

PFOF Description Narrative, FY 2019

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Application for Funding for Fieldwork in Santiago, Chile (May 18 – June 22, 2019) and Buenos Aires, Argentina (May 26 – June 1)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This application requests funding for international travel to conduct fieldwork and library research in Santiago, Chile and Buenos Aires, Argentina to understand how transformative justice actors link issues related to development and indigenous rights to past human rights violations in their respective countries. Data collected from interviews and library research will support the bulk of the analysis of chapter 4 (“Contested Development and State Repression: Argentina and Chile”) of my book manuscript: *Transforming Justice: The Fight for Human Security and Democracy in the Americas*. I will present the first draft of this chapter at the Annual Congress of the Latin American Studies Association in Mexico, May 2020.

PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this project is twofold. First, I seek to travel to Santiago, Chile to conduct interviews with academics and members of human rights nongovernmental organizations to learn about their impressions of and engagement with Chilean democratic and justice institutions. Second, I intend to access scholarly materials in local libraries and bookstores that are unavailable in the United States. During my time in Santiago, I will also travel to Buenos Aires, Argentina for a week to acquire research materials and visit research sites. These visits to Santiago and Buenos Aires serve as the first part of a fieldwork project I mapped out for the summer of 2019.¹

Chapter 4 Aims and Objectives

Recent work in the transitional justice literature seeks to establish how the adoption of transitional justice mechanisms by the state influence long-term reforms related to democracy, rule of law, and human rights in Latin America. “Transitional justice” is a type of justice that states adopt after the end of authoritarianism or civil conflict (i.e., trials, truth commissions, reparations, and memorials). “Transformative justice” goes beyond traditional transitional justice measures because they target the injustices and violence that continue to exist *after* a transition to democracy has occurred. Moreover, “transformative justice” scholars and activists argue that these post-conflict initiatives should be designed to address human security and human development needs *rooted in* authoritarianism or conflict (Evans 2016; Lambourne 2009).

What is less explored is how indigenous communities were treated under prior authoritarian regimes and how these communities have fared in the wake of the processes of transitional justice and democratization. Chapter 4 of my book manuscript will explore the current activism and discourse of human rights organizations that link the current violence against and exploitation of indigenous communities with the past behavior of dictatorships.

I will examine actors and organizations advocating on behalf of the Mapuche, an indigenous population originally from the south of Chile and Argentina. Out of a general population of about 18 million Chileans, the Mapuche make up 1.5 million. Today, over half of the Mapuche population live in Santiago and one-third reside in rural areas. As observed by Jara et al. (2018), “Indigenous people in Chile have, in general, less education, lower incomes and worse jobs than the rest of the population”

¹ I also intend to visit Bogotá, Colombia during the months of July and August. The data collected from this country will inform my analysis for Chapter 2 (“Evolving Conflict and Displaced Justice”).

(481). As further observed by Jara et al. (2018), “Currently these relations [between the Mapuche and the state] are marked by conflict originating from three main historical demands of the Mapuche: return to their ancestral land, their right to jurisdictional autonomy and recognition of their cultural identity” (482). This chapter will show how the Mapuche and human rights advocates connect the current socioeconomic insecurities of the indigenous populations with past injustices against this community.

As such, Chapter 4 will answer the following questions to show how human rights organizations confront the patterns and trends of state treatment of indigenous populations in Chile and Argentina:

- What human insecurities do the Mapuche (and other indigenous populations) experience because of lingering authoritarian practice and policies in Chile and Argentina?
- How do transformative justice actors respond to these human insecurities and frame them as demands for justice?
- How does the work of these transformative justice actors intersect with the transitional justice community – if at all?

BACKGROUND WORK ACCOMPLISHED

In preparation to conduct fieldwork during the summer of 2019, I have finished several of the necessary steps. First, I completed the IRB requirements in August of 2018 and received approval from the committee to conduct interviews in both English and Spanish. Second, in October 2018, I secured an affiliation with Universidad Mayor (a Middle States-accredited university of which Stockton is also an accredited member) so that I may use their library and meet with fellow academics working on related research during my stay in Santiago, Chile. I have also identified organizations and individuals I will interview while in Santiago.

RESEARCH RELEVANCE

For my book project, I study the ways in which state and non-state actors within the field of human rights in the Americas work to advance a transformative justice agenda within their legal, economic, and political institutions. More specifically, my research seeks to determine the extent to which these actors frame the need to redress contemporary human insecurities – i.e., the pervasive threats and deprivations that impede the rights and opportunities people have to ensure livelihoods of dignity and well-being – as *claims of transformative justice*. To accomplish this task, I will study how human rights actors set their agenda for advocacy work so that I can understand empirically their strategies and discourse to engage with transitional justice and democratic institutions. My trip to Chile will focus specifically on examining the activism of human rights organizations that have an interest in issues of development as they apply to the Mapuche population, an important indigenous population in both Chile and Argentina.

STATEMENT OF METHODOLOGY

My thesis is that transformative justice actors within the human rights community are linking their current demands for improved human security conditions to the country’s legacy of state violence and/or authoritarianism. A major goal of this trip is to identify to what extent these specific actors adopt this strategy as part of their activism. Accordingly, I will use qualitative methods to analyze these strategies and to trace how these actors collaborate with other organizations and institutions in the fields of human rights, human security, and transitional justice. I invoke several qualitative methods, including discourse analysis of reports and memos, organizations’ websites and the use of social media, as well as journal and newspaper articles. In addition to documentary analysis, major components of my fieldwork will include interviews and participant-observation, when appropriate and feasible. I will conduct interviews with employees and volunteers of nongovernmental organizations, as well as activists of grassroots organizations.

The strategy for determining which human rights actors and organizations to interview is based on a combination of theory-based sampling and chain-referral (snowball) sampling techniques. This will be based on the empirical and theoretical work of identifying actors advocating for the transformative justice agenda. Chain-referral sampling allows me to gauge what actors are more influential by asking each interviewee to suggest another possible actor to interview about the subject at hand, and so on. I will identify organizations and key actors to approach and interview. I will also use process tracing, defined as a “research method for tracing causal mechanisms using detailed, within-case empirical analysis of how a causal process plays out in an actual case” (Beach 2017). For my project, process tracing will be employed as an analytical strategy for determining whether the legacies of authoritarianism and violence have a causal impact on the current strategies and agendas of human rights organizations.

OUTCOMES AND FURTHER STUDY

My travel to Santiago, Chile (and the brief visit to Buenos Aires, Argentina) will serve as the first part of my fieldwork in Latin America for the summer of 2019. The short-term goal of this proposed visit is to acquire academic resources and materials that are unavailable in the United States, speak with Chilean scholars about their research on democracy and human rights, and interview nongovernmental organizations in the fields of human security and human rights. During July and August of 2019, I will also travel to Bogotá, Colombia to conduct similar fieldwork and access academic materials. I am currently working on securing an affiliation with the Universidad de Rosario in Bogotá to access their library and office space. I intend on applying for Research and Professional Development funding in February 2019 to travel to Colombia during those dates.

The medium-term outcomes of this research will be writing these book chapters in the form of conference papers so that I may disseminate the results of my research and solicit initial feedback from my peers at academic conferences. In September of 2019 I will apply to the 2020 Latin American Studies Association to present my research on Chile and Argentina at their annual meeting. For this conference, presenters circulate their papers (25 – 30 pages in length) in advance to provide each other thorough comments. Based on this feedback, I will revise the paper accordingly and integrate it into the book as a chapter.

IMPORTANCE AND VALUE

This book is an important contribution to the democratization and transitional justice literature because it identifies and analyzes how human rights actors engage with the state to frame their human security needs as claims to justice. In addition, it will advance our knowledge by providing both conceptual and empirical foundations to the emerging field of transformative justice.

In addition, my fieldwork and affiliation with Universidad Mayor fulfills Stockton University’s mission statement to provide faculty with opportunities for “exposure to diverse cultural perspectives” and to “sustain the global awareness and understanding necessary” for “meaningful participation in the world.” More specifically, I will also be supporting Stockton University’s Office for Global Engagement’s mission of building potential opportunities for partnership and collaboration with academic institutions outside the United States.

BUDGET

In addition to my request for \$2000.00 from PFOF, I will also use \$1500.00 in SOBL funds for this trip for a total of \$3500.00. I provide the budget outline in the works cited page as well as the main application.