

Strikes, Stoppages, Occupations

Mexican Feminist Writing on the Walls

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ABSTRACT After the repression of the student movement in 1968, it was feminists who collectively took over public spaces for the first time in the 1970s. In recent years, two of the most representative occupations have taken place at the Angel of Independence in Mexico City and the Department of Philosophy and Literature at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). Over the past fifty years, feminist political strategies have proliferated, exerting a significant, direct impact on the visual regime and the disappropriation of cultural patrimony. Drawing on the voices of different generations of feminists, this article explores the political meanings that striking, work stoppage, and occupation have acquired, and some of the visual and narrative political strategies (including strikethroughs, graffiti, and mural-making) that serve them.

KEYWORDS feminist political strategies, strikes, work stoppages, occupations, disappropriation

After the massacre of students on October 2, 1968, feminists were the first to collectively take to the streets and occupy public spaces in the 1970s. In this article, we analyze the contexts, gestures, and mechanisms through which feminist collectives occupy these spaces by striking and using work stoppages and graffiti to intervene politically, poetically, and pedagogically. Two of the most representative occupations have taken place at the Angel of Independence—also known as the Winged Victory and the Monument of Independence—in Mexico City and at the Department of Philosophy and Literature at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). Drawing on the voices of different generations of feminists, we explore three stages of the poetic, political, and pedagogical meanings that have emerged in sites of striking, work stoppage, and occupation. We conclude by identifying the visual and narrative strategies (including graffiti and murals, citing,

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and strikethroughs) that have transformed public space in direct response to three issues: (1) historical absences of representation, and of 1968 in particular; (2) the suppression of women's experiences and bodies in the definition and construction of cultural "patrimony"; and (3) the repercussions of repeated acts of erasure in the city and in the university. These issues have prompted feminist women, on the one hand, to take over the spaces that have caused their disappearances and, on the other, to inscribe their words and messages in those spaces. These women give us a means of convening with the future and invite us to heed their call.

1. Between Stoppages, Strikes, and Occupations: From *Ni una menos* to *Vivas nos queremos*¹

I have read few essays, texts, books on violence in my country. I never wanted to hear the testimonials. I did what I could to keep the issue far from my reality. Then reality overflowed. The memory of the past, of my parents, of the student movement of '68, had to be present. My different body—a woman's body—had to position itself in the middle of all that.²

In December 2015, a year had passed since the forced disappearance of forty-three students from the Escuela Normal Rural Raúl Isidro Burgos, better known as the Escuela Normal Rural Ayotzinapa. Andrea, a student who was taking the seminar on "Femicide and Feminicidal Violence in Latin America and the Caribbean" at the Museum of Memory and Tolerance in Mexico City,³ spoke of the fear she felt; of the relationship between the experience of violence suffered by her parents and the experience of her parents' parents; of studying and producing situated knowledge from the body. In museum classrooms, academics, activists, journalists, and university students reclaim past practices, such as the strike, occupation, or work stoppage, to activate transformative modes of counteracting the violence we suffer in the present. The classroom is thus transformed into a portal for thought; that is, beyond the urgency of reacting to external violence, it is a space that serves to recuperate and reactivate: *thinking about the present through the lens of the past*. The seminar participants share the notion that 1968 fomented a capacity for critical dissent, which continues to sustain other social movements today.

Since 1968, there has been continuity in the forms of violence exercised by the state apparatus against dissident bodies—forced disappearances, sexual violence, femicide—as well as constant court proceedings that result in impunity.⁴ But in 1968, social energy was also created that led to explosive *flashpoints*. Among them was the strike.

How can we reclaim the strike as a flashpoint to catalyze transformative pedagogical, political, and narrative practices in the present? What genealogies should

we reconstruct? How can they enrich and challenge the feminist strike as a practice? With what methods of muraling, what kinds of strikethroughs? Thanks to the actions that feminists have put into practice, striking has been rebuilt through a praxis that takes up transformative practices in the present as well as past experiences, updating them for the present. In Mexico in 2016, the first feminist strike was organized. Collectives throughout the country reappropriated a tool of struggle that had belonged to workers' struggles until then.⁵ Thanks to the feminist strike, the differences between work and care work/domestic labor have become evident in an explicit way; that is, the differences between activities that are considered productive and those that have been (and continue to be) invisible, unpaid, and excluded from the public and political sphere because they have been considered proper to the female sex for centuries.⁶ Thanks to the feminist strike, the hyperexploitation of care work and precarious labor as well as the dissolution of the difference between the time of production and the time of social reproduction have been rendered visible and presented as political issues.⁷

Since 2016, all the feminist strikes that have been organized in Mexico have managed to make two historic dates and two fundamental issues for transnational feminist movements symbolically converge: November 25 and March 8, and sexist violence and the precariousness of labor. The slogans shouted in the squares encapsulate a political project: *Ni una menos* (Not One Less), *Ni una más* (Not One More), and *Vivas nos queremos* (We Want to Be Alive), and also a challenge: “Si nos matan, entonces que produzcan sin nosotras” (“If they kill us, then let them produce without us”).⁸

In a political, social, and economic space marked by historical processes of colonial and capitalist expropriation and dispossession, exacerbated by neoliberalism, as noted by Angela Davis,⁹ it is imperative to constellate different forms of domination, expropriation, and the dispossession of bodies and territories. As we will see in the next section, the actions that the feminist strike puts into practice (including graffiti and strikethroughs, gestures for the demonumentalization of the common good, and the critical rereading and appropriation of public space) seek to redefine public space. These practices mark the space conceptually, creating livable, vital, shared cities and educational environments, where the concept of “security” refers neither to the enclosure nor to the emptying of public places as protection, for these tendencies would be in direct opposition to the project of consolidating social ties.¹⁰

Strike, Space, and Action

The feminist praxis of striking also takes the form of *occupying* public space. There is no strike without an occupation. An occupation serves to position people within and allow them to inhabit public space, confound the opposition, and defuse fear.

Feminist editor Marta Acevedo¹¹ recalls the effect of the climate in the aftermath of a massacre: “After the massacre of the students on October 2, 1968, in Tlatelolco, everyone was afraid of demonstrating in the street.” The impossibility of inhabiting a space due to fear is one of the effects of the dirty war against students, and yet, Marta also recalls that “in the 1970s, feminist groups were the first to collectively reappropriate public spaces.”¹²

To confound the opposition and defuse fear in demonstrations, feminists made a gesture with an empty space in the middle. Opening the thumb and forefinger of each hand produces an “L” and creates a triangle: the vaginal symbol. With a single gesture, the vagina, as an invisible site of shame and sin, is pressed into a cultural framework and transformed into a political issue: “a gesture that is an oxymoron, since a gesture does not speak, nor does it communicate; a gesture is outside of language, but it is also inside a language.”¹³ A triangular symbol, one that paradoxically marks its appropriation with empty space, indicates a radical change in doing politics with respect to traditional leftist parties and social movements. Until then, movements at the center of the political scene had used a raised arm and a clenched fist, or two fingers pointing forward like a gun, or even two fingers spread apart to say “victory.” Since then, ad hoc, self-organized groups of feminists have chosen to deconstruct and decentralize traditional march strategies to confound the opposition. The objective is no longer to march toward the center of the executive power, toward the Government Palace, but rather to occupy different public squares,¹⁴ to displace and overturn the codified symbols of power and occupy them with a triangular void, which engenders new meaning.

There is no strike without an occupation; there is no occupation without a work stoppage. In the past thirty years, feminist slogans have transformed and encapsulated the cultural and political elements that determine them. From *Ni una más* (Not One More) to *Ni una menos* (Not One Less) to *Nos queremos vivas* (We Want to Be Alive): this shift in slogans indicates a displacement, a new semantic shift in the way we think about and act against feminicidal violence—that is, not passively (as in “not one more because my body is a battlefield”) but rather reactively (as in “not one less because we love each other alive”). This semantic shift is accompanied by a turn to explosive flashpoints. Since 2016, feminists in the municipality of Ecatepec, on the outskirts of Mexico City, have opted to organize their own #8M, or March 8, demonstrations, because the places where they live usually don’t receive media coverage or political attention. “At present, Ecatepec is the most violent municipality in Mexico for women, even surpassing Ciudad Juárez, which has raised international alarm for its levels of femicide,” explains Ana Yeli Pérez, legal adviser to the National Citizen Observatory of Femicide.¹⁵ Deconstructing, displacing, changing protest centers, and decentralizing a protest don’t simply signify the desire to render visible and denounce feminicidal violence, since their political power lies in the reappro-

priation of its grounds, taking the floor and the public square as a site of occupation and the recreation of common space itself. This is about activating a political locus where only an empty space was previously perceived. It is about taking over a space and going on strike, an active strike. On March 8 (or #8M), 2020, the “Vivas Nos Queremos” collective in Ecatepec chose to spend the entire day occupying public transit, singing feminist songs while getting on and off the buses that take women to work every day in the capital. In this way, they transform a space where women suffer sexual harassment in their daily lives into a space of solidarity and creation. The effect was a new turn: a collective rewriting—mediated by voices—of the imminent danger faced by women in Ecatepec, women from the periphery. After more than eighty thousand women overtook Mexico City’s historic center in the massive march of #8M 2020, activists, artists, and academics called a meeting to collectively rethink the uses of the march and the strike. In this meeting, the writer Elvira Liceaga summarized the political power that she perceived as follows: “Although the march summons us to a collective fight against feminicide, it has an intimate sense of camaraderie. The march could be a funeral, and for me it is one of the most transformative, curative events I have ever been to. Hack the collective fight to accompany us, to meet us, a healing and transformative encounter.”¹⁶

The day after the storm was #9M: strike day. Feminists began to move between presence (of the #8M work stoppage and occupation) and absence (of the #9M strike, the displacement and emptying of the sites of the production and reproduction of life).

For journalist and documentary filmmaker Érika Lozano, between work stoppages, strikes, and occupations, “the novelty is in how we look at the violence and horror that have happened to us and transformed us and how we now take care of ourselves. That is very new. We recover the dignity that they try to take from us every day. We regain a sense of life.”¹⁷

After the historic march of March 8, 2020, different groups of women have continued taking to the streets of the capital and other cities in the republic. In Mexico City, both before and after the pandemic, thousands of feminists marched to denounce the immeasurable feminicidal violence exerted on the bodies of women. The fear of contagion and the federal recommendation to “stay home” have been unable to contain the urgent need to go out and occupy the streets and demand the cessation of violence, which is ceaseless. As feminists, we persist; we continue making new maps to affirm that our bodies-territories need not continue to be laboratories where the explosive mechanisms of violence are experienced. To do this consistently, we devise social practices to transform the territories we inhabit; this is also our inheritance from ’68. Between occupations, work stoppages, and strikes—displacing and overturning—we are making a new map to reinvent urban space, where being a woman does not cost you your life.

2. Graffiti and Strikethroughs: Gestures for De-patriarchalization De-facing the Common Good

This new map also includes new forms of demonstration in public space. As we have maintained, the strikes, stoppages, occupations, and demonstrations organized by feminist collectives over the past two years in Mexico City (as well as in other parts of the republic), have developed responsive strategies (turnovers, displacements, and occupations) related to direct action, ways of intervening in urban spaces. In unsettling the cityscape of monuments, they have also managed to intervene in the nation-state's conformity to a univocal visual significance, widening the fault lines such that *unexpected* lives and experiences emerge.

~~The dead~~ The dead women are increasingly unruly
 Before they were easier to deal with:
 we gave their stiff collar a flower
 we praised their names in a long list:
 the borders of the homeland
 the shadows of the distinguished
 the monstrous marble.

The corpse signed up to be remembered:
 once more joined the ranks
 marched to the beat of our old drum.

But what now
~~the dead~~ the dead women
 have become ~~others~~ other women since then.

These days they grow ~~ironic~~ ironic women
 ask questions.

It seems to me they realize
 that they are becoming the majority

Intervention: Roque Dalton, "~~The soldier's~~ The female soldier's rest"¹⁸

Since August 16, 2019, the political graffiti superimposed on some of Mexico City's most emblematic monuments during historic feminist marches has ignited heated debate and prompted engaging critical reflections about the occupation of public space, the patriarchal bias of patrimony, and the partiality of the visual regime constituted through monuments.

*Amigas Vivas, Policía nos viola, Con nosotras no se juega, Se va a caer, La Patria mata, México feminicida.*¹⁹ These are some of the phrases that have been inscribed on the foundation of the Winged Victory and on the bases of other iconic monuments.



FIGURE 1. The foundation of the Winged Victory. Nirvana Paz, from the series *Victoria Alada* (2019). Digital photograph, 1:1 photomontage, Mexico City.

Since then, such phrases have subverted the stony apparatus of conformity to the allegedly collective, univocal meaning of a triple regime: the regime of the visible, the regime of patrimony, and the regime of patriarchy.

Sure enough, accusations arrived swiftly. The feminist scratches and strike-throughs on the stones served to criminalize and vilify the protest and, metonymically, the feminist movement as a whole. In this way, as has happened so many times in history, the scratch that left a trace of the dire cry (“¡Nos están matando!”²⁰) was elided and superseded by the final blow: the accusation, which was converted into a media sentencing of “vandalism.” This is the clean slate of the patriarchal story: “not like that,” they say (of course, they always know how).

It is not our intention to dedicate this text to deliberating over whether these gestures endanger the historic, cultural legacy of Mexico. On the contrary, what we wish to propose through this brief analysis is how cultural and historical patrimony, or rather, the processes of “patrimonialization,” are dangerous in and of themselves; they are an attempt to shape what we could call a *sense* of a community. This has been the case in the most recent demonstrations and work stoppages called by different feminist groups in our region, and it has been repeated, in similar ways, in the most recent feminist strikes that have transpired in the largest public university in the country: the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM).

And this is so because far from constituting a neutral or impartial resource, the production of patrimony, as well as university “pride,” is a political instrument, invested in the service of power structures.²¹ Formulated on the basis of the false claim that patrimonial assets simply “are,” or have been created and are conserved by a universal subject for the pride and enjoyment of a community with an allegedly singular sensibility,²² processes of patrimonialization model, in the words of Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “peoples’ relationships to what they do, the way in which they conceive of their culture and themselves, and the basic conditions of cultural production and reproduction.”²³

It is thus no coincidence that in recent decades and quite clearly in the last two years, monuments have been the direct targets of protests led by groups marginalized by regimes of visibility, representation, and historical recognition (associated with conditions of economic, political, and social subjugation): women, Indigenous peoples, African American communities, and so on. And as Guadalupe Jiménez-Esquinas points out, “relationships with patrimony are situated, embodied, gendered, enclosed, ethnicized, politicized, and therefore not universal.”²⁴

Strikethrough Scratching Is Not Erasing

About two years ago, the straightforward approach to the Paseo de la Reforma, the central avenue in Mexico City, was blocked by scaffolding and panels at one of its most symbolically and spatially prominent stretches. First, the scaffolding was made of makeshift wood, and now it is fortified with a more sophisticated facade—a wall. The appearance of “remodeling” or “work in progress” actually covers, hides, or perhaps paradoxically points out the multiple interventions (in the form of graffiti, strikethroughs, and scratches) that feminist women carried out during the march on August 16, 2019 to the Monument of Independence—that is, the national emblem, the symbol of Mexico City, otherwise known as the Angel of Independence and the Winged Victory, designed by the architect Antonio Rivas Mercado in the early twentieth century. This was a historic protest in which thousands of women demanded recognition of various rape allegations perpetrated by the police, while protesting the relentless waves of violence unleashed against the lives of women throughout the country.

This graffiti precipitated a polarizing debate that took over social media and the mainstream media. Despite the fact that the debate diverted and in a way erased the original demands of the protest, the discussions around the “damages” served to concretize what feminist studies of cultural heritage had pointed out years ago—that is, that patrimony is a tool that serves the patriarchy. Far from being a “given” *good*, it is an instrument that produces and reproduces its own material and cultural conditions (ensuring its continuity).²⁵ It is not coincidental, as feminist readings insist, that patrimony and patriarchy share the same etymological root; *patrimonium* names that which is inherited through the paternal line.

The controversy, which continues today, has led a group of women who specialize in restoration, calling themselves #RestauradorasConGlitter, to appear in the public dispute.²⁶ In a statement issued on several social networks on August 21, 2019, this group expressed the importance of pushing back against the extensive media coverage that had preferred to “emphasize the visual effect of the graffiti instead of focusing on what is truly important: the hundreds of cases of rape and femicide that should never have happened, and that are increasing at an alarming rate each day.”²⁷



FIGURE 2.
A wider view
of the Winged
Victory. Nirvana
Paz, from
the series
Victoria Alada
(2019). Digital
photograph,
Mexico City.

The demand turned hashtag #PrimerolasMujeresLuegoLasParedes (#Women-FirstWallsLater), #RestauradorasConGlitter (#RestorationWithGlitter) has pointed out that graffiti should be read as a symptom of the savage violence perpetrated against the bodies of women. In a petition addressed to the President of the Republic and the Head of Government of Mexico City, they argued that the permanent conservation of the graffiti “should be a palpable reminder of the reprehensible situation of violence in our country, and that therefore none should be removed until the problem of gender violence is addressed and resolved.”²⁸

As a result, today the monument (and especially its pedestal, which is the only part of the monument at hand and eye level) is still full of graffiti, of phrases

and symbols that intervene in the meaning of patrimonial discourse. Such “strikethroughs” do not entirely erase patrimony, but they do argue against what has been told as a single tale. They reply in the voices of the disappeared and the subaltern. In this way, if we recall bell hooks’s approach to “talking back,”²⁹ graffiti can be analyzed not only as a mechanism that seeks to make silence visible and audible, but also, fundamentally, as a gesture or an adequate, appropriate aesthetic intervention, which in this case rightly represents the dire cry: “¡Vivas nos queremos!” Here, too, the strikethrough is a sign of what has already been written.

If strategies such as striking or collectively occupying public space have functioned as explosive flashpoints in the movement’s political power since 1968, then we can consider these visual interventions into cultural patrimony as inaugurating a new mode of protest: one that relays the “misuse” of cultural “goods.”

In her recent work on the “uses of use,” Sara Ahmed calls for a reclamation of the material potential that emerges “when we refuse to use things properly.” This type of misuse, this devious—*queer*—use of things, which could be considered “queer vandalism” (interpreted as “the willful destruction of the venerable and beautiful”),³⁰ can be read as an extension of those feminist practices that, since the seventies, have apprehended the political, effective, and affective power of the unexpected appearance of certain bodies in space and public discourse: those of women, racialized people, sexual dissidents, trans* bodies, and so on.

The graffiti on the monuments and the murals in sites of public education (as we will discuss) disrupt (without erasing) ordinary uses and understandings of public space. These are actions that consciously throw usual use in crisis; they obstruct it. This is about “stop[ping] what usually happens from happening.”³¹

We might occupy a building or a street with the intent to disrupt ordinary usage, to get in the way of how that space is usually used (for what and by whom). Political protest often requires becoming an *inconvenience*. . . . Usage can be how something recedes, an in-justice, violence. To make violence seeable, sometimes you have to create a scene: to stop business as usual.³²

Feminist *inconvenience* occupies public space, and throws its grand narratives into crisis (those of the victors, national heroes, golden angels) without erasing its history; its operation is different from the *tabula rasa*. Feminist *inconvenience* paints over, repaints, replicates, and intervenes; in doing so, it resignifies cultural “goods,” and reminds us that “monuments must be in contact with society. . . . If they are not re-signified, they are worthless.”³³

It is an action that perhaps suggests, as its own gesture, a different pedagogical approach. If the lynchpin of the educational system teaches children to repeatedly

correct their errors over and over again until they *get it right*, then the feminist scratches on the monuments highlight how the (cultural) “good” also needs to be reevaluated. At the same time, in this case, it could be about marking an offense. But here the solution is not to erase, repeat, erase, repeat. On the contrary, this critical (pedagogical) feminist gesture intervenes like a cry, like an exclamation point, like a question mark. It opens up, or rather extends the space generated in any critical classroom: a threshold where despair and rage, but also joy and happiness, are paradoxically put to work.

As critical studies of patrimony and the collective #RestauradorasConGlitter have pointed out, the process of resignifying a cultural legacy does not differ in form (basically, of course) from official processes of patrimonialization:³⁴ signifying and conveying a given “good” in the present, while taking up the past as a resource.³⁵

Goods as Belongings

Although it is perhaps not exactly “appropriate,” read through the lens that we propose here, the act of resignification that recalls the old Angel of Victory again comes close to the method of disappropriation developed and practiced by Mexican writer Cristina Rivera Garza:

It is true that rewriting is a practice through which one goes back to doing something that had already been done before. It is also true that the rewriting process undoes what has been done before. Better yet, rewriting turns it into an unfinished fact, or ends up taking it as not done rather than as done; rewriting ends up giving it even more to do. Rewriting, in this sense, is a work with and in time . . . that implies moving back and forth at the same time: updating: producing the present. . . . When a writer decides to use some appropriation strategy—excavation, *striketrough*, or copying—something becomes clear in the foreground: the role of reading in the process of drafting the text itself.³⁶

Considering graffiti as an intervention (or occupation/misuse) in public space and as an act of disappropriation (in response to the partial and biased patriarchal appropriation of patrimony) maps a route that simultaneously intersects with and deviates from Rivera Garza’s literary approach.

In her writing, to disappropriate the patrimony “literally means dispossessing the dominion of what-is-one’s own.” We can then infer that dispossessing patrimony is nothing other than a demonumentalizing gesture. It interrupts patrilineal heritage. It is an act of defacing the patriarchy. In the case of writing, Rivera Garza specifies, “dispossession signals not only the object but the unequal relationship that makes possession possible in the first place: domination.”³⁷ If this poetics of disappropriation exposes (or discovers and reveals) that individuality actually



FIGURE 3.
Medusa carved
into the base
of the Winged
Victory. Nirvana
Paz, from
the series
Victoria Alada
(2019). Digital
photograph,
Mexico City.

hides (or buries) communal work in the case of written language, then in the case of monumental language—that of the stones and artifacts that occupy public space and stand for singular narratives, the national ones, the heroic ones—gestures of disappropriation demonstrate that their apparent collective belonging actually conceals bias: the added value (indeed, this is what every process of monumentalization consists of) makes the monument an instrument of the patriarchal order and, sure enough, the colonial, classist, ableist, and heterosexist order as well. And the issue is that goods and belongings do not belong to everyone, every woman, that is.

To whom, then, do these “goods” belong? Where do their meanings come from?

If one of the main functions of patrimonialization is to generate meaning in the present by taking up the past as a resource, what can be conveyed when the present is stained with the subjection of (women's) lives? What kind of *good* could be bound to this mortal *evil*? And how to account for it, for women?

In Greek mythology, Medusa unleashed her invincible protective power by petrifying anyone who tried to look at her. Her head guarded temples and monuments. The Winged Victory also has a Medusa carved into its base. But her fierce gaze doesn't appear to paralyze. Now rivers of blood stained red by the spray paint of a feminist gesture flow from the empty sockets of her eyes. As such, the incommensurability of the monumental stone and the rigidity of its meaning burst open through the pores of its materiality at the cry of *¡Ni una menos!*

3. Citing and Summoning in Public Space

Intervening on the walls and in the debates about defacing patrimony, which are academic in this case, has also been a constant in the actions related to student occupations and strikes. Undoubtedly, these actions also reclaim the heritage of '68.

In July of 2018, during the summer break, a mural made by students at the College of Science and Humanities at UNAM in Atzacapotzalco³⁸ disappeared under the brush of white paint; campus authorities had ordered the erasure. Here (institutional) machinations seem contrary to those of (feminist) strikethrough, where the former results in the message's total disappearance. The kind of strikethrough we have discussed enables revision by paradoxically preserving the old formulation alongside a new meaning. The patriarchal brush, on the other hand, precludes the coexistence of possible meanings, which can be contradictory or have a stake in the economy of the unspeakable or that which is "yet to be said." The act of crossing something out makes it possible to underscore the unfinished nature and endlessness of meaning; it is always possible to cross out a new meaning.

The *event*, as Alain Badiou calls it,³⁹ is that which is imperceptible or not fully representable or sayable, that which has yet to be said or to come to pass. And it is in this logical vein that we close this essay, which has traveled the streets of Ecatepec and Mexico City in order to land in another emblematic place for the Mexican feminist movement: the university. In this section, we present graffiti and murals with double meanings: as well-known forms of protest and simultaneously—and paradoxically—as *visual events* with meanings open to intervention and signification, which is another version of the strikethrough.

After the erasure of the student mural in Azcapotzalco, a series of feminist protests transpired that made public the major grievances of the students of the UNAM high school system with respect to different types of violence—and especially gender violence—experienced within and around their schools. On September 3, 2018, a march to the rectory of UNAM's central campus resulted in a sig-



FIGURE 4. Student mural at the Department of Philosophy and Literature, UNAM depicting the Angel of Independence kissing Athena. Valeria Romero Morales, Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), Mexico City.

nificant number of injuries, especially those of Joel, a young man who was beaten and stabbed near the center of the university. A scene came to be cited: Noemí, Joel's girlfriend, embraces him as he lies wounded on the bloodied ground, and her body becomes a shield to protect him from the beating.

As a practice, muraling arises as a double mode of "citation" in the sense that it encompasses both the reproduction of words and gestures, or messages in another context, as well as the act of meeting, gathering, or being called (that is, summoned) to appear.⁴⁰ These two senses of citational practice⁴¹ engender another *event*: students from the high school in Vallejo (another liminal, industrial, and precarious area in the northern part the city) cite the scene of Noemí's shield on the central walls of their school by creating a mural, which represents the event of the injury and the shield. In protest, at least forty UNAM campuses called for a forty-eight- to seventy-two-hour strike.

But the practice of antipatriarchal erasure doesn't end there. In October 2019, inside the Department of Philosophy and Literature, different groups of women arranged for a series of murals and graffiti to commemorate '68 under the banner of the question, "Where are the movement's women?"⁴² Again, the brush of authority painted over one of the student murals inside the department—the mural that represents the Angel of Independence (and the Winged Victory, a symbol of the city that crowns one of the busiest avenues in Mexico City) united in a kiss with Athena, a figure that represents the Department of Philosophy and Literature (FFyL).

The Winged Victory holds a Molotov cocktail in her left hand. Both Victoria and Athena wear green handkerchiefs around their necks, and they embrace against a purple background, kissing each other behind a red banner with the

caption “We exist because we resist.” When the collectives asked the university’s lawyer about the reason for the erasure, he replied that it was erased because the Angel of Independence is a national symbol that must be protected. What the feminist collectives once again achieved was to *deface the patriarchy* and reclaim a symbol—the angel, today the Winged Victory—that did not belong to the nation but to Mexico City’s community.

Again, the academic feminist collectives’ mural functions as a citational practice. After its total erasure, the feminist groups at the Department of Philosophy and Literature cited two events: first, a lesbian celebration of “the chain of separatist kisses against lesbophobia in the FFyL”⁴³ and, shortly after, a strike to denounce gender violence that began on November 4, 2019. They were also responding to another citation: the strike that ensued at the FES (the Department of Higher Education) Cuautitlán campus after a student was drugged and raped at a party, only to wake up naked and with signs of sexual violence.

The Organized Women of the Department of Philosophy and Letters (MOFFyL) announced that they would not cede the murals until the conditions of a safe and nonviolent life within the department were met. The strike lasted from November 4, 2019, to April 14, 2020. As on the Azcapotzalco campus, following the strike, a series of occupations (thirty-three, some of which lasted only a single day) were carried out by female students and activists who also protested against gender violence within UNAM and its surroundings and who demanded a more active role for the University both to make problems of gender violence visible within it and to intervene against more severe forms of violence: the feminicides in the city and in the country. The MOFFyL presented a petition with eleven demands to department authorities; ceding the university facilities was conditional upon the fulfillment of the demands.⁴⁴

Tens of thousands of students—eighty thousand in the thirty-three occupations and thirteen thousand in the FFyL—were out of class for a full semester.

In the pages that follow, we focus on one of these occupations: the FFyL occupation. We analyze the graffiti and murals that the MOFFyL left inside. In doing so, we aim to get closer to the knowledge that marks an event as something yet to come—something unfinished and between walls—contained in successive citations on the walls of the department and which is only possible to obtain partially and liminally, within the limits of the word and the image, on the borders of intimate writing and scandalous graffiti, of insult and prayer, and on the borders of violence and the cry of abandon: knowledge *written by hand*.⁴⁵

Above all, we are interested in investigating how to bring about a new distribution of impressions—a distribution of the sensible, as Jacques Rancière would say⁴⁶—that invites conversation between academia and activism, between feminism and critical perspectives, between students, feminist groups, the university

community, and the administration, and between strikethroughs and citations as strategies of communication. We seek conversations about graffiti and murals as paradoxical and unfinished modes of learning in two senses—that is, as inscriptions that can be crossed out and also as citations on the walls that summon us to meet and to reinterpret the role of the public university in the fight against violence as well as the presence of self-organized groups of feminists and their collectives within transformations in public space.

Grffiti and Murals as Events: Don't Say It All

Grffiti and murals do not appear on a continuum; they do not conform to an unequivocal narrative script. An explosively insulting bit of graffiti can appear on a wall, and next to it a call to burn it all down, and upon turning the corner, a poem, a word, or a cluster of phrases may invite the purest and most promising forms of solidarity and love. Their interpretation brings us closer to comprehending the complexity of feminist affective, discursive, and political aims, those related to the alliance of unexpected meanings and the unstated stakes of the movement.⁴⁷

MOFFyL themselves are the ones who stipulate (in demand 9 of their petition) that the graffiti must not be erased. In this way, they pursue the same aim that gave rise to the collective #RestauradorasConGlitter, with its demands for the conservation of the graphic interventions on the Winged Victory a few months earlier. Graffiti and muraling thus became a disorganized but referential text, which cites—and resonates with—other occupations in the city, a nonlinear text waiting to be deciphered. We must read such texts carefully to interpret their meanings, as the dilemmas and paradoxes of these reverberating messages is left to the university and broader community.

The graffiti and murals in the FFyL reveal everything: anger, loneliness, fear, revenge, vulnerability, authoritarianism, creativity, reason, solidarity, love. We are not going to—nor do we want to, nor can we—offer a coherent explanation or a solution to the problems we face with occupations and demands based on reading and analyzing this visual narrative. What we can offer, given the logic of the event, which Badiou⁴⁸ refers to as unthinkable, a sort of ambiguous and unrepresentable logic, we would call babbling, a dilemma that involves contradiction or paradox. This brings us closer to the extraordinary, the unpredictable, the unforeseen—that to which organized groups of feminists themselves might point to without having known it beforehand.

On the other hand, some of the graffiti and the visual routes that they trace are well known. We wonder, can their refractions in different parts of the city, in various university spaces, reflect the logic and meaning of their enunciation? Is it the same to read the graffiti on the pedestal of the Angel of Independence—the Winged Victory—as it is to find that same graffiti in a classroom or in a university bathroom?

What we seek in the citations and refractions of this political graffiti is to understand their function as instances of translucency,⁴⁹ as lit passageways in a dim space. We recognize them as luminous halos that disperse and reverberate in a game of opacity and selective transparency. On the one hand, this enables suggestive constellations,⁵⁰ and on the other hand, it leads to a fragmented visuality: meanings yet to come and a glance at their outlines.

Translucency occurs when light does not entirely fade away but leaves its mark as an “opaque form of learning.”⁵¹ The occupation as event suggests something new, something unseen, an angle, a word, a spectacular insult, a fragment of poetry, the remnant of an image that multiplies the meanings when read as resonance, in its citational function, or as strikethrough.

An Occupation Itinerary

In this section, we have selected eight images of graffiti and murals. Presented as a spatial journey through the Department of Philosophy and Literature, these form the traces of an untold story, a story reconstructed from the reverberations of echoes. What can the walls taken over by a group organized by women say for five months and ten days, to a restless community that doesn’t always want to read them? Given its paradoxical pedagogy of force, rage, joy, and desolation, can this political graffiti incite dialogue? How to look at/read the walls/worlds that have been crossed out and cited there? We will enter the department, and we will pass through the central hall; we will reach the classrooms and the bathroom, and, from there, to the left, we will walk toward the administration and go up to the first floor.

DEPARTMENTAL THRESHOLD: “WE ARE BAD, WE CAN BE WORSE”

The young women cite the feminist phrase “We are bad, we can be worse,” which has been repeated time and again since 1975—during the first great global feminist event—the so-called World Conference on Women (Conferencia Mundial sobre la Mujer) in Mexico City. They round it off with “And if you don’t like it, go fuck yourself, fuck yourself.” They take to the streets; they sing: “It’s gonna fall, it’s gonna fall, the patriarchy is gonna fall.” “Neither the State nor the church, neither husband nor boss, my body is mine and mine alone and the decision is mine alone.” They also sing the chorus of a song that traveled the globe: “The Rapist Is You.”⁵² Common sense depicts the rapist as an immoral and perverse subject; but for the most part, it’s the opposite. He represents macho morality; rapists are not crazy, or people inclined to crime, nor do they do it because they need sex but rather to say something to the world and above all to other men. “Las peores” (the worst) is also a double citation. On the one hand, it cites Sor Juana (“la peor de todas” [the worst of all women]), and on the other, it points to the tonal intensification of which feminists are capable, a strategy to achieve the changes necessary to live in an equitable and just society.



FIGURE 5. Graffiti at the department entrance cites the feminist phrase “Somos malas, podemos ser peores” (“We are bad, we can be worse”). Photo by Marisa Belausteguigoitia. Taken with a cell phone camera on April 14, 2020, at the Department of Philosophy and Literature, UNAM, Mexico City.

There are also times when songs become slogans and the joy of singing and dancing is lost, as well as the great creative audacity that adapts to the world elsewhere; then comes the moment of punishment, which reduces us to the given and the expected. Some of the graffiti seems to cite manifestos like Valerie Solanas’s *SCUM Manifesto*. It resembles feminist gestures from the seventies, and so can reenact outdated slogans about “women” and “femininity,” in some cases with little respect for the growing complexity of gender identities. These simple definitions have led to some transphobic responses during the occupation.

THE CENTRAL HALL: THE IMMUTABLE FACE, “ABORT UNAM PRIDE”

Unwilling to please with a smile. How to see ourselves in the faces of these women? How do we encounter them? Face to face, where the self acquires its identity from responsibility. The women do not let pain show on their faces; they banish vulnerability along with the disposition and desire to please. In the previous section, a citation of this intervening immutability can be seen on the face of the Medusa crying tears of blood, at the feet of the Winged Victory.

Emmanuel Levinas has been relevant to many feminists who remind us that absolute responsibility for the other, for another woman, is found in the profile,



FIGURE 6. "Ármate" ("Arm yourself"). Photo by Marisa Belausteguigoitia. Taken with a cell phone camera on April 14, 2020, at the Department of Philosophy and Literature, UNAM, Mexico City.



FIGURE 7. "Aborta tu orgullo universitario" ("Abort UNAM pride"). Photo by Marisa Belausteguigoitia. Taken with a cell phone camera on April 14, 2020, at the Department of Philosophy and Literature, UNAM, Mexico City.

in the recognizable traces of ourselves on the face of the other: to be oneself but derived from the other woman.⁵³

In considering the severe resentment against the UNAM, it is necessary to attend to this logic and turn it into re-resentiment, to again sense what the UNAM is and to explore the logic of the rejection of women that has historically existed among male and sexist institutions. The process of patrimonialization outlined in the previous section tells us about the production of institutional and national pride as part of the affective and normative repertoire of what should be venerated or lauded. This is a key component of the construction of Mexicanness, citizenship, and belonging to our public institutions. The feminist collectives that took over the university do not entirely feel like part of either the city or the university. Both institutions and public spaces have fallen short in terms of the crucial reforms and interventions necessary for women to live in peace and with equity. One of the reasons for the occupation was the unanimous refusal to accept the erasure of the '68 commemorative mural, which was designated as “unpatriotic.” The women disrupted national, institutional, and urban devotion; instead of reproducing pride or veneration, they appropriated the symbols, subverting their institutional meaning. With the kiss, they represented love and support between women, and with the green handkerchiefs and Molotov cocktails, the fight for their demands.

The collectives intend to rebuild the pride that awakens university students from another place—one that does not refer to the institutionalization of symbols based on patriarchal or academic narratives such as that of the prizes (Nobel and UNESCO) awarded to UNAM. Rather, they intend to strengthen the logic that reaches into classrooms, to the collective acts of teachers and student groups, who speak, re-sense, and build without monumentalizing. How do we re-sense the UNAM from the perspectives on the ground, those that strikes and occupations point to?

HEADING TOWARD THE ADMINISTRATION: “AMIGA A(RRRR)MATE,”
“ÁRMATE Y SE VIOLENTA”⁵⁴

Rrrrr in parentheses. Self-love and arming ourselves for that self-love is the aim. Respond to *a(r)mada*⁵⁵ for defense. Submit, but to themselves. Criticize the careless care of your own well-being.

There seems to be an irregular fluctuation between tenderness, love, and violence. Here, we see *errrrre* playing with all its sound, and we will see it increase into a *grrrrrrr*. From there, the references reverberate: quotes and slogans from the Winged Victory’s pedestal pointing to the riot *grrrls* and the feminist power generated by anger, which brings so many folks together in protest. The challenge of recognizing ourselves in the faces of these women is—for some women and for some men—incommensurable. To cite Audre Lorde, “If I fail to recognize the lesbian who chooses not to have children, the woman who remains closeted because her homophobic community is her only life support,



FIGURES 8 and 9. “Amiga á(rrr)mate” (“A(rrr)m yourself”). “Ármate y se violenta” (“Arm yourself and be violent”). Photo by Marisa Belausteguigoitia. Taken with a cell phone camera on April 14, 2020, at the Department of Philosophy and Literature, UNAM, Mexico City.

the woman who chooses silence instead of another death, the woman who is terrified lest my anger trigger the explosion of hers; if I fail to recognize them as other faces of myself, then I am contributing not only to each of their oppressions but also to my own.”⁵⁶

THE LADIES ROOM: “PUT THE HOOD ON. RADICAL, VIOLENT,
AND DIRECT ACTION”

Violence in the history of social movements is structural and recurrent. How to tell if the perpetrators of violence are women? In 2013 a group of young Russian women burst into the Moscow Basilica wearing ski masks, a heavy metal group; they devoted a song to the Virgin so that she would free them from Putin; it’s Pussy Riot. Despite strong international support and repercussions, they ended up in jail, tried and sentenced for vandalism and inciting religious hatred. A symbol of veneration and praise—this time religious—was crossed out and resignified. The riot grrrl movement, which preceded them, criticized the systems that oppress women: the church, the family, and state and religious institutions as systems of power.

What understanding of institutions and public spaces do MOFFyL and other young women organized in collectives like them have? Women enter institutions late and inhabit them like intruders. Some never fully feel like they belong.

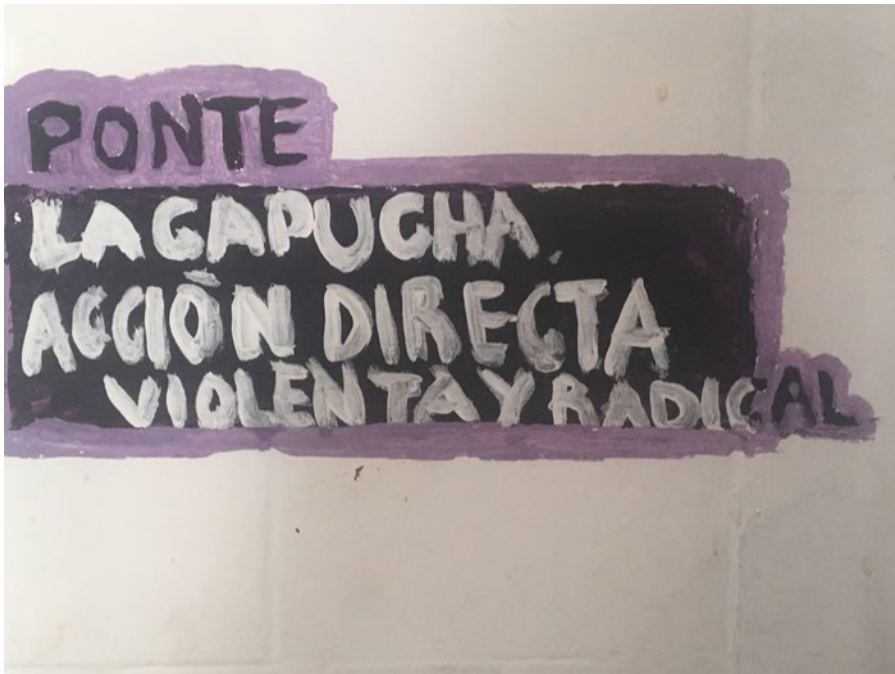


FIGURE 10. Bathroom wall graffiti “Ponte la capucha. Acción directa violenta y radical” (“Put the hood on. Violent, radical, and direct action”). Photo by Marisa Belausteguigoitia. Taken with a cell phone camera on April 14, 2020, at the Department of Philosophy and Literature, UNAM, Mexico City.

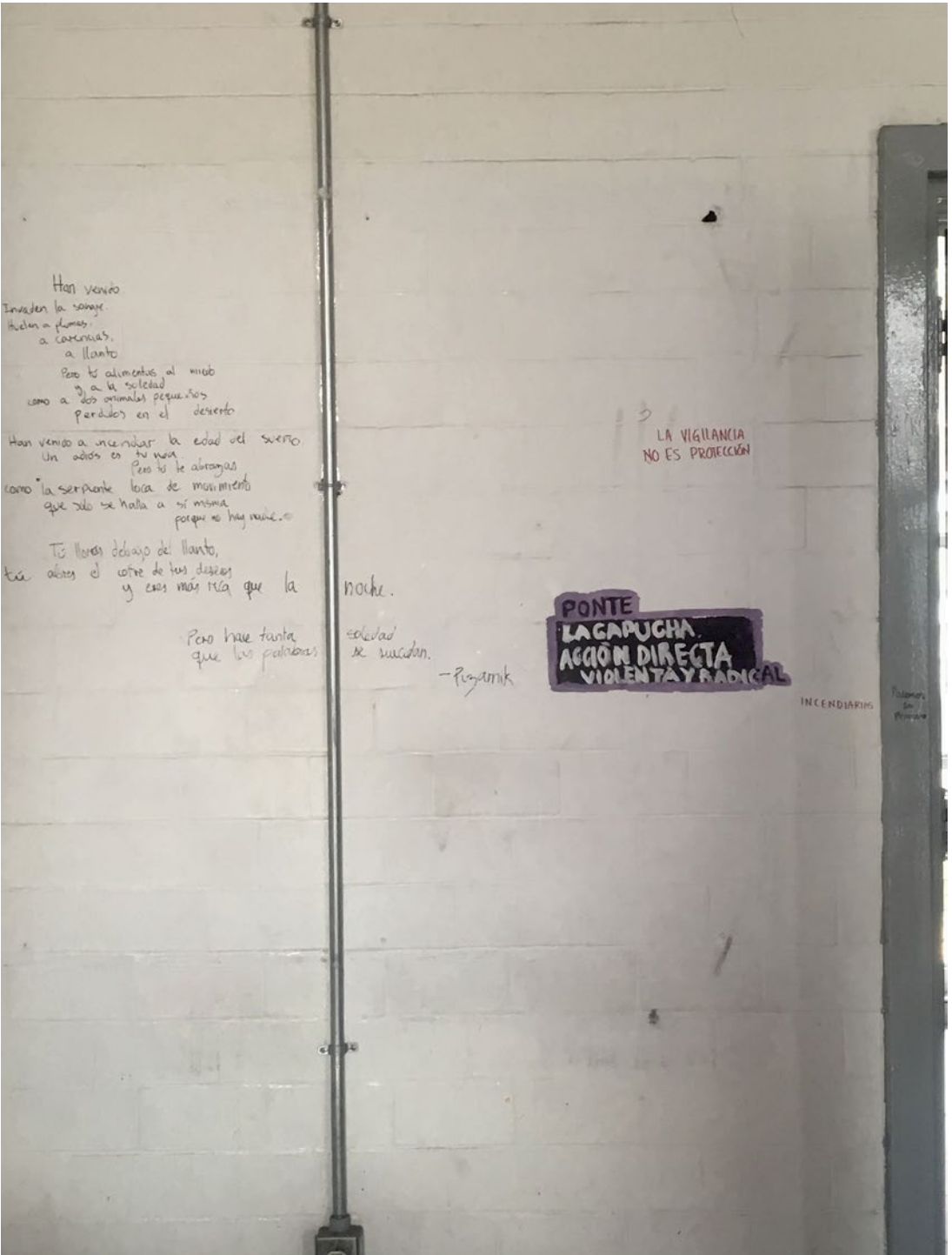


FIGURE 11. Poem by Alejandra Pizarnik written on the bathroom wall next to the graffiti depicted in figure 10 and alongside the words “La vigilancia no es protección” (“Surveillance is not protection”) and “Incendiarias” (“Incendiaries”). Photo by Marisa Belausteguigoitia. Taken with a cell phone camera on April 14, 2020, at the Department of Philosophy and Literature, UNAM, Mexico City.

On the bathroom door is a poem by Alejandra Pizarnik with the graffiti *Capucha acción violenta directa y radical* (Violent, Radical, and Direct Action Hood) next to it. Direct action does not dovetail with poetry that is oblique and indirect, although it can be radical. We are inspired and confused by its contradictions: “Surveillance is not protection.” “Incendiaries.”

They have come.
They invade the blood.
They smell of feathers
of scarcity,
of sobbing.

—Alejandra Pizarnik (1936–72), *Daughter of the Wind*

ADMINISTRATION HALL; SECOND FLOOR: SPLINTERS

During the occupation, the walls that frame classrooms and hallways were filled with color and the academic offices that house the management and administrative staff were filled with splinters. At that paradoxical moment—shot through with these contradictions—when we have to start working in the classrooms again,⁵⁷ upon returning to in-person instruction after the stoppage caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which



FIGURE 12. Splintered furniture in the administration hall. Photo by Marisa Belausteguioitia. Taken with a cell phone camera on April 14, 2020, at the Department of Philosophy and Literature, UNAM, Mexico City.

coincided with the student strike, it will be necessary to listen to all of the Department of Philosophy and Literature's voices and to the university community. This includes not only the many manifestations of support for the occupation, but also those who fear having a different opinion, those outraged by the theft and dispossession of computers; those from the classrooms and university campuses set on fire in the high schools during the seizure; those male and female professors who do not call themselves feminists but who incorporate "women's readings" into their syllabi and who question MOFFyL's practices of direct action from their classrooms and appeal to their own expertise.

During the pandemic, fears, contagions, symptoms, losses, blindness, and statistics have accumulated, but so too have constellations that resonate in the graffiti and murals. The challenge of working for a community that rejects gender violence in all its forms and that builds a safe space for women in particular, that listens and that can coexist and create in common spaces, is immeasurable.

Although we are still immersed in the pandemic, the occupation has lifted, and today we work together collectively in the Department of Philosophy and Literature. As organized groups of feminists, students, teachers, and authorities, we work for a university that responds to the self-organized groups and student protests and proposals. We imagine and implement interdisciplinary courses and workshops; we incorporate and transform legislation for women, their demands, and the reparation of damage. We incorporate activities, legislation, and practices, which, little by little, reshape pride in the university, whose brightness enlightened many and cast a shadow over women. By contrast, we are transforming the university into a common, luminous space for all, a space where students can feel that they are part of an institution that makes them visible and strives for equality and a future for the entire academic community.

4. Conclusions

Feminism has enabled us to do politics by undoing public space, by taking it and forming constellations of meaning, which, on the one hand, reveal the power of protest and abundance and, on the other hand, open up directions for what is yet to come. That is the feminism that we analyze and that we live, a feminism of protest and of opening, one that reverberates, that crosses out and brings us together in the central avenues of the city, in the squares and at the monuments; on the walls of the classrooms and across the spaces that produce our daily lives: from the most intimate and significant spaces, university hallways and bathrooms.

What we want to convey, what we want to shed light on, is the potential of these movements and their critique for bringing forth the imminent, that which is yet to come; that which we cannot articulate but which moves between occupations and strikes, among citations, strikethroughs, and protests: enormous joy and

profound discomfort. This is a protest that demands the reconstruction of educational institutions and the city's attention.

With occupations, work stoppages, and strikes, we are making a new map to reinvent urban space, a close-knit university, and a way of being and being represented in which being a woman does not cost anyone her life.

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Her work in visual culture focuses on the analysis of anormal (nonnormative) cultural practices and their connections with pedagogy, the creation of other epistemologies, political action, feminisms, visions from the South, and notions of representation and power.

Notes

1. Originally coined by Mexican poet and activist Susana Chávez in 1995, the phrase *Ni una menos* has inspired and come to emblemize the transnational grassroots feminist movement. Although the birth of the movement, hashtag, and slogan is often attributed to Argentinian origins, Chávez's earliest phrasing "Ni una menos, ni una muerte más" cried out against unresolved and increasing instances of femicide in Ciudad Juárez. Chávez was brutally murdered in 2011, and the resounding echo of her cry has reverberated across the globe. The allied Mexican feminist march, campaign, and slogan *Vivas nos queremos* could be translated as "We Want to Be Alive," "We Want Ourselves Alive," or, alternatively, "We Love Ourselves Alive." — Trans.
2. Andrea (student), in discussion with Emanuela Borzacchiello, Museum of Memory and Tolerance, Mexico City, September 2015.
3. This seminar was offered in 2015 and 2021 by Emanuela Borzacchiello at the museum.
4. Lagarde, *Los cautiverios de las mujeres*. [The term *feminicide* (*feminicidio*) emphasizes the responsibility of the state and judicial structures for the killing of women, whether through the actual commission of killings or through omission by failure to protect or impunity. *Feminicide* is distinct from *femicide*, which refers only to the killing of women. For a critical history of the term, see Borzacchiello, "Feminicidio y resistencia." — Trans.]
5. Tristán, *La unión obrera*; Luxemburg, "Mass Strike."
6. Dalla Costa, "Community, Factory, and School"; Federici, *Revolution at Point Zero*; Giardini, *Dominio e sfruttamento*.
7. Gago, *La potencia feminista*; Galindo, *Las exiliadas del neoliberalismo*.
8. Borzacchiello, "Nuestros cuerpos son nuestros territorios."
9. Davis, *Women, Race, and Class*.
10. Falú, *Women in the City*.
11. Marta Acevedo is the cofounder of MAS Mujeres en Acción Solidaria, which was one of the first feminist collectives in the seventies.
12. Marta Acevedo, interview in 2018 by Emanuela Borzacchiello as part of the project "M68: Citizens in Motion," carried out by the Centro Cultural Universitario Tlatelolco.
13. Bussoni and Perna, *Il gesto femminista*, 43.
14. Borzacchiello, "Pensando en la construcción de archivos feministas."
15. Ana Yeli Pérez (legal advisor to the National Citizen Observatory of Femicide), in discussion with Emanuela Borzacchiello, May 2, 2017.
16. Borzacchiello, "Encuentro post 8M and 9M."
17. Borzacchiello, "Encuentro post 8M and 9M."
18. Adapted from Dalton, "Soldier's Rest." — Trans.
19. These phrases have been graffitied onto the base of the Winged Victory: *Live friends, Police rape us, You're not playing with us, It's going to fall, The Homeland kills, Femicide Mexico*. — Trans.
20. "¡Nos están matando!" cries out, "They're killing us!" — Trans.
21. Arrieta Urtizberea, "El sesgo androcéntrico," 14.
22. Jiménez-Esquinas, "El patrimonio (también) es nuestro," 22–34.
23. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "El patrimonio inmaterial como producción metacultural," 60.
24. Jiménez-Esquinas, "El patrimonio (también) es nuestro," 34.

25. Jiménez-Esquinas, “El patrimonio (también) es nuestro,” 19.
26. The group’s Facebook page describes them as “an independent collective of women specializing in the study, conservation, and restoration of cultural heritage, and united in the fight against sexist violence.” — Trans.
27. Restauradoras con Glitter, “#RestauradorasConGlitter.”
28. Restauradoras con Glitter, “PRONUNCIAMIENTO.”
29. hooks, *Talking Back*.
30. Ahmed, *What’s the Use?*, 208.
31. Ahmed, *What’s the Use?*, 209.
32. Ahmed, *What’s the Use?*, 210; emphasis added.
33. García, Pascual, and Riojas, “Mujeres restauradoras se pronuncian.”
34. Here, we take the idea of “patrimonio autorizado” (“authorized heritage”) proposed and developed extensively (from the ideas of Laurajane Smith) in Jiménez-Esquinas, “El patrimonio (también) es nuestro,” 22.
35. Jiménez-Esquinas, “El patrimonio (también) es nuestro,” 21.
36. Rivera Garza, *Los muertos indóciles*, 65–66; emphasis added.
37. Rivera Garza, *Los muertos indóciles*, 67.
38. A high school that is part of UNAM, located in the west of Mexico City, on the west shore of the extinct lake of Texcoco, which is used for sewage today. The school is in a densely populated and precarious neighborhood. The bodies of young women have repeatedly been deposited and abandoned in the waterlogged surroundings.
39. Badiou, *Philosophy and the Event*.
40. Saldaña, “La plaza como práctica citacional,” 16.
41. Derrida, “Signature Event Context.”
42. For a long-awaited text that accounts for the participation of women in the ’68 movement, see Draper, *México 1968*.
43. The instructions for starting the chain of kisses have a separatist, consensual, healthy, and playful tone; namely, “try to be tactful and make sure that the kiss is consensual; don’t kiss someone until you are sure that both of you are comfortable; if you are ill, do not attend; do not record or photograph women without their permission; bring a toothbrush to use before and after the event; remember that this is a separatist event, if you see a man report him to the security commission; have fun” (Denuncias FFyL, “Cadena de besos separatista”).
44. The MOFFyL agreed on a list of eleven demands, which they presented to departmental authorities in January. The demands are: (1) the modification of articles 95, 98, and 99 of the UNAM General Statute to recognize gender violence as a serious offense; (2) the dismissal of the secretary general and the head of the Department of Philosophy and Literature’s legal office; (3) a review of cases at the request of the plaintiffs; (4) a transparency report on the complaints presented in the FFyL; (5) an Autonomous Tripartite Commission (CTA) and FFyL Unit for Attention to Gender Violence; (6) workshops with a gender and feminist perspective; (7) gender studies in the curriculum and required gender coursework for all degrees; (8) psychological counseling; (9) permanence of MOFFyL’s graphic manifestations; (10) public apologies for the cases of Mariela Vanessa Díaz Valverde; and (11) the provision of organizational spaces for MOFFyL.
45. These words, “*a puño y letra*,” refer to that which is “written by hand” or “handwritten,” but there is also a pun inscribed in the phrase. *Puño* is a fist, and *a puño* can refer to a raised or

- clenched fist (one that is ready to hit, for example), or, less literally, “by force.” In this sense, the phrase also suggests the force of the handwritten word. — Trans.
46. Rancière, *Politics of Aesthetics*.
 47. The assemblies and discussions regarding gender violence, its prevention, and its eradication among MOFFyL, the authorities, academic staff, students, and workers were framed in a complex environment of admiration, emotion, determined support for self-organized group of feminists, and also bewilderment, fear, and anger over facilities that were set on fire (the rectory was attacked with Molotov cocktails twice) and sections of the Escuela Nacional Preparatoria (High School) Department and the College of Science and Humanities (CCH), which was taken over and damaged.
 48. Badiou, *Philosophy and the Event*, 21.
 49. Barcenilla, “Rompe la ventana,” 491–512.
 50. Draper, *México 1968*, 11.
 51. Glissant, *Treatise on the Whole-World*.
 52. “El violador eres tú” (“The Rapist Is You”) is a Chilean feminist performance that protests violence against women. It has been performed globally since videos of the performance by the feminist collective La Tesis went viral in 2019. — Trans.
 53. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*.
 54. The parenthetical play in *a(rrrr)mate* combines *ámate* (love yourself) and *ármate* (arm yourself), with an enfolded rrrroar. — Trans.
 55. The parenthetical play in *a(r)mada* combines *amada* (a loved one) and *armada* (an armed one). — Trans.
 56. Lorde, “Uses of Anger.”
 57. Due to the ongoing health emergency, at the time this text was written, UNAM was still operating remotely.

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