholic Church has an important presence, I know that there is a small town where a priest does not allow the stores to sell condoms. – Interview 7.

According to Gago (2020), violence is directed towards some bodies more than others, thus the multitude mobilizes around this injustice and violence, demands reparation, eliminating exploitation and discrimination, that refers to body-territory. A member of a feminist theatre collective expressed her belief that it is highly important to move from victimization: “We know it is important to recognize the victims but so it is to take that away and show us powerful and autonomous”. This directly corresponds to Gago's idea that feminist expressions nowadays are reinventing the strike as a tool to understand politicized violence by surpassing victimization, moving from mourning to taking the rage in the streets. Feminist movements challenge the prevailing understanding of bodily sovereignty of feminized bodies that were historically perceived as non-sovereign and incapable of deciding for themselves, says Gago (2020). Thus, not only art within the movement brings visibility and has a power to shape a person's perception of the past or/and current events and deepen knowledge of sexist violence, but it also presents women and feminized bodies as powerful, innovative, and rebellious fighters against injustice and violence.

6.3 Art to encourage: breaking the silence and giving the voice

As explained in the theoretical framework above, the private and public spaces in Argentina are completely separate. According to Gago (2020), private and public spaces in Argentina fall under patriarchal realms and the domestic scene is perceived as a sacral space where no one shall intervene. Reed (2019) claims that art acts to empower and to encourage, allowing the individuals to feel the strength of their own and of the bigger group. The replicated symbols that are shared within the movement allow to visualize the fight much easier.

A member of a performer's collective described the symbol of pañuelo verde as a sign with which you take your pain from private and make it public:

All this pain and sadness regarding abortion – to keep it as taboo at home, but we had the sign on our backpacks, so it is also kind of the same idea: you go to the streets and you share this sisterhood with person that you didn't even know, but you are sharing that. So pañuelo is taking it from private and making it public, to make it visible. – Interview 4.

According to the respondents, the symbol of pañuelo verde was also breaking taboos and the stigma in the public places:

So it was something for a long time a taboo, a silence, so we didn't even have a right to say it out loud, so at that point we said "Stop with this". And we started to conquer this place that we had. – Interview 4.

Members of another artist collective (Interview 7) seconded this idea, claiming that art helps to de-clandestine the topic and at the same time to de-clandestine a person: "When something is clandestine, you cannot talk about it. And by talking about it, we de-clandestine it. To put in words of tragedy is to de-clandestine".

An author of best-selling books in Argentina acknowledged her contribution to the movement saying that her books encouraged women to speak up:

<...> Because of all my public appearances in media, a lot of women wrote to thank, because for the first time women were able to talk about their own abortions. For a long time they weren't able to say anything about it. It was breaking the silence of so many

years that was so traumatic. It was traumatic not only to be seen by other people [judged] but also because it was illegal to have abortion in Argentina. So that silence opened and that was the most moving thing for me, that women are able to talk about it. – Interview 10.

A member of the feminist theatre collective (interview 12) stated that their performances verbalized this stigmatized topic. She described one of their interventions – “Abortamos” – about different people from various backgrounds, who hold very different jobs but are united by the same experience – clandestine abortion. “<...> We were screaming: “Women have abortions, teenagers have abortions, kids have abortions”. This aligns with the writer’s (interview 10) idea that everyone in Argentina was aware that abortions were happening, and it was a matter of time until its legalization.

The finding reveals that images and objects make an impact on an individual’s personal and social life and therefore arts have an ability to develop minds and stimulate emotions. A member of feminist circus troupe (interview 11) stated that their collective transmits other people’s voices during the performance and highlighted that artists feel very heavy after the show, because reincarnation of others’ voices is deeply exhausting.

An important actor that kept the topic of abortion either clandestine or depicted it as a shameful and sinful is the Catholic Church. Holding a particularly important role in Argentine society, the Church, with Pope Francis in front, led the crusade over feminine bodies, claims Gago (2020). “The Church has been intervening and conditionalizing the laws and practices, consciousness and morals” – said a member of a feminist theatre collective. “Every place occupied by the Church was a space taken away from the people” - continued she about the artistic interventions to fight the authority.

Gago argues that feminism does not believe there is an opium of the people and claims that spirituality is the exact opposite - a force of rebellion. Feminism allows the bodies to exist without trying to make them “pure, heroic or even good” (ibid:305). Gago draws on the books by Silvia Federici, Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English who remember why the burning of witches and healers was used to discredit feminine knowledge about the bodies and analyses the witch-burning guide which states that “nothing does more harm to the Catholic Church than midwives”, who of course are also the abortionists (ibid:305).

As Reed (2019) states, one of the social functions of art is to enact movement goals, when art intervenes directly to achieve the promoted values. In the case of *marea verde*, artists put the very private topic of abortion into public spaces, occupying them with their bodies, creating interactive art together with the public, encouraging individuals to speak up or allowing art to express the shared pain.

6.4 Art to empower: therapy, memoria, and a light of hope

Various interviewees indicated the relief they were feeling while doing artistic expressions regarding abortion legalization. Art helped to purify the feelings and transform them into a crafted piece:

The thoughts were subconscious, the pain was coming out of my fingers, without thinking about it, without rationalizing, <...> it just became pure [painting]. – Interviewee 7.

Furthermore, the art collective described their first artistic manifestation of 2019, where they made a huge urn, shaped like a uterus, and used in as a box in which people were invited put their written stories about abortion. That day, during the protest, over 300 people wrote or drew about the abortion experiences they lived themselves or they knew about someone else. As abortion was still illegal in Argentina, people could have been accused or sent to jail even because of talking about it. During the interview, artists emphasized how this interactive artistic intervention allowed women to share their stories and talk about the trauma they have experienced.

This artistic intervention also acted as a remembrance of women that have died because of unsafe, clandestine abortions. “One was from a girl whose cousin had died at the age of 13 from a clandestine abortion. One of the art pieces that we did was dedicated to this story” – told an artist (Interview 7). Another artistic expression, shared by a member of feminist circus troupe, also paid a tribute to the women whose deaths could have been prevented. A member described a performance where a lot of women wearing red capes were carrying empty caskets as a memorial symbol for women who had died because of femicides, unsafe clandestine abortions and systematic discrimination in health.

The performers' collective revealed that art helped them to understand how the fight was affecting their bodies. In the preparation of the performance, the members of the collective started writing scripts – Chapters – questioning “how we felt what marea verde does to our bodies, what we have learnt with marea verde?” (Interview 4). In a search for an answer, they started creating movements and adding physical dynamics to their scripts to enact the feelings.

A singer, wishing to create a music video for one of her songs demanding respect for women and fighting for gender equality, came up with the idea of involving women stuck at home due to the Covid-19 pandemic with their violent partners. She posted an online invitation for women from all over the world to record a video of them dancing, holding a sign or responding to her song in any way. The goal was to empower them and to show that they are not alone. Another song of the same singer was created in regard to the lockdown, aiming to send a message of hope. Being an active member of the movement, a singer was devastated when Argentina introduced a full lockdown, stopping all the gatherings, when the movement was so close to reaching its goal. She created a song sending a message of hope, saying “just breathe, everything outside is still green”, even during the pandemic and the lockdown (interview 14).

A tango singer and songwriter who was nominated for Latin Grammy a few years ago has recently released a new album of 12 tango songs, each inspired by Argentine feminist novelist. Every song reflects different issues women face in Argentine society, and one of the songs was inspired by a book about clandestine abortion:

<...> the song is very sad, very dark, but at the end I try to put some light, but not hope in humanity, but hope in yourself. It says “Yes you have the fine, the charge, but the heaven is for the rebels, the workers, who challenge the fears. – Interview 6.

The findings indicate that hope is imbued in feminism and has the capacity to open up the world and builds the future after having learnt the mistakes from the past. Hope can be perceived as an investment that the paths we are taking will take us where we want to go. Also, Gago reflects Ernst Bloch's description of hope as an engine of social and political transformations, holding a trace of political spirituality, which, according to Gago, shares a certain political potentia (2017:303).

6.5 Art for/of pleasure

According to Gago (2020:304), feminist movements “open a thorny field of desire, of relationships of love, of erotic swarms, of ritual and celebration, of longings beyond their sanctioned borders”. Feminism does not deprive bodies of their “dark potentia”, as she names it.

During *marea verde*, artists saw an opportunity to delve deeper into the topic of pleasure. A visual artist said that the movement provided a place to discuss the pleasure, desire, decision, not only death: “[it is also about] life is also about being happy and celebrate”:

We change it [the Campaign’s slogan] to “Sexual education to discover, contraceptives to enjoy, legal abortion to decide”. And I took a photo of my naked friend holding this changed slogan and the idea was that the discussion of abortion is focused on not to die, but we wanted to shift the discussion further, that it is about your right to decide what to do with your life. – Interview 4.

Members of artists collective admitted that defending the freedom of desire might not be in the first words of the struggle, but it is behind every Campaign’s activity:

Something that we generally hear from the Campaign but we don’t listen that much is desire. Not the abortion as a medical practice, to have or not to have a pregnancy, but also to desire, to have sexual desire and freedom. <...> In our collective we work with women, men and sexual dissidence, so not only women, because in the work for freedom, desire there is another person, so we work with empathy, responsibility – Interview 7.

To analyze the power of pleasure or *desire* in social movements either as an end goal or as a mean that arts employ, it is necessary to dig deeper into Gago’s idea of *desire that moves us*. As she claims that feminist potentia refers to a collective capacity for creation, the Argentine artists thus worked questioning the desire, which is productive, constitutes subjects and relations (such as collective identity of sisterhood, i.e), and has a capacity “to change everything”. Understanding that while the feminist movements protest against many forms of violence that women suffer, feminist potentia also brings the desire to change the perception of women as victims. Similarly to the analysis of the finding 4.2 *Art to raise awareness and visualize the fight*, modern feminist movements here surpass the victimization and shape the

perception of women as bodily-sovereign, powerful, and desiring.

6.6 Art to provoke: critiquing the ideology

As Reed (2019) claims, another social function of art is to critique ideology by challenging dominant values. The findings of this study reveal that one of the major functions of art in marea verde was to provoke. A member of a feminist performers collective described one of their recent interventions against the Church saying that her artistic aim was “to provoke the search and purpose”:

So the purpose of this action was freedom, reclaiming the place that was occupied by oppressors, and to do so by having a symbol of the apple, that is something so naive, but becomes provocative when a group of women are eating it. – Interview 13.

With this intervention in front of the Cathedral in Buenos Aires, she wanted to invite people to be disobedient: “This action had to do with provoking reactions that are related to rejection”, she said, referring to the occupied public spaces by the Catholic Church. A muralist (Interview 4) made street art depicting famous Argentine men, including the President, the Pope, journalists, singers, “manly men”, as she describes them, being pregnant: “So we tried to bring in the discussion of the role of the men in this. We said: “If men could get pregnant, the abortion would be legal.”.



Photographs 3 and 4. Street art made by one of the interviewees. Using with a given artist's permission.

A singer and a member of actresses collective described their performance which served as a parody of Senators' speeches about abortion. During the debates before the adoption of the law, members of the Congress were obliged to take a side on the topic and express their position:

They said that if your dog has puppies, you give them to adoption, so why don't you do the same, just have it [the baby] and give it to adoption. Those things were said inside the Congress. They were so absurd...<...> like dinosaur thinking. So we took that on stage, with music, made a parody of them and the things they said. – Interview 12.

A similar intervention was created by a sound installation creator. She recorded demonstrations, speeches given by politicians, footage from the media and created a sound document reflecting different positions regarding the abortion:

I did it as kind of revenge, playing with these discourses of people that are against women's rights, abortion rights, those that are in the public opinion and actually reach masses in media. Playing with those discourses and putting them on side, I also had fun by doing that. – Interview 9.

The provocative pieces of art made by the interviewees framed the problem and suggested a moral judgment: women are abused by a male-chauvinist system. The message was sent with their art, characterizing the law-makers as controlling, old-mindset holding bureaucrats, and this demonization fueled powerful emotions for the marea verde participants and other artists. Thus, feminist potentia used art to resist religious and political implications over the body-territory.

7. Concluding remarks

This Chapter gathers the main findings answering the research question and presents suggestions for further research.

7.1 Summary of findings

This thesis aimed to explore the variety of functions that protest art has played in the marea verde movement in Argentina. Therefore, the following research question was answered: “*What functions has protest art played in Argentine reproductive rights movement seeking to reform abortion law?*”. Theoretical framework, employing concepts used by Argentine activist and scholar Veronica Gago, accompanied with critical theory of T.V Reed, was used to analyze the findings.

Findings	Analysis
<p>1. Art to empower: uniting and creating a collective identity (internal function)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pañuelo verde as a symbol of sisterhood; ● Interactive art as a tool to connect to and to unite the public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multitude, as the group of resistant bodies, is innovative in networks, exercising feminist potentia through art to expand itself and unite its members; ● Powerful artistic interventions strengthen the feeling of collectiveness, allowing to recognize another member as <i>your own</i>, thus creating collective identity.
<p>2. Art to inform: raising awareness and visualizing the fight (external function)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Movies about marea verde went to international film festivals; ● Photography exhibitions traveled to other countries, images were used for online newspapers and blogs; ● Singers and songwriters sent the message in their concerts; ● Interactive art invited people to discuss and illustrated the scope of the problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Art informs by reinforcing movement values and ideas and also by expressing them and promoting to the people outside of it; ● Art brings visibility and has a power to shape a person’s perception of the past or/and current events; ● Through art, multitude challenges the prevailing understanding of bodily sovereignty.
<p>3. Art to encourage: breaking the silence and giving a voice (external function)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Books, tackling the problem of illegal abortion, became best-sellers, and encouraged the readers to speak up about their own experience; ● Theatre performances verbalized the stigmatized topic of clandestine abortion; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Art took the pain from private sphere and made it public: marking body-territory; ● By putting their bodies into art, members of the multitude convey strong feminist potentia; ● Artistic interventions challenge existing orthodoxies: surpassing women’s victimization and bringing out the role of men in the fight for legal abortion.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Feminist circus troupe transmitted other people’s voices during the performance. 	
<p>4. Art to empower: therapy, memoria, and a light of hope (external function)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Art to purify the feelings and transform them into the crafted pieces; ● Art to share stories and traumatic experience; ● Art to remember the women who died because of unsafe, clandestine abortions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hope as an engine of social and political transformations, holding a trace of political spirituality; ● Collective expressions of interactive art was a strong feminist potentia that strengthened the multitude itself.
<p>5. Art for/of pleasure (external function)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Photographs to encourage the discussions on women’s pleasure and desire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Power of desire inside the multitude has a capacity to stimulate change; ● Feminism does not deprive bodies of their “dark potentia”.
<p>6. Art to provoke: critiquing the ideology (external function)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interventions against the Church ● Theater performances against the Senators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aiming to change the body-territory, protest art enables feminist potentia; ● Art invites to re-mark the territories taken by the Church and restricted by the politicians.

Figure 2 Summary of the findings.

Firstly, looking at the internal dynamics of protest art, it was found that art helped to unite the marea verde participants and to create a collective identity. Multitude – a feminist social movement – is exercising potentia through interactive, public art, which embodies and shapes the collective identity of sisterhood among the activists and participants of the movement. The symbol of pañuelo verde united the women and feminized bodies, spreading through the country and allowing to recognize and identify a stranger, wearing it, as *your own*.

The following findings reveal that protest art had broader external functions, to begin with – raising awareness and visualizing the fight. It told the history of the movement through movies, photographs, and song writing. Art helped to reach the foreign lands when Argentinian artists presented their crafted pieces in festivals, biennales, exhibitions, and concerts.

It was also found that art helped to break the taboos and give the voice to the people. Artists, using their fame, spoke up against the state’s violence against women by keeping abortion illegal, illustrated the presence of clandestine abortion with their art and their personal stories.

Their crafted pieces were telling a story that was a taboo topic for a very long time, bringing out a private topic to the public light.

Further, art was also used to empower individuals, serving as a therapy, as a memoria and giving the light of hope. Artistic interventions such as interactive paintings or collective knitting of pañuelos helped to express the pain the individuals were keeping inside. Writing confession-letters or short stories allowed people to take the burden off their chest and speak up about their losses for the very first time. These interventions also paid a tribute to women who died because of unsafe, clandestine abortion. Songs and poetry sent messages of hope and support for women even when the marea verde movement had to stall due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Moreover, art opened the discussion about women's pleasure and encouraged to look at the fight for legal abortion broader than the main goal, also fighting for sexual education. Photographs and digital designs created by a visual artists collective explored the ways for women and feminized bodies to talk about desire more openly, demand their right to decision-making, educate about sexuality and pleasure.

Finally, it was found that art was used to provoke and to critique the established orthodoxies. Murals, songs, acting performances and sound installations, created by multiple artists, critiqued the role of Catholic Church in the fight for legal abortion. Artistic interventions also satirically looked at key public figures who were men, making decisions over women's bodies. Thus, feminist potentia used art to resist religious and political implications over body-territory.

7.2 Suggestions for further research

As the marea verde movement is traveling from one country to another, there are several opportunities to expand the research. One way to look at protest art within the movement could be to investigate the success stories and the cases where marea verde could not make a change in the country's legal system. For instance, after the marea verde movement exploded in Mexico and Colombia, both countries adopted abortion law¹ (Grant, 2021; Casas, 2022), however even with mass demonstrations in Poland, the government not only kept the abortion

¹Abortion in Mexico is no longer a crime since September, 2021, although its legalization still varies by state. Meanwhile, abortion in Colombia was legalized in February 2022, allowing abortion on demand and without restrictions up to the 24th week of pregnancy.

illegal, but also restricted the policy even more (The Economist, 2020). Therefore, this analysis would enrich the research on functionalities in protest art, allowing to compare its impact on reproductive rights movement among different cultures.

Looking specifically at the marea verde movement in Argentina, the future research could explore the topic of protest art fighting for equal implementation of abortion law throughout the whole country. As most interviewees participating in this study indicated that although the abortion is legal, there are still a myriad of hinders stalling law's equal implementation.

Finally, another potential approach would be to undertake a study analyzing the commodity of art. As Marx (1844) wrote, "*the dealer in minerals sees only the commercial value but not the beauty and the specific character of the mineral*", meaning that in the contemporary capitalist world, the value of art is put on monetary instruments, considering art either as investment or as commodity. Employing the theory of Marx (1844) or Baudrillard (1981) would help to answer the question on whether the value of art is taken away and whether its impact or significance decreases as the reproduction expands. For example, it could be questioned how the meaning of pañuelo verde changes with its image's copies appearing on t-shirts, earrings, tote bags and other productions.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Consent Form

Interview Consent Form

This research centers on the National Campaign's for the Right to Legal, safe and Free Abortion. It aims to explore what role has protest art played in Argentinian feminist social movements seeking to reform abortion law.

The interview will last approximately 30-60 minutes. You have the right to not answer any of the questions or to stop the interview at any time. It is requested to audio and/or video record the interview in order to analyze the interview transcript. This will be done only with your written or verbal consent. The information collected will be used in the thesis of the researcher, Danielė Zubrickaitė, within the Master of Science in International Development and Management programme at Lund University, Sweden.

It is guaranteed that you will not be identified by name in the findings resulting from this interview and your participation in the study will remain confidential. If you agree to participate in the interview, please fill out this form manually or digitally and hand in/send it back to the researcher Danielė Zubrickaitė prior to your scheduled interview.

.....
Signature and date

Appendix 2: Interview Guide



Interview Guide

- I. *Interviewee and their connection to the National Campaign's for the Right to Legal, safe and Free Abortion.*
 - Do you identify as Argentinian? Do you live in Argentina?
 - How did you first hear about the National Campaign's for the Right to Legal, safe and Free Abortion?
 - Where did you first see the information about the movement Marea Verde? Do you remember how you felt when you first heard about it?
 - What are your thoughts on what brings people together in the movement?
 - Why are you involved in feminist-activism, who encouraged you to start your activity?

- II. *Art and public.*
 - When you think of the Campaign, what images or symbols come to mind? What is your first thought when you hear about the Campaign?
 - Have you crafted a piece of art related to the Marea Verde movement?
 - What were you thinking when creating it? What were you feeling?
 - What kind of political message did you want to convey with your art? Did you also want to convey any particular emotions?
 - Do you think the public engaged/responded to your artwork? Are you aware whether Marea Verde activists engage/promote it during the movement?

- III. *Mobilization and emotions*
 - Have you been to any of the Campaign's demonstrations or protests in person?
 - How did you learn about the protest(s)?
 - What made you want to attend the protest(s)?
 - Did you attend by yourself or with someone you know?
 - How did you know you were in the right place when you were looking for the location of the protest?
 - What was the atmosphere at the Campaign's demonstration/protest?
 - How did it feel to be a part of the protest(s) in person?
 - Did the risk of getting infected by Covid-19 had an impact on your decision to participate in the demonstration or halted from taking part in the later ones?
 - When you see/hear (name of the image/symbol they mentioned in section I), what do you feel?
 - What is the most important image/symbol/performance/piece of art that you associate with the Campaign? And why do you think so?

Appendix 3: Excerpt of Open Coding

Social media	Emotions when making art	Role of art	Pañuelo
Marches	Emotions in demonstrations	Public response	Campaign
Network	Collective identity	Reasons for fighting	Connection to Argentina

1. Illustrator

<p>1. Interviewee heard about the Campaign for the first time throughout the radio</p>	<p>Researcher: Yeah, I think yeah it has now started to record. So to begin with, do you identify yourself as Argentine? And do you live in Argentina? Interviewee: Yes, I was born in Argentina and I live in Argentina. Researcher: Great and my second question would be How did you first hear about the National Campaign's for the Right to Legal, safe and Free Abortion? Do you remember when you first heard [about it]? Interviewee: I heard.. I dont know how to say it... But there is a radio programme, digital programme, and I think in 2017 on this programme they began to speak about the need for abortion law. I am sorry for my English... Researcher: Are you kidding me? Please do not be! No!! (Both laughing) So, you first heard about it on a podcast or a radio show? Interviewee: It is not a radio show it is like a channel, it is like a dial, I don't know how to say, a station. Researcher: Aha.. And once you heard about it, what did you think would bring people together in the movement?</p>
<p>2. Radio show invites to militate</p>	<p>Interviewee: I listened about in in 2017 but in 2018 they started to speak about coming together not in parties but we say "militar", it is like starting with a group and going all together.</p>
<p>3. Argentine custom of militation</p>	<p>Researcher: Yeah yeah yeah Interviewee: I dont know how to say it in English but here it is very common to go in a group when you go to the march, all together. I started going with a group of feminists, I knew all of the girls from before, we were friends, it was great. We traveled to Buenos Aires from Mar del Plata, to go the the march, we marched also in Mar del Plata, it was really great.</p>
<p>4. Involvement in the movement through artistic interventions</p>	<p>Researcher: Okay, yeah, that's perfect, because my later question is whether you would say that you are involved in the movement. So as I understand you are definitely involved. You participate in marches.. Interviewee: Yeah and also I am making illustrations, murals, that kind of thing in the art aspects. Researcher: Yeah that's perfect! And when you think about the Campaign, what images or symbols come to your mind? When you just heard about the Campaign? Interviewee: The green scarf of pañuelo verde. It is really important. Because I did not know about the green scarf before. It is like in 2017-2018 I knew about it. I knew about the need for abortion law but I did not know about the Campaign, all the work that they have done before. So it was like cool. So the green scarf was important.</p>
<p>5. Finding out about Campaign through pañuelo verde</p>	<p>Researcher: so The first you saw the pañuelo and then only later you found out about Campaign? Interviewee: Yes i did not know where it comes from. I started to see it on Instagram with another people and then I saw pañuelo verde on television as well.</p>
<p>6. Finding out about pañuelo verde through social media</p>	<p>Researcher: Yeah, great, okay. Have you shared any of the symbols or images online?</p>

Appendix 4: Excerpt of Color Codes

<u>Descriptive codes</u>	<u>Other interviews related to the code</u>
<u>Interviewee heard about the Campaign for the first time throughout the radio</u>	1, 3
<u>Radio show invites to militate</u>	1
<u>Argentine custom of militation</u>	1
<u>Involvement in the movement through artistic interventions</u>	1, 2, 3, 4
<u>Finding out about Campaign through pañuelo verde</u>	1, 11, 12
<u>Finding out about pañuelo verde through social media</u>	1, 5, 6
<u>Makes art for awareness spreading</u>	1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12
<u>When making art related to abortion feels anger</u>	1
<u>Feeling a mix of emotions</u>	1, 3
<u>Public responds to artwork because identifies with it</u>	1
<u>Learns about protests through networks/groups</u>	1, 8, 10, 11
<u>Goes to marches with feminist collectives</u>	1, 8, 10
<u>Attending marches constantly</u>	1, 6
<u>Identifies place for marches by political flags/parties</u>	1
<u>Marches as a happy place</u>	1, 11, 12
<u>Marches make you feel not alone</u>	1, 11, 12, 14
<u>Did not participate in marches during Covid</u>	1, 13
<u>Role of pañuelo has changed</u>	1
<u>Identifying with a person who is wearing pañuelo</u>	1, 5, 13
<u>Art of another activist inspired interviewee to create more/different kind of art</u>	1, 6
<u>Does not identify as 100% Argentinian</u>	2, 3

Appendix 5: Excerpt of Coding Subcategories

Role of art

Role	Sub-category/explanation
<p>1. To raise awareness and visualize the fight</p>	<p>i) bring more people to the marches: "I wanted to make awareness in everyone, try to, I don't know, try to.. try to make everyone coming to the march, to know the importance to have an abortion law. I don't know. Everything.. Everyone was talking about, that more people, more women were concerned about this law it was better." (Int 1)</p> <p>ii) tool for fight: ii. a) "I started filming and thinking that if the law didn't came out and if the Senate did not approve it, I was going to use this movie as an instrument, as another instrument for fight, for struggle." (Int 2)</p> <p>ii. b) to accelerate political decisions <u>interviewee's movie ignited debates about abortion during the Presidential campaign:</u> "what really caught my attention, because we were in a Presidential campaign, we were having Presidential elections, and none of the... none of the candidates from one side or the other one, were talking about abortion." and after the movie came out, " the candidates had to take the position about the abortion and one was against it and the other was for the abortion to be legal, and the one who won was the one for the abortion to be legal." (Int. 2) "It's been for a few years, the project was proposed at the Parliament but was never approved, but this time they treat the project in the commission so that's why we started to work actively." (Int 6)</p> <p>iii) legacy of a fight: "And at the end of 2018 we had a bittersweet sensation when the law was progressing but at the end was not approved. And we kept the pañuelo visible because it was our way to say that we are still here, even if a law did not happen. It didn't happen now, but it will happen." (Int 3)</p> <p>iv) if it's not visible, it does not exist "When you fight for something, what is happening, what is invisible, what people, government, media makes invisible, those problems "don't exist" for other people. I mean they exist for you, they exist in reality, but it is not recognised, they make it look that it doesn't exist or that its not important. And that's why every struggle tries to gain visibility." (Int 5)</p> <p>v) to combat injustice: "Feeling of injustice is one of the reasons we are doing work together, yes. And impunity, things that make you do things together." (Int 11)</p> <p>vi) use the fame, gained from art, to raise awareness: "What was really important for the collective was to.. people know them from TV, from series for a long long long time, and they knew, they understood" and "I understood that I can really help the people who knew me to start listening more about the movement. It was my songs, timely songs, and then this one was like a political action song and I felt like it was bringing something very important to the movement." (Int 12) "So I would go and women would approach me and ask for help." (Int 10)</p> <p>vii) fight against the authority: "the Church has been intervening and conditionalizing the laws and practices, consciousness and morals" and "Because every place occupied by the Church was</p>

	a space taken away from the people.” (Int 13)
2. To unite and create collective identity	<p>i) sisterhood as collective identity: “In the streets we are like sisters, we feel like everything is possible, it is fantastic.” (Int 7) “You go to the <u>streets</u> and you share this sisterhood with a person that you didn’t even know, but you are sharing that. [pain and sadness regarding abortion]” (Int 3) “At one point the bandana in 2018 when Campaign exploded and became massive, the bandana was this kind of sisterhood between women.” (Int 3) “<u>these</u> demonstrations have this sisterhood, and even though you don’t know these people, you have a common objective that is very strong and precedes what you know and makes you familiar.” (Int 7) “But it allows me to go out of the museums, of the galleries, of my usual places, and to go to the streets, next to my sisters, to other activists” (Int 11) “It was absolutely moving, this sisterhood that was generated for the first time among women.” (Int 11)</p> <p>ii) not feeling alone anymore: “<u>what</u> happens is that I do not feel alone. When <u>I am</u> doing a movement I know that I have this network of other girls that are taking care of me and protecting me” (Int 3)</p> <p>iii) identifying and recognizing a person with a <u>pañuelo</u> as “your own”: “<u>it</u> is about being a feminist, it automatically shows what you think and where you stand. It is a symbol of where you stand. You walk into a <u>party</u> and you automatically know that people who wear it are on your side” (Int 5)</p> <p>iv) art united a collective: “abortion was a core reason we got together” (Int 11)</p>
3. To provoke	<p>i) “We did it with images of very <u>very</u> famous men, like the President, famous journalists, singers, these “manly” men, and we made them look pregnant. <u>So</u> we tried to bring in the discussion of the role of the men in this. We <u>said</u> “If men would get pregnant, the abortion would be legal”. And we also did a mural of the Pope, also pregnant” (Int 4)</p> <p>ii) sound document representing different positions regarding abortion, aim was to revenge. “I did it as kind of revenge like playing with these discourses of people that are against women’s rights, abortion rights, those that are in the public opinion and actually reach masses in media, so playing with those discourses and putting them on side, I also had fun by doing that.” (Int 9)</p> <p>iii) acting performance as a parody of Senator’s speeches about abortion. “<u>they</u> said the things like “You don’t let your dogs, your puppies, you don’t abort them, so why do you abort”, you know, things that are so <u>so</u> absurd, like dinosaur thinking. <u>So</u> we took those kind of things and turned them into saying them on stage, with music, make like a parody of them and the things they said. They <u>actually said</u> that, if your dog has puppies, you give them to adoption, so why don’t you do the same, just have it and give it to adoption. Those things were said inside the Congress. They were so absurd...” (Int 12)</p> <p>iv) intervention in from of the Cathedral. “<u>what</u> I am doing and what is going to provoke the search and purpose. <u>So</u> the purpose of this action was freedom, reclaim the place that was occupied by oppressors, and to do so by having a symbol of apple, that is something so naive, but becomes provocative when a group of women are eating it.” (Int 13)</p>