DREAMS OF A SOCCER CITY: POLITICS, CONSUMPTION, AND URBAN TRANSFORMATION IN 20TH CENTURY BUENOS AIRES

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation examines the Ciudad Deportiva of Club Atlético Boca Juniors, a massive stadium, sports complex, and leisure site that aimed to redevelop the city's dilapidated riverfront in the 1960s. The directors of Boca Juniors drew state and municipal support for the Ciudad Deportiva by appealing to developmentalist ideals that prioritized public-private collaborations, consumption, and leisure space for middle class families. As Argentina's most popular soccer club, hundreds of thousands of fans and supporters also invested in the project's fundraising campaign with the belief that Boca's stadium and facilities would contribute to the city's modernization and symbolize national progress. Multiple democratic and military governments aided Boca's efforts throughout a turbulent political and economic period in Argentina's history, a signal that this kind of mass consumption and family leisure were key concerns for successive, yet divergent, political projects. The club completed most of the original planned facilities by 1970 including various sports fields, an amusement park, an aquarium, a concert pavilion, Argentina's first drive-in movie theatre, and a social headquarters with a pool and restaurant. However, political infighting at the club, a withdrawal of public and private support, and national economic crises all contributed to Boca's failure to construct the stadium in time for the 1978 FIFA World Cup. The municipality seized the Ciudad

Deportiva in 1979 but over the next thirteen years Boca's directors were able to regain control of the property and eventually sell it for 22 million dollars.

Drawing on newspapers, sports magazines, club documents, and state sources, as well as over twenty oral histories, this dissertation makes two principal arguments. First, that soccer clubs played significant roles in shaping conceptions of neighborhood identity, gender, and class in 20th century Buenos Aires. These institutions did so in tension with their legal status as non-profit civic associations providing services to a membership base while also functioning as producers of the commercialized spectacle of professional soccer. Second, the successes and failures of the Ciudad Deportiva offer a unique perspective through which to consider the very real dreams of development that animated politics in the post-Peronist decades in Argentina. Scholars tend to focus on political polarization and instability, often obscuring the importance of notions about national and urban development embodied in the Ciudad Deportiva

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appreciated. She is a fearless scholar and her willingness to fight for a more just and equitable sports landscape is an inspiration.

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Most importantly, I want to thank my family. Our story involves many surnames, so it's the Gamero, Galarza, Burinsky, Ceplecha families who I must thank for their love and support. My parents and siblings have always believed in me. Their patience with my work has been constant and I look forward to repaying their love and support in kind. Mom, your love and support mean the world to me. Sarvie, *azizam*, your love and kindness makes this all worthwhile. I dedicate this work to the memory of my father; he was never able to see me combine his passions for history and soccer into a career path, but it gives me immeasurable joy to be living his dream.

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Introduction

Off the coast of Buenos Aires, in the Río de la Plata, sit the abandoned ruins of the Ciudad Deportiva of Club Atlético Boca Juniors. The soccer club's failed "Sports City" from the 1960s was planned to include the world's largest stadium ahead of the 1978 FIFA World Cup in addition to an athletic and amusement complex, but the stadium was never built.[1] Boca's directors worked with architects and engineers to build most of the original planned facilities including a social headquarters with a pool and restaurant, various sports fields, amusement park, aquarium, amphitheater, and a drive-in movie theatre. Club president Alberto J. Armando galvanized support from municipal and national governments and raised impressive amounts of financing from grassroots supporters by promising a project that would modernize the city and provide accessible family leisure space. After Boca failed to build the stadium in the 1970s, the club abandoned the facilities and sold the property in 1992 for 22 million dollars. Vegetation has overgrown the ruins bordered on one side by Puerto Madero, an upscale district featuring luxury office and apartment towers. On the other side sits Villa Rodrigo Bueno, a shantytown created by migrant construction workers who helped transform Puerto Madero into the city's most valuable real estate. The shantytown, gleaming towers, and ruined sports complex present a striking juxtaposition of a failed midcentury vision of Buenos Aires' future and its current reality. They also underscore its current inequitable, neoliberal reality.

I first learned of the Ciudad Deportiva in 2010 during my first pre-dissertation research trip from friends at the *Centro de Estudios del Deporte* (CED), a group of Argentine sport researchers. Buenos Aires has the most soccer stadiums in the world, so the city's history of

[1] A note on terms: In this dissertation, I use the terms soccer, football, and *fútbol* interchangeably. While their geographic usage varies, these terms all refer to the 19th century British sport of Association Football.

stadium construction had already piqued my interest.[2] Mariano Gruschetsky, a sociologist at the CED, made the fortuitous suggestion that I visit the ruins and I soon found an opportunity to take a drive with friends out to the coastline. As we entered Puerto Madero on a rainy Sunday, I was immediately struck by how it contrasted with the rest of the city. People compare Buenos Aires's leafy northern neighborhoods of Palermo and Recoleta to picturesque boulevards in Paris or Barcelona. Puerto Madero was filled with tall glass skyscrapers and expensive restaurants. The freshly renovated brick warehouses and large, rectangular canals hinted at the fact that it had been, until recently, a dilapidated port area. My friend lifted a hand and rubbed his two fingers against his thumb (a ubiquitous gesture signifying money) as we passed a large glass complex with terraced apartments named "ZenCity."

The ambience changed after a few turns. The looming high-rises gave way to a wide avenue lined with idling semi-trucks, their exhaust mixing with the rain to create a thick haze. On the side of the road closest to the Río de la Plata, I could make out the improvised brick and mortar buildings of Villa Rodrigo Bueno. At the end of the avenue stood a large bridge that sloped upwards with a guard post at the crest, the entrance sealed by rusty barricades. Pointing towards a faintly visible ruined building beyond the bridge, my friend said "There's what's left of the cafeteria of the Ciudad Deportiva, what a place it could have been..."[3]

[2] Christopher Gaffney, *Temples of the Earthbound Gods : Stadiums in the Cultural Landscapes of Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 146.
[3] All translations from Spanish to English in this work are made by the author.

Figure 1 - Ruins of the Ciudad Deportiva. Source: "Ciudad Deportiva - El Documental" by Alex Galarza.

As I began making contacts at the club, I was struck by a number of aspects in how people remembered the project and its decline. Many had invested in the club's fundraising campaign and spoke of how Boca Juniors could have transformed the city and contributed to national progress. Others mentioned Argentina's economic and political crises as the cause of the Ciudad Deportiva's failure. A few pointed to club directors' mismanagement of the project (and fraud) as explanations for why the stadium was never built. People's memories of the project were clearly intertwined with a modernizing dream animated by novel forms of leisure and consumption. However, memories of this dream sat uneasily with Argentina's uneven economic growth and political instability in the second half of the twentieth century. In many of the stories I heard, there was a notable tension in describing the project as something that *should not* have been a political issue but, in fact, was thoroughly enmeshed in politics. In other words, people thought of soccer and club infrastructure project as apolitical phenomena that contributed to

national progress and the public good. But they also recognized that realizing such projects were tied to national political projects and networks of patronage.

I was fascinated with the question of why exactly the Ciudad Deportiva, with all of its spectacularity and support at the highest levels, ultimately failed. This dissertation will provide a number of reasons that help us better understand the failure of the Ciudad Deportiva, reasons that are intertwined with Argentina's troubled path in the second half of the twentieth century. However, the most important question to ask was not *why* the project failed but what its story could tell us about soccer and politics in Buenos Aires. Looking beyond the question of failure opens up a different interpretive view, one which allows us to see how soccer became an important field through which club directors, planners, and politicians sought to achieve specific forms of modernization and development in Argentina's capital and largest city. As the most popular team in Argentina, Boca was able to galvanize support because of the way soccer formed a part of everyday life and the way clubs were generative of key political connections at the neighborhood, city, and national levels. The project's history and the longer historical trajectory in which soccer clubs became prominent civic associations in the city offers a unique perspective from which to examine important changes in urban transformation, visions for national progress, and shifting attitudes on class, gender, and race.

Defining the Research Problem

This dissertation focuses on the Ciudad Deportiva as an entry point for understanding broader transformations surrounding politics, consumption, and urban transformation in midcentury Buenos Aires. Thus, the story of the project's genesis, successes, and failures structures the dissertation's historical narrative. The narrative is also guided by a number of

questions that guided my research, including: How did Argentines understand soccer clubs as spaces that were simultaneously seen as apolitical sites that should contribute towards the public good *and* spaces thoroughly intertwined with political power at various levels of government? How did the sport itself and soccer clubs affect shifting notions of class, gender, and race in 20th century Argentina? In what ways did the Ciudad Deportiva represent *desarrollismo* (or developmentalism), a specific vision of consumption, modernization, and social integration in the post-war era that was shared across multiple political projects?

In 1964, Argentina's national congress passed Law 16575 donating forty hectares of the *Río de la Plata* to the club for the construction of a new stadium and sports complex. The project fit within the city's master plan by serving as an anchor to redevelop the dilapidated port district on the southern coast. The way in which the *Ciudad Deportiva* also tapped into developmentalist ideals undergirded a private-public collaboration that drew support from a number of civilian and military governments in the post-Peronist period between 1955 and 1976. The law required Boca to complete the project within a period of ten years and it also specified the scale and types of facilities that could be built. For example, the stadium would need to hold at least 150,000 spectators. Facilities would include swimming pools, basketball and tennis courts, a track, lodgings for athletes, an amphitheater and a children's playground. The law prohibited the construction of any facilities besides those specified and noted that Boca would be solely responsible for financing and executing the project. Once completed, the club would also cede its existing stadium and facilities in La Boca to the city. If Boca failed to complete construction within ten years, the Ciudad Deportiva would become municipal property.

Alberto J. Armando, Boca's charismatic and often controversial president from 1960 to 1980, led the club's grassroots fundraising campaign. The club sold over 200,000 raffle tickets that

entered purchasers into prize drawings for cars, household appliances, apartments, beach cottages, and even race horses. Boca marketed these tickets as *Títulos Pro-Patrimoniales,* or titles in support of growing the club's patrimony and the nation's by supporting Argentine development. Marketing materials and club officials referred to these certificates simultaneously as *rifas*, *títulos*, and *bonos* (raffles, titles, and bonds) and presented them an investment in the club's project, as property titles and bonds that would appreciate in value. As one of Argentina's wealthiest men, Armando provided many prizes from his own businesses which included car dealerships, investment firms, and insurance companies. While the law called for the world's largest soccer stadium and a sprawling athletic site, Boca also planned novel leisure facilities including a drive-in movie theatre, a fish-shaped aquarium, and a tower with a rotating restaurant. The *títulos* financed the construction of a significant portion of the facilities between 1964 and 1969. The club hired a construction firm for a massive terraforming operation that created seven artificial islands off the city's southern coast using a filling and shoring technique that required dredges and pile drivers. Volunteer truck drivers arrived with hundreds of loads of dirt on a daily basis and the city dredged the riverbed to fill in the islands. By the end of the decade, the *Ciudad Deportiva's* islands featured an amphitheater, tennis courts, an amusement park, a dining hall with a pool, and large swimming pools with dressing rooms.

Club directors, engineers, architects, state officials, and a broad public shared the dream of building the Ciudad Deportiva, yet this vision was troubled by a number of factors. At the start of the 1970s there were clear signs of political infighting at the club and delays in progress at the Ciudad Deportiva. Increasing construction costs, poor planning, and inflation in the early seventies led two of Boca's vice presidents to openly rebel against Armando; an episode that ended with gunshots in the club's boardroom. An engineer and member of the political

opposition at the club denounced the project at the Argentine Football Association (AFA), calling it a "farce" that was structurally impossible due to erosion and the weight of a stadium sitting on an artificial island. Armando lost key political support at the national level by backing the wrong candidate in the 1973 elections as Juan Domingo Perón returned to Argentina's presidency. Despite these setbacks, the club began a second and similarly successful fundraising campaign to finance construction of the Gran Estadio. Thousands purchased season tickets and suites in advance for the new stadium. Workers even laid the stadium's foundations and built a symbolic grandstand, but the Gran Estadio was never finished. The club had lost political support and a national economic environment that could keep project costs stable. Armando continued his presidency during the military dictatorship that would murder tens of thousands of people it deemed "subversive" after seizing power in 1976, but the Ciudad Deportiva became city property in accordance with the original law.

After two decades of serving as president of Club Atlético Boca Juniors, Armando lost the club's 1980 elections. Boca regained possession of the Ciudad Deportiva under new leadership as Argentina made its democratic turn in 1983. The club's directors aimed to offload the property and successfully lobbied for a change to the 1964 law in order to sell the Ciudad Deportiva and save itself from bankruptcy. As the club searched for prospective buyers in the late 1980s, Puerto Madero transformed into an expensive waterfront district with high-rises and refurbished warehouses. The neglected Ciudad Deportiva was now prime real estate. The club sold the property in 1992 for over twenty million U.S. dollars, transforming the nearly bankrupt institution into one of South America's richest soccer clubs. This financial windfall allowed Boca Juniors to rebuild its struggling team and enter one of its most triumphant and commercially successful periods at the turn of the millennium under the presidency of Mauricio

Macri. The son of a wealthy businessman, Macri's connections and success at Boca would help him launch a political career taking him to congress, the mayorship of Buenos Aires, and the presidency of Argentina in November of 2015. The consolidation of municipal and national power under Macri and his Propuesta Republicana (PRO) coalition has allowed plans to move forward for transforming the Ciudad Deportiva into a new luxury shopping and living district that has been called the "Dubai of Buenos Aires."

The Ciudad Deportiva's initial success reveals how Boca's directors and *socios*, a wider public, and municipal and state officials transformed urban space and articulated specific visions of consumption and modernity that resonated throughout Buenos Aires and Argentina. The project's failure reveals how wider socioeconomic changes and political changes and club dynamics foreclosed those visions. The project's ambitious scale, novel forms of recreation, and central location fueled belief that Argentina's most popular soccer club could modernize the city and be a testament to national progress. Planners designed the facilities to cater to desires for healthy family recreation and upward social mobility through consumption. For example, the project's architects imagined the family car as the primary means of accessing the facilities and one of the largest islands featured Argentina's first drive-in movie theatre. State support for Boca's efforts to build the Ciudad Deportiva during a turbulent political and economic period in Argentina's history signaled that consumption, family, and leisure were key concerns for political projects in the post-Peronist period. The Ciudad Deportiva and the dreams of development and modernization that animated it offer a unique perspective through which to rethink politics and its intersections during a period in which scholars tend to focus on political stalemate and polarization.

Sources, Approaches, Contributions

This dissertation draws on archival research, oral histories, and ethnography conducted between 2010 and 2014. It contributes to a growing body of scholarship that analyzes consumption, urban transformation, and popular culture in Latin America. I collected and digitized a variety of archival sources including newspapers, sports magazines, and club documents. Some of the most revealing club documents in this study are *memorias y balances*, reports on the noteworthy social and athletic events of each year as well as financial figures. These reports capture the diverse set of activities that club members volunteered their time to organize including Carnival dances, public libraries, and a wide range of amateur sports. The *memorias* also reveal interaction between municipal governments and civic associations. Annual summaries and financial reports detail the political and economic transformations of professional soccer. These largely unexamined sources are often difficult to access at the clubs that bother to keep them. During my fieldwork, club documents began disappearing from the AFA's public library - the only archive that holds a collection - as it reduced its hours and eventually closed. Theft and limited archival access is a common problem in Argentina; even some of the most popular sports magazines from the past, like *El Gráfico,* can be quite difficult to access.[4] A number of private collectors have large physical and digital collections. Online marketplaces also sell them. Piecing together a run of *memorias* for a single institution took the better part of four years. While these are important sources, they must be read as documents produced by the club's directors and, as a result, they often say more about the incumbent administration's agenda than the realities of the institution.

Newspapers and sports magazines provide the most detailed accounts of the *Ciudad*

[4] Eduardo Archetti, *Masculinities : Football, Polo, and the Tango in Argentina* (New York: Berg, 1999), 57.

Deportiva and the economic transformations affecting professional soccer leagues. Periodical collections at public archives, news archives, and sports journalism schools offered the most complete and focused set of sources. In many cases, news coverage pointed to legislative records and executive orders in congressional and municipal archives. Theses sources provide a window into legislative debates over the public support of soccer clubs, including the justifications provided by Argentina's political leaders for subsidizing club infrastructure projects.

I conducted over twenty oral histories with club officials, fans, and politicians. Nearly every participant purchased *títulos* (sometimes several) and provided testimonies on the project's early successes and long decline. Some were club officials who commented on the planning, building, and selling of the *Ciudad Deportiva* while others were fans or employees who visited or worked there. These oral histories shed light on the project, but they also illuminate collective memory about the political and cultural meanings of a project that galvanized such enthusiastic grassroots support and resources.

I also treated archives as an ethnographic site, paying careful attention to the practices of archivists, officials, and fans.[5] Their reasons for preserving documents varied and this shaped the evidence I found on how and why the project failed. As an observer-participant, I worked with Boca Juniors' museum and historical committee to digitize the clubs' archival sources, curate this data, and build a digital archive of *memorias y balances*. These mobile digitization methods mediated my access to sources as a number of institutions and individuals who were initially hesitant to share would become interested when I explained my policy of always returning digitized, high-quality images. Throughout my fieldwork, digital methods helped organize,

[5] Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past : Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995); Edward Murphy et al., eds., *Anthrohistory : Unsettling Knowledge, Questioning Discipline* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011); Edward Murphy, *For a Proper Home: Housing Rights in the Margins of Urban Chile, 1960-2010* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015).

guide, and share my research as it evolved.

Being a male, bilingual researcher from the United States who played soccer also shaped my work in important ways. As Brenda Elsey has noted in her own work on Chilean *fútbol*, her attempts to conduct surveys and oral histories were met with ridicule in specifically gendered ways.[6] In many of my interactions with research participants, a few minutes explaining my strange mix of *madrileño* (Madrid) and *porteño* (Buenos Aires) dialect and proper lamenting of the United States' relative backwardness in the context of global soccer were enough to establish rapport and legitimacy. In the early phases of research, was anxious to explain that my investigation was not aimed to uncover corruption at the club and thus tarnish Boca's image — a concern that keeps many doors closed to Argentina investigative journalists and academics. However, my status as a foreign historian tended to position me as unthreatening in this regard. In multiple ways, these aspects of my positioning as a researcher and a person allowed me to act as a participant-observer in ways that also illuminated the way women are marginalized from positions of power in clubs and from soccer more generally — an important facet of gender dynamics in Argentina.

Academics have taken an increasing interest in soccer as a way of exploring issues like gender, identity, and national cultures. After all, football is more than just the world's most popular sport; it is a global cultural medium whose story is embedded within broader historical processes. Soccer also plays an important, if often overlooked, role in producing political and economic relationships. This work builds on scholarship that examines how sport shapes identities and people's sense of belonging in national and urban contexts. In concert with the cultural turn of the 1970s and 80s, pioneering sociologists like Norbert Elias and Pierre Bourdieu

[6] Brenda Elsey, *Citizens and Sportsmen Futbol and Politics in Twentieth-Century Chile*. (University of Texas Press, 2011), 257, footnote 50.

tied sports into their understanding of how leisure fit into identity formation, class, and cultural practices in European society.[7] In the later 1980s, studies of sport expanded to examine non-European societies and issues of power and colonialism with gender as a particularly important focus.[8] Research on soccer initially tended to examine the game's roots in British schools and its popularization amongst working men; it was particularly concerned with contemporary fan culture, hooliganism, and crowd violence.[9] Soccer scholarship now features a diverse set of approaches, contributions, and areas of focus. Since the early 2000s scholars have argued soccer's significance in shaping gender in Britain, the black sporting experience in South Africa, citizenship and politics in Chile, youth political culture in Mexico City, everyday life in Soviet Russia, France's relationship to its former colonies, and the recent wave of protests, riots, and coups in the Middle East.[10] All of these studies point to soccer's power as a collective experience that can have profound effects on shaping identities. Many emphasize football's importance as both a tool of empire and space for anti-colonial expression, but all recognize the sport as inherently political.

This dissertation reveals a number of crucial ways in which soccer is political. To begin,

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[7] Pierre Bourdieu, "Sport and Social Class," *Social Science Information* 17, no. 6 (December 1, 1978): 819–40; Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning, *Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986).

[8] Richard Giulianotti, *Sport and Modern Social Theorists* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Richard S Gruneau, *Class, Sports, and Social Development* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1983); John Hargreaves, *Sport, Power, and Culture: A Social and Historical Analysis of Popular Sports in Britain* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986).

[9] Richard Giulianotti, *Football, Violence, and Social Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1994); Eric Dunning, Patrick Murphy, and John Williams, *The Roots of Football Hooliganism: An Historical and Sociological Study* (New York: Routledge, 1988).

[10] Jean Williams, *A Game for Rough Girls?: A History of Women's Football in Britain* (New York: Routledge, 2003); Peter Alegi, *Laduma! : Soccer, Politics, and Society in South Africa, from Its Origins to 2010*, (Scottsville South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2004); Brenda Elsey, *Citizens and Sportsmen Futbol and Politics in Twentieth-Century Chile*. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011); Roger Magazine, *Golden and Blue like My Heart : Masculinity, Youth, and Power among Soccer Fans in Mexico City* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007); Robert Edelman, *Spartak Moscow : A History of the People's Team in the Workers' State* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009); Laurent Dubois, *Soccer Empire : The World Cup and the Future of France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); James M Dorsey, *The Turbulent World of Middle East Soccer*, (London: C. Hurst & Co, 2016).

soccer is political in forming a part of the habits and expectations of everyday life.[11] Here, Pierre Bourdieu's work is instructive in helping situate soccer and associational life as forms of embodied practice, or actions people take as part and parcel of their social and cultural worlds. People invested their passion, social capital, and money into soccer clubs because they viewed these forms of associational life as a benefit their communities. Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* is a helpful way of describing these kinds of relatively durable social tendencies that are, on the one hand, created by people and, on the other, shape people. These dispositions are created by the interplay between human agency and broader structures, such as Argentina's political and economic development.

Porteños (inhabitants of Buenos Aires) embodied *habitus*, a particular set of attitudes on consumption, politics, gender, and leisure within a rapidly transforming urban landscape, or "field" as Bourdieu would put it. Focusing on this field and everyday life, topics that may be seemingly ordinary or taken-for-granted as cultural tendencies, is a way of paying close attention to how habitus shapes practice and social relations, while simultaneously providing an important grounding for politics and spatial relations.[12] Alf Lüdtke's work on everyday life emphasizes the importance of ethnographic-historical interpretation and paying attention to what spaces actions occur in and how space shapes these actions.[13] I use these conceptual tools to examine the particular way that soccer clubs fit within the field of 20th century Buenos Aires and the way that they simultaneously reflected and helped produce a *habitus* of associational life and consumption. *Porteños* had a set of attitudes, expectations, and dreams about Argentina's

[11] In looking at the trajectory of housing in Chile, Murphy, *For a Proper Home*, develops how everyday practices *and* expectations have significant implications for citizenship and state formation.
[12] Bourdieu, "Sport and Social Class"; Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977).
[13] Alf Lüdtke, "Introduction: What is the History of Everyday Life and Who Are its Practitioners?" in *The History of Everyday Life Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life*, ed. Alf Lüdtke (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

economic development and national integration; the institutional histories of soccer clubs and their urban infrastructure projects offer a way of examining how they articulated those dreams of development and modernization.

Soccer is also political in the way it has functioned as a space for articulating relationships of power between the sexes. Men have dominated *fútbol* in Argentina in terms of participation and governance. They have been the main actors in club administration, stadium construction, and professional soccer, and operated within certain codes of honor and ideas about masculinity. At the Ciudad Deportiva, Boca's directors envisioned a family space in which the ideal visitor was a breadwinning-male accompanied by his wife and children. Women shaped the institutional life of Boca Juniors as dues-paying *socias*, volunteers and paid staff, and athletes in the club's amateur sports teams. Women played soccer and attended matches since the game's earliest days; the history of the women's game and its current resurgence are the subject of fortchoming scholarship.[14] Soccer and projects like the Ciudad Deportiva also fit within broader Argentine political projects and anxieties about the proper roles for men and women in a modernizing city. Gender is thus a crucial analytical category for understanding how the sport evolved and its significance in society.

In her 1991 article, "Gender and sociopolitical change in twentieth-century Latin America" Sandra McGee Deutsch argued for gender's centrality in signifying relationships of power and its role in shaping political projects. She also noted that "the absence of work on men is striking", although there has subsequently been a great deal of scholarship on the subject.[15] This

[14] Gabriela Garton, "'Fit girls': Corporalidad, identidad y género en las representaciones de mujeres futbolistas". *Bajo Palabra: Revista de Filosofía*, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2017; Brenda Elsey and Joshua Nadel, *Futbolera: Women, Gender, and Sport in Latin America*, forthcoming.
[15] Sandra McGee Deutsch, "Gender and Sociopolitical Change in Twentieth-Century Latin America," Hispanic American Historical Review, 1991, 259–306. See, for examples, Eduardo Archetti, *Masculinities : Football, Polo, and the Tango in Argentina* (New York: Berg, 1999); Peter Beattie, *The Tribute of Blood : Army, Honor, Race, and*

research adds to a growing literature that examines masculinity in sports and broader society, drawing especially on the work of George Mosse, Tim Edwards, and Eduardo Archetti.[16] These scholars argue for an understanding of masculinity that takes into account Bourdieu's emphasis on habitus, but also emphasized how it is historically shaped, contingent, and plural and processual. If gender has power in everyday life, there are also multiple types or ideals of masculinity that are tied to an individual's identity that is always in flux. The combative forms of masculinity that placed a premium on the defense of one's honor featured in sports magazines during the early part of the 20th century shifted towards a breadwinning, family-man masculine ideal in the second half of the century. This had significant implications for political relations, especially the making of citizenship. As a host of gender historians have established, including Karin Rosemblatt, Sueann Caulfield, Ann Farnsworth-Alvear, and Heidi Tinsman, the modernization of patriarchy in industrial work and the idealization of gender and family roles has had profound implications for political projects and state formation in 20th century Latin America.[17]

Finally, football is political in that it is a mass commercial spectacle tied to political projects that prioritize consumption as a marker of national progress or class harmony. The theories of Bourdieu, Baudrillard, and Veblen point to prestige, social capital, and honor as kinds of value that are at play in acts of consumption. In Latin America, scholars have undertaken historical studies that use consumption as an entry point into understanding a diverse range of issues

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Nation in Brazil, 1864-1945 (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001); Matthew C Gutmann, *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009)

[16] Archetti, *Masculinities*; George Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Tim Edwards, *Cultures of Masculinity* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

[17] Sueann Caulfield, *In Defense of Honor : Sexual Morality, Modernity, and Nation in Early-Twentieth Century Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000); Ann Farnsworth-Alvear, *Dulcinea in the Factory : Myths, Morals, Men, and Women in Colombia's Industrial Experiment, 1905-1960* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000); Heidi Tinsman, "A Paradigm of Our Own: Joan Scott in Latin American History," *The American Historical Review* 113, no. 5 (2008): 1357–74; Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt, *Gendered Compromises: Political Cultures & the State in Chile, 1920-1950* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

including the constitution of class and gender identities, the shaping of political projects, and state formation. Heidi Tinsman's transnational history of grape consumption in Chile and the U.S. shows that the meanings of consumption were never fixed by Chile's military dictator Augusto Pinochet but instead that actors contested these meanings in a field of force. Tinsman also addresses debates over whether consumption ultimately is a force of alienation or community building by shifting the question to one of studying how consumption is a political act that is generative of hierarchy and power. Because Pinochet celebrated imported goods as a legitimating force, they served as a lightning rod for debates on whether Chile was modernizing or being victimized by the U.S[18] The anthropological work of David Graeber shows that conceptions of value are historically contingent and that ethnography can illuminate how systems of value defy the totalizing effects of "free market" systems.[19]

In related fashion, the sociologist David Goldblatt has pointed to how, at a global scale, football captures the tensions between love and money.[20] Clubs buy players as commodities and fans consume the spectacle of the professional game. Followers have a vast range of options in consuming media related to the game. Yet, many people think about football and act in ways that defy market logics. Theories of value and consumption are helpful in considering the way that football, and sport in general, sits uneasily between business and civic association. Boca's officials designed the Ciudad Deportiva as a space for the consumption of professional soccer and of family leisure, yet it was also envisioned as a marker of national progress that delivered on expectations of a modernizing city to a broad public. Projects like the Ciudad Deportiva were an articulation of those sometimes overlapping, sometimes competing logics. Club officials

[18] Heidi Tinsman, *Buying into the Regime: Grapes and Consumption in Cold War Chile and the United States*, 2014, 18.
[19] David Graeber, *Towards an Anthropological Theory of Value : The False Coin of Our Own Dreams* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).
[20] David Goldblatt, *The Ball Is Round : A Global History of Soccer* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2008).

mixed these logics in the fundraising campaign for the project, making multiple appeals to potential contributors: as patriotic Argentines contributing to national progress, as loyal fans in solidarity with their club, and as savvy investors.

This dissertation takes the city of Buenos Aires and urban space as an important analytical category in understanding how soccer clubs developed as civic associations. Less than twenty years ago, Diego Armus and John Lear described Latin American urban history as "relatively new."[21] The subfield emerged in the 1980s with social histories but it was in the following decade that historians began to produce more work on labor, gender, and popular culture. In 2000, Anthony Rosenthal described the fields "almost complete silence on how men use public space and in what ways that has changed over time."[22] The Ciudad Deportiva appealed to the dreams of modernization shared by city planners, state officials, and common *porteños* by revitalizing a dilapidated port district. The site's proximity to the city center, to the river, and to southern neighborhoods made it an appealing location in congested urban space. However, the location also presented significant challenges to municipal officials and Boca's directors as it was poorly connected by roads and required a massive terraforming operation. In this dissertation, I trace the use of space during the designing, building, and use of the Ciudad Deportiva in order to understand how *porteños* envisioned public space, consumptive space, and modernizing efforts in the city.

Finally, theories of state formation are useful in placing the Ciudad Deportiva within

[21] Diego Armus and John Lear, "The Trajectory of Latin American Urban History," Journal of Urban History 24, no. 3 (1998): 291–301.
[22] Anton Rosenthal, "Spectacle, Fear, and Protest: A Guide to the History of Urban Public Space in Latin America," Social Science History 24, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 33.

Argentina's broader political and economic developments.[23] Boca's directors sought various kinds of support from municipal and national governments throughout the nearly three decades of the project's existence. Between 1964 and 1992, Argentina had thirteen presidents and Buenos Aires had at least as many mayors. Before the Ciudad Deportiva existed, soccer clubs had received support from national and municipal governments including tax subsidies, land donations, and soft loans since the late 19th century. The Ciudad Deportiva fit within designs within state visions of modernization and national progress, designs that made the Argentine state appear at different points as an entity capable of supporting ambitious public works and ensuring the accessible consumption of recreation and leisure. At other points, Argentines saw the state as an impediment to modernization, a calamitous or corrupt agent mismanaging economic development. Many supporters of the project saw it as an apolitical effort working for the good of the nation though, in reality, the Ciudad Deportiva's successes and failures hinged on special interests of powerful politicians and club officials. In this vein, the work of Fernando Coronil is useful in emphasizing the state not as a single entity, but rather as a historical collection of people, social relations, practices, and beliefs that gave it a singular appearance.[24]

This dissertation contributes primarily to two bodies of literature: 20th century Argentine historiography and studies of soccer in Latin America. First, in Argentina the Ciudad Deportiva fit within a vision of public-private development, modernization, and social integration that became known as *desarrollismo,* or developmentalism. These policies emerged after the transformative government of Juan Domingo Perón (1946-1955) and remained a dominant

[23] Among the works that have most influenced my approach to the state are the following: Edward Murphy, *For a Proper Home: Housing Rights in the Margins of Urban Chile, 1960-2010* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015); Gilbert Joseph and Daniel Nugent, *Everyday Forms of State Formation: Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994); Fernando Coronil, *The Magical State : Nature, Money, and Modernity in Venezuela* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); Philip Abrams, "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 1, no. 1 (1977 1988): 58–89.
[24] Coronil, *The Magical State*, 116.

paradigm between 1955 and 1976. Developmentalism also persisted in specific ways throughout Argentina's long neoliberal turn initiated after the military dictatorship of 1976-1983. *Desarollismo* featured significant continuities with policies of state-led development, welfare, and import-substitution-industrialization from the 1930s and 40s but placed a greater emphasis on the need to attract foreign capital to stimulate heavy industry. Developmentalism also diverged from Peronism's focus on social justice and dignity for the working class. Instead, developmentalists championed the "middle class" (an anti-Peronist political identity in Argentina's historical context) and sought to establish markers of national progress in the form of high levels of consumption and leisure spaces in Buenos Aires.

By examining how Argentina's most popular soccer club sought to fit its ambitious project within developmentalist visions, this dissertation draws on and contributes to studies of Argentine politics in the post-Peronist period of 1955-1976. Scholars focusing on this period have examined organized labor, youth, the middle class, and the cultural transformation of Buenos Aires.[25] Laura Podalsky has shown how film and popular culture in general dramatized interactions between middle class *porteños* and the city, often referencing the transformations in the urban landscape that revolved around cars, architecture, and print culture.[26] Soccer, as a commercial spectacle and site of sociability in club facilities, was also a part of these material changes in the city that played into changing class conceptions — particularly around consumption. Sebastian Carassai's work has shed light on the habits and attitudes of Argentina's "silent majority", the overwhelming majority of middle class citizens who did not participate in

[25] Daniel James, *Resistance and Integration : Peronism and the Argentine Working Class, 1946-1976*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Laura Podalsky, *Specular City : Transforming Culture, Consumption, and Space in Buenos Aires, 1955-1973* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004); Valeria Manzano, *The Age of Youth in Argentina: Culture, Politics, and Sexuality from Perón to Videla*. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Sebastián Carassai, *The Argentine Silent Majority: Middle Classes, Politics, Violence, and Memory in the Seventies*, 2014; Ezequiel Adamovsky, *Historia de La Clase Media Argentina: Apogeo Y Decadencia de Una Ilusión, 1919-2003* (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2009).
[26] Podalsky, *Specular City*.

radical politics or revolutionary movements. Carassai's analysis of television shows, advertisements, and cartoons outlines the contours of how middle class values and interests were represented in mass media.[27] Ezequiel Adamovsky has made crucial insights on the formation of a middle-class identity as an anti-Peronist political project and dismantled influential Argentine sociologist Gino Germani's definition of the middle class as an identifiable segment of society. His work also draws on political cartoons, mass media, and popular culture to analyze middle class identities and how they changed over time.[28] Valeria Manzano has taken youth, rather than class, as the central category of analysis in studying how notions of gender, class, and visions of Argentina's future changed in the 1960s and 70s. Her work examines more rebellious facets of popular youth culture including rock, fashion, sexuality, and rock music.[29] Daniel James' work showed that unions in the 1960s shifted from being bastions of active Peronist resistance to more hierarchical and integrationist entities that increasingly invested dues into social services for their members. He identifies a "clear tendency in these years to place increasing emphasis on the social functions of unions… union leaders frequently fostered an image of their unions as fundamentally service organizations providing a whole range of social services to their members.[30]

Taken as a whole, these scholars signal the transformative nature of the 1960s and 70s in Argentina and argue against political histories that, emphasizing the frequent changes in government, characterize the period as solely one of "stalemate" or "paralysis."[31] My work complements these studies in showing that the post-Peronist decades were generative of

[27] Carassai, *The Argentine Silent Majority*.
[28] Adamovsky, *Historia de La Clase Media Argentina*.
[29] Manzano, *The Age of Youth in Argentina*.
[30] James, *Resistance and Integration*.
[31] José Nun, Juan Carlos Portantiero, and Carlos Altamirano, eds., *Ensayos Sobre La Transición Democrática En La Argentina* (Buenos Aires Argentina: Puntosur Editores, 1987); Luis Romero, *A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).

important economic, political, and cultural transformations with lasting implications for Argentina's historical trajectory. Despite inflation, economic uncertainty, and political proscription, people continued to believe in the capacity of a soccer club to transform part of Buenos Aires. The Ciudad Deportiva stands as proof that in the midst of economic and political turmoil, Argentines still worked to implement modernizing policies and projects. Soccer clubs also continued to serve as sites of providing social services and leisure activities that fit within the integrationist political projects of developmentalist governments. I show that coverage of soccer plays and club economics reflected changes in consumption, class, and gender during the contentious decades of the 1960s and 70s.

Desarrollismo's success hinged partly on increasing consumption, but developmentalists were by no means the first to tie expanded consumer activity to politics. In her history tracing the emergence of the working class consumer as an important political actor, Natalia Milanesio defines consumption broadly. Consumption in her study is a cultural practice including shopping, buying, using and desiring that gave meaning to a working class identity created by workers, admen, political movements, and policies. Milanesio also points out that scholars have tended to favor the commercial settings of consumption instead of focusing on other spaces of consumption, including the household and other places where consumers develop social solidarities and influence politics. Her book positions mass consumption at the center of understanding a new consumer culture, class and gender identities, and the relationship between society and the state. She argues that Argentina was a case in which a the government aimed to use an export economy to industrialize. This government used social justice and "income redistribution as a political weapon and proposed a 'third way' development strategy."[32] For

[32] Natalia Milanesio, *Workers Go Shopping in Argentina: The Rise of Popular Consumer Culture* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 2013), 10.

Milanesio, Peronism offered consumer protection by controlling and marketing consumer goods with educational campaigns.

Eduardo Elena argues that histories of consumption should examine both abundance and scarcity. Latin America's history as a producer of primary products enabled modern consumption elsewhere in the world and fed the emergence of a commercial mass culture at home.[33] Argentina's sense of national identity and its major political movements were formed within attempts to impose order on the vicissitudes of market forces. Elena's study shows how Peronism emerged from efforts to protect Argentine consumers from this "maelstrom of modernity", and propose a "third way" of national capitalism between communism and unregulated free markets.[34] Following the Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells, Elena identifies areas like subsidized leisure or health care as *"collective consumption"* or *"nonmarket consumption"* to distinguish them from retail spending or mass consumption and to embrace a fuller spectrum of consumer acts. His history traces what elements constituted a "dignified life" under Peronism while pointing to the contradictions within the political movement that simultaneously criticized wasteful consumerism while "celebrating conspicuous consumption as modernizing forms of social progress."[35]

The various types of consumption that occurred within soccer clubs and around the Ciudad Deportiva resist simple definitions on how people valued these activities. In building on Castells, Elena's characterization of leisure and health care as collective consumption is an important way of identifying economic areas that are subsidized or don't aim to produce profits. Like the Fundación Eva Perón that Elena describes as an example of a non-market space, soccer clubs

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[33] Eduardo Elena, *Dignifying Argentina : Peronism, Citizenship, and Mass Consumption* (Pittsburgh Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011), 11.
[34] Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air : The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982).
[35] Elena, *Dignifying Argentina*, 14.

also straddled the line between profitable businesses and their legal definition as non-profit civic associations. The overlapping logics and interconnections between market activities, acts of solidarity, and cultural and social capital accumulation that all occurred under the roof of soccer clubs points to their complexity as institutions. It also underscores a fundamental tension in the dynamics of citizenship, consumption, and urbanization that this dissertation explores.

This dissertation also adds to a growing literature on soccer in Latin America. There has been a steady increase in scholarship on *fútbol* in the last decade in the form of dissertations, articles, monographs, and edited volumes published from within and without the region.[36] In Argentina, scholars at the *Centro de Estudios del Deporte* (CED) have led the way.[37] Scholarly production then has only recently begun to catch up with an activity that has long dominated professional sports revenues, attendance, and media coverage in nearly every South American nation. Football reached Latin America via British commercial and imperial expansion, but local elites and popular sectors rapidly adopted and transformed the game into *fútbol*. Urbanization,

[36] Elsey, *Citizens and Sportsmen*; Roger Alan. Kittleson, *The Country of Football: Soccer and the Making of Modern Brazil* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014); Joshua H Nadel, *Fútbol!: Why Soccer Matters in Latin America*, 2014; Jeffrey William Richey, "Playing at Nation: Soccer Institutions, Racial Ideology, and National Integration in Argentina, 1912-1931" (Ph.D., The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2013); Rwany Sibaja, "¡Animales! Civility, Modernity, and Constructions of Identity in Argentine Soccer, 1955--1970" (Ph.D., George Mason University, 2013); Alfio Saitta, "From the Barrio to the Nation: Social, Neighborhood, and Sports Clubs in Argentina, 1920-1975" (Dissertation, University of Indiana, 2014); Magazine, *Golden and Blue like My Heart*; Gaffney, *Temples of the Earthbound Gods*; Joel Horowitz, "Football Clubs and Neighbourhoods in Buenos Aires before 1943: The Role of Political Linkages and Personal Influence," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 46, no. 3 (August 2014): 557–585; Matthew Karush, "National Identity in the Sports Pages: Football and the Mass Media in 1920s Buenos Aires," *The Americas* 60, no. 1 (2003): 11; Raanan Rein, *Los bohemios de Villa Crespo: judíos y fútbol en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2012); Raanan Rein, "'El Primer Deportista': The Political Use and Abuse of Sport in Peronist Argentina," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 15, no. 2 (1998): 54; Diego Armus, Stefan H Rinke, and Asociación de Historiadores Latinoamericanistas Europeos, *Del football al fútbol/futebol: historias argentinas, brasileras y uruguayas en el siglo XX*, 2014.

[37] Maria Verónica Moreira, "Honor y gloria en el fútbol argentino. El Caso de la hinchada del Club Atlético Independiente" (Universidad de Buenos Aires, 2001); Raanan Rein, ed., *La cancha peronista: fútbol y política (1946-1955)*, 2015; Julio Frydenberg, *Historia Social Del Fútbol : Del Amateurismo a La Profesionalización* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI Editores, 2011); Julio Frydenberg and Rodrigo Daskal, eds., *Fútbol, Historia Y Política*, (Ciudad de Buenos Aires: Aurelia Rivera Libros, 2010); Rodrigo Daskal, *Los Clubes En La Ciudad de Buenos Aires (1932-1945) Revista La Cancha: Sociabilidad, Política Y Estado* (Teseo, 2013); Mariano Gruschetsky, "Estadios de fútbol, actores sociales y desarrollo urbano: Los casos del Club Atlético River Plate y del Club Atlético Vélez Sársfield en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires en el siglo XX" (Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, 2010).

industrialization, and associative life all drove *fútbol's* spread as a ubiquitous pastime.

Recent works have added to our understanding of the gendered world of soccer, with particular attention paid to women's exclusion from the region's most popular game and to the forms of masculinity interwoven with *fútbol*. The first book-length work explicitly exploring soccer and masculinity emerged from Argentina with Eduardo Archetti's *Masculinities: Football, Polo, and the Tango in Argentina*. Argentine men defined and tested their masculinity as both players and fans. Clubs were institutions driven by the economics of the most popular urban male pastime, but they also served as civic associations serving the needs of a broader constituency. These club membership bases were not composed solely of young men. Families joined in order to participate in the club's "social sphere," or services and amateur athletics. Women paid club dues, competed in amateur sports like basketball, organized social and cultural events, and worked as administrators and librarians as part of club staffs. Brenda Elsey also provides a blueprint in demonstrating how clubs served as a venue within which Chilean men developed their political activities while also promoting certain forms of masculinity that intersected with broader political transformations.[38] Christopher Gaffney's comparative work on stadiums in Buenos Aires argues that it was precisely a "gendered production of urban space" that defined stadiums as "domains for territorial competitions between men." Building on Archetti, Gaffney links matches at the soccer stadiums of Buenos Aires to a longer historical trajectory of the gendering of public space.[39] My focus on club facilities as blends between public and private spaces designed for *socios* to use as family units adds a different perspective on reading stadiums primarily as domains for competing men. Rather than being an arena exclusive to men, soccer clubs were centers of associational life were gender roles were

[38] Elsey, *Citizens and Sportsmen*.
[39] Gaffney, *Temples of the Earthbound Gods*, 132–36.

articulated and contested in a variety of activities.

Porteños consumed the spectacle of professional *fútbol* and soccer clubs were in the business of selling it. Results on the field fueled the commercial success of professional soccer and Boca Juniors' cultural capital cannot be separated from their sporting achievements. However, characterizing clubs as businesses elides an entire sphere of civic association that animated institutional life at soccer clubs. Soccer clubs' legal status as non-profit civic associations points to the need to understand clubs as non-market entities. Sociologist David Goldblatt's definition of clubs is particularly apt in Argentina: "A football club is the accumulated cultural capital and the historical memories of the group of people who have chosen to invest their time, their energy, and their love in it."[40] Julio Frydenberg and others have outlined the early commercialization of the sport, decades before the formal professionalization of the game in the 1930s, but there has been very little written on consumption or the economics of soccer clubs in the post-Peronist era.[41] I focus on the issues of production and consumption of the spectacle of professional soccer and the ways these economic shifts were intertwined with Argentina's growth and recurring crises the second half of the twentieth century.

Chapter Outlines

The first chapter describes how soccer became Argentina's most popular pastime for men and how soccer clubs developed as neighborhood-based civic associations in the early 20th century. I focus on how clubs integrated themselves into local politics, sociability, and patterns of consumption and recreation. *Porteños* founded clubs during a period of political reform and

[40] David Goldblatt in discussion with the author, 2012

[41] Julio Frydenberg, *Historia Social Del Fútbol : Del Amateurismo a La Profesionalización* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI Editores, 2011); Julio Frydenberg and Rodrigo Daskal, eds., *Fútbol, Historia y Política*, (Buenos Aires: Aurelia Rivera Libros, 2010); Rodrigo Daskal, *Los Clubes En La Ciudad de Buenos Aires (1932-1945) Revista La Cancha: Sociabilidad, Política y Estado* (Buenos Aires: Teseo, 2013).

social upheaval, resulting in a boom in neighborhood associations that sought to integrate residents into political and civic life. The creation of the modern, working class barrio, involved questions of consumption, citizenship, and changing forms of sociability and leisure time. As the sport evolved into a spectacle of mass consumption, the most successful clubs built followings that transcended their neighborhoods and positioned them to draw large numbers of dues-paying *socios* in the 1920s and 30s at the dawn of the professional era. Clubs' combined roles as local civic associations serving their members and sites of the mass consumption of popular sport enabled their directors to draw on state support in building their stadiums and infrastructure. The chapter begins by tracing football's diffusion in the city, the meanings of masculinity and class that people ascribed to it, and the ways that clubs positioned themselves as institutions that would shape healthy minds and bodies. I then examine the role of print journalism and other media in popularizing the game. Sports pages were a place where Argentines articulated conceptions of race and gender through *fútbol*. As soccer became more popular, clubs evolved into more complex institutions offering a range of activities that fit within a changing consumer landscape. With professionalization, clubs sought to build their own concrete stadiums subsidized by loans and public donations in order to expand their facilities and better control revenue. I trace how clubs employed themes of hygiene, morality, and youth to petition the national and municipal governments for support. Finally, I analyze how this relationship between the state and soccer clubs transformed during the Peronist decade to incorporate the language of social justice and celebration of the working class.

Chapter two introduces Boca's search for a new stadium during the post-Peronist period after 1955. I begin by describing Argentina's political transformations and the role of developmentalist policies in the military and the governments of Arturo Frondizi (1958-1962)

and Arturo Illia (1963-1966). Led by president Alberto J. Armando, Boca Juniors strategically positioned its early project designs within plans for the transformation of Buenos Aires's southern neighborhoods and old, dilapidated port district. Construction began despite increasing uncertainty over Argentina's political and economic future, and in contrast to the general national mood, the fundraising was spectacularly successful. The dream of the Ciudad Deportiva promised class harmony, consumption, and a kind of moral oasis that would also demonstrate Argentina's success in modernization and development. The chapter also fits the Ciudad Deportiva within a changing professional landscape for soccer, including the emergence of new competitions, growing club memberships, and the diversification of a consumer lifestyle that privileged a middle-class identity.

Chapter three details the construction of the Ciudad Deportiva between 1964 and 1970, the most successful period of the projects history and the completion of most planned facilities. The chapter examines how Boca's directors navigated the transition from civilian to military rule when general Juan Carlos Onganía led a coup to remove Arturo Illia and began Argentina's period of bureaucratic authoritarianism. The club was able to continue enjoying support at the highest levels because the military's continuation of developmentalist policies and priority on modernization. The Ciudad Deportiva drew thousands of Argentines to invest in the project, visit the construction site, and begin to use the facilities as they were inaugurated. State, religious, and international dignitaries rubbed elbows with celebrities and the *porteño* elite to add to the prestige and spectacle of the construction. This success and glamor gave many a sense that Boca's Ciudad Deportiva was fulfilling its potential as an inspiration and marker of national progress. Many came to see the Ciudad Deportiva as a site of social harmony in which middle class families could visit and enjoy a space of leisure and consumption in their city. My analysis

adds to our understanding of how clubs were places where particular kinds of gender norms were at play on the field and off it. I also fit the Ciudad Deportiva within broader transformations in professional soccer as clubs sought to develop new revenue streams and positioned themselves as motors for national progress in the developmentalist era.

The fourth chapter traces the slow decline of the Ciudad Deportiva that began after 1970. That year, Onganía was removed in a military coup and general Alejandro Lanusse became the *de facto* president of Argentina in 1971. Despite the change in government, Armando continued to draw support at the highest levels of national government and launched another incredibly successful fundraising campaign to finance construction of Boca's planned Gran Estadio. However, construction was slow to begin and the club began facing a series of lawsuits related to their administration of the initial fundraising campaign. By 1972, Armando faced an open rebellion from within his own board of directors which culminated in a violent confrontation and gunfire at the club. The return of Juan Domingo Perón to power in 1973 meant that Armando had become *persona non grata* in the returned Peronist administration. The club laid foundations for the stadium and did receive an extension on the deadline to construct it ahead of Argentina's hosting of the 1978 world cup. However, rampant inflation and a national economic crisis in 1975 seemed to definitively end plans to construct the stadium. Another military coup in 1976 spelled the end of the stadium project. Beyond Boca, soccer clubs struggled to find new revenue in a diversified consumer landscape that disrupted professional soccer's economic model. Clubs created new competitions, a lottery, and faced a players strike in 1971 while accumulating increasing levels of state debt.

Chapter five explains the Ciudad Deportiva's failure and eventual sale in the period between 1976 and 1992. The chapter describes the state violence initiated by the military junta in 1976 as

a part of the so-called Process of National Reorganization, or *Proceso*. The military also initiated Argentina's neoliberal era with economic policies designed to fight inflation, reduce state spending, and secure foreign loans. However, military governance was characterized by internal rivalries, corruption, and an increase in public spending in certain sectors. It was in this context that the military junta seized possession of the Ciudad Deportiva from Boca Juniors for failure to complete the facilities as specific by the original 1965 law donating the river property to the club. The junta also passed over the project as the originally planned primary site for Argentina's hosting of the 1978 FIFA World Cup, an event for which military organizers spent over 500 million dollars on stadiums and infrastructure. While Armando was out of favor with the leaders of the *Proceso*, the club was eventually able to regain possession of the property through military connections with the board of directors. They were only able to do so because of the favoritism and corruption endemic to the military dictatorship. With the return of democracy in 1983, Argentina's continued economic crises and decade of economic contraction opened space for further neoliberal restructuring. Boca Juniors nearly went bankrupt during this period, but was successful in amending the original law for the Ciudad Deportiva to sell the property as part of a real estate boom in the formerly dilapidated port district of Puerto Madero. The chapter pays particular attention to the economic policies that contextualize the Ciudad Deportiva's failure and the club's brush with bankruptcy.

In a brief epilogue and conclusion, I underscore how soccer's trajectory (and Boca's in particular) remains intertwined with broader transformations and tensions in Buenos Aires and Argentina. The Ciudad Deportiva's sale enabled the reemergence of Boca Juniors as a successful team and club with a particular approach to marketing and commercialization in the mid-1990s under club president Mauricio Macri. With Boca's team winning a series of domestic and

international titles, Macri launched a political career that touted his business-minded governance of the club as proof of his ability to improve Argentina's national economy. His efforts to privatize the non-profit civic association club model provoked a fierce response from fans and club directors, a signal that many Argentines continue to view clubs as non-market institutions. Understanding Macri's time and legacy at Boca Juniors sheds light on Argentina's current political reality, as the former club president has since been elected to congress, the mayorship of Buenos Aires, and the national presidency.

Chapter 1 - The Emergence of Soccer City: Clubs, Stadiums, and the State, 1890-1955

Newsreel footage from November 11th, 1954 captures the palpable excitement in the neighborhood of La Boca. A throng of singing fans filled the streets surrounding Boca Juniors' stadium, La Bombonera. Young men packed the barrio's corners and cafes. Shop owners and residents painted their walls with Boca's colors, blue and gold, sometimes including graffiti homages to star players. Streetcars overflowing with fans rolled into the neighborhood, men dangling precariously off their sides and roofs. Well over 30,000 people made it into La Bombonera's stands filled with hope that the team would win and earn the club its first championship in a decade. Boca scored just before halftime and the stadium erupted with euphoria. The goal proved decisive, a 1-0 victory for Boca Juniors spurred fans to rush onto the field and celebrate. Recently-elected club president, Alberto J. Armando joined the players in the locker room with bottles of champagne. The victory was a milestone for Boca; a new president, a recently expanded stadium, record-breaking attendance, and a long-awaited championship. The club dedicated the victory to Argentina's president, Juan Domingo Perón, who had authorized a state loan via executive decree to finance La Bombonera's third tier. The players and club directors joined Perón and other Argentine sports celebrities at the Casa Rosada, the presidential palace, to celebrate with the nation's "first sportsman."[1]

[1] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1954*, 1954; "Semanario Argentino 124," *Semanario Argentino* (Buenos Aires, November 1954), Archivo General de la Nación.

Figure 2 - Boca's team and directors with president Perón. Credit: Archivo General de la Nación

Perón supported various soccer clubs as part of efforts to tie enthusiasm for sports to *justicialismo*, or the Peronist ideology of social justice. Peronist legislators worked to pass a 1947 law authorizing Perón to issue $4.6 million dollars[2] worth of low-interest loans to clubs for the building of stadiums, fields, and athletics facilities.[3] The loans represented a considerable public investment, but *fútbol* had been securing state subsidies and loans for over fifty years. Municipal and state officials justified this spending by arguing that these institutions served the public good by shaping healthy bodies and minds amongst Argentine youth. Clubs were indeed neighborhood-based civic associations that provided a variety of services to their members and community. The soccer clubs of Buenos Aires were about more than just winning championships, they were an integral part of everyday life and a set of institutions that produced

[2] All monetary figures in this dissertation are conversions of the Argentine peso to the contemporary equivalent of U.S. Dollars. e.g. 20 million 1947 Argentine pesos are equivalent to 4.6 million 1947 U.S. Dollars
[3] "Fijase El Presupuesto de Gastos de La Nación Para El Año 1947 - LEY 12931," *Boletin Oficial*, January 25, 1947, 76.

a particular kind of urban politics and social life. This chapter explores how clubs came to occupy this role as both service providers serving their members and sites for the consumption of leisure within the wider context of the city's expansion in the early twentieth century.

I begin by tracing soccer's arrival as a British import and the sport's growing popularity in the late 19th century. Young *porteño* men quickly formed their own clubs, inscribing the game with various meanings of masculinity, race, and class. By the 1910s, soccer had become a ubiquitous male pastime and mass spectacle drawing tens of thousands of spectators. Soccer clubs also became increasingly integrated into the sociability, politics, and consumption patterns of the neighborhoods they represented. These institutions expanded their membership bases into the thousands by the 1920s and offered an expanded set of activities including amateur sports, educational programs, and dances and cultural events. By the 1930s and 40s, soccer professionalized and consolidated its place as a spectacle of mass consumption. Clubs played their league matches in massive concrete stadiums built with public subsidies secured by wealthy and politically connected boards of directors. I describe the construction of several of these concrete stadiums in order to examine the key links between politics, state formation, and urban transformation that soccer made possible. During the Peronist decade of 1946-1955, club officials began to adopt more explicit political language in their interactions with the state. Clubs' adoption of the language of *justicialismo* built on the established precedents of how *fútbol* directors interacted with politicians in the first half of the twentieth century.

Forming Clubs in a Growing City

Football came to Argentina in the mid 19th century as part of Britain's economic, cultural, and political influence in post-independence Latin America. The game made its way across the

Atlantic almost immediately after its invention; members of the Buenos Aires Cricket Club played the first official football game in Argentina in 1867, only four years after the publication of the official rules of association football in England. Businessmen, rail workers, sailors, and bankers from the British isles spread the game everywhere they went in Argentina. The small but influential Anglo-Argentine community and Argentine elites practiced football as part of a gentlemanly lifestyle in exclusive clubs alongside other sports like rowing, cricket, and tennis. Argentine elites and political leaders viewed European immigration and the economic and cultural influence of British empire as the key to modernizing the nation. This imbued the figure of the "sportsman" with 19th century notions of civilizational progress. Thus, from the moment footballs arrived in Argentina they were tied to a project of whitening the nation that valorized European (especially northern European) habits above all others.[4]

The transformation of football from an elite hobby to popular pastime in the capital of Buenos Aires began in 1890 when Glaswegian schoolmaster Alexander Watson Hutton formed an official league. Composed of elite British and Argentine schools or clubs, Hutton's league championed the growth and organization of football as an integral part of the moral and physical formation of young men. Only males who could afford high tuition or club membership dues could play. However, league organizers worked to popularize soccer beyond elite circles as a "civilizing" force that would inculcate sportsmanship and fair play.[5] Coverage of the league soon extended beyond English-language papers like *The Standard* when national dailies like *El País, La Nación* and *La Prensa* began featuring sports sections at the start of the 1900s. These stories placed sportsmanship and collective struggle at the center of the spectacle, emphasizing the

[4] Jeffrey William Richey, "Playing at Nation: Soccer Institutions, Racial Ideology, and National Integration in Argentina, 1912-1931" (Ph.D., The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2013),
[5] Julio Frydenberg, *Historia Social Del Fútbol : Del Amateurismo a La Profesionalización* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI Editores, 2011).

ethical dimension of competition. According to *El Diario*, a proper "sportsman" (using the English word) showed "class" by refraining from "unnecessary ostentatiousness." Any hostile conduct reflected a "national [Argentine] temperament."[6] Sportsmanship could show the inherent class status of some and the learned habits of others. Journalists celebrated the masculine virtues of fair play, the hygienic benefits of sport, and the moral pedagogy of amateur competition.

The nascent football press catered to an expanding audience in a city experiencing rapid growth fueled by dramatic changes in Argentina's economy and population. An agricultural export boom of wheat and cattle helped fuel an influx of immigration to Buenos Aires and the Pampas region. Wheat production grew by five times between 1892 and 1913 with similar growth rates in corn and linseed. Wool and meat production also grew with the establishment of canning and packinghouses. During roughly the same period, British capital investment in Argentina increased by twenty times, much of it focused on infrastructure like the increase of railroad tracks from 2,500 kilometers in 1885 to 34,000 in 1916.[7] Buenos Aires grew from around 180,000 inhabitants in 1870 to 1.2 million in 1910. Immigrants arrived from Italy and Spain in the largest numbers but also from Eastern Europe and the Levant. By 1909, the city's foreign-born population stood at 46%[8]. Many new arrivals avidly consumed the spectacle of the official league by attending matches and following the emerging sports press. The press played up the spectacle and controversy of the top leagues, offering analysis and inviting readers to reflect on team selections, performances, and referees. Young men formed hundreds of clubs at the beginning of the century in order to compete in both independently organized leagues and the lower divisions of the official league with dreams of playing at the top level.

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[6] *El Diario*, October 1906 cited in Ibid., 34.
[7] Luis Romero, *A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), p.4-7.
[8] Richard J Walter, *Politics and Urban Growth in Buenos Aires, 1910-1942* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 7.

Newspapers were a technology that enabled more than just the growth of a sports press, they also served as an organizational tool for the new clubs based in growing neighborhoods. In April of 1903, *La Argentina* described the panorama of club football: "The game has become massively popular, it has spread to all parts and even street children have entered the fray… more than 400 clubs compete outside the official league with more than 6,000 enthusiastic footballers."[9] *La Argentina* served as a crucial platform of communication for independent leagues to coordinate schedules and find opponents. It was the paper of record for league schedules, results, and solicitations for matches. The new clubs sometimes emerged from the elite leisure club model in which dues-paying members organized a variety of leisure and athletic activities such as gymnastics and fencing with Gymnasia y Esgrima de Buenos Aires (1880). Other clubs were founded in the workplace, with railroad clubs like the one founded by Buenos Aires Western Railway workers (Ferrocarril Oeste) in 1904.[10] In many cases, founders created a club explicitly to play football and lived in the same neighborhood. They referenced their *barrios* in club names: e.g. Boca Juniors (La Boca), Vélez Sarsfield (Vélez Sarsfield), San Lorenzo de Almagro (Almagro), Chacarita Juniors (Chacarita), Defensores de Belgrano (Belgrano), and Nueva Chicago (Nueva Chicago a.k.a Mataderos), to name only a few. In October 1907, Club Gaona Juniors announced their founding and issued a challenge in *La Argentina*: "The neighborhood on Gaona street has founded a new club… the field is on Gaona 1453 between Cucha Cucha and Pujo. We accept challenges for under twelve teams this Sunday the 27th."[11]

In the 1910s, the sports press helped reshape football's cultural meanings as it moved beyond the clubs of high society and into popular culture. The pages of *La Argentina* served as a place to establish a reputation, air grievances from games, and resolve conflicts. Players and journalists

[9] Frydenberg, *Historia Social Del Fútbol*, 47.
[10] Richey, "Playing at Nation," p.47-48.
[11] *La Argentina,* 10/25/1907 Cited in Frydenberg, *Historia Social Del Fútbol*, 52.

weighed the British values of "fair play" and "sportsmanship" against those of *viveza criolla* (creole guile) that subverted the rules. These debates hinged on the importance of winning at any cost and the codes of honor that were at stake in competitions as clubs aimed to grow and play in the top league. This included *guapeza* (combative toughness), which could be employed to preserve masculine honor and save face in defeat, or *picardía* (trickery) to defeat physically superior opponents. Players and fans associated winning and losing with a sense of manly honor taking shape in cafes and street corners, concepts defined in terms of nationalism, class, and gender.[12]

The sports pages also featured debate on how the top leagues should be structured, the role of a paying public, and the ethics of paying players. The official league included a mix of aristocratic and working-class clubs that reportedly adhered to strict hygienic standards for their facilities and prohibited charging for admittance to games. In 1912, long-simmering tensions over these policies provoked the formation of a breakaway league that allowed charging for attendance. On the one hand, the split reflected the growing popularity of the game as matches became spectacles attended by thousands of (potentially paying) fans. On the other, the split reflected the division between an adherence to the original British values of amateur leisure that showed and taught class status and the newer, more popular values of masculine honor and competition. Papers like *La Argentina, La Mañana, El Diario,* and *Crítica* largely advocated for the values of the breakaway league, but also strongly criticized any under the table compensation of players.[13]

The development of early football clubs took place within a changing urban geography. The agro-export economy and growing transportation network enabled the emergence of

[12] Ibid., 81–89.
[13] Frydenberg, *Historia Social Del Fútbol*.

neighborhoods characterized by single-family dwellings rather than the shared, often communal living spaces of the *conventillo*, or tenement. Neighborhoods south of the city center, such as La Boca and Barracas, were characterized by crowded *conventillos* filled with tenants who did not conform to a nuclear family ideal and were more apt to adopt anarchism and radical leftist politics.[14] *La Argentina* in 1909 remarked that "the single-family home is enormously important for the moral and cultural progress of the most modest classes" and that an "increase in the number of property owners" would contribute to "social tranquility."[15] The ideal citizen was imagined to be European-descended, family-oriented, and focused on progress and respectability.[16] Social mobility involved more than housing; being *culto*, or cultured, meant having the proper family structure and participating in the civic life of *barrio* organizations.[17]

The city's public transportation system fed the growth of football by allowing thousands of fans to attend the top division's games across the city every weekend. With teams frequently migrating in search of field space, players and fans needed to travel significant distances to reach games. In 1910, 300 million passengers traveled over 400 miles of streetcar track. *Porteños* rode Latin America's first subway, inaugurated in 1913. The number of taxis also grew steadily throughout the decade.[18] Public transport was so efficient that the U.S. General Consul remarked that the city's transportation system was the best and cheapest in the world during his visit to Buenos Aires in 1912. Accessible means of traversing the urban landscape made the many city-wide leagues possible. In moving about the city via a growing transit system, players and fans

[14] Ezequiel Adamovsky, *Historia de La Clase Media Argentina: Apogeo y Decadencia de Una Ilusión, 1919-2003* (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2009), 77.
[15] Emilio Berger: "El hogar propio," *La Argentina,* 15/2/1909 p.4 Cited in Ibid., 80.
[16] Ibid., 91.
[17] Adrián Gorelik, *La grilla y el parque : espacio público y cultura urbana en Buenos Aires, 1887-1936* (Buenos Aires: Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, 1998), 299.
[18] Walter, *Politics and Urban Growth in Buenos Aires, 1910-1942*, 19.

came to understand the city as a landscape of rivalries between neighborhoods.[19]

Clubs formed part of a wider network of civic associations that proliferated in the city's new neighborhoods at the turn of the century. This *asociacionismo*, or boosterism for associational life, shaped a new form of urban sociability, spatial organization, and civic life that would become a defining feature of modern Buenos Aires: the *barrio*.[20] A typical set of barrio institutions included public schools, parks, green spaces, football clubs, libraries, and *sociedades de fomento*. Neighborhood libraries helped make accessible a growing catalogue of accessibly-priced books that were considered part of the canon of being *culto*. These publications included classic works of fiction and non-fiction, focusing on topics that included self-improvement and hygiene, ideas and debates on social reform. Titles on scientific approaches to sexuality reflected a preoccupation with healthiness and hygiene as well as outlining the proper role of women as mothers who would ensure the physical and moral formation of children.[21] Residents also organized *sociedades de fomento* to petition the state or municipal government for resources or basic services like water, street paving, or public schooling. *Sociedades* and other associations also served as community centers with their own libraries and social events. Elites and state officials saw *barrio* institutions and cultural production as a key to integrating European immigrants and overcoming the nation's "barbarous" past. These institutions would also encourage social mobility and help counteract revolutionary politics.

Barrio associations positioned themselves as apolitical institutions that merited the collective pooling of resources and public investment. Under the banner of neighborhood improvement, there was broad consensus that this associational work was apolitical in that the everyday needs

[19] Frydenberg, *Historia Social Del Fútbol*, 92–105.
[20] Gorelik, *La grilla y el parque*, 175.
[21] Leandro H Gutiérrez and Luis Alberto Romero, *Sectores populares, cultura y política: Buenos Aires en la entreguerra* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1995), 54–63.

of the community superseded party politics. This apolitical designation, rooted in the idea that municipal governance functioned above partisan politics, made neighborhood associations a primary contact point between residents and public officials.[22] At the turn of the century, interactions between neighborhood boosters and municipal authorities did not generally feature factional party politics. However, the work of shaping urban life was hardly apolitical. Indeed, the wide array of philanthropic, volunteer, and publicly subsidized work of neighborhood associations was *the* privileged instrument of reform and urban planning. In 1912, the Seanz Peña law instituted universal male suffrage and prompted the two dominant parties, Radicals and Socialists, to expand their presence in the barrios by building infrastructure and party headquarters.[23] Football clubs complemented these "apolitical" efforts to shape respectable citizens by offering a site of community cohesion and identity as well as a healthy form of recreation that would improve the mind and spirit.

Not everyone agreed that football was a positive influence. The sport was not adopted as part of the physical education programs of public schools. Enrique Romero Brest, the leading figure in physical education in Argentina, considered team sports unhealthy and associated football with street life.[24] Romero Brest believed that any sport practiced in the streets and plazas of the city would only promote immorality and violence.[25] The healthiness of the sport was of particular concern to public officials, intellectuals, and hygienist thinkers who sought to improve public health in the face of a number of deadly outbreaks (tuberculosis in particular) that struck Buenos Aires in the late 19th century. During the first two decades of the 20th century, Romero Brest's

[22] Luciano de Privitellio and Luis Alberto Romero, "Organizaciones de La Sociedad Civil, Tradiciones Cívicas y Cultura Política Democrática: El Caso de Buenos Aires, 1912-1976.," *Revista de Historia* 1, no. 1 (2005): 13.
[23] Gorelik, *La grilla y el parque*.
[24] Frydenberg, *Historia Social Del Fútbol*, 26.
[25] Diego Armus, *The Ailing City : Health, Tuberculosis, and Culture in Buenos Aires, 1870-1950* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2011), 295.

thinking prevailed throughout a public education system that aimed to shape a strong, national "*raza*" more resistant to sickness by emulating the hygienic practices and military gymnastics of European countries like Sweden. Shut out of public schools, football nevertheless thrived as an extracurricular activity played in clubs, public parks, and the streets.

Players had difficulty securing space to play despite the fact that many of the city's new neighborhoods were located on the city's still-expanding periphery. In 1907, only one third of the more than 300 clubs in the city had a field.[26] Club organizers had to work with other neighborhood associations, local municipal authorities, and landowners to build a field and stands on loaned or rented space. Most clubs represented a neighborhood but were forced to migrate across the city in search of open space and affordable field rentals. Throughout the early twentieth century, some clubs found space in the neighborhoods of their original founding, a process that helped cement social and affective ties. Other clubs settled permanently outside their founding *barrios* and still managed to retain symbolic ties to their original neighborhood culture. Still others moved and lost those ties only to generate new ones in a different neighborhood. Above all, social and political capital proved decisive in finding a *barrio* and field space in which to settle.

City politicians and state officials championed soccer clubs as important civic associations that warranted public investment. The city council, or *concejo deliberante*, passed legislation and ordinances that helped structure public space, civic associations, and addressed the need for public services in a rapidly expanding city. In 1915 one city councilman pushed for soccer to be integrated into public schools, arguing that it facilitated "physical and moral development" and would rescue children from street life and vice.[27] The elite and exclusive club Gimnasia y

[26] Frydenberg, *Historia Social Del Fútbol*, 26.
[27] Armus, *The Ailing City*, 297.

Esgrima de Buenos Aires received a tax break for facilities that would "develop the physical strength of the children of the city and… awaken interest in physical exercise, with all of the according hygienic and moral benefits." These subsidies to exclusive clubs led members of the Socialist party in the *concejo* to question the efficacy of football as a method for strengthening the "*raza"* and improving hygiene of all Argentines instead of just wealthy young men. Despite these objections, the city council loaned public space and provided tax exemptions to clubs including Porteño, River Plate, Boca Juniors, Atlanta, and Almagro in the 1900s and 1910s.[28] A 1918 electoral reform helped diversify the class composition of *concejo* and the legislative body became an important source of support for even more sports clubs.'

The growth of soccer as a pastime and clubs as civic associations fit within a broader process of Argentina's state formation in the early twentieth century. The country's overall population grew from 1.8 million in 1869 to 7.8 million in 1914; an explosion that presented elites and state officials with concerns over what kind of citizenry the nation would produce, especially as this occurred within processes of rapid urbanization. Real possibilities for social mobility attracted many immigrants from abroad and to the nation's urban centers, some prominent intellectuals drew on positivistic social science to diagnose Argentine society as ill. Social tensions stemmed from a process of uneven growth at the turn of the century, culminating in a wave of strikes and urban revolts in 1910. The Unión Cívica Radical (UCR) emerged as the most successful mass political party following universal suffrage in 1912 and was led by Hipólito Yrigoyen (president 1916-1922) and later by Marcelo T. De Alvear (president 1922-1928). While Radicals would eventually employ repression and firings as a response to strikes and demonstrations demanding for social reforms, they also established an important role for the state as arbiter between

[28] Rodrigo Daskal, "Clubes, Deporte y Política En El Honorable Concejo Deliberante de La Ciudad de Buenos Aires (1895-1920)," in *Fútbol, Historia y Política*, ed. Julio Frydenberg and Rodrigo Daskal, (Ciudad de Buenos Aires: Aurelia Rivera Libros, 2010), 224.

economic sectors and generator of social reform measures. Social legislation in this period included official recognition of unions, the establishment of pensions in certain sectors, and labor regulations. Socialists, who competed reasonably well with the Radicals in terms of electoral results and party infrastructure, were particularly engaged in supporting libraries, theaters, and cultural activities that would uplift the working classes.[29] Support from city council members should be seen as a part of the state's expanding role in questions of social reform and views on popular culture that revolved around elite desires to shape an orderly citizenry.

Identity, Culture, and Consumption

By the 1920s, *fútbol's* growing popularity positioned the sport to profoundly influence the making of identities based on national belonging, neighborhood life, and differences of gender, class, and race. Sports journalism became the most widely circulated genre of the day, an achievement that was partly enabled by Argentina's continued economic growth and mandatory public education that expanded already high literacy rates. The sports press also featured changes in their visual and narrative styles in order to attract larger readerships. *La Argentina* had featured a dedicated sports section since the early 1910s, but the Buenos Aires daily *Crítica* dedicated an entire broadsheet to soccer and featured a more irreverent, playful tone in its language and cartoons. In 1924 the paper was the third-most circulated paper in the city with 166,385 copies, a number that rose to above 300,000 at the end of the decade. *El Gráfico* began circulating in 1919 as an entertainment magazine but by 1925 it focused exclusively on sports and reached a weekly circulation of 100,000 copies. The dedicated sports press, the most prominent national dailies (such as *La Nación* and *La Prensa*), and general interest magazines

[29] Romero, *A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century*.

like *Mundo Argentino* and *El Hogar* all increased their coverage of soccer throughout the decade.[30]

Soccer coverage in the 1920s played a crucial role in defining the concept of a national race, especially in competitions that pitted *porteño* teams against those from other provinces and nations. In the early twentieth century, clubs and specially-selected city teams from a combination of clubs (*combinados* or *selecciones*) represented Argentina or the city and acquitted themselves well against visiting teams from Europe and South America. When Racing Club became the first Argentine (rather than Anglo-Argentine) team to win a string of national championships in the 1910s, journalists increasingly treated *porteño* club success as reflective of national success and potential. On the eve of a tour of Europe by Buenos Aires club Boca Juniors, *Crítica* published a racialized cartoon titled "The Indian triumphs in Europe" that featured bewildered Europeans staring at a grinning, dark-skinned Argentine wearing feathers and holding a football. *Crítica's* humor stemmed from an assumed understanding on the part of Argentines that they were not a nation composed of indigenous populations and that Europe's ignorance of this was laughable.[31] In the same vein, a 1928 *La Cancha* satirized the Scottish club Motherwell's losing tour in Argentina with a cartoon titled "How they see us in Europe" featured depictions of unruly Indians and gauchos ("cowboys") on horseback.[32] In 1920, *Crítica* caused a diplomatic row with Brazil when it published a cartoon and article depicting the Brazilian national team as a band of traveling monkeys dressed as people, complete with descriptions of Brazilians "loping down our streets, doing cartwheels" and "colored entities who

[30] Matthew Karush, *Culture of Class: Radio and Cinema in the Making of a Divided Argentina, 1920-1946* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012); Pedro Acuna, "Dribbling with the Left and Shooting with Right: Soccer, Sports Media, and Populism in Argentina and Chile, 1940s-1950s" (Ph.D., University of California, Irvine, 2016).
[31] Matthew Karush, "National Identity in the Sports Pages: Football and the Mass Media in 1920s Buenos Aires," *The Americas* 60, no. 1 (2003): 27–28.
[32] Rwany Sibaja, "!Animales! Civility, Modernity, and Constructions of Identity in Argentine Soccer, 1955--1970", 46–47.

talk like us and try to mix in with the rest of the Americas."[33] Uruguay, with its capital of Montevideo a short sail across the *Río de la Plata*, enjoyed success on the international soccer stage by winning gold at the 1924 Olympics and defeating Argentina in both the 1928 Olympic and 1930 World Cup finals. This success led *porteño* journalists to sometimes formulate a *rioplatense* racial identity that included their cross-river neighbors. However, Uruguayans were also racialized in the press as demonstrated by a 1930 *La Cancha* cartoon titled "The hillbillies celebrate their 'victory'" that depicts the team as dark-skinned savages dancing to drums.[34]

The sports pages mainstreamed the racial understandings of European superiority posited by Argentine and Latin American intellectuals and advanced a conception of "white *mestizaje*", as historian Jeffrey Richey has put it.[35] In Chile, for example, the ideas of physician Nicolás Palacios international soccer competition functioned as a showcase for a version of *mestizaje* that argued for a Chilean racial superiority based on the mixture of the indigenous Mapuche and Gothic tribes that had once invaded Spain.[36] Argentine intellectuals like José Ingenieros and Carlos Octavio Bunge argued that Argentina's *mestizaje* was superior because it was a mix made up exclusively by white Europeans. Sports writers pointed to the dominance of *rioplatense* soccer, based in the Pampas and *Río de la Plata* littoral, as proof of this superiority in the 1920s. While many sports writers equated Argentina as a whole with Buenos Aires and the surrounding region, inter-provincial play provided the opportunity to distinguish the capital from the "backwards" provinces. The Campeonato Argentino, a cup in which selections of teams by province competed between 1920 and 1928, received significant funding from the national and

[33] Jeffrey Richey, "The Macaquitos Affair: Soccer, Blackness, and Brazil as Argentina's Racial Other, 1919-1929," *Radical History Review*. 125 (2016): 116.
34 Rwany Sibaja, "!Animales! Civility, Modernity, and Constructions of Identity in Argentine Soccer, 1955--1970", 51.
[35] Richey, "The Macaquitos Affair."
[36] Elsey, *Citizens and Sportsmen*; Acuna, "Dribbling with the Left and Shooting with Right."

provincial governments as part of a push to unify the nation. However, such efforts at national unity confronted regional prejudices. The *porteño* soccer press largely presented racialized portrayals of provincial opponents as "sun-baked", "*pelo-duro*" (hard-haired)", players that represented indigenous inferiority.[37]

Sports journalists tied these racial conceptions to ideas of body aesthetics and masculinity. The phenomenally popular *El Gráfico* writers Borocotó and Chantecler idealized the *criollo* (European-mixed) *pibe* (kid) who played on the streets and empty lots of the city as the embodiment of a national style that included dribbling, guile, carefree attitude, and individualistic flair. For more conservative dailies like *La Nación*, *La Prensa*, and *La Razón*, sportsmanship remained an important virtue for players representing Argentina, but they also celebrated the unique trickery and improvisation of Argentine style as superior to "mathematical" British approaches to the game. *Crítica* emphasized a class component in the embodiment of this style; *fútbol criollo* was a product of Argentina's poor boys - "*nuestra muchachada vulgar*" - and even included a vague non-whiteness (*morocho*) as part of the national style's makeup. These forms of masculinity had their ambiguities and contradictions, but Argentina's whiteness and national potential were at their center.[38]

Playing and fandom of football were thus linked to the fulfillment of Argentina's great potential and the concentration of that potential in the capital city. Buenos Aires continued to expand throughout the interwar period; the population grew from 1.2 million in 1910 to nearly 2.5 million in 1940. The dramatic rates of foreign immigration slowed, replaced by migrants from the other Argentine provinces. Streetcars, an expanded subway system, taxis, and a network

[37] Richey, "Playing at Nation."
[38] Karush, "National Identity in the Sports Pages"; Eduardo Archetti, *Masculinities : Football, Polo, and the Tango in Argentina* (Oxford UK ;;New York: Berg, 1999); Richey, "Playing at Nation."

of buses called *colectivos* provided accessible transportation throughout the city.[39] Municipal officials and urban planners largely focused their attention on improvements in the center city, but the peripheral *barrios* exploded outwards without official planning. Despite a lack of basic services, *barrio* residents focused their aspirations for social mobility by volunteering and participating in *sociedades de fomento* and civic associations, including soccer clubs.[40]

The *sociedades de fomento, bibliotecas populares*, party headquarters, and soccer clubs that had taken root in the first two decades of the century combined with new public spaces in parks, cafes, and streets to create neighborhood identities and forms of popular culture. *Sociedades de fomento* flourished alongside *bibliotecas populares*, or community libraries; by 1934 there were 125 *sociedades de fomento* in the city and around 90 *bibliotecas populares*.[41] *Sociedades* functioned as *de facto* neighborhood representatives to municipal officials in the 1910s, but a number were granted formal recognition from the city council in the 1920s. It was common for politicians and prominent neighborhood leaders to serve on the boards of multiple institutions, including soccer clubs. Although party politics and the 'apolitical' activities of associational life were always enmeshed, official rhetoric still defended this distinction. The Radical mayor of the city even accused a group of *sociedades de fomento* associated with the Socialist party of violating this spirit.[42] *Barrios* were also the centers of production and setting for an explosion of film, radio, music, and literature that ridiculed the failed attempts of those who sought to emulate the upper classes. Yet, they also embraced the promise of social inclusion and upward mobility

[39] Walter, *Politics and Urban Growth in Buenos Aires, 1910-1942*, 235–38.
[40] Anahí Ballent, *Las Huellas de La Política : Vivienda, Ciudad, Peronismo En Buenos Aires, 1943-1955* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2005), 39–43.
[41] de Privitellio and Romero, "Organizaciones de La Sociedad Civil, Tradiciones Cívicas y Cultura Política Democrática: El Caso de Buenos Aires, 1912-1976.," 7; Gutiérrez and Romero, *Sectores populares, cultura y política*, 71.
[42] de Privitellio and Romero, "Organizaciones de La Sociedad Civil, Tradiciones Cívicas y Cultura Política Democrática: El Caso de Buenos Aires, 1912-1976.," 12.

through consumption.[43] The ambivalence of the mass culture that emerged from barrios in this period can be contrasted to that which had been produced from the *conventillos* and poor southern districts of the center city, a working class identity that included anarchist and revolutionary ideology.[44]

Clubs became more complex organizations in the 1920s. The most popular clubs in the official league were capable of filling their stadiums with tens of thousands of fans and had attracted growing amounts of dues-paying *socios*, or members. In 1915 no club had more than a thousand *socios*. By 1920, River Plate and San Lorenzo had near 15,000 *socios* each, Boca Juniors with 8,500, Independiente with 4,200, and Racing with 3,000. These clubs would become known as the "big five" due to the size of their memberships and their monopoly on winning league titles until the 1960s. The player-director who facilitated the matches for a small number of teams was replaced by a *comisión directiva* elected by the *socios* and charged with directing the staff and volunteers. Club finances consisted of ticket revenues, dues paid by *socios*, advertisement deals, and any subsidies or loans provided by the government or influential members. Many *socios* also incorporated a wider set of recreational sports and cultural activities into their club offerings, furthering their role as symbolic defenders of *barrio* life. These activities were sustained largely by volunteered time or ticket revenue and often mirrored or complemented the *sociedades de fomento* or social clubs in the area. It wasn't just the players who defended the *barrio* in a match, but also the fans who actively participated in matches by invading the pitch, harassing referees, and fighting with fans of the rival team. The audience acted within the same codes of honor at play on the field in their cheering, singing, and physical

[43] Matthew Karush, *Culture of Class: Radio and Cinema in the Making of a Divided Argentina, 1920-1946* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 29–41.
[44] Gutiérrez and Romero, *Sectores populares, cultura y política*, 46–48.

actions; their masculinity was at stake in collectively defending their neighborhood.[45]

Successful teams with large numbers of supporters who attended their matches were best positioned to establish a sphere of social activities within the club and attract local cultural capital. Directors were keenly aware of the balance between maintaining a competitive and successful team and promoting non-soccer activities for *socios*. Championship teams grew the club's popularity beyond the neighborhood and attracted fans and socios who wanted to attend games, yet building a pool, library, or incorporating a recreational sport would serve the membership base.[46] Many clubs obtained legal status as *asociaciones civiles sin fines de lucro*, or non-profit civic associations, with elections for *comisiónes directivas* involving thousands of *socios*. Club directors balanced the work of managing of a competitive team alongside the expansion of the club's social activities and membership as well as the political work and financial management of securing scarce urban space. One indicator of the increasing complexity of club governance was the creation of specialized commissions, or *comisiónes*. Boca Juniors had a *comisión* of players and athletics, yet it also had *comisiónes* of housing, construction, and social events. Vélez Sarsfield had various *comisiónes* as well as a director of club headquarters, delegates to the soccer associations, and a chief of neighborhood watch.[47] Despite the diversifying interests of *socios* and directors, the spectacle of competitive soccer remained the main focus and motor of growth for most clubs. Since at least the 1910s, clubs had offered players jobs and incentives to draw their talents to clubs. The revenues generated by selling thousands of tickets per game meant more money was at stake and *morronismo* - or phony amateurism where players were actually professionals - became increasingly prevalent during the 1920s. This led the larger clubs and players association to successfully push for the

[45] Frydenberg, *Historia Social Del Fútbol*, 256–57.
[46] Ibid., 168–75.
[47] Ibid., 175.

professionalization of the game in 1931.

Soccer professionalized in the context of important political changes in Argentina and an expanded role for the state in questions of directing the economy and stimulating domestic consumption. Agustín P. Justo began serving as Argentina's elected president in 1932, two years after the Radical Yrigoyen had been removed by a coup (of which Justo formed a part as a former general). Justo (1932-1938) and his successors Roberto M. Ortiz (1938-1940) and Ramón Castillo (1940-1943) formed a part of a conservative political coalition known as the Concordancia. The Radical party remained an important player, but some of their electoral victories were annulled by the conservative government and they abstained during elections. An important affect of the global economic depression that began in 1929 was to alter Argentina's terms of trade as agricultural exports became less profitable and foreign capital became more difficult to secure. From 1933 on, Argentina's economic ministers began to further expand the instruments of state intervention in the national economy. These instruments included an income tax, exchange controls, the creation of the Banco Nacional, protections for a growing industrial sector, and subsidies for public and private construction projects. Later in the decade, nationalists currents in the military and conservative government advocated for a strong state that would adopt anti-imperialist economic policies and ensure order and social peace in the pursuit of economic progress.[48]

During the 1930s and 40s the Argentine worker-consumer emerged as a key political subject. Foreign and domestic studies of the consumer market from the 1930s revealed low wages and a small internal market for consumer goods. Politicians, public officials, and social scientists had a major interest in consumer spending, framing it as a "social question" of integration and

[48] Romero, *A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century*, 59–90.

citizenship. A 1937 study showed that an average family spent nearly 80 percent of its budget on food and housing, with only 8 percent dedicated towards a broad category of spending on personal needs and entertainment. In 1947, another study reiterated these findings; working class families spent most of their incomes on basic goods and very little on entertainment or durable goods.[49] Items such as radios, cars, and sewing machines were three to seven times more expensive in Argentina than in the U.S.[50] While families may have spent relatively little on leisure goods in this period, by this point soccer clubs like Boca Juniors had grown into large, neighborhood based institutions with services and recreational and educational opportunities. Clubs collectively pooled member dues and made accessible forms of leisure, recreation, and consumption that *socios* might otherwise not have access to. Despite limits on mass discretionary spending, professional soccer became an increasingly commercialized affair and growing club memberships continued to feed the creation of more club libraries, amateur sports, and social events. Through these activities, even *porteños* with lower incomes were increasing their leisure activities and discovering new avenues through which to spend their time. In some cases, club directors merely facilitated the efforts of members who volunteered time to organize whichever new sport or leisure activity they and their fellow socios practiced. In other cases, club officials proactively expanded their infrastructure and athletics facilities to draw new members to an expanded set of amateur sports or recreational activities.

Boca's 1936 *memoria y balance* gives a sense of the growth of activities not related to professional soccer. The Library and Cultural Acts Subcommittee reported that the club's new library had been able to attract an "increasing amount of children… [who] only months before

[49] Natalia Milanesio, *Workers Go Shopping in Argentina: The Rise of Popular Consumer Culture* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 2013), 58.
[50] Eduardo Elena, *Dignifying Argentina : Peronism, Citizenship, and Mass Consumption* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011), 31–40.

we saw running around in the streets… exposed to the dangers of the traffic of our great city… [the children] have voluntarily directed themselves to a familiar and comfortable place where they receive affection and good advice."[51] In celebration of Argentine independence day, the subcommittee organized a children's athletic tournament with candy prizes and a grand festival with clowns, jugglers, trained dogs, and acrobats. The library also celebrated its third anniversary that year and hosted three academic talks including "Words for the kids: Social dynamics and pacifying rhythms of culture", "Psychology applied to different life activities", and "Prophylaxis of contagious diseases." The *memoria* also contains photographs of ten professors in the Library and Cultural Acts Subcommittee and photos of the many women in classes for elocution, music, knitting, Spanish dancing, tailoring, hat-making, cooking, and Spanish language. The French class had men and women while drafting and stenography were male-only.

[51] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1936*, 32 Ejercicio Administrativo, 1936, 44.

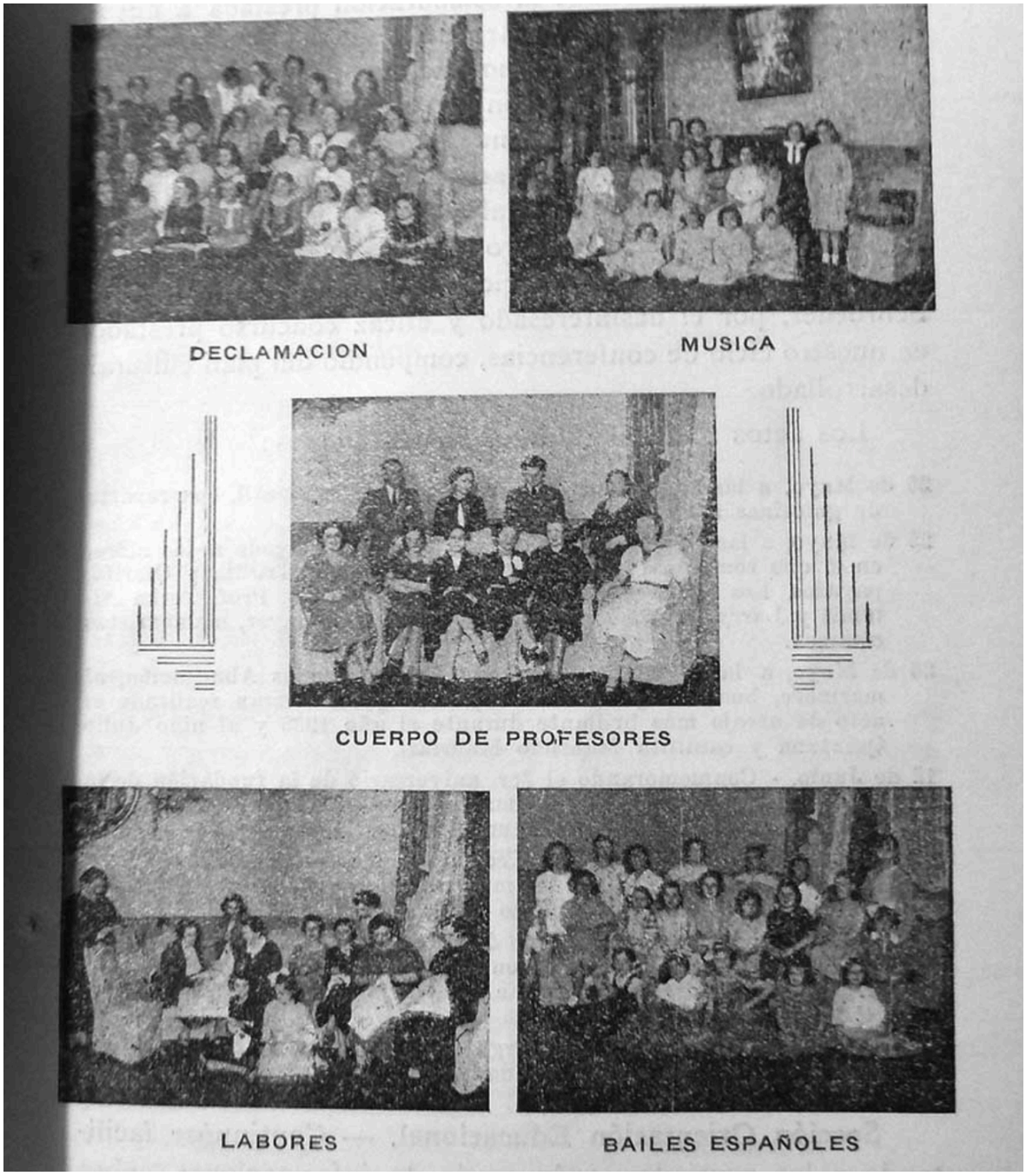

Figure 3 - Classes offered at Boca Juniors. Source: Memoria y Balance Club Atlético Boca Juniors, 1936

The rise of arts education in the club offers an instructive case on how new classes or programs were integrated into the club. The *memoria* notes that one Angélica Cano volunteered to create an Academy of Arts in the club. She piloted a very successful three-month course that attracted many new *socios* to the club. The *memoria* reported that it would be officially

incorporated into the class offerings for the next year. The subcommittee lauded Cano for her "altruism, enthusiasm, and dedication" in organizing classes and finding teachers. They further hoped that the academy, or even an eventual University of Boca Juniors, would convince the club directors to invest in the academy and subcommittee, especially because such spending would be tax-free (clubs were exempt on educational costs). The subcommittee urged directors to earn the thanks of "those who benefited, their families, and society for having contributed to moral and intellectual elevation."[52] The library reported that 218 students had taken classes, with Spanish dancing and drafting as the most popular with 42 women and 26 men, respectively. The library circulated materials amongst 6,262 readers that year.

The following year, the club reorganized its various amateur athletics subcommittees into a single Department of Physical Education. The club's doctor, Silvestre Sala, cited his experience with the "bibliography of sports medicine… [which] points to the scientific requirements of organizing such a department." *Socios* would now be able to practice soccer, basketball, baseball, athletics, paddle ball, bocce ball, wrestling, weightlifting, and boxing with full access to the club's medical services as well as physical education specialists. The reorganization speaks to the crucial role assigned to a scientific approach in practicing amateur athletics and ensuring a healthy mind in a healthy body. The library and amateur athletic subcommittee hinged almost entirely on voluntary labor, an indicator of the commitment and attachment that neighborhood residents had for their club. The library and amateur athletics were two prominent areas in which women appeared in club life. The services and educational opportunities in the library presented opportunities for women to teach and acquire practical skills (tailoring, hat-making, knitting) or study music, elocution, and dance as traditional gender norms encouraged. The most explicitly

[52] Ibid., 45.

vocational courses, stenography and drafting, were taken exclusively by men. Basketball appears as the most popular women's sport throughout the 1930s and 40s, as Boca often had multiple teams competing and were quite successful. With little discretionary income, *barrio* residents pooled their collective resources and labor to create socially meaningful leisure activities in soccer clubs.

Figure 4 - Básquet Femenino. Source: Memoria y Balance Club Atlético Boca Juniors, 1936

Building Stadiums

With large membership bases engaged in a variety of activities in the growing *barrios* of Buenos Aires, soccer clubs were well-positioned to fit their efforts at stadium construction within

the urban planning efforts of municipal officials. Between 1921 and 1925, urban planners consolidated a series of studies, commissions, and projects into a *Plan Orgánica* - the city's first master plan. It prioritized hygiene in the suburban *barrios* as well as green spaces, support for sports clubs, and the expansion of basic services. Sociologist Mariano Gruschetsky points to a section of the hygienic plan that read "Barrios Obreros, Jardines, Stadiums Deportivos, Embelecimiento Suburbano." The thinking of *urbanistas*, or urban planners, held that green space and beautification works were essential elements that would shape the character of the inhabitants of working class districts in the expanding urban periphery. *Barrio* residents would also need accessible space for leisure and exercise in order to ensure healthy bodies and minds: "closed parks should never be a privilege reserved for only part of society but instead be open to all… playing fields should be for the most part municipally-owned." However, the plan also specifically delegated the task of ensuring the public's access to athletic space to "*entidades deportivas*" - sports clubs. While this might appear as a contradiction - ceding the creation of public leisure space to private entities, the explanation of city councilman Ghío is illuminating. He argued that the public had already built its own space without the help of state officials and that soccer clubs "little by little, gained thousands and thousands of fans and one day, just as they began improving their institutions, we appear as regulators to form commissions that only impede the public good." Gruschetsky points to this as an example of the prevailing idea amongst municipal and state officials that soccer clubs already contributed to their public good on their own and that the state's role was to support, not regulate their efforts.[53]

This political consensus held that clubs and their stadiums contributed to hygiene, inculcated morals in youth, provided important services to their communities, and provided athletic and

[53] Mariano Gruschetsky, "Estadios de fútbol, actores sociales y desarrollo urbano: Los casos del Club Atlético River Plate y del Club Atlético Vélez Sársfield en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires en el siglo XX" (Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, 2010).

social facilities across the city. However, there was dissent on the part of some state officials. In 1923, one national congressman asked why Club Atlético River Plate, one out of the more than six hundred clubs providing important services, merited a subsidy - especially when the club charged for membership and match admission. Another congressman (who also happened to be president of River Plate) responded that there were only eleven clubs like River in the city and that since it was composed of young workers from the southern neighborhood of La Boca, it provided physical and moral development for an underserved population. He added that public subsidies had been provided to wealthy and exclusive clubs whereas River provided accessible recreation that contributed to the physical health of youth.[54]

The growing social spheres and neighborhood services at soccer clubs were accompanied by growing match attendances in the professional era. Sports journalists lamented the enormous difficulties and discomforts that fans experienced on match days. A 1926 game between San Lorenzo de Almagro and Racing is illustrative: 20,000 people squeezed into the stadium while 5,000 remained outside after having bought tickets. Angry fans left in the street tried to force their way in, clashing with security outside the stadium.[55] Even clubs with larger wooden stadiums couldn't meet the demand. Clubs often faced a predicament in investing in improvements for facilities they might soon be forced to move out of because of increasing rent or terminated leases. Club directors placed the highest priority on constructing large, permanent stadiums on property they owned.[56]

Club Atlético Independiente was the first club to inaugurate a cement stadium in 1928. This marked a point where clubs became almost singularly focused on securing the property, loans,

[54] Daskal, "Clubes, Deporte y Política En El Honorable Concejo Deliberante de La Ciudad de Buenos Aires (1895-1920)," 226–27.
[55] Gruschetsky, "Estadios de fútbol, actores sociales y desarrollo urbano: Los casos del Club Atlético River Plate y del Club Atlético Vélez Sársfield en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires en el siglo XX," 44.
[56] Karush, *Culture of Class*.

and public support necessary for building large cement stadiums capable of holding tens of thousands of spectators. Some clubs had been able to secure permanent ownership of their property, such as Huracán with the help of the famous airman Jorge Newbery and San Lorenzo de Almagro with the support of the Catholic Church.[57] As clubs sought permanent homes in the 1930s, space had never been in such high demand in the capital. Between 1928 and 1932, the city legislature debated a proposal for a municipal stadium that would serve multiple clubs and hold 100,000 fans but neither the league nor the national government supported it. The initiative failed because clubs wanted their own stadiums based in their own neighborhoods and wanted as much public support in building it as possible.[58]

In 1936, the national government made available a special state fund to be dispensed by the executive branch for stadium construction, offering up to 1.2 million dollars in loans. Clubs harnessed their social and political capital, mobilized *socios* in fundraising campaigns to buy property. Clubs stressed a number of factors in making appeals for state support: the important services that facilities would provide to members and *barrio* residents, the economic stimulus that stadiums could provide to a surrounding area, and the moral development of local youth. The stadium campaigns of three clubs illustrate how fans, directors, and public officials shaped these efforts.

On Argentine Independence Day (May 25th) 1901, a group of young men from the neighborhood of La Boca merged their teams and founded Club Atlético River Plate. River Plate was one of the earliest clubs founded outside of British scholastic circles to compete in the top division. The club moved several times in the 1910s and 1920s before settling in the northern neighborhood of Recoleta in 1923. There, the club built a large wooden stadium with a

[57] Frydenberg, *Historia Social Del Fútbol*, 94–95.
[58] Ibid., 132.

swimming pool, gym, and tennis and basketball courts. This athletic and recreational infrastructure quickly attracted many dues-paying members and River Plate soon had the largest membership base of any club in the city. The club continued to attract more *socios* and needed an even larger stadium and space for infrastructure. In the early 1930s, River Plate's directors had considered moving westward to the *barrio* of La Paternal but found the space and price unsuitable. They also considered acquiring another club's property and facilities, but the acquisition of Sportivo Palermo failed to pass the vote of the directors and *socios*. By 1934, with rent and taxes rising on their property in Recoleta, the club acquired space near the northern city limits in the barrio of Belgrano. With the help of mayor Mariano de Vedia y Mitre and president Agustín P. Justo, the club secured a good price and municipal approval to build on land that had been destined for city roads.[59]

The club planned to build a monumental stadium capable of holding 150,000 spectators and vast facilities for practicing sports and hosting social and cultural events. The club also received a 735,000 dollar loan from the government to build the facilities with the agreement that the city would be permitted to hold civic and cultural events on the grounds. The club successfully positioned itself as an institution that would use the facilities not only for professional soccer, but also for attracting *socios* and providing services in a developing area of the city. The club had just over 5,000 members when they moved to Recoleta in 1923. By the time the stadium was inaugurated in 1938 there were 33,058 *socios* of River Plate - roughly twice as many than any other club. These members played a critical role in financing the completion of the stadium when the club underestimated costs and was forced to organize an emergency loan from its fans and

[59] Gruschetsky, "Estadios de fútbol, actores sociales y desarrollo urbano: Los casos del Club Atlético River Plate y del Club Atlético Vélez Sársfield en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires en el siglo XX," 50–53.

members.[60] *El Monumental*, as it was nicknamed for its size, was emblematic of stadium construction in this period in three ways: it brought together political support at the federal and municipal levels, drew on the financial support of its members, and presented the project as a benefit to youth and the local community.

Club Atlético Vélez Sarsfield experienced a more troubled trajectory on the soccer fields and in building a stadium. Founded in the western suburb of Floresta in 1910, Vélez struggled for a decade to maintain a competitive team and had just under five hundred *socios* in 1921. In sharp contrast to its *fútbol* fortunes, club directors and *socios* did create a vibrant social sphere within the club by hosting dances and engaging with other neighborhood associations. The club regularly loaned their field to local schools - no small service considering that the field maintenance composed 40% of the club's budget. By the end of the decade, the mixed fortunes of the soccer team and the growing number of members who were primarily interested in social activities caused the club effectively split into two groups with competing interests. Those interested in soccer, *socios de la cancha*, and those interested in social activities at the headquarters, *socios de la sede*, paid two different monthly dues to either support the team and attend matches or participate in social activities.[61]

After professionalizing in 1931, the directors of Vélez formed a special commission to locate an appropriate location to build a stadium for 55,000 spectators and athletic facilities. The commission was unsuccessful and by 1937 they were forced to accept an unsustainably expensive rental agreement that nearly bankrupted the club. With their team relegated to the second division and facing the possibility of being forced to sell its social headquarters, or *sede*

[60] Ibid., 53–56.
[61] Mariano Gruschetsky, "Actores Sociales En Torno a La Construcción Del Estadio Del Club Atlético Vélez Sarsfield," in *Fútbol, Historia y Política*, ed. Julio Frydenberg and Rodrigo Daskal, 1. ed. (Ciudad de Buenos Aires: Aurelia Rivera Libros, 2010), 160.

social, the club officially separated into two entities with the *socios* primarily concerned with social activities shouldering their own costs. Vélez's *socios de la sede* continued to enjoy a vibrant civic association. Without a field, stadium, or positive record on the field, the soccer team struggled to survive.

In 1941 José Amalfitani won the presidential elections at Vélez and ushered in a new chapter for *fútbol*. First, Amalfitani personally assumed a significant portion of the club's debt to prevent bankruptcy. He then utilized his political connections in the municipal and federal governments, the Catholic Church, and at the Asociación del Fútbol Argentino (AFA) to obtain a large piece of property and begin a stadium project. The municipality filled and leveled the grounds at no cost to the club and in 1942 the club inaugurated a new field with stands. With a rejuvenated team promoted back into the first division, Amalfitani also formally reintegrated the *socios de la sede* into the club. An authoritarian leader, Amalfitani persuaded *socios* and fellow club directors to donate funds for the field's construction and pay to move some of the social infrastructure to the new location.[62] Amalfitani counted on a combination of both soccer and the club's vibrant social sphere to assemble the political and financial resources necessary to build a large, concrete stadium.

Founded by young men in La Boca in 1905, Club Atlético Boca Juniors achieved success on the field and growing popularity throughout late 1910s and early 1920s. However, the club attracted nationwide support when it became the first team to tour Europe in 1925. Like their rivals River Plate, Boca Juniors also requested government support under the 1937 legislation authorizing President Agustín P. Justo to make state loans for the construction of stadiums and sports fields. Eduardo Sánchez Terrero, president of both Boca Juniors' and the AFA was also

[62] Ibid., 168.

Justo's son-in-law. In presenting their request of 470,000 dollars, the club's *comisión directiva* argued that the loan was warranted because of the "…passion and enthusiasm that socios and fans act with in all activities; the growing importance of these activities in the local community; the indisputable growth the club has fomented in the community's athletic life; and the extraordinary impulse that a monumental and spacious stadium would provide for the development of the area's moral, intellectual, and physical states."[63] Supporters presented the stadium as a project that would facilitate the practice of sports and social and cultural activities for club members and, by extension, the barrio. President Justo granted the request and in the same year the club made the Minister of Housing (and president-elect) Roberto M. Ortiz an honorary member alongside congressman Reynaldo Elena, who had presented the loan request.

At the stadium's inauguration in 1940, Boca's vice president Antonio Llach expressed the club's gratitude to Justo (who had ceremonially placed the stadium's keystone two years prior) for his important role in securing the loan. Llach claimed that the state's support of sports "affirmed the bodily health and spiritual strength of the youth. Understanding sport this way is a patriotic act of wise legislators and governors."[64] AFA vice-president Germán Seoane explained that the nation was the real beneficiary of the stadium because sport "already appreciated by our governments, will be the ends pursued for the betterment of the [Argentine] race, in consonance with the proverb that has been embraced by the nation: healthy minds in healthy bodies."[65]

When Justo died in 1943, Boca paid homage in their annual *memoria y balance* by mentioning him as a "crucial factor in obtaining the loan for the construction of our stadium."[66] Justo wasn't made an honorary socio like Ortiz or Elena because he had already become one on

[63] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1937: p. 26
[64] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1940: pp. 30-31
[65] Ibid. p. 35
[66] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1943: p. 34

his own, years before his involvement in the loan, and had also contributed personally to the internal club fundraising. The club commissioned and dedicated a bronze bust of Justo, placing it in the club library. While Justo was a Boca Juniors fan first, he also supported other clubs while president. The same homage mentions that various clubs counted Justo as "one of their most loyal and important friends who [obtained] for his nation a constant physical progress… evidenced by the multitude of athletic projects and institutions in which he intervened as an ordinary citizen and later as minister and president."[67]

A year after its inauguration, La Bombonera, or chocolate box as the stadium was nicknamed for its appearance, still lacked facilities for practicing sports or holding social and cultural events as had been promised in the original proposal to the government. Boca's directors themselves recognized this debt to their *socios* and wider community; in the 1941 *memoria y balance*, the club recognized that they could not "delay further the [construction of] facilities demanded by the *socios* and fervent fans." The *memoria* also notes how a lack of sports facilities was even driving *socios* to become members of other institutions to practice sports. In response, the club presented an ambitious plan to construct an Anexo Deportivo, or sports annex, adjacent to the stadium. The plans included tennis, basketball, and bocce ball courts, a playground for children, a pool, and a small campground with grills. With the stadium funds exhausted, the club financed the project by convincing a number of members to pay double their monthly dues as a loan to the club and by increasing the overall monthly cost, or *cuota*. Thus, the only portion of the stadium project that directly attended to providing services to socios and the community, a key point in justifying the investment of public money, wasn't financed by the government loan but with money from the *socios* instead. By the following year, the annex was inaugurated with a

[67] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1943: p. 34

playground, three bocce ball courts, and a basketball court.[68]

Figure 5 - La Bombonera. Source: Memoria Y Balance Club Atlético Boca Juniors, 1941

Boca's *memorias* offer only a partial view of the decisions, debates, or explanations behind the actions of club directors and *socios*. However, the case of La Bombonera does offer some insights on how clubs could operate in their delegated role as providers of services and contributors to the public good. The stadium project promised not only to attract more *socios* and thus provide services to La Boca residents, but also to youth across the nation and their physical and mental states. Yet, the Anexo Deportivo was not prioritized by the club and was financed by its members. Unlike Vélez, the very possibility of a social sphere at Boca Juniors in many ways hinged on its popularity as a soccer team. Clubs were able to obtain state support by emphasizing the social contributions they made as institutions, but they enjoyed a large degree of discretion on whether or not the money was actually spent on non-soccer activities.

68 Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1943: p. 34

Soccer and Social Justice

Between 1946 and 1955, Juan and Eva Perón transformed Argentine politics by leading a government that emphasized working-class concerns with the creation of an expanded set of state policies. Peronist economic policy sought to tame the vicissitudes of Argentina's export economy with wage and price controls in addition to efforts to develop national industries that employed the unionized workers that constituted the party's political base. Real wages rose 62 percent between 1946 and 1949, with union membership growing from 434,814 in 1946 to 2.5 million in 1949.[69] Celebrating an expanded consumer society that included working class Argentines was an important part of Peronist politics. As a ubiquitous set of pastimes and massively popular form of culture, sports like soccer gained a new political dimension in the 1940s.

As in previous decades, a lifestyle and consumption habits considered *culto* were important aspects of social mobility. Peronism changed the relationship between respectability, social mobility, and consumption in a number of important ways. Through redistributionist policies and political discourse, Peronism placed working class culture and economic empowerment at the forefront of national progress. An important part of the Peronist cultural project thus contested the definition of *culto* and its "bourgeois" values. However, an equally important part of the same cultural project celebrated the tastes of elites and foreign influences as the very barometer by which social mobility could be measured. In other words, working class culture was to be celebrated and defended but the very elevation of the working classes and their lifestyles was to be measured largely within the parameters of existing class hierarchies.[70] Working class Argentines' adoption of habits and lifestyles of those "above their station" was a deeply

[69] Milanesio, *Workers Go Shopping in Argentina*, 32.
[70] Elena, *Dignifying Argentina*.

upsetting move by Argentines in the middle and upper sectors as it eroded the markers of their social status. The theaters, shopping areas, restaurants, and leisure spaces of downtown Buenos Aires thus became the sites of a "barbaric invasion" of "*cabecitas negras*", a racist term for Peronists meaning little blackhead.[71] The anxieties created amongst anti-Peronists by an increased presence of economically-empowered working class consumers in public or relatively exclusive places of leisure would have lasting effects on the cultural and political landscape of the city.

Sport appeared to offer a means for building unity. Perón took an active interest in it, stressing Argentina's sporting achievements as evidence of the nation's progress. The Peronist government merged Argentina's Olympic Committee with the National Sports Confederation to create the combined Comisión Argentina del Deporte y Comisión Olímpica Argentina (CADCOA). CADCOA was involved in hosting international sporting events like the World Basketball Championship and Panamerican Games. The heads of the AFA during this period were also exclusively direct appointments of the Peronist party. In addition to government subsidies for various clubs' stadiums and infrastructure, the Peronist decade saw the highest average match attendances in Argentine history, with crowds varying between twelve and fifteen thousand per match. The players' strike of 1948 reformed player transfer policies and salary negotiations, leading to a rise in salaries and greater freedom of movement which, in turn, increased the costs of the transfer market. Juan and Eva Perón were regular fixtures at any of the marquee boxing, auto racing, soccer events of the day and their supporters often cheered for them during games. In the magazine, *Aquí Está*, a report boasted about record attendances at movies, concerts, and sports. *Mundo Peronista* celebrated the happiness workers could achieve

[71] Natalia Milanesio, "Peronists and Cabecitas: Stereotypes and Anxieties at the Peak of Social Change," in *The New Cultural History of Peronism : Power and Identity in Mid-Twentieth-Century Argentina*, ed. Matthew Karush and Oscar Chamosa (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 53–84.

through the number of soccer tickets one could buy.[72] As a spectacle consumed in large part by working class males, Peronists celebrated soccer attendance as a political victory and landmark for *justicialismo*[73]

Through executive orders from Perón and legislative efforts of Peronist officials, soccer clubs received greater amounts of state loans for infrastructure projects. In August of 1946, the senator and admiral Alberto Teisaire proposed a law that would eliminate the state debts held by all sports clubs, arguing that "in a rational analysis of [previous support], one can see that [loans] have been simple mortgage operations… the way they were negotiated has entailed significant losses to the institutions that accepted the loans, with interest rates of up to 17%." Given that the clubs were institutions that served "all social classes from the most wealthy to the citizen of the most humble conditions" and that clubs contributed to "the physical and moral health of our youth", Teisaire argued that the state had the "unquestioned obligation" to cancel all existing debt.[74] In this way, Teisaire combined the argument that soccer helped form healthy minds and healthy bodies with the promise that clubs would provide services to Argentines of all classes. While Teisaire's proposal was not approved, in 1947 congress passed a law authorizing the executive to loan up to 4.7 million dollars to sports clubs for the construction of stadiums. Congress also passed a law allowing several clubs to permanently purchase property that had previously been leased to them by the state.[75]

At Boca Juniors, directors used the language of social justice in seeking state subsidies to finance a variety of projects during the Peronist decade. This included a third tier of stands in its stadium, a social headquarters on the nearby avenue of Almirante Brown, and a large property in

[72] Milanesio, *Workers Go Shopping in Argentina*, 124.
[73] Elena, *Dignifying Argentina*, 165.
[74] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1946: pp. 64-66
[75] "Venta de Inmuebles a Varias Instituciones Deportivas - LEY 14167," *Boletin Oficial* 17267 (November 3, 1952).

the northern neighborhood of Palermo, called the Parque Romano. All of these projects were completed with loans from the federal government and National Bank. In their *memorias*, Boca Juniors also noted their adherence to new legislation that increased the salaries of club employees, always couched in loyalty to the working nation and Peronist ideals. The unprecedented number of references, praise, and honors bestowed on the Peronist government in the club's official documents demonstrates the degree to which Peronism affected the conduct and discourse of Boca Juniors' directors.

As in earlier periods, the club obtained loans from the state by arguing its important social function. These arguments were mixed with the language of social justice, including concepts like "the new Argentina", "the working nation", or various references to "the humble." The first reference to Juan Domingo Perón in the club's *memorias* appears in 1945 when Perón organized an athletics event in Boca's stadium as the head of the newly created *Secretaría de Trabajo y Previsión*, or Secretary of Labor. In the same *memoria*, Perón was hailed for implementing a statute for employees of sports clubs that required clubs to increase staff salaries and implement a retirement pension of 11% of their salaries.[76] The club directors considered that staff and "workers merited the increase and a reevaluation of their conditions of life in general. The resolution to revise and augment their salaries and establish a minimum wage has served our purposes of justice and order."[77]

In 1945, the club recognized that despite building the Anexo Deportivo two years before, an "enormous number of members ask that more attention be paid to their needs."[78] Three years prior, the directors admitted that "soccer has taken priority above all things, absorbing our

[76] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1945: p. 31
[77] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1946: p. 17
[78] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1945: p. 39

attention at the cost of other activities."[79] The first priority in addressing the situation was eliminating Boca's debt with the state. That year, Perón signed an executive order loaning Boca Juniors 600,000 dollars. Perón received thunderous applause from Boca's fans when he read the decree to a filled stadium in a match against Racing. Like presidents Justo and Ortiz before, Boca Juniors named General Perón and the Minister of Housing, Ramon Cereijo, honorary *socios* of the club in recognition of their assistance in obtaining the loan that would be used to construct a third tier of stands in the stadium. In March of 1947, Boca Juniors held a "Gran Conscripción de *Socios*" in which an incredible 12,000 members joined the club; the first to sign up was Juan Domingo Perón. The club mentioned their increase of workers' salaries in the memoria y balance that year, noting their commitment to social justice.[80]

In 1947, club directors noted that the collective agreements and salary increases for workers had become "a new and important factor in destabilizing the finances of the institution." The club was required to pay 20% more in wages (or 150,000 pesos) than the previous year to administrative staff, workers, ticket vendors, inspectors, and ushers. In comparison, the most expensive player that Boca signed that year was Heleno 'Gilda' de Freytas for 202,800 pesos. In addition to the poor financial situation, the 1948 *memoria* signaled that construction on the stadium's third tier had halted due to a temporary delay in the loan that had been resolved quickly thanks to the "enormously good faith" that Perón and Cereijo had in the club.[81] In 1949, the good faith held by Perón and his minister was further demonstrated by doubling the loan to 1.2 million dollars and in providing an immediate 130,000 dollar infusion of cash from the National Bank to start construction as soon as possible. The club expressed its "most fervent thanks to his excellency the President of the nation General Juan D. Perón and his excellent

[79] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1941: p. 114
[80] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1947: p. 44
[81] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1948: p. 11

Minister of Housing Dr. Ramon J. Cereijo for their inexhaustible efforts in support of the growth of Argentine sport."[82] With funds to spare for the third tier, planners added stadium improvements including a bar and cafe, a meeting room for the comisión directiva, a library, a gym, and a pool for the Anexo Deportivo.[83]

Two years later, the third tier was almost finished and the club directors turned their attention to improving infrastructure for its socios. In 1951,Boca Juniors acquired a property in the northern neighborhood of Palermo called the Parque Romano. The property included a swimming pool, theatre pavilion, three outdoor dance floors, stands, and open field space.The directors congratulated themselves on the purchase as "one of the most important and sensational achievements of a social and sporting space in our times." The club planned for the space to be utilized by "the immense number of socios that are dispersed across the city and in its outskirts."[84] The club expressed gratitude not only to Perón and Cereijo, but also to Eva Perón, who had organized and attended the annual Campeonatos Evita, a massive youth athletics event held at Boca's stadium that year.

The *memoria* of 1952 opens with the words: "Eva Perón, immortal." Never before, or since, has anyone figured so prominently in the annual records of the club. After dying of cancer at the age of 33, the club described Eva Perón as a "friendly compañera always ready to help and encourage" whose passion left the club with "gratitude and an unforgettable legacy" for the "beloved Jefa Espiritual." Club president Daniel Gil delivered a speech in homage to Eva Perón on behalf of all soccer clubs of the Argentine Football Association, or AFA, explaining that "Evita" represented the nation and hearts of the masses. Since *fútbol* was another "genuine passion of the masses", there was a natural affinity between soccer and Eva Perón. Gil

[82] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1949: pp. 21-22
[83] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1949: p. 13
[84] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1951: p. 11

mentioned the Campeonatos Evita as proof of her involvement in sport as well as her assistance in obtaining loans and donations for various sports clubs.[85] Boca's directors also heaped praise on Perón and Peronist officials: "Boca Juniors, the club of the *pueblo trabajador*[86]… has sought from [Perón] many times encouragement, advice, and help. Always, always, it has found in him a loyal friend, fan, and guide."[87] The same note referenced the club's "humble origins," alluding to a natural connection between the Peronist government that worked for the "moral and physical development of Argentine youth" and the club that united "the humble folk of the entire nation."[88]

Boca's *comisión directiva* called for an emergency session "merely hours after learning the terrible news" and approved eleven proposals to honor Eva Perón's death. The club planned to hold a funeral procession in La Boca, to close the club's headquarters for thirty days of mourning, and to suspend all sports events outside of official competitions where black armbands would be worn. The club also sent letters of support to the Confederación General de Trabajo, Partido Peronista Masculino, Partido Peronista Femenino, Fundación Eva Perón, and the Unión del Personal de Entidades Deportivas. Finally, the club unanimously approved the donation of 91,610 pesos raised in a charity match played in Mendoza for the erection of a national monument to the deceased. The swimming pool being built as part of the Anexo Deportivo was dubbed "Natatorio Eva Perón."[89] The club also included a proclamation of loyalty to President Perón, expressing the club's "unconditional support of the patriotic enterprise" of Perón:

[85] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1952: p. 2
[86] a term connoting the national, working people
[87] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1952: p. 18
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.

> "Our president [Perón] values and encourages the efforts of those who place the harmony and happiness of the collective over that of the individual. This is why we feel him at our side, with Boca Juniors, presiding with his solidarity and moral support an incredible contribution to the club… Boca Juniors is something of a patriarch of national fútbol, but it never donned the jersey of the privileged because it could never forget its humble origins and preferred to be, always, dressed in cotton playing with a ball of rags. For this reason, Boca Juniors joins the humble citizens across the nation to say in one voice: Thank you, my general!"[90]

That year, Perón signed a national law that authorized the executive to permanently sell several clubs (including Ferocarril Oeste, Vélez Sarsfield, and Boca Juniors) the property the state leased to them.

The year 1952 was filled with club construction projects. The club inaugurated the third tier, dubbed "General Perón", placed the keystone for a swimming pool ("Eva Perón"), installed stadium lights for night games, and finalized plans to transform the Parque Romano acquired in the northern neighborhood of Palermo into an athletic and social complex. The property had cost the club a total of 203,000 dollars. Despite this high cost, the club considered the purchase a successful acquisition of one of the most desirable pieces of property in the city. With these additions, Boca seemed poised to address its deficit in providing socios with social and athletic infrastructure.

The memorias between 1952 and 1954 also mark a high point of references to the Peronist government. In 1953, the club featured another homage to the "Jefa Espiritual de la Nación." The club, "an institution whose values are intertwined with the most authentic ideals of the nation", held an "intimate and fervent justicialist ceremony" with a silent procession through the neighborhood of La Boca, ending with the dedication of a bronze bust of Eva Perón for the club's social headquarters. The memoria marks this as "a civic act, a proof of faith in the destiny

[90] Ibid. p. 18

of the new, Argentina justicialista of General Perón, as well as a solemn and sacred promise: Boca and its socios will always be with the Primer Descamisado of the nation." The club even allowed the Peronist party to use its party headquarters for a rally held by congressman Santos Gonzalez in support of Perón's second five-year plan.[91] While the "apolitical" nature of clubs and other neighborhood associations had always been problematic, any pretense of such had been clearly been abandoned by the mid 1950s.

Still, the deep politicization of everyday life and consumption that occurred during the Peronist decade presented a challenge for neighborhood associations that were ostensibly apolitical. Openly anti-Peronist civic associations remained on the margins of state support, while those that supported Perón were able to benefit. In 1954, 111 *sociedades de fomento* organized to support the government and formally integrate into the city council and receive more direct support the state. These incentives yielded a situation in which it becomes difficult to distinguish between civic associations that supported Peronism and those that simply "hicieron la venia" (or played along), making the minimum effort or gestures necessary to not miss out on state support.[92]

In 1954, the club elected Alberto J. Armando as their new president. Armando was born in 1910 in a train station in the province of Santa Fe. Orphaned at fourteen, he would eventually make his way into car sales and moved to Buenos Aires. In 1952, Armando traveled with a group of Peronist functionaries to Detroit, Michigan. After touring automobile factories, he made 150,000 dollars by acting as an intermediary in the purchase of 681 Ford automobiles. With this initial fortune, he would open a car dealership and eventually expand his operations into a

[91] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1953: p. 2, 18
[92] de Privitellio and Romero, "Organizaciones de La Sociedad Civil, Tradiciones Cívicas y Cultura Política Democrática: El Caso de Buenos Aires, 1912-1976.," 22.

considerable collection of corporations involved in finance, imports, media, and automobiles.[93] Armando began addressing the club's financial restructuring and adapting to new financial rules created by AFA. The previous administration had reportedly left a debt of 114,000 dollars. Boca's *memoria y balance* after Armando's first year reported this debt to be nearly eliminated. The club's financial report stated that they had raised funds by recruiting more members, selling more tickets, and raffling cars. For Boca Juniors, this was proof of the "vast amount of solidarity that surrounds our club and how it's possible to capitalize on that solidarity when it is stimulated in public with healthy intentions."[94]

Under Armando, the club reversed course on the Parque Romano. Club directors had explained the 1951 acquisition as a "unique real-estate opportunity in one of the outstanding areas of the city." The deal was another opportunity "to observe the potency of our beloved institution and the measured reason of its administrators who have… realized an operation of high economic value and incalculable potential."[95] The park, located in the northern barrio of Palermo near the zoo, included a retractable dance floor with a pool underneath, theatre pavilion, parlor room, and some stands. The club intended to expand the property and host cultural events while adding facilities for physical education.[96] The Parque Romano was renamed Anexo Palermo and opened on November 7th, 1953 with a men's volleyball game, an artistic rollerskating exhibition, and a movie attended by children and their families. The club also hosted large dances to provide members with a healthy leisure and social activity while raising money to further improve the property. The dances held in November raised 1,500 net dollars and it was projected that dances would bring in a monthly gain of 1,800 dollars. The committee

[93] Jorge Búsico, "Armando Está De Vuelta," *La Razón*, November 24, 1986.
[94] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1954*.
[95] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1952*, 1952, 35–36.
[96] Ibid., p.16.

in charge of the project remarked that the facility's opening meant that the club "now has great halls suited for physical education, cultural events, and social gatherings in Palermo, the center of the city." The club had designs to expand the facilities and construct a natatorium. The facility would hold 20,000 spectators and feature a pool with a retractable floor that would support athletic and cultural events. These efforts were not only intended to expand the club's infrastructure, but also provide facilities to members and supporters too far from La Boca to practice sports and enjoy cultural activities there.[97] Armando called the project "a property strangely grafted onto our patrimony without any logical relationship with our other infrastructure for the social use of socios, not only because of its location but also because of other conditions that are well-known."[98] For whatever reason (beyond its distance from the club's neighborhood) the property was sold for only 1.1 million pesos (four times less than it had paid).

The club entered its 50th year in apparently sound financial condition.[99] In his speech celebrating the club's quinquagenary, Armando referred to "structural debilities" in the previous period of club governance that had brought the club "dangerously close to exhaustion and demanded an extraordinary set of efforts" to recover from. He struck a hopeful note in marking that the club had nearly 50,000 members and around 1.3 million dollars in assets.[100] While no record of it appears in the *memorias*, Armando expelled the entire comisión directiva of the previous administration for practicing "financial irregularities." Daniel Gil's administration had supposedly been obscuring the club's debts by understating what was owed from year to year. A prominent Argentine soccer journalist, Dante Panzeri alleged that Armando would adopt similar

[97] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1953*, 1953, 26–27.
[98] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1954*.
[99] Ibid.
[100] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1955*, 1955, 12.

measures, counting the profits from selling a player in one budget year but only counting debt for acquiring a player over several years.[101]

Boca Juniors won its first championship in a decade in 1954 and, as noted above, dedicated the title to the "man who has given Argentine sport substance and resonance", Perón. For the second anniversary of Eva Perón's death, the club "presented itself at the altar of civic life erected at the C.G.T headquarters to offer flowers as a testimony of admiration and respect."[102] The phrase "Support the Second Five-Year Plan and General Perón" can be seen painted on the enormous third tier balcony stretching the length of the stadium in game footage from 1954.[103] The championship team and *comisión directiva* were received at the Casa Rosada by Perón along with other dignitaries and figures from Argentine sport. Armando's first presidency lasted only two years. While Armando's relationship with Peronism was complicated (he would back an anti-Peronist after Peronism was legalized again in 1973) he had made his initial fortune as part of a Peronist delegation to Detroit. As a result of the anti-Peronist purges that followed the 1955 coup against Perón, Armando was jailed for 49 days.[104] Published only a month after the coup, the *memoria* of 1955 contains no reference to the national government.

Conclusion

Perón's government weathered an important economic crisis in its final years through a relatively successful program of state-led austerity. However, Perón faced growing opposition within the Church and military and the loss of their support galvanized an anti-Peronist coalition that denounced the regime's authoritarian tendencies. In June of 1955, the navy bombarded the

[101] Dante Panzeri, *Burguesía y "Gangsterismo" En El Deporte* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Líbera, 1974), 277.
[102] Club Atlético Boca Juniors (CABJ), *Memoria y Balance General*, Buenos Aires: CABJ, 1954: p. 34
[103] "Semanario Argentino 124."
[104] Armando Maria Mercedes, *Interview with Maria Mercedes Armando* (Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2014).

city center's Plaza de Mayo as part of an attempted coup and killed over three hundred people who had rallied in support of Perón. In response, Peronist supports burned a number of prominent churches in Buenos Aires. In September, General Eduardo Lonardi led a revolt in Córdoba which forced Perón to resign and flee to Paraguay. The architects of the coup would face their own challenges in deciding the path forward, but the first half of the twentieth century had left clear models on the role of the state in economic progress and the importance of consumption and social mobility in forging a political consensus.

Soccer, as the country's most popular male pastime and as the central pillar of hundreds of civic associations deeply embedded in their urban contexts, formed an important portion of the political panorama of consumption and popular culture. State officials viewed soccer clubs as privileged instruments of moral pedagogy for young men as well as institutions that would offer healthy habits and recreational opportunities for Argentine families. These connections between clubs and the state facilitated the construction of stadiums across the urban landscape. As the sport professionalized and commercialized, its reach into the daily lives of *porteños* only increased. In this way, clubs positioned themselves to continue making claims about their importance in shaping Argentina's citizens and contributing to national progress.

Chapter 2 - Dreams of Development: Desarrollismo, Class, and Fútbol in Post-Peronist Buenos Aires, 1955-1964

On December 11th, 1963, congressman Reynaldo Elena gave a speech in support of a legislative proposal to transfer forty hectares of territory in the *Río de la Plata* to Club Atlético Boca Juniors. Elena began by citing the Roman poet Juvenal's maxim: "Mens sana in corpore sano" - a healthy mind in a healthy body. Club officials and politicians often employed the Latin phrase when requesting some form of public aid and two prominent clubs, Gimnasia y Esgrima de La Plata and Argentinos Juniors, even employed it as their institutional mottos. For Elena, realizing the maxim was "a central part of the struggle for those of use who are responsible for shaping our youth and building a strong people who will invigorate and make great the nation." Elena argued that Boca Juniors was well-prepared for the task of propagating sport in service of the nation for several reasons: "Its popularity is inexhaustible… few institutions can offer guarantees in assuming responsibility for realizing a work of such magnitude assigned here… an ample sector of *porteños* will benefit."[1] Congressman Fayiz Sago also supported the legislation in terms of urban planning. He argued that the project furthered one of the 1958 city master plan's most basic goals of "reestablishing direct contact with the river" while also providing recreational space in the dilapidated port district of Puerto Madero. Sago explained that the master plan aimed to gain territory via land reclamation in the river, but warned that this undertaking would remain "only a dream" in the face of the immediate priorities of highway construction, housing, and public transport. Boca's project was therefore an opportunity to facilitate a private institution's effort in advancing the ambitions of the city's master plan: "When an institution like Boca Juniors… commits to an enterprise of such magnitude, it is the

[1] Cámara de Diputados de la Nación, "Proyecto de Ley," *Diario de Sesiones*, December 11, 1963, 370.

obligation of the state to facilitate and support those who collaborate in social betterment."[2]

Congress passed law 16.575 donating property to Boca Juniors on October 29th, 1964 by a vote of eighty one to twenty five. By law, the Ciudad Deportiva was to include a stadium with a minimum capacity of 140,000 spectators, a club headquarters, practice fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, a gym, swimming pools, skating rinks, playgrounds, covered spaces for artistic and athletic spectacles, and accommodations for athletes in large tournaments. The club had to comply with all municipal ordinances and complete the project within a period of ten years. If the Ciudad Deportiva did not meet its legal specifications, the city would seize the property.[3] Boca's directors planned a massive fundraising campaign based on selling raffle tickets to finance the project. Needing an executive order to authorize the raffle, Club president Alberto J. Armando struck a deal with Argentina's President, Arturo Illia, to divert a portion of the Ciudad Deportiva's fundraising to construct public housing. The agreement called for the building of 1,400 apartments in southern neighborhoods including La Boca and the Costanera Sur where the Ciudad Deportiva was to be built. The project's funds would help subsidize a portion of the savings and loans plans used to build the apartments.[4]

[2] Cámara de Diputados de la Nación, "Donacion," *Diario de Sesiones*, October 29, 1964.
[3] Ibid.
[4] "El Dr. Illia Apoyara La Gran Obra Boquense," *Asi Es Boca*, November 11, 1964.

Figure 6 - Armando and Illia discussing the Ciudad Deportiva at the Casa Rosada. Credit: Archivo General de la Nación.

This chapter fits the planning of the Ciudad Deportiva within the developmentalist projects of post-Peronist governments between 1955 and 1964. I begin by tracing how the civilian governments of Arturo Frondizi and Arturo Illia advocated for developmentalist economic policies that embraced public-private enterprises and prioritized middle-class consumers as the agents of national progress and modernization. Buenos Aires became a highly symbolic stage for measuring or displaying the successes of these political and economic projects. I examine how the 1958 city master plan encapsulated developmentalist visions of urban planning while pointing to leisure and recreation as important markers of the city's modernization. I then discuss how the world of professional soccer adapted to the political and economic uncertainties of this

period and how club directors responded to changing consumer and leisure patterns by refocusing on *socios* and their families. Finally, I analyze the institutional history of Boca Juniors during this period to trace Armando's reemergence as club president and the visions for a new stadium that culminated in the Ciudad Deportiva.

Development and Integration

The military leaders who removed Perón in 1955 styled their coup a *Revolución Libertadora*, or liberating revolution, that would restore democracy to Argentina. Hundreds of thousands of Argentines filled the Plaza de Mayo to attend the swearing in of General Eduardo Lonardi, a man who promised there would be "neither victors nor vanquished" in the aftermath of the coup. Some factions within the military viewed Perón simultaneously as a "tool of international liberalism" for seeking investments of foreign capital and a communist for leading a social justice movement "contaminated" by Marxism.[5] Despite this hostility, Lonardi proposed a conciliatory approach to Perón's followers and aimed to restore a constitutional order purged of certain totalitarian and undemocratic Peronist tendencies. Many military and civilian leaders within the anti-Peronist coalition even agreed with many of the basic economic and social policies of the previous decade. However, the anti-Peronist hardliners within the military forced Lonardi's resignation a month later and began an aggressive "de-Peronization" campaign under General Pedro Aramburu. In addition to outlawing Peronism, Aramburu appointed military interventors in the unions; abolished the 1949 constitution; and prohibited any mention of Perón's name.[6]

Between 1955 and 1958, the military government worked to return Argentina to

[5] David Rock, *Authoritarian Argentina the Nationalist Movement, Its History, and Its Impact* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p.182.
[6] Luis Romero, *A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century*.

constitutional democracy on their own terms. They convened a consultative body of political parties of whom they required the proscription of Peronism as a basic tenet. The military also adopted an economic plan developed by Raul Prébisch that reduced state intervention in the economy, suspended collective bargaining, authorized Argentina's entry into the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, and devalued the peso. Intended to balance the trade deficit and increase Argentina's economic efficiency, its effect was to galvanize resistance amongst Peronist workers who adopted strikes and sabotage to combat their decline in real wages and loss of power in the workplace. The political and economic forces arrayed against unions were intended to break Peronism's hold over labor, but these measures yielded more resistance than integration.[7] Perón's supporters in labor and other sectors dreamt of a return from the exiled leader and, with a growing sense of their own autonomy, influenced political developments through negotiation and direct action. When the government held a constitutional referendum in 1957 as a sort of prelude to the 1958 presidential elections, Peronists cast blank ballots and garnered the largest number of votes with twenty four percent.[8]

The other party with broad electoral support, the Unión Cívica Radical (UCR), had split into two factions in 1956 over the issue of outlawing Peronism and differences in economic policy. Arturo Frondizi's faction sought to attract Peronist voters by promising to lift the ban on Peronism. Their economic policies centered on modernizing Argentina's economy through strategic investment of foreign capital in heavy industry. Ricardo Balbín's faction shared the military's hardline stance on Peronism, though this wing advocated for economic policies similar to Perón's. Frondizi conducted secret negotiations with Perón and triumphed with his backing in the 1958 election. While Frondizi won with a sixteen point margin over Balbín, nearly ten

[7] Daniel James, *Resistance and Integration: Peronism and the Argentine Working Class, 1946-1976*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
[8] Romero, *A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century*.

percent of Argentines still cast blank ballots - an indication that the Peronist vote could remain decisive even if it had been "loaned" to Frondizi.

The military's priority on "de-Peronizing" Argentina stood at odds with the political reality that Peronist votes could swing any electoral contest, a dilemma that Argentine sociologist Juan Carlos Portantiero characterized as a "stalemate.[9]" This chess metaphor has been repeated in studies of this period because it is an apt description of the delicate balance of power within the Argentine state. The military did not hesitate to check constitutional governance by imposing various edicts on Frondizi, removing him from power in 1962, and doing the same with Arturo Illia after his election in 1963. Yet, this stalemate should not be read as an indicator of political stasis or an inability to effect change. Indeed, state officials made real attempts at profound political and economic transformations that would have lasting consequences. For instance, Frondizi's economic policies - grouped under the term *desarrollismo* - would remain the dominant paradigm in state visions for economic progress until the 1970s. One essayist gave Frondizi the moniker the "Perón of the middle class," a description that points to the ascendancy of a middle class identity that state officials placed at the center of efforts to modernize the nation.[10]

Desarrollismo, or developmentalism, emerged as a series of economic and political ideas that featured many continuities from the Peronist planning state (and prior reformist ideas) but also key breaks in terms of industrial policy, social spending, and the role of foreign capital. Championed by Frondizi's economic minister, Rogelio Frigiero, developmentalist thinking included an important role for state intervention in economic planning, viewed industrialization

[9] Ibid., 134.
[10] Esteban Rey, ¿Es Frondizi un nuevo Perón?, Buenos Aires, Lucha Obrera, 1957, p.125. Cited in Adamovsky, Ezequiel. Historia de La Clase Media Argentina: Apogeo y Decadencia de Una Ilusión, 1919-2003. Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2009.

as a means to end Argentina's agro-export dependency, implemented redistributionist policies designed to stimulate domestic markets, and aimed to build a political movement that linked economic growth to social mobility and national progress. Developmentalists believed that wealth redistribution was necessary for social integration and that workers and industrialists shared the mission of breaking the oligarchy of agro-exporters.[11] How the state would guide "economic growth to raise rapidly the living standards of the masses" remained a top priority.[12] While Perón had courted foreign capital in the final years of his government and celebrated the growth of light industry, developmentalist policy aggressively opened Argentine markets for an influx of foreign capital that spurred a boom in heavy industry including steel, petroleum, and automobiles. Developmentalists celebrated science and technology as the keys not only to transforming industrial production, but also in academic expertise and social science that would guide state planning and modernization efforts in broader society. Liberal elites and economists were hostile to this state interventionism but their Partido Demócrata Nacional had little electoral influence. However, they did use military allies and control of important media outlets to attack *desarrollismo*.

Frondizi, as a champion of developmentalist ideology, viewed Peronism as a necessary stage in Argentina's path forward. The middle class would serve as the central agents of integrating the Peronist masses into a modernized economy and society. In a developmentalist treatise produced by Frondizi's UCR faction, Juan Ovidio Zaval drew on sociologist Gino Germani's research that claimed at least 40% of the population was middle class. Zaval argued that Frondizi's aims were to create a "movement of national liberation… composed of the popular classes" based on

[11] James P Brennan, *The Labor Wars in Córdoba, 1955-1976: Ideology, Work, and Labor Politics in an Argentine Industrial City* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), 14–15; Ezequiel Adamovsky, *Historia de La Clase Media Argentina*.
[12] Eduardo Elena, *Dignifying Argentina,* p. 248.

income redistribution that was "sane." The middle classes would lead a "national movement" and "new social function" with their "higher degree of cultural preparedness."[13] Culture and its consumption thus played a crucial role in how Argentines adopted or viewed middle class identities with a new sense of mission in the post-Peronist era. Historian Matthew Karush points to the growth of mass culture in the 1950s and 1960s that was "for and about the middle class" as a transnational process with infused with new political messages that had specific appeals to young people.[14]

Despite the claims of Germani and sociological studies that continue to be inspired by his original insights, the middle class was not a definable segment of the Argentine population whose size could be measured by income or type of employment. Income, occupation, and lifestyle choices were arbitrary categorizations better understood as part of a wider political project to envision an ideal citizen. The middle class was a cultural construct, an identity that historian Ezequiel Adamovsky shows Argentines performed through their attitudes, voting, and lifestyle. A survey in 1960 revealed the widespread adoption of this identity: 40% of respondents identified as middle class; 59% as working class, proletarian, or popular; and less than 1% as upper class. Interestingly, 70% of those who were quantifiably in the highest income categories chose to identify as middle class. Rather than income, respondents referred to things like their employment, way of speaking, dress and European appearance, and where they lived in the city as proof of their middle-class identity.[15] By 1958, the middle class existed as an idealized citizenry that was of European ancestry, anti-Peronist, and friendly to *desarrollista* policies. Frondizi staked his political fortunes on elevating the living standards and lifestyles of

[13] Juan Ovidio Zavala: "El Radicalismo Intransigente y la clase media argentina", *Programa Popular*, suplemento, año1, no 4, July 1-7 1957, p. 1-8 cited in Adamovsky, *Historia de La Clase Media Argentina*.
[14] Matthew Karush, *Culture of Class*, 214–22.
[15] Adamovsky, *Historia de La Clase Media Argentina*, 365–68.

Argentines who identified as part of the middle class.

Foreign investment was key to developmentalist policies. The amount of foreign capital, largely from the United States, rose from 20 million dollars in 1957 to 348 million dollars in 1961. These investments were a crucial factor in facilitating the boom in steel, automobile, and petroleum production. Investments from the United States also helped shift consumption habits including the rise of supermarkets and U.S. influenced media and marketing practices. Developmentalist policies influenced this economic growth, but booms in heavy industry were tempered by contractions, inflation, and full-blown economic crises that subsequently spurred stabilization policies. This uneven growth ultimately contributed to a decline in workers' share of GDP and further erosion of union bargaining power. In 1959, Frondizi's government responded to a wave of labor unrest by intervening in the unions and enlisting the army to repress the most combative factories. In the elections of 1962 Frondizi sought to reconcile with Peronists by lifting the party's proscription. When Peronist candidates won in several provincial gubernatorial elections, the military removed Frondizi in another coup on March 28, 1962.[16]

The Cuban Revolution, the U.S. led Alliance for Progress, and anti-Communist papal encyclicals altered the entire region's political panorama and spurred transformations within the military in the early 1960s.[17] The military was split on what to do after the ouster of Frondizi in 1962, with the *gorila* (or *colorados*) faction favoring the elimination of elections and the *legalistas* (or *azules*) who supported the democratic process under military supervision. The *legalistas,* led by General Juan Carlos Onganía, would oversee the July 1963 election of Arturo Illia, but generals continued to dictate policies that fell under their expansive notion of "National Security." Both factions in the military subscribed to a conception of National Security that

[16] Romero, *A History of Argentina*, 78–94.
[17] Altamirano, *Bajo el signo de las masas*, 67–77.

envisioned a permanent war against subversion and communism in which the drive for economic modernization was a crucial battle. The *azules* in particular emphasized their capacity to guide economic and social modernization. They drew significant military aid and training from the United States between 1963-66 under the Alliance for Progress.

Illia belonged to the UCR faction that rivaled Frondizi's and followed economic and social policies less friendly to foreign capital and a more conciliatory relationship with unions. While developmentalists decried the lack of incentives for foreign investment, Illia's policies still featured redistributionist policy, state planning in the economy, and an emphasis on national industry. Argentina enjoyed a brief economic recovery with increased exports in the two years following the 1963 economic crisis.[18] Illia prioritized resolving sectional conflicts within the state and emphasized the importance of legislative and legal bodies in solving them. However, the magazine *Primera Plana* helped shape widespread public perception of Illia as an ineffective, clueless, and passive president who was not up to the task of directing Argentina's modernization. Writers in *Primera Plana* ascribed to developmentalist thought that placed the greatest faith in Argentina's new managerial technocrats who alone could modernize the economy and society. The magazine encapsulated middle class beliefs in the superiority of efficiency over liberal democracy and their frustrations with political impasses.[19]

By 1964, nearly ten years after the *Revolución Libertadora* had removed Perón and aimed to restore constitutional government, Argentina's political situation was increasingly uncertain. The military's original mission had been to protect democracy from what they and many Argentines perceived as an undemocratic order that had inverted "proper" social hierarchies. By the time Arturo Illia won the 1963 election that mission had shifted to protecting Argentina from

[18] Romero, *A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century*, 146–52.
[19] Liliana De Riz, *La política en suspenso, 1966-1976* (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2000), 13–23, 38–39.

communism, a goal that precluded any reconciliation with Peronism and prioritized economic progress and modernization as the keys to social harmony. Developmentalists, liberals, and other economic policymakers jockeyed for control of this economic project as the nation experienced the benefits and drawbacks of volatile, uneven growth that hinged on foreign investment and stabilization policies. Nevertheless, developmentalists and Argentines who identified as middle class occupied a privileged position in policymaking, a position that would only consolidate during the 1960s.

Modernizing Buenos Aires

The city of Buenos Aires continued its economic and demographic primacy relative to the rest of Argentina in the post-Peronist period. By 1960, the federal capital's population stabilized around three million - a figure very close to the most recent census conducted in 2010 which counted 2.87 million *porteños*. However, the total metropolitan area reached 7 million when including the greater metro area of Gran Buenos Aires (around 12 million in 2010). The areas outside of the federal capital experienced large population gains through internal migration from the interior provinces and the industrial belts north and west of the city that would also grow dramatically under developmentalist policies. Therefore, major concerns of city planners included further containing metropolitan expansion, decentralizing governance in order to better provide basic services, subsidizing the construction of affordable housing, and developing a transportation network in the increasingly distant periphery.[20]

Developmentalist policy, eager to attract foreign capital, spurred growth in the banking and financial sectors. These companies constructed a number of new office towers in the northern

[20] Margarita Gutman and Jorge Enrique Hardoy, *Buenos Aires: historia urbana del área metropolitana* (Madrid: Editorial MAPFRE, 1992), 173.

area of downtown Buenos Aires. Recreational and shopping activities extended from the center northwards towards Belgrano and San Isidro.[21] Shops featured imported styles and products in fashion, food, and music as a way to cater to middle class consumption tastes that saw these products as a way to distinguish themselves as modernizing Argentines.[22] Hot dogs, coca cola, and jeans amongst youth were ways to mark one's identity and forms of belonging. The latest home appliances were a must. Television emerged slowly at the start of the 1950s only to explode in 1956 with a variety of programming including soccer. The car was the ultimate modern machine, but was still expensive and a relatively inconvenient form of transportation in the city. Increased imports allowed them to become more accessible after 1956 and used for family vacations.[23]

Public officials and urban planners in the post-Peronist period prioritized the reconstruction of the symbolic and physical boundaries that had kept working class *porteños* out of prominent public spaces, reshaping the city to promote an urban consumer culture. Workers' greater access and presence in recreational spaces and activities that had previously been exclusive to middling and upper sectors gave forms of consumption and leisure a specific political charge. These spaces tended to be in concentrated areas downtown, where *porteños* of varying socioeconomic status encountered each other increasingly at concerts, movies, stores, cafes, and the zoo.[24] Both elites and middling sectors resented the entry of newcomers into their recreational spaces.

Turnover in the office of mayor of Buenos Aires exceeded that of Argentina's executive between 1955 and 1964. Military and civilian governments appointed eight *Intendentes*, or city

[21] Ibid., 227.
[22] Rebekah E Pite, *Creating a Common Table in Twentieth-Century Argentina: Doña Petrona, Women, and Food*, 2013; Valeria Manzano, *The Age of Youth in Argentina: Culture, Politics, and Sexuality from Perón to Videla*. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014).
[23] Ernesto Goldar, *Buenos Aires, vida cotidiana en la década del 50* (Buenos Aires: Plus Ultra, 1980).
[24] Natalia Milanesio, *Workers Go Shopping*, 126–27.

managers, and also issued a series of decrees to reinstitute and restructure the municipal government. The city legislature, or *Concejo Deliberante*, was reconstituted with the 1958 elections. The *Concejo's* makeup reflected Frondizi's victory with his faction of Radicals holding twelve seats, the other Radicals holding eight, and a mix of Socialists, Communists, and Christian Democrats holding the remaining eight. Illia's election in 1963 brought a corresponding shift in the *Concejo's* balance of power as his Radical faction gained the majority of seats. Tracking the blank votes cast in *Concejo* elections reveals that Peronists, despite the federal capital's anti-Peronist voting tendencies, played a decisive role in shifting electoral support to either Radical faction.[25] City politics and policies remained contested despite Peronism's proscription and the fact that its strongholds of support lay outside the city limits.

One of the military's mayoral appointments, Eduardo Bergalli, declared the post-Peronist context an opportunity for a "third founding of Buenos Aires." His time as mayor was characterized by nepotism, strikes, failed housing projects, and conflict with other government organs. Frondizi's mayor, Hernán Giralt, served from 1958 to 1962. His administration oversaw the construction of thirty-five kilometers of new subway lines, a system of traffic signaling, and projects to build 15,000 housing units. Giralt even continued as mayor for three months after Frondizi's ouster in 1962 until retiring and turning the mayorship over to Alberto Prebisch. Prebisch continued traffic improvements and policies focused on affordable housing. His administration began construction on 4,400 apartments in the southern district of Catalinas Sur, near La Boca, and promised to end the problem of *villas de emergencia*, or shantytowns. Arturo Illia's appointment, Francisco Rabanal, served between 1963 and 1966 and would inaugurate the

[25] Mario Rapoport and María Seoane, *Buenos Aires, historia de una ciudad: de la modernidad al siglo XXI, sociedad, política, economía y cultura*, vol. 2 (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Planeta, 2007), p. 55.

monobloques of Catalinas Sur begun by Prebisch.[26]

The constant changing of mayors resulting from the coups and elections of this period stood in contrast to city planners' adherence to a single master plan created in 1958. Frondizi's mayor, Giralt, oversaw the creation of a new city planning commission called the Organización del Plan Regulador de Buenos Aires (OPRBA). The OPRBA's city master plan was officially approved in 1962, published in 1968, and it would remain the guiding force for urban planning until the 1970s.[27] OPRBA's members drew on two inspirations in their designs. The first was a 1948 document called the Estudio del Plan de Buenos Aires (EPBA). It was created by architects and urban planners who identified key problems in zoning, traffic, housing, and recreational spaces. The second was Patrick Abercrombie's 1945 London master plan that emphasized the importance of studying urban planning in a broad regional, historical, and functional perspective. As a result of these two influences the master plan envisioned separate proposals for the regional, metropolitan, and federal capital levels while also addressing problems and solutions identified in the 1930s and Peronist decade.[28]

The plan focused mainly on improvements within the limits of the federal capital and included measures for better traffic circulation, new highways, and more parks. Large *monobloques* were built on the city's outskirts, but single-family apartment and homes with separate rooms for children and accessible green space were the living patterns of modern *porteños*. Of major concern was the construction of highways to relieve the congested center and facilitate access to the city, the improvement of the city's electrical grid and drainage system,

[26] Ibid., 51–55.
[27] Ibid., 51–55.
[28] Leandro Daniel Benmergui, *Housing Development Housing Policy, Slums, and Squatter Settlements in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1948-1973* (College Park, Md.: University of Maryland, 2012); Odilia E. Suárez, *Planes y Códigos Para Buenos Aires 1925-1985* (Secretaria de Extension Universitaria y Bienestar Estudiantil, 1986).

and the expansion of green spaces and recreational areas.[29] Planners sought to "rebalance" the "uneven development" of Buenos Aires's northern and southern neighborhoods by "renovating" the south and improving the dilapidated southern coastline and port. Buenos Aires had expanded so rapidly that by the mid twentieth-century the center had ceased to be the only economic and social pole of the city. The southern, western, and northern suburbs had all developed their own centers of commerce and consumption.[30] While most major projects stood to benefit *capital federal* first and foremost, city officials did defer municipal governance across a larger system of municipal bodies. Another plan was created in 1967 and published in 1970, influenced by the Plan of Paris and involving French experts. It also focused heavily on a costly transformation of the city by improving metropolitan infrastructure.[31]

In seeking to bring order to the expansion of the metropolitan area and undertake public works within capital federal, the master plan viewed the entire southern area of Buenos Aires as an area in need of improvement. The southern districts were relatively well connected with three bridges that connected capital federal across the river Riachuelo to Avellaneda as well as a number of highways extending to the nearby city of La Plata.[32] Planners identified the southeast as an area for land reclamation, or filling in of the *Rio de La Plata*. In 1948, EPBA had lamented the appearance and supposed social effects of factories and housing. Architects and planners saw the slaughterhouses, factories, and housing made of wood and metal for workers in La Boca and Dock Sud as a source of unhygienic and dangerous conditions. The plan also aimed to fill and

[29] Organización del Plan Regulador, *Descripcion Sintetica Del Plan Regulador* (Municipalidad de Buenos Aires, 1968).
[30] José Luis Romero, *Buenos Aires, historia de cuatro siglos* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Abril, 1983); Adrián Gorelik, *La grilla y el parque: espacio público y cultura urbana en Buenos Aires, 1887-1936* (Buenos Aires: Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, 1998).
[31] Suárez, *Planes y Códigos Para Buenos Aires 1925-1985*.
[32] Gutman and Hardoy, *Buenos Aires*, 181.

clean the flood-prone area of Flores in the southwest[33]. That area's Parque Almirante was to transform into an enormous park and recreational area for sports. This would require a massive undertaking of elevating the area to combat flooding and cooperation from civil institutions and soccer clubs like San Lorenzo de Almagro who would build their own Ciudad Deportiva there. Cleaning the Riachuelo river that cut through the city's south side, filling and elevating Flores, creating the Parque Almirante Brown as a major city park, and building and promoting modern public housing were all pillars of the 1958 master plan that sought to "rebalance" the north-south divide in Buenos Aires.[34]

The Costanera Sur encompassed an area that involved several ideas of the master plan, including the construction of housing in Catalinas Sur and Casa Amarilla and the filling and redevelopment of the Puerto Madero district. The Casa Amarilla area of La Boca, an abandoned railway station adjacent to Boca's stadium, was planned as a base of urban renovation through large housing works. The master plan also envisioned the old Puerto Madero on the southern coast as an area for sports, leisure, cultural events, and some housing and administrative offices with an area of 405 hectares projected by filling the river and reclaiming the dykes of the old port. All of this was to be realized financially via long-term investments, a special government fund, and foreign capital.[35] A massive recreational complex located ten minutes from Buenos Aires's symbolic center, the Plaza de Mayo, held great appeal. OPRBA planners aimed to "satisfy the deficit of recreational and athletic space and distribute them evenly inside the urban area… with the center to be served by filling 400 hectares of land in the river."[36] In this context, the deal between Boca Juniors and Illia demonstrates how the plans for the Ciudad Deportiva fit

[33] Suárez, *Planes y Códigos Para Buenos Aires 1925-1985*.
[34] Graciela Silvestri, *El color del río: historia cultural del paisaje del Riachuelo* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, 2003).
[35] Organización del Plan Regulador, *Descripcion Sintetica Del Plan Regulador*.
[36] Ibid.

within urban planning and affordable housing efforts.

Soccer's Changing Political Economy

After 1955, the military government purged sport of Peronist influences by replacing many leading officials in the sports bureaucracy. Some journalists and historians of soccer in Argentina have described the post-Peronist years as a period of crisis, of '*fútbol espectáculo*' characterized by high spending on players, new forms of commercializing professional soccer, and more violence within stadiums.[37] A disastrous 1958 World Cup campaign and a poor run in 1962 crushed any notions of Argentina's international soccer superiority. Average stadium attendance also fell in the following decade, though this was partly because of competing leisure activities, shifting consumption patterns, and an expansion in the number of games played across new competitions. Television and family trips competed with the practice of attending weekend soccer matches at the club stadium. Two Argentine soccer historians point to the increasing acquisitive power of women and broader access to education (especially higher education) as social transformations that contributed to an expanded set of leisure practices for porteños.[38]

In 1958 Agustín Rodríguez Araya proposed a government takeover, or *intervención*, of the AFA to "restore the effectiveness of that body" and "remove politics from sport."[39] Three separate pieces of legislation all sought to curtail the privileges and subsidies enjoyed by clubs. In 1958 three congressmen proposed a commission of nine members who would study the

[37] Ariel Scher and Héctor Palomino, *Fútbol, Pasión de Multitudes y de Elites: Un Estudio Institucional de La Asociación de Fútbol Argentino (1934-1986)* (Buenos Aires Argentina: Centro de Investigaciones Sociales sobre el Estado y la Administración, 1988); Juan Sebreli, *Fútbol y Masas* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Galerna, 1981).
[38] Scher and Palomino, *Fútbol, Pasión de Multitudes y de Elites*.
[39] Cámara de Diputados de la Nación, "AFA: Intervencion Proyecto de Ley Del Señor Diptuado Rodriguez Araya y Otros," *Diario de Sesiones* 3 (July 17, 1958): 1679.

economic and financial activities and propose a series of financial regulations for the clubs.[40] Two congressional declarations expressed concern over the rising cost of tickets, arguing that the "popular classes", "the most humble of people" were being priced out of a game whose very success was made possible by their support. A proposal from Angel Francisco Beiró explained that because ticket prices had doubled in a matter of months in 1959, the AFA had the obligation to prevent clubs from raising ticket prices. After all, it was "an essentially popular sport… impassioning the masses who have built the sport itself and now see it exclude them." In the case that clubs did not cooperate, it would be time for the state to withdraw all support from the AFA and professional clubs as the millions of pesos in support were no longer justified and the clubs should be treated as profit-seeking enterprises that have "forgotten their origins and that their progress has been made possible by lovers of the game who never thought these entities would become simple money-making machines."[41] In 1961 and 1962 congress proposed two projects to examine the amount of state debt held by clubs and to examine how elections might be affected by candidates promoted by clubs.[42]

Carlos Camet proposed legislation in 1958 and 1960 that would study two issues: how clubs spent money as non-profit civic associations and how to keep Argentina's best players in the domestic league. A 1959 legislative project from Rogelio Rodríguez Díaz proposed an outright ban on all player transfers abroad. Díaz argued that clubs were vibrant institutions that contributed to "the formation of better generations, as much in a sporting sense as in a spiritual

[40] Cámara de Diputados de la Nación, "Comision Para Analizar Economia Del Futbol," *Diario de Sesiones* 3 (July 24, 1958): 1855.
[41] Cámara de Diputados de la Nación, "Fútbol: Aumento de Las Entradas. Pedidio de Informes: Proyecto de Resolucion Del Senor Dipuatdo Beiró.," *Diario de Sesiones* 1 (May 15, 1959): 279.
[42] Cámara de Diputados de la Nación, "Pedido de Informes Sobre Los Deudas de Clubes de Futbol a Bancos e Instituciones Oficials, y Creditos a Entidades Deportivas Del Interior Del Pais. Proyecto de Resolucion Del Senor Diputado Busaniche," *Diario de Sesiones* 1 (May 30, 1961): 491; Cámara de Diputados de la Nación, "Deudas de Los Clubes de Futbol Con El Estado Nacional: Pedido de Informes Relacionados Con La Declaracion de Moratoria. Proyecto de Resoulcion Del Senor Diputado Rodriguez Araya," *Diario de Sesiones* 9 (April 17, 1962): 6650.

sense, equal cultivators of physical exercise and better health conditions." He also pointed to the revenue of foreign currency that team tours of Europe brought to the national economy, reasoning that the financial weakening of clubs would affect Argentina's balance of payments. Pointing to Europe, Díaz explained that other nations had taken similar measures and that a decay of the national game would produce "popular detachment" from the sport.[43] If they were unable to attend the matches at stadiums, a resolution from José Antonio Aybar to the Communications Commission asked that the state channel, Canal 7, broadcast the games and fight the "commercial interests" that were blocking these broadcasts from inside the AFA. A proposed resolution from Julio Busaniche aimed to study the amount of debt clubs held with state banks and institutions, an amount estimated in 1956 to be approximately ninety million pesos and to be available mainly to clubs in Buenos Aires.[44] Another resolution from Araya attacked the AFA president Colombo for attempting to unilaterally negotiate club debts with the state.[45] None of these congressional proposals resulted in legislation or concrete actions, but their existence reveals that legislators had concerns about the financial state of clubs and their role in society.

Many club presidents and directors looked to the growing popularity of television and opportunities for sponsorship and merchandising. The large clubs pushed for the creation of a more exclusive top flight that would be governed separately, allowing the big clubs to more easily modify competition formats and influence the AFA's policies - the existing system was

[43] Cámara de Diputados de la Nación, "Jugadores Profesionales de Fútbol: Prohibición de Su Transferencia Al Exterior. Proyecto de Ley Del Señor Diputado Rodriguez Diaz," *Diario de Sesiones* 1 (May 13, 1959): 203.
[44] Cámara de Diputados de la Nación, "Pedido de Informes Sobre Los Deudas de Clubes de Futbol a Bancos e Instituciones Oficials, y Creditos a Entidades Deportivas Del Interior Del Pais. Proyecto de Resolucion Del Senor Diputado Busaniche."
[45] Cámara de Diputados de la Nación, "Deudas de Los Clubes de Futbol Con El Estado Nacional: Pedido de Informes Relacionados Con La Declaracion de Moratoria. Proyecto de Resoulcion Del Senor Diputado Rodriguez Araya."

one club, one vote.[46] In 1962 Racing Club proposed an unsuccessful project to the AFA that would close the transfer market for three years in order to keep top Argentine talent from transferring to better-paying clubs in Europe and elsewhere in Latin America.[47] That same year the AFA, larger clubs, and national government acted to reorganize top flight professional football by forming a national league. This league aimed to expand the professional market's reach by featuring teams from other provinces rather than solely from Buenos Aires's immediate metropolitan area.[48] Clubs turned to several new forms of increasing revenue including sponsorships, advertising deals, and television contracts. The AFA's presidents and state appointed managers worked to introduce a new continental-wide competition, the Copa Libertadores, as well as a new national league that included more teams from Argentina's provinces. Clubs also invested heavily in new infrastructure, including facilities that mirrored Boca Juniors' Ciudad Deportiva. Many clubs accumulated large debts and their inability to pay salaries on time played a key role in leading players to strike in 1971.

Player transfers and wages one source of financial troubles in professional soccer. The larger clubs exemplified this trend by offering large salaries to star players and signing expensive foreigners. River Plate's president explained: "we can't buy cheap players… River is like the Teatro Colón, not just anyone can play there."[49] Ticket sales had long been the economic motor of the clubs but this source of revenue declined as the average match attendance fell. Attendance of first division soccer games fell from it's peak in the five year period of 1951-1955 at 12,755 per game to only 7,830 in the period of 1966-70 - a decline of 38%. The creation of summer tournaments in tourist destinations like Mar del Plata were one way in which clubs brought the

[46] "Coincidencia de Dirigentes: Crisis Total En El Fútbol," *Goles*, July 31, 1962.
[47] "No Prospereria El Proyecto Del Cierre de Pases," *Goles*, August 21, 1962.
[48] "1963 Dara Una Nueva Fisonomia Al Futbol," *Goles*, October 9, 1962.
[49] Scher and Palomino, *Fútbol, Pasión de Multitudes y de Elites*, 100.

spectacle of *porteño* professional soccer to where people were spending their weekends and vacations. International tournaments hosting teams from Europe and South America could be televised to meet the consumer where they were, though plenty continued to see games at stadiums in Buenos Aires.[50] Television also offered an alternative to those who wished to avoid the increasing violence in and around stadiums. While violence had existed within soccer since large crowds had begun watching matches in the early twentieth century, the 1960s saw the creation of institutionalized *barras bravas*, or hooligan groups. These groups were often tied to club agrupaciones (political factions) and *dirigentes*, occupied specific areas of stadiums, and confronted opposing fans and even political opposition within their own clubs.

Boca: "Faith the Country Needs"

After General Aramburu's takeover of the *Revolución Libertadora*, military officials jailed Alberto J. Armando for fifty nine days for his connections to the Peronist government.[51] With Armando removed, Miguel de Riglos - a member of the Buenos Aires elite and former treasurer of Boca under Armando - won the 1956 elections and served for three years. The club reformed its statutes that year, replacing an open general assembly of members with two hundred representatives as a way of ending "tumultuous assemblies." Under De Riglos, Boca was required to comply with new financial rules imposed by the AFA that set limits on how much clubs could spend on buying players and accumulating debt, internal and state audits of club accounting, and severe penalties for financial mismanagement.[52] In the last year of De Riglos' presidency, the club's *memoria* again cited the drastic level of change that was needed to fight

[50] Ibid., 111–12.
[51] Armando Maria Mercedes, *Interview with Maria Mercedes Armando* (Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2014).
[52] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1956*, 52 Ejercicio Administrativo, 1956.

factionalism within the club and lamented the "many socios driven away by politicking, caudillos, and gangsterism."[53]

Armando returned to the presidency in 1960 with an agenda to rescue the club from the previous years of mismanagement. The *memoria* that year talked of "recuperating… correcting finances… and returning prestige to the club where it had been erased by well-known factors."[54] Armando returned to his previously successful strategy of selling rifas. During his first presidency in 1955, Armando had raised 5.6 million pesos[55] after selling nearly 18,000 tickets at 500 pesos each.[56] In 1960 he turned the 3 million peso deficit into a 20 million peso surplus. "We have created the propitious conditions to exploit our economic potential", wrote the club directors. The *memoria* included pictures of the Gran Rifa's two winners that year; a smiling "Señor Orlando Cueno, possessor of the winning ticket and now a millionaire" appeared next to Armando. The club sold 10,000 raffle tickets at 1,000 pesos each with a variety of prizes including a new car, an apartment downtown, an apartment in the beach town of Mar del Plata, or an all-inclusive trip to Europe. The net gains from both sweepstakes that year totaled 14.5 million pesos, or three quarters of the reported surplus.[57] In the following year of 1961, 23 of the 25 million pesos the club reported as a surplus came from four series of sweepstakes.[58] As a kind of lottery, the rifas' legality depended on executive decree. A special thank you appeared for President Frondizi in the memoria. Boca was able to secure new executive authorization in 1962 after Frondizi's ouster and raised another 5.4 million through these raffles.[59] Armando had found a way to adapt the club's finances to the challenges of professional soccer in the 1960s and

[53] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1959*, 1959.
[54] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1960*, 1960, 7.
[55] In this section, I do not convert pesos to dollars because of the high level of fluctuation in the value of the peso relative to the dollar.
[56] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1955*, 1955, 86–87.
[57] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1960*, 8.
[58] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1961*, 1961, 57.
[59] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1962*, 1962, 93.

continue expanding the infrastructure of the club.

All large soccer clubs also saw the competitiveness and success of their first team as a primary concern. Boca Juniors had taken the unprecedented step in 1962 of purchasing the facilities of a struggling third division club, Arsenal de Llavallol, in order to set up an academy on the outskirts of the city away from its "vices" where young players could be trained and morally shaped in-residence.[60] Boca's Escuela Integral de Fútbol, or academy, would be relocated a year later to a rural estate the club purchased in San Justo, La Candela. Boca purchased the chalet for 25 million pesos and obtained executive authorization from de facto president Jose Maria Guido to finance the purchase through rifas.[61] Armando and the Comisión Directiva hosted fundraising dinners at the club's new property, receiving donations that included furniture and books from the national congress and various foreign embassies[62]. The academy began training a small class of a dozen young men in 1963, but aimed to recruit sixty boarding students and 200 commuting students with a full school curriculum. Boca's head coach, the legendary Adolfo Pedernera, had toured Europe's academies and concluded that the dedication to the sport and seriousness of training he witnessed there were just what Argentines required to harness their raw talent.[63] Armando explained that the name, Escuela Integral, referred to the life education the club would provide to academy players. In the "moral environment created by Pedernera and his staff… the kids are the model of correctness." The young players had chores, rules, responsibilities, and required study time in the library in addition to language and typing classes.[64]

La Candela was frequently listed by Armando as part of the club's *obra social*, or

[60] "Boca En Una Operacion Sin Precedentes," *Goles*, January 1, 1962.
[61] "La Asamblea Decidira Si Se Adquiere "La Candela"", *Asi Es Boca*, November 24, 1965.
[62] "Muchas Donaciones se han hecho ya para La Candela", *Asi Es Boca*, November 24, 1965.
[63] "Se Realizo Una Reunion de Prensa en La Candela", *Asi Es Boca*, November 24, 1965.
[64] "La Candela: Un Paraiso," *Asi Es Boca*, November 24, 1965.

contribution to society. Boca would continue investing in the facilities and its capacity to train "productive members of society" as well as talented professional players.[65] Yet, the academy was primarily an investment in producing player labor that could either be sold to other clubs or used at Boca. Increasing player wages and the number of games played in newer competitions like the Copa Libertadores - an international, South American club competition similar to the European Cup or Champions League - made academies like La Candela an important investment. Boca's team played a particularly high number of games not only because of the main league and international competitions, but also because of touring matches at home and abroad designed to generate revenue or further the club's interests. The club toured Europe several times in the 1960s with the aim of increasing prestige and revenue, playing teams like Real Madrid, Barcelona, Eintracht Frankfurt, and Juventus. Boca signed a contract with the Liga de Mar del Plata to renovate the municipal stadium in the summer beach resort as part of a profit-seeking venture to turn the town into the "capital of international summer tournaments" with teams like Santos, Real Madrid, River, Boca, and San Lorenzo playing in five-team tournaments.[66]

Academics, journalists, and amateur historians have described how a number of wealthy and politically-connected club presidents, like Armando, led their clubs in the style of *caudillos* to respond to the economic challenges of the late 1950s and early 1960s.[67] However, club presidents were both empowered and limited by a constellation of support from their membership, the unpredictable fortunes of their soccer teams, and an array of political and economic factors during a turbulent period in postwar Buenos Aires. On the other hand, several club presidents of this period were very wealthy, well-connected, and wielded enormous influence inside the institutions as a result of how power was concentrated in the club executive.

[65] "Hablo Armando En La Facultad de Medicina," *Asi Es Boca*, November 8, 1967.
[66] "Ya Esta En Marcha Otra Ambiciosa Realizacion," *Asi Es Boca*, August 7, 1968
[67] Scher and Palomino, *Fútbol, Pasión de Multitudes y de Elites*.

"Armando was an absolutist", explained Jesus Asiain, one of Armando's vice-presidents at Boca and a longstanding club official. "I had many conflicts with him but we remained friends… but he ran roughshod over people and many hated him for it", added Asiain. Maria Mercedes, Armando's second wife, recalled Armando's celebrity status and their lifestyle: "We traveled the world, we would go to the Bal de la Rose at the Monte Carlo Sporting Club in Monaco, we have titles in Ireland and Scotland, the key to the city of Miami… my husband knew how to do things the right way."[68]

Atilio Pozzobon, a close friend of Armando's and and actor/comedian associated with Boca Juniors, shared an anecdote in which Armando was being asked by a reporter: "Alberto J. Armando don't you have a degree of some kind? A doctorate in law, medicine, odontology, veterinary medicine? No, responded Armando… I'm a doctor of ideas, and there's no university that can teach you that." Pozzobon summarized: "He was a seller of faith… politics never interested him because he was interested in Boca… he was also busy running all of his companies. He had his dealership, was president of the Banco Holandes, he had an insurance company, I could sit here naming his business ventures all day."[69] By the mid sixties Armando was one of the ten richest men in Argentina. One historian has described his style of leadership at Boca as "concentrated power with sheer demagoguery."[70] Under Armando, Boca had one of its most successful periods domestically and internationally. They won multiple league titles throughout the 1960s and won the Copa Libertadores in 1977 and 1978.[71] He boasted that Boca Júniors was the best at soccer and that, with his new plans for a Ciudad Deportiva, they would

[68] Jesus Asiain, *Interview with Jesus Asiain* (Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2012); Jesus Asiain, *Interview with Jesus Asiain* (Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2013); Maria Mercedes, *Interview with Maria Mercedes Armando*.
[69] Atilio Pozzobon, *Interview with Atilio Pozzobon* (Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2014).
[70] Scher and Palomino, *Fútbol, Pasión de Multitudes y de Elites*.
[71] "¡Señor, No Raye Los Coches!," *Clarín*, October 19, 1961, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.

surpass even River Plate in social infrastructure.[72]

Armando's plans to expand the club's social infrastructure and membership base called for a larger stadium to accommodate the demand for seats at Boca's stadium, La Bombonera. A number of congressmen proposed legislation that would exchange La Bombonera for the nearby Casa Amarilla property to build a new stadium, cultural center, and athletic facilities. The legislation was not solely focused on solving Boca's stadium problem, it was a comprehensive plan for expanding the area's public services and included a women's health center, the construction of a "monobloque moderno", and the establishment of a fund for "building improvement in Barracas and La Boca." Boca Juniors was also to construct a building for the Universidad Popular de la Boca.[73] This legislation explicitly addressed the issue of Boca's new stadium as an opportunity to execute the city master plan's goals of housing and improvement of services in the southern districts of Barracas, La Boca, and Catalinas Sur. The proposed plan continued to develop with congress and President Frondizi as Boca began to describe the project as a Ciudad Deportiva and Gran Estadio. The plans grew to expand the housing component and help build a dozen *monobloques* with subsidized incentives for club members to live there.[74] The club took another unprecedented action in forming "Boca Juniors Cooperativa Integral de Vivienda Ltda", an entity that aimed to construct housing in the Casa Amarilla area and turn La Bombonera into apartments once the new stadium was completed.[75]

The defunct train yards of Casa Amarilla had ceased operation in 1910 and had plenty of open space for a larger stadium whereas La Bombonera was surrounded by buildings and streets. This seemingly ideal location proved to be a frustrating negotiation for Boca's directors. As an

[72] *Pipo Mancera Entrevista a Alberto J Armando En 1966*, difilm.com, 1966.
[73] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1960*, 14–15.
[74] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1961*, 10.
[75] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1962*, 10–11.

alternative, Armando proposed another idea to the general assembly of *socios* in which Boca would acquire fourteen hectares along the southern highway route to Mar del Plata, forty five kilometers outside the city. This would provide enough space for a stadium as well as an athletic and social complex to provide more services to socios, a Ciudad Deportiva. The plan was rejected unanimously. Boca's general secretary remarked: "It was the only thing the opposition and majority ever agreed on."[76] This failure pointed to two important realities framing the club's efforts to expand. First, large open spaces near La Boca or a central location in the city were scarce and expensive. Second, a move relocating far from the barrio (as River Plate had done in moving to Recoleta in 1923) would not be supported by the club's directors or fans.

In 1963, the engineer Luis Delpini (who had built the Bombonera) proposed an ambitious plan to build the Ciudad Deportiva atop artificial islands in the Río de la plata. The idea to build on reclaimed land from the river was not as unusual as some contemporary observers claimed. *Porteños* had been employing the technique of dredging the shallows along the coast and using the dirt for land reclamation to improve and expand ports since the 19th century. The city had already begun plans in 1958 to build a Ciudad Universitaria for the University of Buenos Aires. This new university complex was built on reclaimed land north of the Belgrano neighborhood and River Plate's stadium and was comparable to the Ciudad Deportiva in scale. In September of 1963, Armando and his Comisión Directiva called for an extraordinary session of the Asamblea de Socios. Boca's president explained that his team had completed two of their three campaign promises: to clean up the club's finances and build a great team. However, the third goal of constructing a new stadium would be impossible in La Boca. Delpini presented his plans for building the stadium on reclaimed land from the river on the Costanera Sur to the gathered

[76] "Fue Desaprobado El Proyecto Para La Ciudad Deportiva," *Asi Es Boca*, August 6, 1963.

members. Armando warned that the project would require an enormous effort but that it also had the support of then *de facto* president José María Guido. If the socios rejected the plan, he would resign from the presidency so that the club could follow another path to expanding. The editors of *Así Es Boca* included a note of support in their coverage of the *asamblea*: "For twenty five years we've heard a litany of unrealized projects. Let's break that cycle. We know that Armando is perfectly capable of realizing this great work."[77]

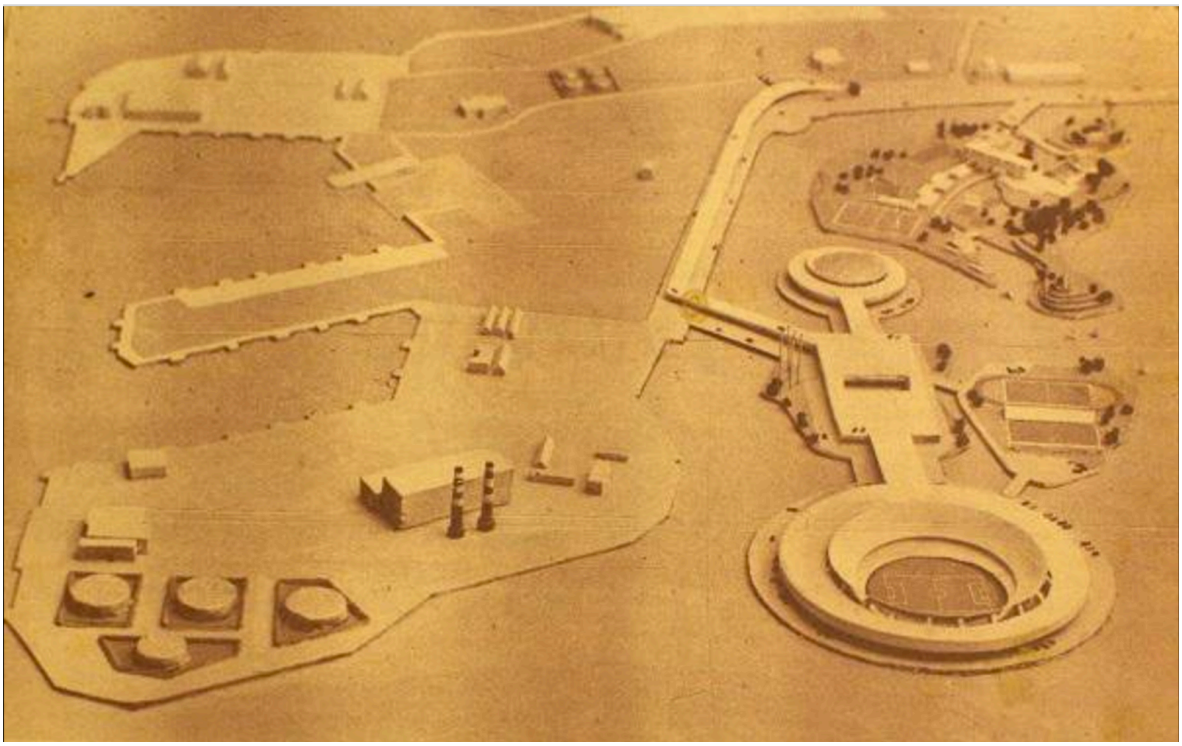

Figure 7 - An early mockup of engineer Delpini's. Source: Asi Es Boca, 1964

With the *asamblea's* backing, the club began working with congressman Reinaldo Elena to secure political support for the project. On a rainy Tuesday in October of 1963, in the middle of their season, Boca Juniors' first team and reserves traveled to the town of Pergamino. There, they raised 488,726 pesos in a charity match for the construction of an industrial school. Pergamino, a town of less than eighty thousand, was also the hometown of president-elect Arturo Illia and it

[77] "Pide Que Una Asamblea de Socios Le Ratifique La Confianza: Si No, Renunciara," *Asi Es Boca*, September 25, 1963.

was Arturo's father Martín who had donated the land upon which the school would be built. Two weeks later, *Así Es Boca* reported: "our club is absolutely sure that the new government will cede the property because the monumental project makes more valuable and elevates an entire area of the city." The club planned to self-finance the construction by selling season tickets in the new stadium and converting La Bombonera into apartments and commercial spaces.[78] Armando had also discussed a plan with Buenos Aires mayor Francisco Rabanal that included securing a low-interest, one billion peso loan from various banks backed by the government.[79]

In 1964, congress passed law 16.575 and the club threw a Banquet of Honor for congressman Reinaldo Elena who had been instrumental in proposing and passing the law. In addition to a new stadium, the law called for skating rinks, tennis courts, an area with games for kids, and "covered spaces for sporting and artistic spectacles."[80]

> The general character of this recreational zone will be of a public park. It will be bordered by roads of slow moving traffic, with forestry, and connect to ample parking and extensive sidewalks. There will be special sectors with fishing jetties and spas. On the border of the river there will be paddle tennis courts, tennis and basketball courts, docks for sailing boats, a museum for sailboats, an aquarium, exposition space and various shops for pedestrians.[81]

The federal government not only donated the land, but the city also promised to construct surface streets, dig subterranean access, and link two major city thoroughfares. Boca also successfully lobbied for a tax exemption from all import duties for materials to be used in the construction. Other clubs found this unfair and, again with Elena's help, passed legislation to exempt all clubs from paying taxes on materials to expand their urban infrastructure.[82]

The club announced in May of 1964, with the support of Arturo Illia, that it would sell

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[78] "En Fecha Proxima Tendremos Los Terrenos De Balneario Sur," *Asi Es Boca*, October 16, 1963.
[79] "Nuevo Estadio: Entrevista Con El Intendente Rabanal," *Asi Es Boca*, May 20, 1964.
[80] Cámara de Diputados de la Nación, "Donacion."
[81] Ibid.
[82] Cámara de Diputados de la Nación, "Exención de Impuestos a Boca Juniors," *Diario de Sesiones* 6 (October 7, 1965): 4153.

100,000 títulos to finance the project with a 2.7 billion peso (18 million dollar) budget. The agreement under Illia had called for the building of 1,400 apartments in the southern districts and the use of Ciudad Deportiva funds to subsidize a portion of the savings and loans plans for this housing.[83] Each *título* would include a 100,000 peso life insurance policy and serve as a downpayment for an apartment in the monobloques planned for the southern neighborhoods. The housing plans fit within a wider, ambitious municipal goal of gaining one thousand hectares of reclaimed land north of the Ciudad Deportiva site for a new residential and commercial district. The downpayment included in a *título* would help fund the construction of subsidized housing built along the Costanera Sur, in Mataderos, Nueva Pompeya, and La Boca, all southern districts. By November, the Comisión Directiva had several meetings with Illia, the Minister of Public Works Miguel Angel Ferrando, mayor Rabanal, and various legislators to determine a savings and loans plan to complement the títulos contributions to housing construction. Boca's directors also promised to complete the stadium in time for the 1970 FIFA World Cup, though Argentina's bid to host lost out to Mexico in October of 1964. In a speech, congressman Belgrano Rawson argued that it was at a club like Boca where "real service to the nation could be provided" because "those at Boca unite for things… where we in politics tend to divide ourselves… it is this sort of FAITH that THE COUNTRY NEEDS."[84]

Conclusion

The Ciudad Deportiva's planners fit the project within Argentina's post-Peronist political context where legitimacy, in a very important sense, hinged on social questions over access to

[83] "El Dr. Illia Apoyara La Gran Obra Boquense."
[84] "Ya Esta En Marcha El Gran Plan: Illia Apoya," *Asi Es Boca*, May 27, 1964; "Nuevas Gestiones Por Los Terrenos Para El Estadio," *Asi Es Boca*, September 16, 1964; "El Dr. Illia Apoyara La Gran Obra Boquense"; "La Gran Obra Ya Esta En Marcha," *Asi Es Boca*, November 25, 1964.

lifestyles and forms of consumption. The way in which state officials and Boca's directors aligned the project to meet goals in housing, urban redevelopment, and novel forms of consumption and recreation is important in two ways: it shows that these were important parts of *desarrollista* ideology and that soccer clubs were positioned as important civic associations capable of effecting change in these areas. That direct link between the Ciudad Deportiva and political visions for the future of Argentina and Buenos Aires would contribute to the project's longevity and its final outcome. Various economic sectors and state officials challenged the developmentalist model, but it was stable and influential enough to sustain political support for the Ciudad Deportiva in the face of multiple changes in government. The period between 1955 and 1964 was thus not only formative for Boca's project, but also generative of an enduring political vision that undergirded the Ciudad Deportiva.

Armando's ambitious plans for Boca's new stadium aimed to meet the challenges of a transformed professional game, an expanded membership base, and clubs' roles as sites for novel leisure and recreation. The Ciudad Deportiva and its stadium promised modernization, leisure, and harmony between consuming *socios* whatever their social background (so long as they could afford travel and admittance) precisely in a moment where social integration and political consensus seemed increasingly elusive in Argentina. The project also offered practical solutions to the goals of the city master plan - a document that, like developmentalist policies, enjoyed lasting support throughout changing political projects. By the time crews began construction in 1964, Armando and club officials successfully framed the ambitious project as a national undertaking which would galvanize the "faith and hard work" of many Argentines.

Chapter 3 - Building the Ciudad Deportiva: Argentina's Faith in Boca's Work, 1964-1970

Boca Juniors celebrated 1967's end with an extravagant gala at the Ciudad Deportiva. Aníbal Troilo, one of Argentina's most famous tango musicians, played the national anthem on his *bandoneón* (a tango concertina) and the bishop of Buenos Aires directed a military band. In his speech inaugurating the Pabellón de las Americas, a large concrete concert pavilion with concert seating and the flags of all the nations of the Americas, Alberto J. Armando emphasized the importance of "faith and work" in allowing Boca Juniors to "interpret and materialize the beliefs of the *pueblo*." Television cameras were on hand to broadcast Armando's evening speech inaugurating the Fuente Arco Iris, an elaborate fountain that greeted visitors as they crossed the main bridge into the Ciudad Deportiva. The fountain "announces a miracle", said Armando, "a miracle of love - in the form of volunteering and sacrifices - to make tangibly real our lofty dream."[1] The fountain and pavilion were only the most recent works inaugurated in a massive complex built with the proceeds from a massive grassroots fundraising effort. Boca Juniors was poised to deliver on its promise that faith in the club's hard work would lead to a symbol of national progress.

By 1970, six years after congress passed law 16.575, Boca Juniors had seemingly defied the project's skeptics: volunteers had trucked around 200,000 loads of some 1,600,000 cubic meters of earth into the Río de La Plata to form seven artificial islands connected by six bridges to the mainland. Contractors built a social headquarters that included three cafes, two restaurants, and a swimming pool with a glass wall allowing patrons to observe the underwater activity. Work crews had used over 6,000 tons of cement, 2,000 tons of iron, 140,000 square meters of wood, 50,000 tons of sand and gravel, and 3,500 square meters of pavement. Armando personally led

[1] "Brillante Inauguracion de Las Flamantes Obras," *Asi Es Boca*, January 3, 1968.

an impressive marketing campaign which sold 160,000 *títulos pro-patrimoniales*, or "titles" to the Ciudad Deportiva, in order to finance the construction. Boca's president recruited celebrities, dignitaries, and his star players for publicity. The band Los Cinco Latinos recorded a vinyl album of the official "Himno de la Ciudad Deportiva" with a B side featuring Armando giving a speech overlaid by a dramatic orchestral theme.

The speech on the vinyl recording evoked citizenship, progress, and a nation-wide collective undertaking that transcended partisan divisions. Armando described the Ciudad Deportiva as an inheritance to Argentina's "children, grandchildren, and the citizens of future." He lauded the "personal savings of kids, women, and men of an altruistic spirit above tiny party flags" that financed the project and boasted about the quixotic nature of an undertaking "*casi de locos*" that inspired "work, faith, and love." In speeches on or at the Ciudad Deportiva, Boca's soccer exploits and new stadium were often secondary to the facilities' nature as a "social project", or *obra social*. Accessible facilities provided recreation to *porteños* and visitors while the complex itself stood as proof of Argentina's ability to modernize. Clever marketing, Armando's salesmanship, and the promise of fabulous prizes were important in selling the Ciudad Deportiva, but so was the claim of contributing to the wider national good. Volunteer truckers played a key role in transporting an enormous amount of earth to the construction site and hundreds of thousands of people contributed financially, but fitting the project within the modernizing visions of state officials was just as important in realizing the club's vision.

Figure 8 - The Ciudad Deportiva circa 1972. Credit: Personal Archive of Martín Oesterheld

This chapter explores how the Ciudad Deportiva fit within the continuing developmentalist visions for the city and nation during the civilian and military governments of the mid and late 1960s. Indeed, club officials and the press pointed to progress at the project as proof that Argentina could modernize despite political instability. I examine club records, magazines, and newspapers to trace the Ciudad Deportiva's construction, its financing and marketing campaigns, and political developments within the club. Boca's directors and the architects of the Ciudad Deportiva designed, broke ground, and constructed a portion of the complex during the government of Arturo Illia. However, the project's most important and successful phases of construction occurred during the dictatorship of General Juan Carlos Onganía. I detail how and why uninterrupted progress at the Ciudad Deportiva reflected the developmentalist nature of what Guillermo O'Donnell has termed "the bureaucratic authoritarian state" implemented by Onganía. Installed by a military coup that enjoyed significant public support, Onganía directed a

civilian government that many Argentines hoped could modernize the nation's economy with technocratic expertise and authority. While 1960s Argentina did experience significant economic growth, it was highly uneven and the political unrest and violence of the period shaped a reality that was increasingly distant from the Ciudad Deportiva's promises of social integration, consumption, grandeur, and modernization. This chapter details the project's most successful phase of construction and fundraising, explaining how Boca was able to generate public interest and support in the late 1960s by appealing to particular notions of consumption. Finally, I tie Boca's project to continuing transformations in the world of professional Argentine *fútbol*.

Selling and Building Boca's 'Social Project'

"He had a vision of something marvelous… perhaps it was not the most practical thing, but he was an idealist." Jesus Asiain, Armando's former vice president at Boca Juniors, told me about project's novelty and emphasized Armando's lofty ambitions. He pointed to the restaurant's see-through pool, the drive-in theatre, and the scale of the project as some of the project's more spectacular features. Asian also mentioned that costs were an enormous problem: "it was very complicated, anchoring the stadium on that kind of terrain and it was never a good location for traffic in the area.[2]" The practical aspects of constructing a stadium complex on artificial islands raised questions from the project's outset, but this seeming impossibility also endowed the Ciudad Deportiva with a dream-like allure that Armando spun into a marketing asset. While the river location presented an engineering challenge, it was also a solution to the difficulty of securing space in La Boca and the club's rejection of the proposal to build a complex along the highway route to Mar del Plata. The Río de la Plata also presented Boca

[2] Jesus Asiain, *Interview with Jesus Asiain* (Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2013).

Juniors with the opportunity to develop plans for a "Rama Náutica", or nautical branch of amateur sports practiced at the club. This new institutional wing would make sailing and motor boats accessible to members and add a "stroke of color and joy… a breath of fresh air, light, and sunshine for the Great Capital of South America, pride of all Argentines."[3]

Traffic would become a recurring obstacle, but there was likely a great deal of faith that the city's highway plans would facilitate access. There were plans to build a coastal highway running from Tigre in the north to La Plata in the south in addition to widening the main north-south artery in the city: the Avenida 9 de Julio. Frondizi's economic policies had focused explicitly on expanding the Argentine automobile production, an industry that would struggle to compete when protectionist barriers came down and foreign companies fed the growing market for cars - particularly larger family vehicles. The number of registered cars in the city rose from 145,000 in 1965 to 254,000 in 1970.[4] Sloping bridges and decorative fountains were design aspects that pointed to a family unit traveling in a car as the ideal visitor to the Ciudad Deportiva. These design choices responded to trends that indicated the automobile was an increasingly prevalent form of transport in the city and that city planning efforts aimed to accommodate their presence.

Armando and club officials also had to work to convince Boca's *socios* that the Ciudad Deportiva was a viable option. Luis Delpini, designer of La Bombonera and an accomplished architect, had proposed the Costanera Sur site to Armando.[5] Delpini passed away in 1964, but not before convincing Armando of the river site's viability. In September of 1963[6], Armando

[3] "Nos Acordaran Los Nuevos Terrenos," *Asi Es Boca*, October 21, 1964.
[4] Mario Rapoport and María Seoane, *Buenos Aires, historia de una ciudad: de la modernidad al siglo XXI, sociedad, política, economía y cultura*, vol. 2 (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Planeta, 2007), 283–85.
[5] "Dolor Boquense: Murio Luis Delpini," *Asi Es Boca*, March 18, 1964.
[6] "Pide Que Una Asamblea de Socios Le Ratifique La Confianza: Si No, Renunciara," *Asi Es Boca*, September 25, 1963.

called for an extraordinary assembly of members' representatives concerning the Ciudad Deportiva. Surprisingly, Armando called for an electoral referendum on his own presidency, explaining that he could not undertake the Ciudad Deportiva without an "affirmation of confidence." In a move that he would later repeat, Armando dramatically offered up his resignation: "If the *socios* approve, I'll lead the work. If not, I'll resign and let other men, more worthy of their faith, lead. I'm willing to resign from my businesses to dedicate myself wholly to Boca Juniors and to complete this magnificent project." Club magazine *Así Es Boca* provided their endorsement of Armando. In another article one year later, *Así Es Boca* denounced the "politicking" and factionalism of opposition members who accused Armando of bankrupting the club with the signing of expensive players and claimed the "stadium that will never come." The magazine's writers admitted, "we can't say whether the promise will be kept… but, the municipality has included our project in the plans for urbanizing the coastline."[7]

Armando and his *comisión directiva* lobbied for the support of municipal and national authorities throughout the second half of 1964 and 1965, meeting with Arturo Illia, his Minister of Public Works Miguel Angel Ferrando, his mayor Francisco Rabanal, and members of congress. The club needed the municipal officials to approve plans fitting the Ciudad Deportiva's construction to broader plans aiming to improve the Costanera Sur. Boca required two executive decrees from Illia in order to conduct their fundraising campaign and to begin construction of the islands in a manner that would not interfere with waterway navigation. The club presented an initial budget of fifteen million dollars that would be raised by selling 100,000 raffle tickets.[8] A portion of the proceeds from the raffles would be diverted to subsidize savings and loans plans

[7] "Vuelve La Politqueria: La Ropa Sucia Se Lava En Casa," *Asi Es Boca*, September 23, 1964.
[8] "Nuevo Estadio: Entrevista Con El Intendente Rabanal," *Asi Es Boca*, May 20, 1964; "Firmaria Esta Semana El Decreto El Doctor Illia," *Asi Es Boca*, June 10, 1964; "Interesa Al Dr. Illia El Proyecto Boquense," *Asi Es Boca*, February 10, 1965.

for a series of apartment buildings in the southern districts of Mataderos, Nueva Pompeya, La Boca, and the Costanera Sur. The raffle tickets themselves could be used as a down payment on an apartment and would also serve as a five hundred dollar life insurance policy.[9] Boca's apartment plans positioned the Ciudad Deportiva to help alleviate a housing shortage, particularly in the south, and respond to city planners' concerns about the growing number of *villas de emergencia* (or shantytowns) that concentrated in the southeast districts. Congressman Belgrano Rawson praised Boca and Armando at one of the negotiating meetings: "Sometimes we're divided… at Boca they are united… It's the same problem of faith, and that is what the country needs."[10]

The Ciudad Deportiva fit into a transnational phenomenon that viewed stadiums as crucial elements within a modern city. Estimates for stadium construction in the U.S. were considerably higher than the original fifteen million dollar estimate for the Ciudad Deportiva: 1965 estimates for Cincinnati's Riverfront stood between twenty and thirty five million dollars; around thirty million in 1966 for Pittsburgh's Three Rivers Stadium; and twenty eight million in 1964 for Shea Stadium in New York.[11] Robert Moses, mid-20th century New York City's most important city planner, aimed to link Shea Stadium in Queens with another project he was involved in: the 1964-65 World's Fair also held in Queens. Moses' hope was that Shea Stadium would rival Central Park as a tourist destination and source of civic pride.[12] In August of 1965, Armando shared news that he would be visiting the Houston Astrodome, a multi-purpose stadium that Houston's civic leaders envisioned as much as a theme park as a stadium. With its space-age "astro-turf", indoor entertainment, and lavish facilities, the Astrodome became its own tourist

[9] "El Dr. Illia Apoyara La Gran Obra Boquense.", *Así Es Boca*.
[10] "El Dr. Illia Apoyara La Gran Obra Boquense," *Asi Es Boca*, November 11, 1964.
[11] Robert C Trumpbour, *The New Cathedrals: Politics and Media in the History of Stadium Construction* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2007), 79, 123, 208.
[12] Ibid., 211–13.

attraction beyond its function as a sports arena.[13] Armando also shared news that the World's Fair of New York would be donating its observation towers for use at the Ciudad Deportiva as an act of publicity and goodwill.[14]

Pablo Abbatangelo, an engineer and former club official, described the rifas to me: "At the time of their sale, they were sold as *bonos pro-patrimoniales*, public stocks that would rise in value and property titles, but they were never either… Armando was a phenomenal salesman of dreams, a car salesman."[15] Advertisements, journalists, and the club all referred to the Título Pro-Patrimonial as a bono, rifa, and título (bond, raffle, and property title) interchangeably. The various ways of referring to this certificate reflected its complex nature. It was simultaneously a raffle ticket, a transferable bond promising a return on investment, and a theoretical property title. For 27,700 pesos[16] (paid in cash or installments), a purchaser of a *título* would receive a signed and numbered document that, as long as one was making their payments, made the holder eligible for a series of prize drawings occurring at quarterly and annual intervals. One possessed rights (some specific, some vague) as a holder of the *título*, including: up to a 50% discount on any event (except soccer) at the Ciudad Deportiva, the right to practice water sports and receive a discount on docking fees for boats, the ability to sell or inherit the title, and "special discounts" on meals at the dining facilities. If the holder fell behind on three payments, the *título* would be automatically canceled and ineligible for raffles and benefits. Illia authorized the rifas in a decree stating that, given the Ciudad Deportiva's "beautification of the city and that it will fill a social function and public good in offering an important center of leisure and recreation", the club would be authorized to emit three series of 40,000 raffles that would be subject to oversight by

[13] Ibid., 23–24.
[14] "El Salon Giratorio de La Feria de Nueva York," *Asi Es Boca*, August 25, 1965.
[15] Author's interview with Pablo Abbatangelo (Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2014).
[16] Roughly 200 U.S. dollars in 1964, or $1562 in 2017

the Ministry of the Interior and the Federal Police.[17] The decree did not mention down payments for apartments or life insurance.

In the oral histories I conducted, people expressed reservations about the utility of the *títulos* and their chances of winning prizes, but they were eager to help the club and had faith in Armando's ability to deliver on his grand promises. Cándido Jorge Vidales, another club official who served as interim president and is still involved in Boca's governance, said: "*Títulos* were expensive, but Armando could sell you the Obelisco (read: the Brooklyn Bridge)… he sold them to even non-Boca fans… it was a national hit, a must-see attraction. It was not a fraud, I would buy a *título* all over again."[18] Purchasing a *título* was an act of consumption; it gave the buyer the chance of winning fabulous prizes including cars, apartments, and durable goods. It was also, ostensibly, an investment that carried the prospect of a real return or future savings on recreational spending in the form of discounts to use the facilities or acquire a season ticket. In its original (though unrealized) form, it could even serve as an important opportunity to secure housing in the context of a housing shortage and a dearth of credit options. However, buying a *título* was also clearly an act of solidarity and demonstration of faith in Boca Juniors and Alberto J. Armando. In this sense, it was a form of collective consumption in that aimed to support services for members and the broader national good.[19]

[17] "¡Sera Realidad!," *Asi Es Boca*, February 17, 1965. Boletín Oficial, "Decreto 1025," Pub. L. No. 1025 (1965).
[18] Author's Interview with Jorge "Cholo" Vidales (Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2013).
[19] Manuel Castells, *City, Class, and Power* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978).

Figure 9 - Título Pro-Patrimonial de la Ciudad Deportiva. Credit: Personal Archive of Alex Galarza.

Boca Juniors hired a construction firm for the first phase of construction as well as a sales firm to help sell the títulos. The first was Christiani y Nielsen, a Danish company with experience in land reclamation. They would construct the first islands closest to shore for 800,000 dollars. The second was Emprendimientos Sociales S.A. (ESSA), a Brazilian company that would hire thousands of salespeople over the next seven years to sell títulos and administer the drawings in exchange for a percentage of the funds raised. The most important *título* salesman was Armando himself. Hosting a dinner for "founding members" in June of 1965, Armando invited famous celebrities and his star players for a gala fundraiser in which one

thousand guests paid for their títulos in full, raising 150,000 dollars in one night.[20] For a comparison of how the Ciudad Deportiva's revenues compared to normal club business, the 1965 *memoria y balance* praised the Subcommittee of Sales and Advertising at Boca for increasing revenue 400% by securing new stadium publicity contracts and concessions for a total of sixteen thousand dollars.[21] In the same year, Boca Juniors reported a total income of 1,395,489 dollars and a total spending of 1,382,773 dollars.[22]

The Secretary of Commerce and Industry authorized Boca Juniors to import steel sheeting duty free, the main material that would be used as retention walls for the artificial islands.[23] This is significant in that developmentalist policies subsidized the steel industry as a key sector in modernizing Argentina's economy. In October of 1965, with the help of congresswoman Rosaura Isla and congressman Reinaldo Elena, the national legislature passed what would become known as "La Ley Boca." The law proposed an exemption of ten years from any tax paid on material for the Ciudad Deportiva. During legislative debate, two congressmen raised objections that the law privileged Boca Juniors. Congresswoman Isla responded "the privilege is the men who are transforming forty hectares of water into forty hectares of urbanized land in the form of the Ciudad Deportiva, the pride of the Republic." The law was modified to give tax-exempt status on the spending that any clubs undertook in improving their infrastructure, a status that clubs continue to enjoy today.[24]

On June 14th, 1965, the club held a groundbreaking ceremony in which the first pile driver pounded steel sheetings and pilot beams of the retaining walls into the riverbed. Cándido Vidales

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[20] "Veintisiete Millones Por Una Cena," *Clarín*, June 25, 1965.
[21] "Compras: Una Subcomision Que Trabaja Mucho Y Con Acierto," *Asi Es Boca*, August 11, 1965.

[22] *Memoria Y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1965*, 1965.
[23] "Autorización," *Clarín*, May 16, 1965, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion; "145 Millones Para La Iniciacion de La Obra," *Asi Es Boca*, July 21, 1965.
[24] Cámara de Diputados de la Nación, "Exención de Impuestos a Boca Juniors," *Diario de Sesiones* 6 (October 7, 1965): 4153; "Se Exceptuo De Impuestos A La Gran Obra Boquense," *Asi Es Boca*, November 10, 1965.

was at the Ciudad Deportiva when the first truck dumped the first load of earth into the Río de la Plata: “We all looked over the edge to watch the dirt sink into the water... we were an object of ridicule.”[25] This construction method remained constant throughout various phases of construction: First, workers would use cranes to position sheet pilings and steel beams along the contours of the islands. Crews would use a pile driver mounted on tracks to pound the retaining walls into the river. Next, volunteer truckers would dump loads of earth into the river and form beachheads that bulldozers could use to continue shifting earth into the island's contours. A dredge on loan from the Ministry of Public Works and Boca's own would also shift earth from the riverbed into the island formations. Finally, crews would construct the facilities upon the islands of reclaimed earth, build bridges connecting them to shore and each other, and then dig canals to separate the islands and allow water to flow underneath the bridges.

A June 1965 ad recruiting *título* salespeople in the major daily *Clarín* stated: "Earn 650 dollars a month, or more!... The largest sales campaign ever realized in the country."[26] Another advertisement for the *títulos* urged people to "buy the key to the Ciudad Deportiva!... Club Atlético Boca Juniors has decided to take on a transcendental plan that will not only contribute to the growing of the institution, but also serve a social function and public good in offering the population an important center for leisure and recreation."[27] The club hosted a lavish "founders dinner" that month for one thousand people who bought the first *títulos* and paid the one hundred and fifty dollar cost in full. Armando predicted that the first 40,000 would be sold within four months; "who else but Boca can raise 150,000 dollars in one night?", he asked. He estimated that the company in charge of selling the raffles, ESSA, would employ between 1,200 and 1,500 people and pointed to the track record of success in raising funds for Juventus of Italy, and

[25] Interview with Jorge “Cholo” Vidales.
[26] “Gane M$n 120.00 Mensuales o Más,” *Clarín*, June 16, 1965, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.
[27] “¡Compre La Llave de La Ciudad Deportiva!,” *Clarín*, June 24, 1965, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.

Santos and Gremio of Brazil. Armando went on to predict that the *títulos* would increase sixfold in value and that the Ciudad Deportiva would be worth eighty three million dollars in the future.[28]

Press coverage from dailies and magazines in the early years of construction tended to emphasize the rapid pace of construction, enthusiasm for the project, and the curiosity of a broad public. The construction site was frequented by so many curious onlookers that *Así Es Boca* published a notice asking people to maintain their distance and not distract the workers with questions. Crews worked through nights, expressing in interviews that they were excited to be part of the project and sometimes bought títulos themselves. Some of this reporting from magazines like *Así es Boca* likely sought to build excitement for the project, but there are signs that many people were genuinely drawn to the project as an exciting site to visit.[29]

Así Es Boca was one of the club's most popular magazines and, in addition to covering the Ciudad Deportiva with regularity, offers a look at the club's institutional and social life as well. Founded in 1954 and directed by Mario Ruzza, the magazine claimed "total independence in its judgement, without political allegiances or personal preferences."[30] Varying between twenty and thirty pages filled with large photographs, weekly editions of *Así Es Boca* covered club governance, social events, players' lives, transfer rumors, and comics in addition to close coverage of the professional team's results. Boqui, the comic's titular protagonist served as a prototypical Boca die-hard and humor often revolved around his love of the club. In one comic, Boquita admonishes a shopkeeper for not cleaning graffiti on his wall - including "vote for Illia" and a cigarette ad. After the shopkeeper paints the wall white, Boqui is seen running away and

[28] "Veintisiete Millones Por Una Cena."
[29] "El Pais Expectante: Con Interes Se Sigue La Marcha de Los Trabajos," *Asi Es Boca*, January 5, 1966; "La Realidad Es La Mejor Promocion Para La Obra," *Asi Es Boca*, January 26, 1966.
[30] "Diez Años De Asi Es Boca," *Asi Es Boca*, April 1, 1964.

the phrase "VIVA BOCA" has been recently painted.[31] In another, Boqui comments to his friend that with Boca leading the league, even the birds are happy. Despite the meat shortage, increase in prices, the whole nation is happy. "Does that mean that Boca is the solution for the government?", asks Boqui. "Exactly", replies his friend. "Then why doesn't Illia just proclaim Boca champion??", asks an exasperated Boqui.[32] The comic also featured ugly but common racial stereotypes: in one comic a man is asked by various people to buy rifas while Boqui fends them off for the man. A little girl asks the man to buy her a raffle ticket for a doll. Then, a racialized boy with dark skin, speaking in *lunfardo* slang, asks him to buy a raffle ticket for a music record. Boqui kicks away a final boy before he can even ask the man. The man then asks Boqui, "What is it that you wanted to tell me, boy?" Boqui responds: " I've come to bring you something great! There's a raffle for a ball signed by Boca's players, how many do you want?"[33]

The prize drawings and winners added another layer of public interest in Boca's construction efforts, further spurring sales. By May of 1966, ESSA had sold all forty thousand títulos in the first series and had drawn seven winners for the one million peso quarterly drawing or ten million annual drawing. The firm sold nine thousand bonos for the second series even before conducting the first drawing in that round. ESSA claimed that only 28% of those who had bought títulos were dues-paying socios of Boca Juniors, while another 22% were Boca supporters, 29% supporters or socios of other clubs, and 21% who had no interest in soccer whatsoever. Only two percent were behind on their título payments.[34]

[31] Carlos Luis "Goz" Gómez, "Boqui," *Asi Es Boca*, October 16, 1963.
[32] "Boqui," *Asi Es Boca*, July 8, 1964.
[33] "Boqui," *Asi Es Boca*, October 7, 1964.
[34] "Con Todo Exito Sigue La Venta de Titulos," *Asi Es Boca*, May 18, 1966.

The Ciudad Deportiva and Bureaucratic Authoritarianism

By June of 1966, the military's intent to depose Illia was clear. The coup at the end of the month and takeover of the presidency by Juan Carlos Onganía was a widely expected move. Argentines from various points on the political spectrum either welcomed the coup or held cautious hope that the military could govern more effectively than Illia. As the military positioned itself to take power, the club planned a magnificent event for Flag Day on June 20th, inviting high-ranking officials from the armed forces and the Church to celebrate a flag raising ceremony and oath swearing by new enlistees. The club also sought to draw a large audience for the ceremony by offering a free raffle ticket for a new car to anyone who wished to walk around the recently completed contours of several of the first islands. Three hundred thousand people visited throughout the day and the club sold over 2,000 *títulos*. The line of people waiting to walk the borders of the islands was long enough that nightfall forced the club to close the walkways and distribute raffle tickets amongst the waiting crowd for the car drawing. Hundreds of soldiers from Batallion 601 "Domingo Viejo-Bueno", the Ministry of Defense, the School of Intelligence, and the Air Force swore their oaths to the flag. Bishop Ernesto Segura performed a "Misa de Campaña," or Campaign Mass. General Mario Aguilar Benitez shared that "never had he participated in such a brilliant act in which the pueblo had turned out in such multitudinous and enthusiastic form." *Así Es Boca* reported "popular fervor, underscored by cheers and applause which caused a redoubling of martial nature of the troops."[35]

Illia's detractors used his reputation for moderation to paint him as an inept, indecisive leader incapable of meeting the challenges of modernization. His economic policies were interventionist (canceling Frondizi's foreign oil contracts and paying indemnities was one of his

[35] "¡Sensacional! Fiesta de Pueblo," *Asi Es Boca*, June 29, 1966.

first actions), aiming to reduce public debt and industrialize. Illia's government faced recurring crises of legitimacy resulting from winning with only 26% of the vote. They also faced Peronist opposition from increasingly militant unions, opposition from liberal elites, and a military that was developing a more active role for itself in national leadership. Yet, the GDP grew 8% between 1964 and 1965, industry grew by 15%, and unemployment fell significantly. Agricultural production grew by 50% between 1963 and 1966. However, these relatively improved economic conditions could not effectively combat Illia's public perception as an incapable leader.[36]

The military leaders' conception of their "apolitical" role as guarantors of "National Security" was encapsulated by Onganía during a speech at West Point. He outlined the military's responsibility in preventing totalitarianism and in working with civilian government to grow the economy. Liberty meant successful economic development.[37] The azules within the military rallied behind Onganía's championing of modernization by authoritarian administration and staunch anti-communism as a defense of Western civilization. Many in his military faction understood their mission in religious terms, as a Crusade in defense of Christianity in the face of a communist threat.[38] Onganía was a devout Catholic and active *cursillista*, a movement that utilized retreats to teach an expansive, conservative notion of Church doctrine in all areas of life. Throughout his rule, Onganía sought to increase attendance in *cursos* among top government officials and he appointed several *cursillistas* as ministers, including economic minister Jorge

[36] Liliana De Riz, *La política en suspenso, 1966-1976* (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2000), 21.
[37] David Rock, *Authoritarian Argentina the Nationalist Movement, Its History, and Its Impact* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 194–99; Guillermo O'Donnell, *Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism Studies in South American Politics* (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies University of California, 1973), 115–54.
[38] De Riz, *La política en suspenso, 1966-1976*, 34.

Néstor Salimei.[39]

Onganía's initial economic policies and those of his minister Salimei essentially developmentalist policies that would be 'freed' of political constraint in order to efficiently direct the national economy.[40] The military *legalista* faction viewed their own success in modernizing and restructuring the armed forces as proof that the economy could be better directed by the military and that the electoral process was ultimately disruptive in that task. Onganía acted quickly upon assuming power; in 1966 he suspended congress, political parties, and regional governors. His government established the National Council for Economic Development (CONADE) and the National Council for Security (CONASE), two bodies that would work together closely. Onganía's government suspended Congress and the Supreme Court, leaving the functions of government to a combination of military and civilian technocrats. He also took over the universities by force, sending police in to clear university buildings and in what would become known as the "Night of the Long Sticks."[41]

The National Security doctrine of Onganía also presented an opening for economic liberals unable to exert influence or policy changes through electoral means. When he replaced economic minister Salimei with the liberal Adalbert Krieger Vasena, liberal elites embraced his government as a "new hope" that would eliminate "statism" and usher in free-market policies. While Krieger Vasena did not implement a strictly orthodox liberal plan, he did prioritize the retrenchment of the state. However, Krieger Vasena did not enjoy a consensus in implementing his policies. Within the dictatorship and among its supporters, there were clear divisions between those who espoused liberal, free-market policies and others who viewed nationalist, directed

[39] Craig L Arceneaux, *Bounded Missions: Military Regimes and Democratization in the Southern Cone and Brazil* (University Park, Penn: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 51.
[40] Marcelo Cavarozzi, *Autoritarismo y democracia: 1955-2006*, (Buenos Aires: EUDEBA, 1996), 33.
[41] Rock, *Authoritarian Argentina the Nationalist Movement, Its History, and Its Impact*, 200–205.

economic policy as the key to warding off dependency and fighting imperialism. Right wing nationalists who called for Onganía's coup were bitterly opposed to Krieger Vasena's tenure as economic minister, attacking monopoly capitalism from a religious standpoint and arguing for the needs of labor, the urban poor, and against foreign investment.[42] They had supported his previous economic minister Salimei, who was a prototypical managerial, self-made man with parallels to Armando whose priority wasn't necessarily to reduce the state, though he got caught in a corruption scandal.[43] The complex divisions over economic policy, authoritarianism, and communism confused previous ideological positions and, in fact, the composition of Peronist guerrilla groups like the Montoneros, which included former right-wing nationalists, showed just how entangled right wing and left wing had become by the early 1970s.[44]

While this period did feature somewhat steady economic growth for Buenos Aires, that growth was slow and unevenly distributed amongst sectors who competed politically for legislation to favor certain industries. Investments of foreign capital increased throughout the 1960s and fueled important changes in industry and the urban landscape of Buenos Aires. Manufacturing production rose 47% between 1960 and 1975 and continued to be concentrated in metropolitan Buenos Aires. The population of greater Buenos Aires grew from around three million in 1945 to seven million in 1960, also growing steadily as a proportion of the country's total population (from 34% in 1960 to 39% by 1980). In stark contrast to the population in the 1910s and 20s, only 16% of the city's population was foreign born by 1970; migration from the other Argentine provinces, as well as from the wider province of Buenos Aires, became the most

[42] Ibid., 210–11.
[43] De Riz, *La política en suspenso, 1966-1976*, 45.
[44] Rock, *Authoritarian Argentina the Nationalist Movement, Its History, and Its Impact*, 221; Carlos Altamirano, *Bajo el signo de las masas* (Buenos Aires: Ariel, 2001), 99–114. Cavarozzi, *Autoritarismo y democracia: 1955-2006*, 34–25. James P Brennan, *The Labor Wars in Córdoba, 1955-1976 : Ideology, Work, and Labor Politics in an Argentine Industrial City* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994).

important demographic trend of the 1960s and 70s. The city was becoming younger and more female, with 46% of the population falling between 15 and 44 years of age and 94 men for every 100 women by 1970.[45] The city's population grew by 1,670,000 between 1960 and 1970 and was distributed more on the periphery. By 1960, the first ring of suburbs outside capital federal contained 45% of the total metropolitan population, with capital containing 43% and the second and third rings exhibiting steady growth of the remaining 17%. The growing industries which depended on foreign capital, including automotive and chemical manufacturing, were concentrated in a new industrial corridor stretching northwards from the city along the Paraná river as well as in the existing industrial belt that encompassed west and south of capital federal.[46] In a general sense, this period featured suburban consolidation and advanced industrial growth in specific industries in new industrial areas in the periphery.

Despite the growing importance of areas outside the traditional center in economic and demographic terms, efforts to improve infrastructure and services focused nearly exclusively within the limits of capital federal. Under Illia, the municipality worked to improve the infrastructure of the southwest district of Bajo Flores while also broadening major streets leading to the center city.[47] The 1958/1965 master plan reflects this focus on the city center and districts close to it in emphasizing elevated highways connecting downtown, recreational spaces in its proximity, and the development of coastal areas like Catalinas Norte and the Costanera Sur. It was within this context of desarrollismo, urban planning, and consumption that the Ciudad Deportiva took shape, providing a vision of integration, development, family recreation, and mass spectacle in a period of volatility, conflict, and uncertainty.

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[45] José Luis Romero, *Buenos Aires, historia de cuatro siglos* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Abril, 1983), 252.
[46] Margarita Gutman and Jorge Enrique Hardoy, *Buenos Aires: historia urbana del área metropolitana* (Madrid: Editorial MAPFRE, 1992), 214–22.
[47] Romero, *Buenos Aires, historia de cuatro siglos*, 221.

Progress at the Ciudad Deportiva

The opaque nature of the military's rule left no documentary evidence on whether Boca would be held to the original housing deal developed under Illia, but by the end of 1966 it was clear that the club had abandoned any plans to help build affordable housing in the city's south. Money from the *bonos* of the Ciudad Deportiva did not make its way into housing projects, down payments, or savings and loans. However, the club did acquire life insurance policies for all dues paying members through the Caja Nacional de Ahorro Postal, or National Postal Savings Bank. The nearly 50,000 *socios* of Boca Juniors would receive a basic 40,000 peso life insurance policy which could be increased up to 1.5 million depending on age. The bank's president called it a "modern insurance plan… [placing] Boca Juniors in a distinct place amongst institutions who do good works in the area of social security. Collective insurance has the virtue of strengthening the nexus that ties *socios* to the institution that unites them." Armando's speech referred to the backwardness of Argentines in the area of insurance and that Boca's efforts were part of matching the importance that the United States and Germany give to insurance. "It is an honor for Boca to convert itself into a pioneer in sports, modernizing, giving its members the chance to protect themselves economically."[48]

A newspaper article profiling Armando and the Ciudad Deportiva at the end of 1966 explained: "If you visit the Ciudad Deportiva without buying a *bono*, without spending one peso on something Armando sells you himself (even an autograph), then it's because you're made of stone." The story emphasized the passion for Boca Juniors, the volunteer truckers, and the work for the nation as decisive factors in making such a grand undertaking possible.[49] The Christmas party of 1966 would include a television broadcast, famous musical guests including Los Cinco

[48] "Se Firmo La Poliza Que Cubre a Nuestros Socios," *Asi Es Boca*, October 26, 1966.
[49] "La Ciudad y El Hombre," *El Mundo*, December 27, 1966, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.

Latinos and Aníbal Troilo and his orchestra. The club invited General Onganía, though he was unable to attend and General Osiris Villegas read a speech from him instead.[50] The newspaper *Clarín* reported that the Christmas fundraiser was becoming such a success that Armando planned to charge 100,000 pesos per fork for the end of 1967. *Clarín* referred to the dredging of the river as "poetry… water and dirt from the bottom of the river with a powerful pump sending earth across more than a kilometer of tubing and discharging it within the beltway of, in a short time, will become… a flowered garden, a place of recreation for laughing kids and youth who ponder doing great things." The article also reported that Armando was on his way to New York City to fulfill an order of a thousand *títulos* that had come from the Club Social Argentino, an investment of 134,000 dollars.[51]

The Ciudad Deportiva's islands took shape throughout 1966 while crews built the main facilities over the following two years. The club continued raising funds for the project, launching a new series of 40,000 *títulos* after having sold all 120,000 in the first three series by May. With over 400 laborers working on the site (projected to increase to over 1,000 as stadium construction began) Armando confidently stated that a Boca Juniors forward would kick the first ball in their new stadium in 1970. He also shared Boca's plans to donate twenty three schools to the nation, one for each province.[52] Armando articulated these new plans by explaining that the Ciudad Deportiva was transforming the nature of the club itself. It was no longer just a soccer club, but "an *empresa* that also plays fútbol." The term *empresa* can translate to company, business, or enterprise. It is in this last sense that Armando referred to a broader set of goals defining Boca Juniors. *Clarín* reported that the province of Tucumán had donated seventeen hectares of property with hot springs and the resort town of Bariloche also donated eight

[50] "Todo a Punto Para La Gran Fiesta En Ciudad Deportiva," *Asi Es Boca*, December 28, 1966.
[51] Diego Lucero, "Esa Flor de Agua y Barro Es Un Poema," *Clarín*, Abril 1967.
[52] "Nuevos Bonos Para La Ciudad Deportiva de Boca Juniors," *Clarín*, May 13, 1967.

hectares. Both donations were destined for facilities that would include soccer fields, rural schools, and bungalows for *socios* to use on vacations. Armando explained: "We Argentines want to build, we want to make something… we're a *pueblo* that is happiest when participating in projects… unfortunately [we Argentines] have been held down to keep us from taking off, which is why when a club like Boca Juniors launches a work that calls to our nature as builders then *boquenses* and others respond."[53] *El Tiburon*, a newspaper from the northern province of Salta, remarked during a visit from Armando that it was easy to understand why some thought he had "qualities to govern the nation, to launch this country - which is dissolving between our fingers - into a journey of seemingly impossible tasks." Argentina had "lost the capacity to better itself, to go beyond a narrow-mindedness in collective efforts. Only by committing to difficult, concrete, exhausting tasks could it recover that capacity."[54]

An interview with *Extra* characterized Armando as someone "obsessed with building… contagious in optimism" who many thought would do well as the economic minister or mayor of Buenos Aires. Armando had visits with Onganía, called Frondizi "intelligent" and was a longtime friend of the Radical congressman Reinaldo Elena. These various positions led the magazine to characterize him as "politically ambiguous." When asked about his plans for the club, Armando explained that his goal was to use the Ciudad Deportiva as a tool to surpass River Plate as the country's "grand institution" and to serve as the headquarters of a "fabulous entity" that also played fútbol. This would be accomplished by expanding membership to 250,000 *socios* who would generate 75 million pesos in monthly dues and enable more construction. *Extra* asked rhetorically: "Why doesn't Onganía - who calls stuffy liberals one day and minor nationalists the next - ever think of calling a figure of national optimism… Armando doesn't

[53] "Boca Juniors: El Club-Empresa Que También Juega Al Fútbol," *Clarín*, May 14, 1967.
[54] "Sigue Siendo Intenso El Ritmo de Trabajo," *Asi Es Boca*, October 25, 1967.

need propaganda, his projects, sales, and life are example enough."[55] Armando gave a talk titled "The Social Project of Boca Juniors" at a national conference for Athletics and Sports Medicine that expanded on these themes, insisting that the club was being transformed into an "integral institution that also plays soccer." Boca sought to offer a greater variety of amateur athletics in order to make sports more accessible to women, as well as men, and maintain their physical activity and spiritual health. The club also played charity matches all over the provinces with the profits donated to local hospitals and schools. He pointed to these tours as a way to shed negative images of *porteños* in the provinces, proof of the "culture and unity found in sport."[56]

By June of 1967, crews completed land reclamation for the first eight islands and construction began for the Pabellón de las Americas, Fuente Arco Iris, dining hall, and swimming pools. "We've all seen the Hollywood movies that show the luxury of Miami and Hawaii where everything seems closer to a dream than reality… especially with swimming pools whose walls are transparent allowing one to see inside. This is precisely what will be built at the dining hall of the Ciudad Deportiva." The dining hall, or *confiteria*, would include a night club, meeting hall, cafe, and a pool and lounge. Planners envisioned the Pabellón de las Américas as its own small island and concert pavilion with a stage lined with the flags of all nations in the Americas in honor of international solidarity and Pan-American sentiment. The Fuente Arco Iris (Rainbow Fountain), a large fountain and modernist sculpture with colored lights, would serve as an impressive spectacle greeting all who entered the Ciudad Deportiva. *Así Es Boca* also reported that the club would lease property on one of the islands to a company for fifteen years in order to build an aquatic center with docks for yachts and boat houses, securing five percent of

[55] "¿Esta Loco?," *Extra*, November 1967, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.
[56] "Hablo Armando En La Facultad de Medicina," *Asi Es Boca*, November 8, 1967.

profit for Boca.[57] The club celebrated significant progress at its annual Christmas party: three islands paved, landscaped, and connected by a total of six bridges. General Villegas and Bishop Segura were again present at the feast along with tango star Anibal Troilo and a military band. The word "*fe*", or faith, had always featured in talk of the Ciudad Deportiva, but Armando's Christmas speech described the project in particularly religious terms in front of the military officials and clergy. He referred to the project as a "sanctuary of integral faith of all Argentines" and compared Boca's "pioneering" efforts to the "band of soldiers who entered the barbarous plains and - with a righteous call to battle - gave the country 20,000 leagues of new territory to cultivate… We are pioneers too in forcing the city to turn around and look towards the sea from which we came… Here we are marking Buenos Aires as a cardinal point whose geography and civic achievements can't be ignored… I toast to the holy craze of building which we inherited from our fathers and, God willing, will pass to our sons!"[58]

[57] "Se Iniciarion Nuevas Obras Para La Ciudad Deportiva," *Asi Es Boca*, May 31, 1967, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.
[58] "Brillante Inauguracion de Las Flamantes Obras."

Figure 10 - Fuente Arcoiris at Night. Credit: Personal Archive of Martin Oesterheld.

Throughout 1968, the Ciudad Deportiva continued to receive curious visitors and truckloads of dirt to fill out the islands. In February, seven hundred trucks dumped earth in a single day. A group of Brazilian sailors visited the project, hosted by Lieutenant General Carlos Perantonio who had taken them to a match between Boca Juniors and Huracán.[59] During a visit from Europe, Prince Rainier of Monaco remarked that his favorable impression of Argentina was due largely to the tours of the Ciudad Deportiva and the resort towns of Mar del Plata and Bariloche. Armando responded by again linking the club to the nation: "it's our country that still amazes visitors… but it's also the pueblo's capacity for creation… it's the same pueblo that is making possible the construction of the Ciudad Deportiva as the ultimate expression of what can be done with faith and work. Undeniably, our club deserves credit for positively channeling this

[59] "Los Camioneros Acrecen Su Aporte Para La Gran Obra," *Asi Es Boca*, February 14, 1968.

magnificent force."[60] In celebration of Argentina's Independence Day on July 9th, the club held a spectacular inauguration ceremony for the Pabellón de las Américas and Fuente Arco Iris attended by military dignitaries and the band Los Cinco Latinos debuted their Himno de la Ciudad Deportiva. Representatives from Boca's popular fishing club and the new speedboat racing club, two groups that were using the facility in great numbers, were present at the ceremony. The *confiteria* was nearly finished, with the main floor functioning as a cafe. The club spent 280 million pesos on the works inaugurated that day, adding to the total sum of 1.5 billion pesos (half the originally projected cost of the entire project) invested to date.[61]

[60] "Otro Año de Arduo Trabajo Para La Ciudad Deportiva," *Asi Es Boca*, February 21, 1968.
[61] "La Ciudad de Boca Se Agranda," *Clarín*, July 10, 1968; "Nuevas Atracciones Se Suman a Nuestra Ciudad Deportiva," *Asi Es Boca*, July 10, 1968.

tado notoriamente el paso de los días. La prueba está dada por el simple hecho de que es necesario nada más que un lapso de una semana (y a veces menos), para darse cuenta de los adelantos que se realizan.

El tablestacado ha ido proyectándose río adentro a un ritmo vertiginoso. Al principio hubo algunos días de demora, como consecuencia de las crecientes de las aguas, que hacía muchos años que no se mostraban tan agresivas. Pero poco después el problema fue superado con la colocación de los puentes de servicio, para el movimiento de los martinetes.

A partir de ese momento, el avance fue haciéndose cada vez más intenso y los plazos previstos se acortaron de manera notable. Es así que ahora se lleva un adelanto de más de un mes,

dos puentes de acceso, que espera poder terminarse para fin de año.

La febril actividad que se desarrolla no conoce descanso. De día y de noche, puede verse a técnicos y obreros cumpliendo entusiastamente con sus funciones. Todo esto es un verdadero canto al trabajo, digno ejemplo de lo que todos los argentinos debemos reali-

de setiembre y por casi todo el mes, se producirán espectáculos de gran jerarquía, estando prevista la colocación de una gran carpa sobre los terrenos ya ganados al río, donde actuará un circo compuesto por los mejores artistas de la especialidad.

Además, se cuenta con el aporte de un gran número de figuras del cine, radio,

CAMIONEROS BOQUENSES

Colabore usted también en la construcción de la Ciudad Deportiva Boca Juniors.
Lleve tierra a la Costanera Sud.
Fácil acceso y rápida descarga.
Ciudad Deportiva Boca Juniors "Fe y Trabajo".

Derecha: El primer camión descarga su tierra en el tramo que se acaba de abrir. Abajo: Desde aquel momento hasta ahora, esta escena se reproduce centenares de veces por mes, a un ritmo vertiginoso.

Figure 11 - Trucks dumping earth at the Ciudad Deportiva. Source: Así Es Boca 1967

The club officially dubbed the inaugurated *confitería* "Neptuno" at the Christmas celebration of 1968. By early 1969, the saltwater pool and dressing rooms were also opened and *Asi Es Boca* reported that 30,000 people were visiting the Ciudad Deportiva per week. In an article featuring nationalistic fervor, the magazine triumphantly declared that even "the English imitate us" in planning a new Wembley, or national stadium, and sports complex that the magazine claimed had been copied from the Ciudad Deportiva. "It seems like a distant memory, the times when everything that was imported (especially from France or England) was considered superior! Now

we're exporters to these same places and now not of raw products, but of ideas, projects, and above all of faith in building."[62] The club announced another 435 million pesos investment in shoring walls, canals, bridges, and infrastructure to complete the remaining islands and lay groundwork for building the micro and main stadiums.[63] It seemed that Boca's faith and hard work were paying off and that the Ciudad Deportiva was fulfilling its promise to mark Argentina's ascendant modernization.

Figure 12 - "Ruben Mollo at the Cafe Neptuno" Credit: Personal Archive of Hernán Soria.

[62] "¡Los Ingleses Nos Imitan!," *Asi Es Boca*, February 26, 1969.
[63] "Fabuloso Plan de Obras En Nuestra Ciudad Deportiva," *Asi Es Boca*, May 28, 1969

Soccer as a Motor for Progress

In the late 1960s, the soccer press reported on the changing economics of professional soccer and the role of clubs in national progress. The clubs and the Argentine Football Assocition (AFA) sought to adapt the schedule and format of professional soccer to the ways that television and cars had redrawn the consumer landscape. In 1967, the AFA split the first division into two championships. The Campeonato Metropolitano would continue the old league structure that included teams mostly from Buenos Aires and the surrounding region including Rosario and Santa Fe. The new Campeonato Nacional incorporated a select number of teams from the rest of the provinces through a playoff system. While games had been televised since 1960, the AFA signed a contract for the 1968 season that was the first to be broadly supported by clubs. The contract between the state channel and AFA provided for one televised game per week and split seven million pesos between the two televised teams and the governing body.[64] These trends also gave greater importance to an international competition that had been created at the end of the 1950s but that Argentine clubs had not been taking very seriously, the Copa Libertadores. The tournament pitted the domestic champions of seven South American leagues against one another, eventually expanding to include the first and second placed teams. The tournament grew in importance as Argentine clubs achieved greater success, with Club Atlético Independiente winning the cup twice in 1964 and 1965.

In these ways, the top clubs of Buenos Aires began to compete more with teams from the rest of Argentina, South America, and increasingly with European clubs in special tours and intercontinental championships. The need to increase revenues and sign star players spurred directors to hold more showcase matches that could be televised or attended by vacationing

[64] Ariel Scher and Héctor Palomino, *Fútbol, Pasión de Multitudes y de Elites : Un Estudio Institucional de La Asociación de Fútbol Argentino (1934-1986)* (Buenos Aires: Centro de Investigaciones Sociales sobre el Estado y la Administración, 1988), 120.

supporters. The increased contact between international clubs no doubt facilitated the signing of greater numbers of foreign players to Buenos Aires clubs and the export of Argentines abroad. Despite the new competitions and forms of consuming them, clubs accumulated two billion pesos of state debt by 1970, increasing by another 25% in 1973. In 1971 the AFA succeeded in creating a soccer lottery, a project that various AFA presidents and club leaders had been working on for several years. The Ministerio de Bienestar Social oversaw the creation of the PRODE, or lottery of *pronósticos deportivos*. The head of the ministry called it "a tax for suckers." People would play the PRODE by predicting the outcomes of each weekend round of matches, a game with poor odds that nevertheless remains a popular form of sports gambling to this day. The AFA would redistribute profit from the lottery to the first division clubs.[65]

The AFA had been under state control in the form of a state appointed interventor since the 1955 coup. During the Peronist decade, the party's control over sports led the leaders of the Revolución Libertadora to intervene at the AFA in order to remove Peronist influence in soccer. Raul Colombo was the first president elected after this period of state intervention in 1957 and remained president until 1965. Colombo emerged from Club Atlético Almagro and was a friend of Frondizi's and fellow party member of the Unión Cívica Radical, characteristics that help explain his presidency lasting through Illia's government. Under Colombo's presidency at the AFA, Czechoslovakia crushed Argentina by a lopsided score of six to one — an infamous defeat that would shatter the national team's confidence that they were among the world's best. The team also failed to advance from the group stage in 1962, and the AFA lost bids to host the 1962 and 1970 tournaments. Colombo attempted to create a soccer lottery and a ban on player transfers abroad, but was unable to realize either project. His successor, another Radical and

[65] Ibid., 116–20.

brother of Argentina's vice-president Perette, successfully lobbied for a debt forgiveness plan for the AFA and affiliated clubs in 1966. After Ongania's coup in 1966, the AFA would again be governed by state intervenors, this time under nine different men until 1974.[66]

In February of 1970, Club Atletico Independiente - considered one of the "*cinco grandes*" - was unable to pay its player salaries for months. The club conducted a small tour of friendlies in Montevideo and Brazil but was only able to raise a small amount of money, an act with the sports magazine *Goles* condemned as "selling prestige."[67] In an article deploring the general state of the game, *Goles* cited the failure to qualify for the 1970 World Cup, the hours of waiting and inconveniences in attending matches, increasingly violent displays on the fields and amongst rival fans, and the dilapidated state of many stadiums that the municipality had promised funds to improve.[68] In 1968, Argentine soccer experienced the worst stadium disaster in its history. On June 23 at a match between River Plate and Boca Juniors, Boca fans exiting the stadium's twelfth gate found it closed. Unable to exit, those pressed against the gate were crushed by the accumulating crowd of people behind them who did not know what was happening ahead. Seventy one people died and sixty were wounded at the "Puerta 12", a case in which investigations to this day have never clarified why the gate was closed or why authorities failed to open it in time.[69]

Clubs adapted to these challanges in a variety of ways, but some of the largest placed the same focus on social infrastructure that Boca sought to achieve with the Ciudad Deportiva. "Soccer isn't eleven guys in shorts kicking around a ball. Boca and San Lorenzo are demonstrating - in the same way that Independiente, Racing, River, and Velez have before them

[66] Ibid.
[67] "Vendiendo Prestigio," *Goles*, February 24, 1970, Círculo de Periodistas Deportivas.
[68] "El Publico: Ese Gran Sufrido," *Goles*, April 7, 1970, Círculo de Periodistas Deportivas.
[69] Scher and Palomino, *Fútbol, Pasión de Multitudes y de Elites*, 118.

- that it is a motor for progress."[70] This *Clarín* article from June of 1967 referred to Boca's Ciudad Deportiva as a topic of daily conversation, but it was more concerned with reporting about Club Atlético San Lorenzo's Ciudad Deportiva in the barrio of Flores. There, 350 workers, 400 dump trucks, and twenty bulldozers worked daily to elevate the 260,000 square meters of floodplains the city had ceded to San Lorenzo. The club planned to build a new stadium and sports complex that included four large gyms, a library, theatre, meeting spaces, athletic tracks and fields, and several pools in the middle of the Almirante Brown City Park. The 1965 law donating the property to San Lorenzo stipulated that the club was to build a stadium for 140,000 spectators, fields for soccer, basketball, tennis, as well as pools, gyms, and covered spaces for cultural and social events.[71] Like Boca, the club launched a series of 40,000 rifas to cover the 1.6 billion estimated costs for the project. Independiente acquired 68 hectares in the barrio of Wilde to construct various athletic and social infrastructure, primarily a colossal complex of swimming pools and spas. President Arias promised to "bring Mar del Plata to Avellaneda", or create a beach resort within Independiente's infrastructure. The "Aqua Solarium" would be the centerpiece, a 10,000 square meters natatorium with dressing rooms for 5,000 people, turkish baths, medical clinics, cafes, and daycares. The property would also feature a sports complex with the usual athletic fields as well as specialized fields and activities for women and families in the form of volleyball, bocce ball, mini-golf, and grilling spaces. Independiente also adopted rifas as the primary method of financing the project.[72]

The soccer press of the 1960s also offers a window into gender roles and player life in soccer

[70] "Julio Verne Trabaja...," *Clarín*, June 13, 1967, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.
[71] "No. 16.729 Donación de Terrenos Al Club Atlético San Lorenzo de Almagro," Pub. L. No. 16.729, § Leyes Nacionales Año 1965 (1965); "Ambicioso Proyecto de San Lorenzo de Almagro," *La Nacion*, December 1965, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.
[72] "El Futbol Hace Otra 'Ciudad,'" *Goles*, June 10, 1969, Círculo de Periodistas Deportivas; "Independiente: En Una Obra Colosal," *Goles*, July 15, 1969, Círculo de Periodistas Deportivas; "Ad: Independiente Trae Mar Del Plata a Avellaneda," *Goles*, July 29, 1969, Círculo de Periodistas Deportivas; "Independiente Hace Calculos," *Goles*, September 9, 1969, Círculo de Periodistas Deportivas.

clubs. *Así Es Boca* sometimes covered player fatigue and injuries, but the overwhelming majority of articles involving players and their personal lives focused on their roles as family men. When a player was married or had children, the magazine would publish an article lauding their accomplishment and celebrating their moral character in "settling down." The magazine celebrated the birth of Alberto Gonzalez's first son, Pablo, by congratulating him on giving birth to a male and responsibly depositing his 50,000 pesos bonus in a bank account for his son. *Así Es Boca* also marked the wedding of Silvio Marzolini and Susana Beatriz Basso as a romance "known to many Boca fans - especially female fans - and viewed with extraordinary enthusiasm." Their marriage at a young age was particularly celebrated.[73]

This ideal of the family man extended to advertising for the Ciudad Deportiva. A 1968 advertisement for one of the later series of rifas in 1968 depicts a father in a suit looking towards the Ciudad Deportiva and his wife and two children. The children and wife look expectantly to the father, as if asking permission. The advertisement states that: "the biggest benefits are for the kids… [the Ciudad Deportiva] provides healthy leisure in comfortable facilities, athletics, game appropriate for all ages, extraordinary spectacles."[74] Not mentioned in many advertisements was the increasingly popular practice of fishing at the Ciudad Deportiva - an activity with strong gendered dimensions for men, families, and children. Hunting and sport fishing grew in popularity during and after the Peronist decade as pastimes previously associated with elites but made accessible to middling sectors and the working class. Recreational fishing spurred the creation of specialized stores, catalogs, and magazines consumed by increasing numbers of fishermen who fished along the Costanera Norte, the Aeroparque, the northern outskirts of

[73] "Se Casa Silvio," *Asi Es Boca*, November 11, 1964.
[74] "Ad: Ahora En La Ciudad Deportiva de Boca Juniors Las Mas Grandes Ventajas Son Para Los Pibes," *Asi Es Boca*, September 18, 1968

Olivos and Tigre, and the southern city of Quilmes.[75] By January of 1968, Boca had formed a Subcomisión de Pesca that counted on hundreds of fishermen who were particularly supportive of the project through attending events and purchasing rifas. The fishing subcommittee's official rules included respecting the ongoing construction and possessing a license. The third of seventeen rules read: "Wives and young children are only permitted as accompanied guests."[76] Women were unwelcome in the world of sport fishing, yet they could participate in family events catering to youth fishing. Five hundred children attended a May fishing tournament at the Ciudad Deportiva featuring a concert, trophies for competitors, and various prizes of candy and cookies handed out by the Subcomisión de Damas.[77] The club staged youth events at the Ciudad Deportiva around fishing, educational play, and music.

In 1967, governors and representatives from all twenty three provinces of Argentina as well as representatives from the federal government attended a ceremony at the Ciudad Deportiva for the symbolic transfer of twenty three small, pre-fabricated schoolhouses that Boca Juniors donated to the provinces.[78] At the inauguration of the first school in 1968 at the town of Colonia Nueva in Entre Rios, the president of the local boosters praised the club: "This work is a beautiful gesture from Boca Juniors because it speaks to their care for the education of children which we should value and appreciate profoundly." The director of the school donated to Ojo de Agua in the province of Salta wrote: "What good Boca Juniors has done for us! Until now we worked in precarious conditions making everything difficult, uncomfortable, and ugly, but thanks to the spirit of generosity… we've survived… Gestures like this from Boca Juniors

[75] Romero, *Buenos Aires, historia de cuatro siglos*, 307.
[76] "Buen Galardon Para Nuestros Pescadores," *Asi Es Boca*, January 3, 1968.
[77] "Un Magnifico Torneo," *Asi Es Boca*, May 15, 1968.
[78] *Memoria y Balance General, C.A.B.J 1967*, 63 Ejercicio Administrativo, 1967.

remind us that we're a great nation, united by our glories and promising future."[79] Commander Itoiz of Santa Cruz wrote in thanks to Boca: "The donation links the prestigious and popular metropolitan athletic institution to the cultural development of the southernmost province that finds itself in a stage of transcendental development."[80]

Armando created a business around pre-fabricated houses from Germany in 1969. Viviendas Alberto J. Armando S.A. sold three models of Okal houses with monthly payments between 6,500 and 14,300 pesos including house insurance for ten years. Armando had also created an insurance company that would fold that year, but he also created an investment firm in Alberto J. Armando Financiera Mandataria S.A. and promised between 14% and 16% returns on investments ranging from 25,000 to 100,000 pesos.[81] These ventures fit within a challenging landscape in housing and credit for Argentines. In 1968 private credit from banks was accessible to only 15% of families who earned high incomes and state loans from the Banco Hipotecario only increased this figure to 40% of families. Onganía's government designed the Plan VEA (Viviendas Económicas Argentinas) to make loans for housing more accessible.[82] Boca's star midfielder, Antonio Rattín, opened his own sales company partnering with Viviendas Alberto J. Armando in 1969, "like the majority of Argentine players who had businesses outside of soccer", whose objective was to "offer comfortable housing for the population, especially the people of humble conditions."[83]

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[79] "La Primera Escuelita Ya Esta En Funciones," *Asi Es Boca*, May 22, 1968.
[80] "Ya Funciona Otra Escuelita," *Asi Es Boca*, June 19, 1968.
[81] "Ad: Viviendas Alberto J. Armando," *Asi Es Boca*, October 23, 1968, Personal Archive of Alex Galarza; "Ad: Hoy Unimos Dos Acontecimientos," *Asi Es Boca*, November 6, 1968; "Ad: Veinticinco Mil Pesos Es Un Buen Punto de Partida," *Goles*, December 2, 1969.
[82] Romero, *Buenos Aires, historia de cuatro siglos*, 462.
[83] "Rattin Comenzo Su Actividad Comercial Con Rapido Suceso," *Asi Es Boca*, April 16, 1969.

Conclusion

Progress at the Ciudad Deportiva seemed to bely Argentina's general political and economic situation, but the project had its own problems that would explode in spectacular fashion during the 1970s. The "social sector" of the project - which included almost all of the facilities except the main stadium, smaller stadium, and parking facilities - was almost entirely finished. In May of 1969, Argentina experienced a wave of revolts and urban uprisings typified by a general strike organized by students and auto workers in Córdoba. Protestors clashed with the military retook the city, leading to dozens of deaths and hundreds of injuries. The kidnapping and murder of General Aramburu in May of 1970 by the Montoneros, a Peronist guerrilla organization, prompted the military to remove Onganía from office. Onganía's election had reflected hope on the part of many Argentines that a military leader leading technocratic experts could deliver on promises of economic development. However, violence and political polarization reflected the long-standing tensions that the bureaucratic authoritarian state had been unable to resolve.

The project had already weathered changes in government by tying Boca's work to national progress, but club officials shifted rhetoric around the project to emphasize Argentina's ability to overcome political divisions with hard work and religious faith. Examining the reasons for both the shift and the Ciudad Deportiva's successes in this period reveals the developmentalist nature of Onganía's bureaucratic authoritarian state. That state was in an increasingly precarious position and had to rely on force for moving forward with its contradictory vision of *desarrollismo*. Supporters of the Ciudad Deportiva emphasized its capacity to overcome the increasing violence and political instability in Argentina. Yet by 1970, workers at the project had still not begun construction on the all-important stadium. This placed the project in a precarious economic and political position as the military removed Onganía from power.

Chapter 4 - Crisis and Failure at the Ciudad Deportiva, 1970-1976

On the night of Tuesday, April 24th 1973, Boca Juniors' board of directors gathered in the small meeting chambers of the club's stadium, *La Bombonera*. The recently renovated room contained a long, glass-topped meeting table, polished hardwood floors, and display cases filled with Boca's most important trophies. That night, the room was packed with supporters from both sides of a divide that had emerged within Boca's leadership. On the one side stood club president, Alberto J. Armando, and on the other, three board members who had publicly denounced him for theft and fraud. Conflicting reports make it difficult to know exactly what happened that night, but a heated argument between the directors and their supporters culminated with gunshots and teargas. People destroyed chairs and shattered trophy cases as they scrambled for the exits. Heavily armed police had anticipated trouble at the meeting and quickly arrested several men. Wasting no time, Armando immediately re-assembled the remaining club officials and replaced the three board members who had resigned in protest. This included both club vice presidents, Miguel Zappino and Fernando Mitjans, who had accused him of embezzling funds from the Ciudad Deportiva, failing to deliver prizes from the raffles, and engaging in various forms of financial mismanagement with the club treasurer in order to "cook the books." The scandalous accusations and sensational images of the wrecked room and bullet holes became national news. The club magazine *Así Es Boca* marked it as the darkest moment in the Boca's history, an "unimaginable embarrassment." The magazine speculated that a judicial takeover of the club, or *intervención*, might be the only way to protect the interests of Boca's dues-paying members.[1]

[1] "¡Vimos La Cara De La Muerte!," *Asi Es Boca*, May 2, 1973.

Figure 13 - Police, media, and Miguel Zappino on the night of violence at La Bombonera. Credit: Clarín, 1973.

The internal political crisis at Boca Juniors was only one of several challenges faced by those working to build the Gran Estadio and complete the Ciudad Deportiva in the early 1970s. The club also faced increasing press scrutiny and a mounting number of lawsuits focused on their administration of the raffles and prizes. The 1973 global oil crisis and the Argentine

government's response to it led to a weakening Argentine peso, rising import costs, and rampant inflation. Boca's directors also had to navigate a shifting political landscape. Alejandro Lanusse led a coup against Juan Carlos Onganía in 1970 and again sought to reinstitute democratic governance on the military's terms - the most important of which was to keep an aging Juan Domingo Perón out of power. To the military's dismay, Peronists won the elections of early 1973 and Perón returned to the presidency later that year. Armando, a man with a Peronist past, backed Lanusse's losing candidate in the elections. This decision would cost the club its support at the highest levels of government. Left-wing guerrillas, right-wing paramilitary groups, military counterinsurgency operations, and violent protests all marked a rising level of violence in the country.

Despite the instability, inflation, and violence, Boca Juniors made significant progress in constructing the Gran Estadio. The fundraising campaign for the stadium offered seat and suite reservations in addition to more raffles; it was as successful as the fundraising conducted at the start of the project. State-led economic models persisted and even enjoyed limited success in halting inflationary spirals and spurring growth. General Lanusse, a Boca fan, personally intervened in authorizing the stadium construction and was the guest of honor at the ceremony to begin construction in May of 1972. Armando promised to inaugurate the stadium by May 25th, 1975 at 11am - well ahead of Argentina's hosting of the 1978 FIFA World Cup. Out of favor with the government and suffering from its own internal feuds, the club made no more progress on the stadium. Peronist legislators attempted to revive the stadium project in 1974 by declaring the Ciudad Deportiva a "national interest" as a venue for the World Cup, but no progress was made under that law either. By the time the deadline passed, the project had become

"unmentionable" in Armando's presence according to one club director.[2]

This chapter details Boca's attempt to build the Gran Estadio. While these efforts failed, the project galvanized significant resources and energy from varied sectors throughout the early 1970s. The project demonstrates that the same visions of modernization and social harmony that originally animated the Ciudad Deportiva remained just as powerful to successive governments an increasingly polarized and unstable national context. The dreams of *integración* and consumption that the Ciudad Deportiva represented stood at odds with the political and economic realities of the period, but the work continued. The chapter also places the Ciudad Deportiva within a context professional *fútbol's* own crises with mounting levels of state debt, a players' strike in 1971, and struggles to find new ways of generating revenue in a worsening economic climate. Ultimately, the multiple factors contributing to the Ciudad Deportiva's failure fit within Argentina's increasingly unstable political and economic situation.

Selling the Gran Estadio

General Alejandro Lanusse and the military leaders who removed Onganía in June of 1970 aimed to contain the social unrest on display in Córdoba and in guerrilla actions while also preparing the country for elections. Lanusse believed that Argentina's social unrest stemmed from the closing down of democratic institutions of popular expression and that, once reestablished, violent social unrest would dissipate. Because Lanusse had presidential ambitions of his own for the future elections, the junta appointed Roberto Levingston to bring stability to the political and economic situation. Instead, Levingston instituted a new political project along the lines of Onganía's and aimed to build a Catholic-inspired, nationalist "hierarchical and

[2] Author's Interview with Jesus Asiain (Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2012).

orderly democracy." After a currency devaluation and spike in inflation under an economic minister not of his choosing, he appointed his own and pushed for economic policies that favored domestic industry, requirements to buy Argentine-produced goods. This doubling down on developmentalist policy was well-received in some sectors of the military and industry, but both the military (who considered him to have gone rogue) and the public questioned Levingston's legitimacy. Peronists, Radicals, and Socialists joined forces alongside other political parties to form the "Hour of the People" and demand immediate elections. In February of 1971, a second wave of violent unrest in Córdoba known as the "Viborazo" gave Lanusse his pretext to remove Levingston.[3]

During his two year presidency, Lanusse worked to stabilize the Argentine economy and contain social unrest. Lanusse proposed a *Gran Acuerdo Nacional*, or great national deal, in negotiation with the reconstituted political coalitions ahead of the elections. The proposal included developmentalist economic policies and a continued role for the military in combating "subversion." During his presidency Lanusse's economic policies focused on price controls and wage increases to protect consumers against runaway inflation. The government increased spending, limited imports, and incentivized domestic industry. In an effort to achieve this final point, the government required half of all stock investments go to new stocks and also gave greater tax subsidies to those that were based or relocated outside of Greater Buenos Aires. The rate of average annual inflation reached 34% for 1971 - the highest since 1959 - and 58% for 1972. In 1970 a new currency, the "peso ley" eliminated two zeros from the Argentine peso, making three pesos ley equal to one U.S. dollar. By 1973, thirteen pesos ley were equal to one dollar. Like other governments that attempted to enact developmentalist policy, Lanusse's

[3] Liliana De Riz, *La política en suspenso, 1966-1976* (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2000).

pushed more nationalist and protectionist policies at certain moments only to adopt austerity measures and policies aimed at attracting foreign capital in order to curb inflation or spur growth.[4]

The Ciudad Deportiva's planners paid close attention to these national developments as they had multiple, direct impacts on the efforts to build the Gran Estadio. First, the club needed authorization and support from the national and city governments in order to construct the extensive pedestrian and vehicular access ways necessary to connect the Ciudad Deportiva and the Gran Estadio to the mainland. Authorization from the executive was also required to launch more raffles in accordance with national regulations on gambling and lotteries. Inflation was particularly devastating to long-term projects like the Ciudad Deportiva. The purchasers or raffle tickets, or *títulos*, were very often paying off the cost over months and years so that their final payments to the club were in devalued pesos. The club adjusted for this in the fourth and fifth series of raffles but these came at a period of high rates of inflation as well. Time was also a factor. The majority of the "social" facilities, which included facilities like the restaurant; swimming pools; tennis courts; and amphitheater, were complete and in use. However, only five years remained for the club to complete all of the facilities stipulated by law including the all-important stadium. With the 1975 legal deadline looming, the municipality could potentially find the club in noncompliance with the original 1965 law and seize the property. While little concrete planning had been done, Argentina's hosting of the 1978 FIFA World Cup brought pressure as plans had included the Gran Estadio as a central venue for the tournament.

In 1970, Armando announced that the new stadium would see its first kickoff at exactly

[4] Ibid.; Luis Romero, *A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002); Paul H. Lewis, *The Crisis of Argentine Capitalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

11am on May 25th of 1975.[5] In a radio interview, Armando explained that the budget for the stadium had originally been 12 million dollars, but that it had doubled to 24 million dollars because of inflation. He insisted that the club was prepared to spend up to 30 million dollars with the funds raised from a new series of raffles that featured apartments, cars, and even airplanes as prizes. Asked if the stadium would be a possible venue Argentina's hosting of the 1978 World Cup, Armando assured the interviewer that Boca's stadium and its ample facilities for the press would make the site of the 1970 World Cup final, Mexico's Estadio Azteca, "obsolete." Armando added a qualifier to these promises: "If God wills it, that I live that long and that I have this kind of energy… and that all depends on God."[6] The stadium would be built on the seventh island, an area of 35 hectares of which 15 would be dedicated to a parking lot with space for 7,500 cars. Connected to the mainland via access ways separate from the other sectors of the Ciudad Deportiva, the stadium's weight would be borne by 1,200 concrete supports, 30 meters long each. The geographic survey revealed no technical problems for the project and Armando optimistically reported that five billion pesos could be raised by simply selling a quarter of the future seats of the stadium in advance. The club had already sold 800 million pesos worth of títulos by February of 1971 and 600 trucks per day were dumping earth into the space created by the seventh island's shoring walls. Looking ahead to the stadium's completion, Armando speculated: "Who says we won't also build a hospital or a university?"[7]

[5] "Una Meta Boquense," *Goles*, November 10, 1970.
[6] Radio Universidad Nacional de La Plata, "Testimonio de Alberto J. Armando sobre la construcción de la ciudad deportiva del Club Atlético Boca Juniors," October 23, 1970.
[7] "Asi Es Como Se Construye Para El Pais," *La Razón*, February 16, 1971.

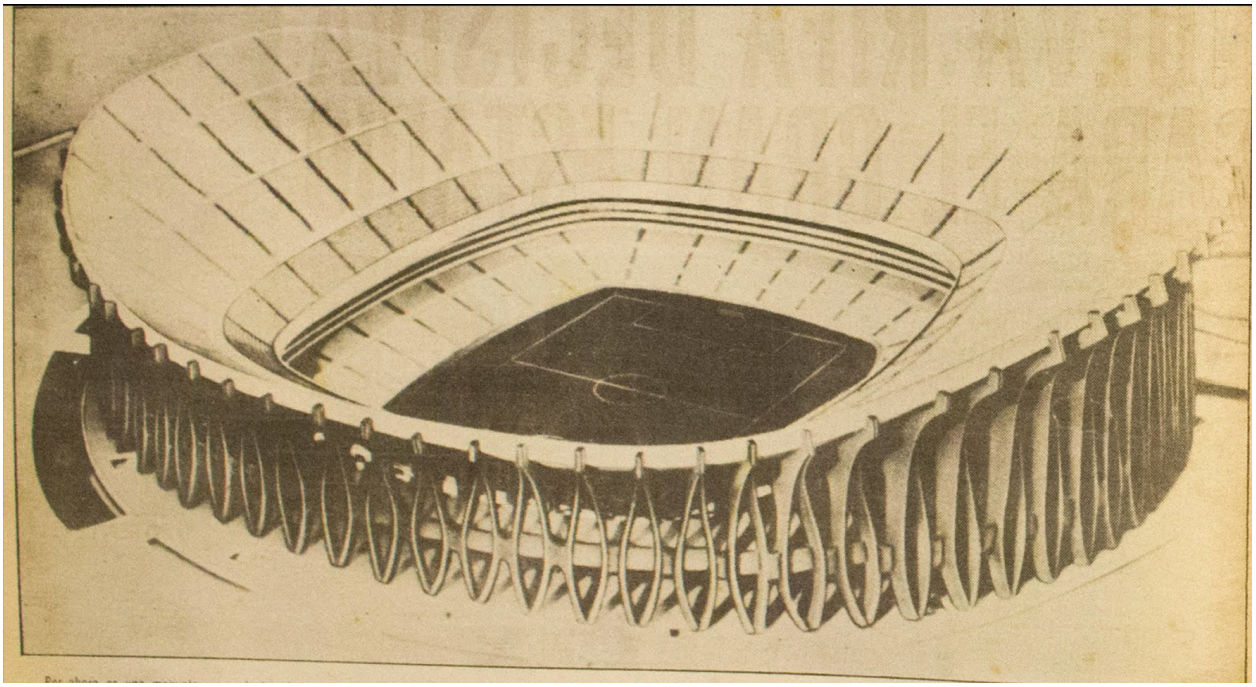

Figure 14 - A mockup of the Gran Estadio. Source: Así Es Boca, 1971

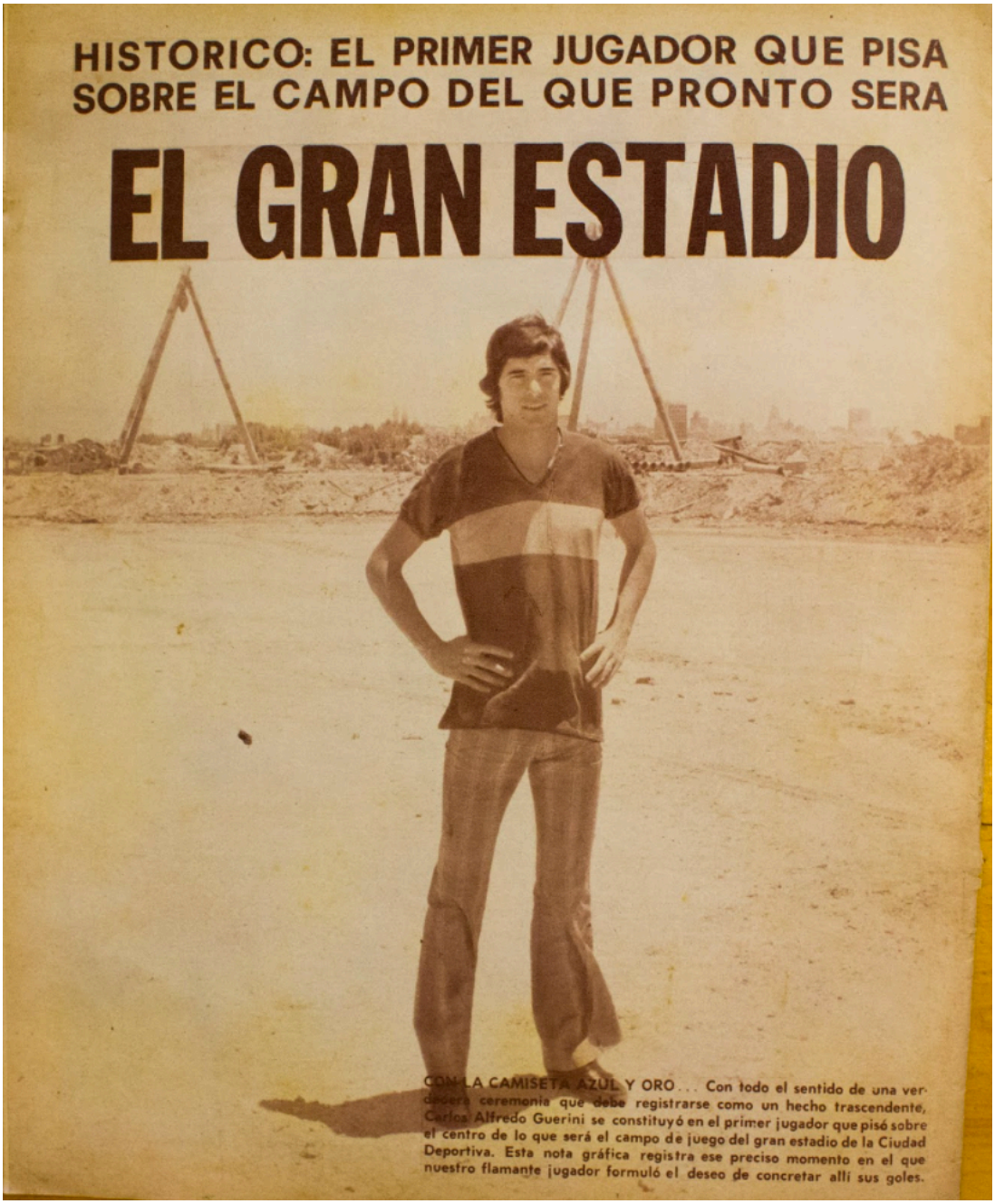

Figure 15 - Carlos Alfredo Guerini at the site of the Gran Estadio. Source: Así Es Boca, 1971.

The club announced they would break ground in November of 1971. However, construction was slow to begin. During a low point in team form, a sports magazine asked Boca fans if the Ciudad Deportiva was a wise investment. Several fans lamented the fact that too much money and attention was going to the project when the professional team needed more work to improve.

The 1971 season had been a disappointing one with Boca finishing eighth and fans had come to expect national championships after having won five league titles between 1962 and 1970. Armando responded to these complaints stating that the professional team finances were completely independent of the Ciudad Deportiva, and that in the future the project would benefit professional soccer with its infrastructure and revenue.[8] In a 1972 interview, the magazine *Siete Dias*, asked why the original funds raised by the first 120,000 *títulos* had not been enough to finish construction. Armando responded that the national currency was thoroughly devalued and that the cost of building materials had increased considerably. The "ley Boca" which granted all clubs tax exemptions on infrastructure spending was a boon, but costs had indeed risen and the peso had lost considerable value since the project had begun in 1964. When questioned about paying player salaries with funds from the project, Armando called the claims "absurd."[9]

Most press coverage of the stadium was of a decidedly triumphalist tone, celebrating the progress of Boca's sports complex as proof of the club's desire to contribute to the nation's progress. "Generations will see this work as the fruit of faith and work… the Ciudad Deportiva belongs to each and every Argentine", remarked *La Razón*. The newspaper argued that the club's achievements were not merely material, but that the project had "left its mark on the Argentine spirit… all over the country its example has inspired other institutions to build their own Ciudades Deportivas."[10] Diego Lucero, a columnist writing in *Clarín*, compared the completed islands and future stadium to the lighthouse of Alexandria and the Statue of Liberty. He described it as a "source of national pride which honors a generation… [Boca] bested the river for the city's benefit, transforming and modernizing Buenos Aires, looking towards the future."[11]

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[8] "¿Exito o Fracaso?," *Goles*, September 5, 1972.
[9] "Con El Corazon En La Boca," *Siete Dias*, September 24, 1972.
[10] "Asi Es Como Se Construye Para El Pais."
[11] Diego Lucero, "El Estadio En El Rio Ya La Ilusion En Marcha," *Clarín*, March 14, 1971, Clarín Archivo de

The Ciudad Deportiva had continued to expand its facilities at the start of the decade by adding a drive-in movie theatre, mini-golf, and a third restaurant. The pools attracted thousands of visitors in the summer months, alongside trampolines and playgrounds for children.[12]

The plans for the Gran Estadio were as spectacular and ambitious as the rest of the Ciudad Deportiva. The club hired an architectural team led by Carlos Costa of Estudio Coveca and the construction firm Christiani and Nielsen to plan and build the new stadium. At an estimated cost of 12.7 million dollars, Coveca's architects designed the stadium to hold 120,000 spectators. Besides its scale and location, the stadium plans distinguished themselves in terms of accommodations for the press and accessibility by automobile. The stadium would include seats for 1,200 journalists, thirty booths for radio broadcasts, and ten sectors for television broadcasts, characteristics that would ensure its suitability as the main venue for the 1978 World Cup. Within the 34 hectares of space set aside for the stadium and its facilities, there would also be a practice field and a parking lot for 10,000 cars. The planners anticipated that the city's statistics of one car per every fifteen inhabitants would likely rise to one car per ten inhabitants. The causeway connecting the stadium to the mainland's highway along the coastline would be 26 lanes wide (wider than the city's famous 9 de Julio avenue), adjusting the amount of lanes depending on entrance or exiting of fans. Traffic would arrive via a separate causeway constructed specifically to accommodate the volume demanded by the stadium's scale.[13]

Planners reiterated the project's contributions to the city's master plans for the Costanera Sur, arguing that the stadium would further the master plan's goal to "renovate and recuperate" the 150 hectares of the old Puerto Madero and extend the city's territory by 400 hectares by

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Redaccion.

[12] "Nueva Confitera, Minigolf," *Asi Es Boca*, July 19, 1972.

[13] "Una Meta Boquense." "Se Entregará En Marzo El Anteproyecto Definitivo de Un Estadio de Fútbol," *La Prensa*, February 16, 1971. "Se Anunció La Construcción Del Nuevo Estadio de Boca Júniors," *La Prensa*, November 5, 1970.

reclaiming land from the Rio de la Plata. The Ciudad Deportiva would anchor growth not only with its own recreational and cultural facilities, but would also stimulate future projects for administrative buildings and housing. The construction firm Christiani and Nielsen had been operating in Argentina for fifty years, inspiring great confidence with important projects including Buenos Aires' major southern train station, Estacion Constitucion, the Fabrica Argentino de Alpargatas, and various bridges crossing the Avenida General Paz.

The club also contracted ESSA once again to sell the seats and box suites in advance, a fundraising effort that was projected to raise 19 million dollars. The club projected that the costs of construction would be met by advance sales of 27.5% of the stadiums' seats and suites. In March of 1971, ESSA began offering fans the rights to seats or suites for a period of twenty five years, charging between 575 and 900 dollars for seats and 7,500 dollars for suites with six seats with financing plains of up to 60 months. By April, half of the lower bowl seats and all of the six-seat suites had been sold, raising four million dollars in the first month of pre-sales.[14]

[14] "Boca Juniors y Su Nuevo Estadio," *La Nación*, March 10, 1971. "Asi Es Como Se Construye Para El Pais"; "Acerca de Su Futuro Estadio Informó Boca," *La Prensa*, April 1971.

Figure 16 - Ad for the Gran Estadio's Rifa. Source: Así Es Boca, 1972.

However, in the same month the club was sued over its fundraising *rifas*. Teófilo Amado, purchaser of a Título Pro-Patrimonial de la Ciudad Deportiva, won the Christmas lottery in December of 1967. Amado claimed that when he attempted to collect his winnings, the club offered only twenty thousand dollars of the twenty five thousand he had won, then only half of

that, and then only a used car. In April of 1971, he sued the club for not paying his the prize amount. In his suit, Amado sought twenty thousand dollars in moral damages as well as a penalty of 4.25 million dollars for the club which had illegally raised that amount through unauthorized rifas.[15] Judge Néstor Sanz ruled in favor of Boca Juniors, arguing that he found no intent for fraud on the part of the club and that nowhere did the purchased título mention the right to participate in rifas.[16] However, the civil court also found that the *rifa* had never been authorized in the first place. In December of 1971, Boca was ordered to pay 10,000 pesos to *título* holder Juan Carlos Dabusti for eliminating a prize drawing date because of a change in dates for the national lottery, a drawing the club should simply have rescheduled.[17]

Members of the political opposition within the club publicly challenged the viability of the stadium plans. When the club presented the stadium plans at the AFA in order to assure the governing body that it would be ready in time for the 1978 World Cup, an engineer named Omar de Leo from the "Frente Opositor" coalition of *agrupaciónes*, or club political parties, began shouting "the stadium construction is a farce… the Ciudad Deportiva and the stadium are the fraud of the century!" De Leo continued shouting over all attempts to restore order and threw a stack of flyers into the air, scattering the accusations against Armando all over the room. The flyers claimed that the club had not conducted an adequate study of the technical, economic, and legal feasibility of the stadium. The opposition group claimed that the club had not consulted the necessary authorities to ensure adequate road construction. They also cited a municipal decree that prevented the construction of the stadium prior to completion of the roads that figured into the city master plan's redevelopment of the Costanera Sur. The club had also surpassed the original 40 hectares authorized by the 1965 law; the complete stadium and facilities were to

[15] "Queréllase a Boca Júniors y Sus Directores Por Una Rifa," *Clarín*, April 8, 1971.
[16] "Sobreseyóse En Una Querella Contra El Club Boca Júniors," *Clarín*, October 28, 1971.
[17] "Debe Pagar Un Club $10.000 Por Un Sorteo," *La Nación*, December 28, 1971.

occupy 104 hectares on their own. Finally, the group claimed that of the 18 million dollars already raised for the previous construction phases, the club had spent 40% on administrative costs - 15% more than was legally permitted.[18]

The decree mentioned by De Leo's flyer, number 3359 from May 25 of 1969, had indeed been signed by mayor Iricíbar and explicitly stated that the stadium could only begin construction once adequate access for pedestrians and automobiles had been constructed. Raul Garney, the secretary of Public Works had endorsed the decree in February of 1971. Some reports indicated that the decree was intended to force Boca to share in the costs of road construction. Coveca's lead architect Carlos Costa argued that this was nonsensical and unconstitutional. Costa claimed that the costs for roads had already been budgeted in the 1962 Plan Regulador and that the municipality could delay the opening of the stadium until roads were built but not prevent its construction. He also argued that the municipality was about to open contract bidding for the construction of the Costera highway with funds from Vialidad Nacional. Boca sought to address the problem by going directly to President Lanusse.[19]

The club pressed on without an apparent solution to the problem of building roads and in November of 1971 - a full year after the stadium's announcement - Armando and invited guests held a ceremony to celebrate the driving of the first piling foundation into the stadium's island. It was the first of 1,500 pilings, 25 meters long, necessary to anchor the foundations for the stadium.[20] However, in 1972 the plans changed and the club held yet another ceremony to celebrate the driving of another "first" of 1,200, 32 meter pilings on the 25th of May. This time,

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[18] "El Estadio de Boca; Su Construcción Y," *La Nación*, August 6, 1971, sec. Deportes; "Lo Que No Pudo Escucharse En La AFA: Objetan La Construcción Del Estadio Proyectado En La Ciudad Deportiva," *La Opinion*, August 8, 1971.
[19] "Se Construirá El Estadio de Boca; Las Obras de Acceso Gestiónanse En Alto Nivel," *Clarín*, August 18, 1971; "Estudio de Mecánica de Suelos Realizado En Terrenos Ganados Al Río de La Plata," *La Prensa*, November 2, 1971.
[20] "Un Estadio Del Futuro," *Clarín*, November 4, 1971; "Ciudad Deportiva," *Clarín*, November 5, 1971.

General Lanusse, the head of the Ministerio de Bienestar Social Francisco Manrique, mayor Saturnino Montero Ruiz, AFA president Raul D'Onofrio, and other military and church dignitaries were in attendance. Bishop Héctor Gilardi blessed the construction site and Lanusse pressed the button to drive the first piling into the ground. By August, progress continued as ninety five more pilings had been driven and the club bestowed honorary memberships to the national press secretary, minister of public works, and the mayor.[21]

By this point, supporters of the Ciudad Deportiva had bought over 200,000 Títulos Pro-Patrimoniales, thousands of one-off raffle tickets, and a significant portion of the future stadium seats and suites in advance. Still, the costs of the stadium continued to rise and the club began planning another, final, Gran Rifa to finance continued construction. In answering for the team's poor form, Armando told *Así Es Boca*: "I'm not running the soccer team, I'm only concerned with the rifa right now." The magazine echoed some concerns about the *comisión directiva's* preoccupation with the stadium construction at the neglect of the team while also noting that the importance of the rifas was unquestionable. The magazine insisted that the títulos had sold spectacularly well when the team was winning championships: "we can't forget that soccer is the motor that powers all other activities."[22] In order to power the *rifa*, Armando signed an agreement with the Fiat motor company in which the club purchased five hundred Fiat Model 600 cars as prizes and announced they would purchase 1,500 more.[23]

The rifas included tickets and drawings at two tiers. The Cruzada de las Estrellas was priced at 43 dollars and the Cruzada de Oro at 110 dollars with different categories of prizes for each. Prizes included cash, home goods, sports equipment, apartments in Buenos Aires and nearby

[21] "Avanza El Pilotaje de Nuestro Estadio," *Asi Es Boca*, August 16, 1972; "Fiesta En La Ciudad," *Asi Es Boca*, August 23, 1972.
[22] "No Estoy En Futbol... Yo Me Ocupo de La Rifa," *Asi Es Boca*, August 23, 1972.
[23] "Suscribió Ayer El Club Boca Júniors Un Acuerdo Con Fiat," *La Prensa*, August 23, 1972; "Armando Firmo El Acuerdo Por 500 Fiat Para La Rifa," *Asi Es Boca*, August 30, 1972.

resort towns, cars, yachts, airplanes, and race horses. The club projected that they would boost the nation's economy by spending 14 million dollars on prizes, including 7,000 cars - the equivalent of 3% of the annual production of automobiles in Argentina. *Así Es Boca* emphasized that the club would use Argentine materials and labor as well as employing between three and five hundred skilled personnel per day who would use "modern and complex techniques." By all press accounts, the Cruzadas matched the enthusiasm and scale of the first títulos. Over one thousand candidates for positions as salespeople selling the rifas interviewed on the first day of hiring at IDA, the company contracted by Boca to sell the rifas instead of ESSA. Salespeople were given a portion of the revenues generated and participated in sales competitions with the same sorts of prizes being raffled. Club legend Antonio Rattín served as the celebrity salesperson operating from the IDA offices. A worker from the Ledesma plant in Jujuy came to the sales offices to buy as many rifas as he could, adding that "of the 7,000 or so people at the plant, 80% are Boca fans." Armando sold out all of the rifas he had brought with him to New York and Los Angeles within a matter of hours, raising 300 thousand dollars during his trip.[24]

In the midst of successfully launching the rifas, Boca continued to face lawsuits and perform poorly in the league. Opposition to the administration of the club and Ciudad Deportiva also become more organized and received increasing attention from various press outlets. Raúl Luis Coutteret was the owner of the drive-in movie theatre at the Ciudad Deportiva, one of the several facilities leased by the club to private business owners. In September, Coutteret denounced Armando and his comisión directiva for defrauding the club and holders of *títulos*. In purchased space in the newspaper *La Razón*, Coutteret explained that the club had breached his contract,

[24] "Caracteristicas Excepcionales Posee La Gran Rifa Boquense," *Asi Es Boca*, November 1, 1972; "Extraordinarias Proyecciones Se Preven Para La Gran Rifa," *Asi Es Boca*, November 8, 1972; "La Rifa Esta En Marcha," *Asi Es Boca*, November 15, 1972; "¡300 Millones En Tres Horas!," *Asi Es Boca*, November 22, 1972; "Aqui Vende Rattin," *Asi Es Boca*, November 22, 1972; "Enorme Interes Por La Rifa," *Asi Es Boca*, November 22, 1972; "Los Vendedores de La Rifa Seran Tambien Felices Beneficiados," *Asi Es Boca*, November 29, 1972.

owed him close to 200,000 dollars for his work at the Ciudad Deportiva, and was breaking the law in various ways. He claimed that only the first *rifa* was authorized by the Ministry of the Interior, no financial data was reported to the ministry, that the fourth and fifth rifas were sold in a way that tricked holders into believing they could participate in prize drawings, and that the *títulos* did not appreciate any interest as originally promised. Furthermore, he alleged that the stadium would be impossible to complete by 1975, that the club was not in any financial or legal condition to launch another *rifa*, and that overall construction at the Ciudad Deportiva was paralyzed.[25]

Coutteret's denunciations received significant press coverage and support from the opposition *agrupaciónes* within the club. Coutteret formed part of a broader group of hundreds of aggrieved *título* holders who organized themselves as the Comisión Provisoria de Poseedores de Títulos Pro-Patrimoniales who alleged various cases of trickery and fraud in the fundraising efforts for the Ciudad Deportiva. Dale Boca, an *agrupación* of 2,400 socios circulated a flyer demanding that Armando answer the various accusations of fraud, present a full account of finances related to the Ciudad Deportiva, and answer concerns over the allegedly meagre sum that was destined for the club as a result of the most recent round of rifas. Boca vice president Miguel Zappino added his voice to calls for greater transparency on investment in the project. The club's comisión directiva held a public meeting in which club treasurer Francisco Toledo claimed that a full accounting of the finances for the Ciudad Deportiva between 1965 and 1972 showed that that, far from being in financial turmoil, the club's debtors owed them money.[26] In an interview with *Así Es Boca* Armando elaborated on the allegations by arguing that they were

[25] "Un Socio Del Interior En Busca de La Verdad," *Asi Es Boca*, August 30, 1972; Raul Luis Coutteret, "Solicitada: A Los Socios, Tenedores de Títulos Pro-Patrimoniales Y Simpatizantes Del CLUB ATLETICO BOCA JUNIORS Y Al Público En General," *La Razón*, October 17, 1972.
[26] "Se Rindio Informe Sobre Recursos Y Gastos Para La Ciudad Deportiva," *Asi Es Boca*, October 4, 1972.

simply a product of electoral politics in the club and that the *socios* had already responded to opposition groups' arguments by voting him into office. He explained: "The accounts can be found in our annual report… we have invested 3 million pesos into a property that is now worth over 20 million… this is our answer and on May 25th, 1975 we will provide another answer when we open the stadium."[27] When asked why the original *rifas* launched in 1965 were not sufficient for covering the stadium, Armando answered with a new explanation: the club had never said that money would be used for the stadium and that it was intended for the Ciudad Deportiva's social facilities, which were already completed. Furthermore, Armando cited the devaluation of the peso and denied the accusations that the club used money raised for the project in order to buy professional soccer players.[28] In a longer, written response Armando and secretary general Luis Maria Bortnik again dismissed the charges as electioneering and pointed to the publicly available records and the comisión directiva's twelve year track record of five championships and the successes to date of the Ciudad Deportiva.[29] Progress at the stadium continued through December of 1972 as three hundred pilings were driven into place to support the foundation.[30]

Exploiting Sentiments

Armando's controversial leadership at Boca Juniors were tied to broader transformations in professional soccer clubs. The first of these was the perception that the game had become overly commercialized and that clubs had gone too far in searching for new forms of revenue. In his popular 1974 book *Burguesía y Gangsterismo en el Deporte*, famous sports journalist Dante Panzeri excoriated soccer officials, fans, players, and - above all - the commercial corruption he

[27] "No Contestaremos Las Acusaciones Anonimas," *Asi Es Boca*, October 4, 1972.
[28] "Con El Corazon En La Boca."
[29] "Contestacion," *Asi Es Boca*, November 8, 1972.
[30] "A Todo Ritmo Avanzan Las Obras Del Nuevo Gran Estadio," *Asi Es Boca*, December 13, 1972.

saw as endemic within clubs. Many clubs, he wrote, believed that commercial growth was a sign of progress while others understood that to progress meant to avoid commercial logics: "These are the two great paths that must be defined within club statutes in this age. Either one or the other." For Panzeri, it was the "ridiculously large amount of money at stake in soccer that is destroying what is still left of the game."[31] Sports journalists marked this period variously as the age of "fútbol espectáculo", "fútbol moderno", or "fútbol empresa" where clubs led the "industrialization of sport and, through it, the creation of new forms of profit-making excused under the logic of job creation or the social benefits of clubs." Panzeri preferred to call it "legal robbery."[32] Dante Panzeri's polemic identified politicians and the state apparatus as willing enablers of the ills he saw within soccer.

Declining stadium attendance added to this perception of professional soccer's economic crisis. Between 1967 and 1973 average match attendance in the domestic first division hovered around 7,500. This marked nearly a 50% decline in average match attendance from the period between 1944 and 1954 where crowds averaged around 14,000 per game.[33] Panzeri lamented the rising costs of the game alongside declining attendance, pointing to excessive travel and lodging costs for players as a particularly egregious form of inflating costs.[34] He singled out Boca Juniors and River Plate as the most commercialized clubs who had perfected the art of "exploiting sentimental passion" and "bearing the most blame for destroying professional soccer." Club directors, explained Panzeri, had responded to the decline in attendance only by increasing ticket prices, paying the players higher salaries to play fewer games, creating new tournaments simply to make more money, expanding the league to include teams from other provinces in search of

[31] Dante Panzeri, *Burguesía y "Gangsterismo" En El Deporte* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Líbera, 1974), 34.
[32] Ibid., 104.
[33] Ibid., p.152.
[34] Ibid., p.113.

larger markets, and adopting more nefarious business practices to enrich themselves.[35] Directors, according to Panzeri, made it normal to pay "absurd" bonuses to their players and began to aggressively clamp down on *socio* dissent by attacking them in the press or using hired thugs.[36]

Panzeri singled out Armando as a particularly unethical club president. He accused Armando of skimming funds from player transfers and said of the Ciudad Deportiva and projects like it: "an exploitation of sentiments… a promise of paradise for the gullible… [a way of] saving clubs from bankruptcy in the face of demented administrators." The most famous of these, he wrote, "is the fraud committed by Boca Juniors against thousands of innocent purchasers of raffles 'pro-patrimoniales' that never gave its holders any rights and constantly under scrutiny by the justice system."[37] Writing about Armando's presidency, Panzeri described how Boca had been a club with a social headquarters and the Parque Romano but these had been sold and that the *socios* financed everything without receiving any services in return. Armando had made soccer "an activity for open illegality." Panzeri also pointed to the lawsuit by Amado as evidence of corruption and mentioned that the stadium would never be built without the city building roads to connect the Ciudad Deportiva.[38]

Comedian and actor Atilio Pozzobon, a close friend of Armando's who did advertising for the club and famous for his sketch comedy interpretation of a crazed Boca fan, also touched on Armando's handling of player transfers. He explained that Armando would sign players with his own money, independent of the club's board of directors, and then employ the signee at his auto dealership until the club made up their mind to sign them.[39] Boca Juniors vice president Miguel Zappino accused Armando of overcharging the club at this step in order to make a profit for

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[35] Ibid., p.151-154.
[36] Ibid., p.214-215.
[37] Ibid., p.253.
[38] Ibid., p.282-284.
[39] Author's interview with Atilio Pozzobon (Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2014).

himself. José Sicari, an advisor to the president at the club, accused Armando of financial chicanery in administering rifas throughout his presidency; selling three or four raffle tickets with the same assigned numbers in order to sell more than they really had.[40]

The Fútbolistas Argentinos Agremiados (FAA), or the players' union went on strike in 1971, the results of which would lead to transformations in salaries and their working status. At the center of the labor dispute was the status of players as workers, which had been recognized as a result of the FAA's 1948 strike, and the AFA's negation of this status. The AFA treated players as "athletic workers", a special status that fell largely under control of soccer's governing constitution unlike regular workers who were under state labor laws. Under AFA regulations, there were no consequences for clubs failing to pay their player salaries. The players strike lasted two weeks until president Lanusse intervened, putting a plan in place for the statutes to be modified in favor of the players.[41] Armando and his *comisión directiva* needed to retain internal and external political support in a rapidly shifting landscape while simultaneously keeping the club solvent in the face of rising inflation and a failing national economy.

"We saw Death's Face"

The Ciudad Deportiva lost the support it had enjoyed at the highest levels of government in 1973. That March, Argentines voted in the first presidential elections in which the Peronist party was legally allowed to participate since its proscription in 1955. The military lifted the proscription on Peronism but not on Perón, inserting a clause for the March elections that disqualified him. Héctor Cámpora, the Peronist candidate, won by a significant margin and

[40] "El Escándalo Boquense," *Asi*, April 17, 1973.
[41] Ariel Scher and Héctor Palomino, *Fútbol, Pasión de Multitudes y de Elites : Un Estudio Institucional de La Asociación de Fútbol Argentino (1934-1986)* (Buenos Aires Argentina: Centro de Investigaciones Sociales sobre el Estado y la Administración, 1988), 120–23.

paved the way for Perón's election in September of that year. The Peronist coalition led by Cámpora, the Frente Justicialista de Liberación Nacional (FREJULI), galvanized various sectors of the left, right, and loyal Peronists. The FREJULI received 49% of the vote, a significant margin relative to the 21% received by the nearest competitors, the Unión Cívica Radical. In addition to losing key political support with the return of Perón, the club experienced a profound internal political crisis which nearly drove Armando from the club.

Cámpora presented his resignation to congress in July, setting up elections for September in which Perón and his third wife and vice president, Isabel, won with 62% of the vote and assumed the presidency on October 12th. Economic minister Jose Gelbard succeeded in bringing inflation under control by the end of 1973 and the decline in real wages showed signs of stopping. However, the budget deficit had increased by 43% in the following year and inflation climbed back up to 40%. Perón's "Pacto Social", or social pact, had similar policies to those of his government in the 1940s and 1950s: state planning of the economy that prioritized industrial sectors, investment in public works, protectionist trade policy, protection of wages, and taxes on agricultural exports. The global oil crises that erupted in 1973 had the effect of raising the prices of crucial imports and unleashing runaway inflation that reached 954% by 1976.[42]

In 1973, the growing political discontent within the club would develop into an acrimonious and public crisis. Fernando Mitjans and Carlos Civita, two members of the club's *comisión directiva*, presented their resignations to Armando in February. Mitjans, the vice president, and Civita opted for discretion and chose to cite their responsibilities outside the club as reasons for being unable to continue rather than any disagreements with Armando. However, it would be the club's other vice president Miguel Zappino who began a series of public accusations that

[42] Romero, *A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century*.

galvanized a number of club officials and members of the political opposition into calling for legal proceedings against Armando and his removal from the club. For the next two months, the national press gave significant coverage to a war of words and series of revelations on the part of former Armando supporters that all revolved around his alleged mismanagement of the club's finances. Zappino's accusations centered on Armando's alleged circumvention of the comisión directiva in player transfers, administering the rifas, and managing the Ciudad Deportiva's construction and funding. According to Zappino, Armando ran the club from his car dealership office instead of the club. There, he would perform financial chicanery with the support of his loyalists and then force the rest of the comisión directiva to approve decisions through trickery or misdirection. Armando would allegedly purchase players on his own without the club's approval, skim money from the transfers, and then report different figures in the club balances. Zappino also alleged that Armando had signed a foolish or corrupt contract with IDA to hold the rifas, with the company taking the lion's share of the proceeds. This was apparently Zappino's breaking point as it was when Armando asked him to administer the rifas that the vice president refused to be a party to fraud. When Boca Juniors and Racing played in a tournament in Salta and Tucumán, the funds were misreported at both clubs and Racing's president was ousted as a result, while Armando faced no consequences at Boca. These actions were exacerbated by the fact that no meetings of the comisión directiva had been held for months and Armando was away from the club in the provinces campaigning for Lanusse's military candidate in the 1973 elections, Ezequiel Martínez.[43]

Zappino was able to rally support from other disgruntled members of the club's leadership and held press conferences detailing charges against Armando. The Ciudad Deportiva was at the

[43] "Una Nueva Crisis," *Asi Es Boca*, February 21, 1973; "¿Crisis En Boca? Zappino Acusa," *El Gráfico*, February 27, 1973.

center of Armando's alleged financial crimes, labeled "the most fraudulent operation of all time."[44] Opposition members were now going to "take the lid off" of Armando's fraud. Mario Hersovich, leader of the special commission formed within the asamblea de representantes and an economics professor, called the project a "massive fraud" whose reported finances were completely false by even casual observations. The Inspección General de Justicia was already investigating the 1971 *memoria y balance* and was now investigating the most recent balances. Zappino, the commission, and opposition members called for a meeting of the comisión directiva to take action on these issues, especially the unauthorized rifas that *socios* deserved total transparency on.[45] Hersovich told *Así Es Boca*: "it's probable that we've found ourselves facing the greatest scandal in the history of sporting institutions." The magazine reported that in the face of such instability, it was possible that the national authorities would step in with an interventor to safeguard the socio's interests.[46]

The war of words escalated into violence on April 10th. Members of the opposition and loyalists (now distinguished by the press as Zappinistas and Armandistas) met at the club in order to hold a meeting. Over two hundred people began pushing and shoving one another as it became clear that Armando would not emerge from his office to hold the meetings and several fistfights broke out before the police intervened. The Zappinistas accused Armando of employing boxers and weightlifters as political muscle to intimidate opposition members. The gathering was rescheduled to April 24th and held in the club's newly renovated meeting room. It was there that the gunfire and teargas described at the beginning of this chapter foreclosed any

[44] "El Escándalo Boquense."
[45] "Gravisimas Acusiones Contra Armando," *Clarín*, March 30, 1973; "Crisis En Boca: Zappino y Sus Denuncias," *Clarín*, April 2, 1973.
[46] "Puede Haber Novedades En La Crisis Institucional," *Asi Es Boca*, April 11, 1973.

possibility of a future meeting of the *comisión directiva*.[47]

In May, club officials from the member's assembly turned to the courts and authorities to resolve the club's crisis in governance. Maximo Barallobres and Irineo Roque Duarte, the president and secretary of the member's assembly formally denounced Armando, the club treasurer Francisco Toledo, and the club secretary Luis María Bortnik for embezzling 26 million pesos from a player transfer.[48] Three more officials from the member's assembly joined Roque Duarte and Barallobres in passing a resolution calling for the removal of Armando, Toledo, and Bortnik from the comisión directiva for "violating the apolitical nature of the club" by distributing flyers and raffling signed Boca merchandise in support of Ezequiel Martínez's campaign. They also cited the embezzlement case as a violation of the club's status in "deteriorating the image of the club."[49] In June, Armando's reformed *comisión directiva* took out ads in papers with an official response to all of the charges leveled against them by a "minor group of socios without significant backing in the club… a fact proven by their rejection of the offer to participate in the club's governance structures." The ad explained that each of the formal accusations leveled against the club's leaders could be addressed with receipts, contracts, and bank deposits which it detailed. It also explained that in the legal case brought against them, they had submitted evidence that would be used in a counter-suit for defamation. Finally, the *comisión directiva* rejected the resolution passed for their removal, arguing that there were no provisions within the club statues to allow for such an action. According to them, the resolution had been passed as part of "a campaign to defame the club and its legitimate representative and

[47] "El Escándalo Boquense"; "¿Hasta Cuando?," *Asi Es Boca*, April 18, 1973; "¡Vergonzoso!," *Asi Es Boca*, April 25, 1973; "¡Vimos La Cara De La Muerte!"
[48] "Denuncian Un Nuevo Desfalco En Boca," *Clarín*, May 18, 1973.
[49] "Golpe de Estado En Boca Júniors," *Clarín*, May 23, 1973.

to do moral harm and material harm to one of the most prestigious institutions of the nation."[50] Armando's removal from the club was to be decided by a vote in the general assembly on November 30th, 1973.

It is unclear how close the vote ended up or whether it even took place, but Armando continued serving as president. At the start of 1974, the stadium and overall progress at the Ciudad Deportiva was "completely paralyzed." Ezequiel Martínez, the brigadier general Armando had campaigned for in the March 1973 elections was among the worst performing candidates. The coalition that would return Perón to the presidency, FREJULI, won without a need for runoffs and it was from this coalition that new plans for the Ciudad Deportiva would emerge. Ludovico Slamovitz, a FREJULI congressman, introduced legislation that would declare the Ciudad Deportiva a project of "national interest" and establish a commission that would study whether the stadium could be completed as had been intended by the original law passed in 1965.[51]

While there is no mention of the legislation or progress at the Ciudad Deportiva at this time in the club's memorias, national newspapers outlined the basic contours of the efforts by the municipality to complete the project. Slamovitz was careful to insist that the original law was slated to allow the city to seize the property for failure to complete the project, but that his legislation would not expropriate the Ciudad Deportiva. The congressman stressed: "what's most important is to save the institution and its thousands of socios and fans who supported the project in good faith… it would be an unjust seizure of Boca's patrimony [on top of] the errors that the men who are charged with directing the club have committed." City councilman Miguel

[50] "Solicitada: Club Atletico Boca Juniors," *Clarín*, June 4, 1973.
[51] "Ciudad Deportiva: 'Declararla de Interés Nacional...,'" *Clarín*, August 1, 1974; J.A. Allende and R.A. Lastira, "Ley 20.853: Declárase de Interés Nacional La Ciudad Deportiva Creada Por Ley 16.575," *Boletin Oficial* 23026 (October 30, 1974): 2.

Unamuno elaborated on Slamovitz's plan, explaining that they wanted "to recuperate the municipality's legal rights and initiate a project with the Ministerio de Bienestar Social… the possibility of finishing the stadium and putting it at the service of the entire community." The officials also emphasized the important possibility that the Ciudad Deportiva and its stadium could continue serving as the projected centerpiece of the 1978 World Cup to be hosted in Argentina. The law passed, creating a situation in which the national and municipal authorities charged a special commission with finishing a project from within a club whose own *comisión directiva* had failed to follow the law. This prompted three *agrupaciones* to circulate a letter again calling for the removal of Armando and his *comisión directiva* as an embarrassment, a group "completely discredited before the [new] legitimately constituted national authorities… [because of] siding with Ezequiel Martínez."[52]

[52] "Pídese La Intervención de La Munciipalidad En Las Obras de La Ciudad Deportiva de B. Júniors," *La Razón*, April 6, 1974; "Ciudad Deportiva: 'Declararla de Interés Nacional...'"; "La Ciudad Para El Pueblo 'Nadie Pide Expropiarla,'" *Crónica*, August 15, 1974, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion; "La Ciudad Deportiva," *Clarín*, October 1, 1974; "Pasado y Futuro de Una Obra Inconclusa: Ciudad Deportiva," *Goles*, October 9, 1974, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion; "Conoce Ud. La Ley Sobre La Ciudad Deportiva de Boca Juniors," *Clarín*, October 16, 1974.

Figure 17 - Lanusse and Armando at the Casa Rosada. Credit: Archivo General de la Nacion.

In Perón's "Modelo Argentino," as he called his state vision, was a version of corporatism that would avoid the ills of capitalism and indeed present a model for the third world, all who would not join integrated democracy would need to be annihilated. Perón had lauded the Montoneros and other left-wing revolutionary forces during his exile, but after returning to the presidency he turned against them. Perón's minister of social welfare, José López Rega, used the ministry as a base for forming a right-wing Peronist death squad called the Argentine Anticommunist Alliance, or Triple A. In June of 1974, left-wing supporters of Perón attended a mass rally at the Plaza de Mayo but began taunting Perón when he condemned their actions. Perón died on July 1st, 1974 and was succeeded as president by his vice president and wife

Isabel.[53]

Isabel's administration struggled to balance the sectoral interests of those who had supported the Pacto Social, a conflict made evident when the economic minister José Gelbard resigned in the face of conflict over economic policy that would favor agrarian interests over industrial unions. To combat inflation, the new economic minister Alfredo Gómez Morales imposed austerity measures that brought the government into conflict with their base of union support. By March of 1975, the cost of living had increased by 26% in only four months. Unable to attract enough foreign capital, Gómez Morales devalued the peso that month by 50%. By June, Gómez Morales had resigned and his replacement, Celestino Rodrigo, implemented a 100% price increase on controlled goods and devalued the peso by 100%.[54] The adjustment provoked a general strike in the following month and became known as the "Rodrigazo." Jesus Asiain emphasized the Rodrigazo as a crucial factor in crippling the Ciudad Deportiva.[55]

Conclusion

Between the passage of Slamovitz's law in 1974 and the ouster of Isabel Perón two years later, no progress was made on the Ciudad Deportiva or the Gran Estadio. On March 24th, 1976, a military junta led by Jorge Rafael Videla removed Isabel Perón in a coup and began the so-called "Process of National Reorganization." The military's Proceso brought an end to the visions of social integration that had been shared by successive governments after 1955. The junta justified the coup as a necessary step in saving the country from a spiral of violence that Perón's government had proven itself incapable of containing. The military's war against

[53] De Riz, *La política en suspenso, 1966-1976*; Romero, *A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century*; Lewis, *The Crisis of Argentine Capitalism*.
[54] De Riz, *La política en suspenso, 1966-1976*.
[55] Jesus Asiain, *Interview with Jesus Asiain* (Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2013).

subversion marked an unprecedented period of state terror in Argentina in which the armed forces would murder some 30,000 people. The military also ended the project of state-led development by adopting neoliberal economic policies associated with the Chicago School and overseen by economic minister Alfredo Martínez de Hoz.

Yet, despite the spiraling violence, the visions of modernization and social harmony that animated the Ciudad Deportiva continued to show remarkable durability. There was little progress at the site during the height of the turmoil in the early and mid 1970s and Armando's administration was beset with political and financial crises. However, the club did successfully raise stadium funds and Armando was able to weather these crises. The next chapter shows that the Ciudad Deportiva's future may have been foreclosed during this period, but dreams of consumption and social integration through recreational facilities would endure during the dictatorship. More importantly for Boca, the Ciudad Deportiva would also endure as a valuable asset.

Chapter 5 - Selling the Ciudad Deportiva, 1976-1992

On June 25th, 1978, the Argentine men's national team faced the Netherlands in the final of the FIFA World Cup. Mario Kempes, the tournament's top scorer, struck first in the opening half to put Argentina ahead 1-0. The Dutch would equalize late in the second half, sending the game into extra time. Kempes scored again in the 104th minute and his teammate Bertoni added another goal as time expired to give Argentina a 3-1 win and their first World Cup trophy. Military president Jorge Rafael Videla presented the trophy to Argentine captain Daniel Passarella for a lap of honor around the Estadio Monumental, Club Atlético River Plate's home stadium. Argentines everywhere celebrated a victory that also represented the culmination of an ambitious effort on the part of state officials to project an image of stability abroad and unity at home. The military organizing committee for the tournament, the *Ente Autárquico Mundial* (EAM), hired the U.S. marketing firm Burson-Marsteller to manage the government's image amidst increasing international awareness of the military's brutal campaign against "subversion" that murdered upwards of thirty thousand people. They also spent over one hundred million dollars on a color television station that could only transmit color images abroad. The organizers invested in renovations for River Plate's stadium, Vélez Sarsfield's stadium in Buenos Aires, and Rosario Central's stadium in Rosario in addition to building three brand new stadiums in the cities of Córdoba, Mendoza, and Mar del Plata.[1] Led by navy admiral Carlos Lacoste, the EAM never reported the final costs but estimates place spending somewhere between five hundred and eight hundred million dollars. In comparison, Spain's organizers would spend only two hundred million dollars on the 1982 World Cup.[2]

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[1] Scher and Palomino, *Fútbol, Pasión de Multitudes Y de Elites*.

[2] Ricardo Halac and Cernadas Lamadrid, *Los Militares Y El Mundial*, Yo Fuí Testigo 8 (Buenos Aires Argentina: Editorial Perfil, 1986); Scher and Palomino, *Fútbol, Pasión de Multitudes Y de Elites*; George Vecsey, "Sports of The Times," *The New York Times*, March 20, 1983,; Paul H. Lewis, *The Crisis of Argentine Capitalism* (Chapel

The military prioritized the hosting of the FIFA World Cup as a point of national pride; it was also a project to build up support and legitimacy for the regime. The junta that seized power in 1976 called its governing project a *Proceso de Reorganización Nacional*, or Process of National Reorganization that aimed to transform Argentina by eliminating left-wing guerrillas, their ideology, and a broad conception of anything encompassing "subversive" politics. They also sought to control inflation and spur economic growth. To do so, the junta turned to neoliberal policies that reduced the state's size and spending and eliminated trade protections. In practice, however, the military continued significant spending in national defense, key national industries, and public works like infrastructure for the World Cup. In Buenos Aires, military mayor Osvaldo Cacciatore sought to modernize the city by constructing a system of highways that would connect downtown areas to Greater Buenos Aires. He also secured a fifty million dollar loan from the Housing Secretary and held construction bids on the proposed Parque de la Ciudad, a one hundred and twenty hectare municipal amusement park that would include a zoo, aquarium, and a two hundred meter "space tower" with a restaurant.

In theory, Boca Juniors' Ciudad Deportiva fit with the junta's plans for hosting the World Cup and providing modern leisure spaces in the city. However, Alberto J. Armando was a political pariah in the eyes of the armed forces given his Peronist past and his more recent support of the wrong military faction in the form of general Alejandro Lanusse and his candidate Ezequiel Martínez in the 1973 elections. This chapter explains how the club abandoned efforts to complete the Ciudad Deportiva by 1976. By that point, the national government stopped supporting the project and the municipality seized the property in 1978. New leadership at Boca Juniors after 1980 would help the club regain possession of the property and begin a lengthy

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Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 454.

process of trying to amend the original 1965 law in order to sell the property. While their efforts passed over the Ciudad Deportiva for political reasons, the military's investment in sport and leisure space as a way of modernizing Buenos Aires points to the lasting legacies of postwar visions of state-led development and social integration. The way in which Boca Juniors emerged from an economic crises in the mid 1980s by selling the Ciudad Deportiva in 1992 parallels Argentina's broader neoliberal turn during the last quarter of the twentieth century.

Pasa la Ciudad Deportiva a la Municipalidad

Ha concluido el plazo legal establecido para que el Club Atlético Boca Juniors cumpliera con los requisitos fijados cuando por ley nacional se cedieron a esa entidad tierras bajo el agua, sobre la Costanera Sur, para la construcción de la Ciudad Deportiva. Y como esos requisitos no se han cumplido, la cesión ha quedado sin efecto y lo realizado en obras pasa automáticamente a pertenecer a la Municipalidad.

Tal lo que expresó ayer, en el curso de una entrevista radiofónica, el intendente de la ciudad de Buenos Aires, brigadier (R) Osvaldo Cacciatore, al ser consultado sobre el tema, y agregó, respecto de los proyectos que existen con relación a los terrenos ganados al río:

"Desde el comienzo hemos tenido la intención de preparar una serie de sectores perfectamente delimitados para darles una conformación urbanística moderna, funcional. Hay planes según los cuales se ubica allí edificios públicos y se destina un sector para actividades culturales".

Siguió diciendo el brigadier Cacciatore que se ha previsto un espacio para el futuro auditorio de la ciudad, un sector recreativo de espacios verdes y otro, que corresponderá al área privada, donde se levantarán edificios particulares, con el producto de cuya venta se va a solventar gran parte de las otras obras.

Cuando su interlocutor expresó que circulaba por la calle un rumor según el cual la Ciudad Deportiva de Boca Juniors estaría ya prácticamente en manos de la Municipalidad, al no haberse construido las otras proyectadas, el intendente respondió:

"En términos legales, la Ciudad Deportiva ya ha finiquitado el plazo para cumplir con todos los requisitos de la transferencia, de ma-

(Cont. en la pág. 13; col. 3)

Figure 18 - Headline of the Ciudad Deportiva being seized by the city. Source: La Nacion, August 22 1979.

Losing and Regaining the Ciudad Deportiva

The leaders of the three branches of Argentina's armed forces seized power on March 24, 1976, but it was army General Jorge Rafael Videla who occupied the presidency. Videla represented the resurgence of the *colorado* faction of the military that viewed Onganía's *azules* and their governance as a *dictablanda*, or "soft dictatorship" that had failed to mobilize a counterrevolution confronting leftist subversion. The junta would prioritize "national security while eliminating subversion and the conditions that promote its existence" while Videla personally emphasized his "profound Christian belief" and the "doctrine of national security" as a keys to fighting global communism.[3] The junta justified their actions by claiming that guerrillas posed an imminent threat in spite of the fact that those groups had been militarily defeated by the time of the coup.[4] By May of 1975, José López Rega's Triple A had already killed over five hundred people in a campaign against the guerrilla groups like the ERP and Montoneros as well as their sympathizers.[5] Nevertheless, the *Proceso* aimed at a more profound transformation of Argentine society that would eliminate politics and restore order. In order to restore order, the junta's logic went, it was necessary to "cure" society of political ills. As a result, the military considered many aspects of popular youth culture "subversive" and the military saw itself as waging a cultural and moral war in "de-politicizing" the country. The military banned all political parties, subjected the press to strict censorship, and began an expansive campaign to kidnap, torture, and murder anyone suspected of potential "subversion." In the words of General Ramón Camps, who was in charge of several clandestine centers in Buenos Aires province, a subversive had "forfeited the right to call himself an Argentine." In the "war between good and

[3] David Rock, *Authoritarian Argentina the Nationalist Movement, Its History, and Its Impact* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 224–25.
[4] Adamovsky, *Historia de La Clase Media*, 407.
[5] Rock, *Authoritarian Argentina*, 223.

evil," he said, it was necessary to "take out quite a few journalists because they were taking positions that threatened the prevailing institutions."[6]

With the support of the United States and in coordination with other South American dictatorships as part of Operation Condor, Argentina's *Proceso* reached its peak of violence between 1976 and 1978. The 1984 government commission that investigated the violence under president Alfonsín would document over 9,000 cases, but human rights groups counted more than 30,000 victims for the entire period.[7] Press censorship and the targeting of journalists limited public knowledge of the scale and nature of the state terror, but the weekly marches of the mothers and grandmothers of the "disappeared" around the Plaza de Mayo served as an important rallying point for awareness. Each branch of the armed forces had a particular area of responsibility and set up their own clandestine torture centers. This organizational model reflected the significant factionalism that existed within Argentina's military which included internecine violence between branches of the armed forces.[8]

The junta viewed *desarrollismo's* concessions to organized labor and privileging of the industrial sector as only a step removed from Peronist policy and therefore subversive. Developmentalist governments had included orthodox liberal economic ministers and policies, but the *Proceso's* leaders believed that liberal economic policy had not been allowed to go far enough to fix the problems of inflation and erratic growth. Most importantly, military leaders viewed liberal economic policy as a part of the doctrine of national security. In neighboring Chile, Chicago-trained economists had been leading a revival of classical liberal economic policy since 1973 under the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet; the revival marked the first neoliberal turn on the continent. Argentina's junta tasked economic minister José Alfredo

[6] Ibid., 227–28.
[7] Romero, *A History of Argentina*, 218.
[8] Ibid., 216.

Martínez de Hoz with controlling inflation, creating economic growth, restructuring Argentina's economy away from "excessive" state control, reducing the public payroll, and eliminating trade protections.[9]

Martínez de Hoz was theoretically empowered to transform the Argentine economy, and he did, but the way he implemented his policies diverged from the neoliberal ideal. A loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and a currency devaluation helped to stabilize inflation during the minister's first year. A new banking law and the deregulation of interest rates created a new and highly speculative financial market which dominated new investment. Martínez de Hoz eliminated export taxes on agriculture and some import tariffs, eventually leading to a flood of imports and increased consumption of foreign goods. However, reducing the public payroll and state spending proved impossible for Martínez de Hoz in the face of the military's veto power. Rather than a wave of privatizations of national industries and mass firings of public workers, the military protected the national oil, railroad, and airline companies and aimed to maintain as low a national unemployment rate as possible in order to retain public support. In fact, public spending increased from 43% of GDP in 1977 to 60% in 1979 under Videla.[10] At the end of 1978 Martínez de Hoz reversed course on free exchange rates in order to combat inflation with a fixed schedule of devaluations known as the *tablita*, but this led to an overvaluing of the peso and inflation remained constant at around 150%. The deregulated banking industry had featured spectacular growth with new banks, branches, buildings, and employees, but this came crashing down in 1980 when a run on banks that had been making bad loans precipitated the Central Bank to liquidate over forty financial institutions.[11]

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[9] Cavarozzi, *Autoritarismo y democracia*, 58–59.
[10] Gerchunoff and Llach, *El ciclo de la ilusión y el descencanto*, 456.
[11] Romero, *A History of Argentina*; Lewis, *The Crisis of Argentine Capitalism*; Gerchunoff and Llach, *El ciclo de la ilusión y el desencanto*.

In March of 1981, Videla stepped down as part of a planned transfer of the presidency and General Roberto Viola took charge amidst the economic crises, growing protests over the "disappearances," and a lack of confidence in his leadership on the part of his military colleagues. Viola reversed course on neoliberal policies, but his presidency was only to last nine months due to ill health and conflict within the military. In December of 1981, General Fortunato Galtieri assumed the presidency and appointed Roberto Alemann economic minister. Alemann's team was composed largely of people who had worked with Martínez de Hoz and they re-imposed policies of austerity, devaluation, and wage freezes.

Galtieri came close to provoking a war with Chile over three islands of disputed territory in the Beagle Channel in January of 1982. The military took expensive, short-term loans to purchase arms and equipment ahead of the anticipated conflict. Six weeks later, on April 2nd of 1982, an Argentine expeditionary force invaded the disputed Malvinas/Falklands Islands with only minimal resistance from the British forces. The military action was initially met with widespread national support and echoed the nationalistic fervor inspired by the 1978 World Cup victory. However, the war for the Malvinas became a military disaster for Argentina and by June 14th the final Argentine garrison surrendered to the British Task Force after suffering over seven hundred dead and more than 1,600 wounded. Discredited, Galtieri resigned and the army appointed Reynaldo Bignone to seek an electoral exit for the military junta from power.[12]

During the *Proceso,* military leaders sought to transform the urban landscape of Buenos Aires. Air force general Osvaldo Cacciatore served as the military mayor of Buenos Aires between 1976 and 1982, the longest serving head of municipal government since Mariano de Vedia y Mitre in the 1930s. The entire metropolitan area was the site of twenty four clandestine

[12] Cavarozzi, *Autoritarismo y democracia: 1955-2006*; Romero, *A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century*; Lewis, *The Crisis of Argentine Capitalism*; Gerchunoff and Llach, *El ciclo de la ilusión y el desencanto*.

detention centers. The most infamous of these was the Navy Mechanics School (ESMA), but the military also created a number of large centers within city limits including the "Club Atlético" in the barrio of San Telmo (named so because of its relative proximity to Boca Juniors) that held 1,500 prisoners. Using medical terms, military "surgeons" like the famously cruel general Ramón Camps aimed to "clean" the city by targeting youth in particular.[13]

Cacciatore aimed to "rationalize" city government by reducing its 86,000 employees and cutting city services, but he actually increased spending on public works. Much of this spending was suspect or corrupt with little to no positive impact on the economy. In an act of supreme arrogance, Cacciatore ignored the combined protests of architects, engineers, city boosters, and his own municipal traffic and infrastructure organizations by announcing a plan to build one hundred kilometers of highways throughout the city proper. The projected density of .54 kilometers per kilometer squared would have been 3.6 times the amount of highways in Los Angeles, the city with the most in the world. Between 1977 and 1979 the city expropriated nearly 3,000 properties in order to clear a way for the first two of the eight projected highways. The military hired the Spanish company AUSA to build them. The 25 de Mayo and Perito Moreno highways had an original budget of one hundred million U.S. dollars but the actual project costs added six hundred and thirty million dollars to the nation's state debt, including over four million dollars in bonuses for just twenty three consultants[14]

Privatization of the city's garbage collection was emblematic of how the military enriched itself and friends of the regime. Through a series of ordinances, the municipality created a single entity to control all garbage collection in the city and surrounding areas called the CEAMSE. After a year of consolidating CEAMSE's monopoly on garbage collection, the city passed

[13] Mario Rapoport and María Seoane, *Buenos Aires, historia de una ciudad: de la modernidad al siglo XXI, sociedad, política, economía y cultura*, vol. 2 (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Planeta, 2007), 396–402.
[14] Ibid., 2:427–42.

another ordinance allowing the work to be contracted to private businesses and hired two foreign companies and two Argentine companies owned by businessman Franco Macri.[15]

The 1980 census established the population of *capital federal* at 2.9 million inhabitants, a loss of almost 50,000 people since 1970 but an overall growth of the metropolitan area from 8.3 million in 1970 to 9.7 million in 1980.[16] The southern barrios bordering the river Riachuelo including San Telmo, La Boca, Barracas, Nueva Pompeya, and Villa Lugano had the city's lowest population density; nearly 3.4 times less dense than the most populated central district. The southern neighborhood of Barracas lost 30,000 inhabitants after it was effectively split in two by highway expropriations.[17] Between 1976 and 1983 the military government expelled 214,000 people from *villas miserias*, or 94% of the total population that the Comisión Municipal de Vivienda (CMV) classified as *villeros*. According to the CMV, *villeros* were "principally from the interior provinces and bordering nations with few economic resources and low skills who find themselves in a state of marginality." This removal was accomplished with ordinances that prohibited construction, the dismantling of basic infrastructure and institutions serving social needs, and with violent raids that removed people by force. The height of these efforts was reached in the months prior to the 1978 FIFA World Cup with the "eradication" of villas in the northern areas of Retiro, Colegiales, and Belgrano.[18]

The military also inherited Argentina's right to host the 1978 World Cup. FIFA had selected Argentina as host in 1966 and confirmed again in 1971 during the presidency of Alejandro Lanusse. The military junta formed its own organizing entity, the EAM, in 1976 and designated the army general Omar Actis as chief organizer. In an act attributed then to guerrillas but

[15] Ibid., 2:445–47.
[16] Ibid., 2:451–54.
[17] Ibid., 2:451–54.
[18] Ibid., 2:483–85.

suspiciously linked to rivalry between the army and navy, Actis was gunned down on the way to his first press conference for the tournament. Navy captain Carlos Lacoste took leadership of the EAM, working with Cacciatore to make various improvements in the city including street signage, traffic lights, illumination for monuments, and stadiums. The EAM remodeled River Plate and Vélez Sarsfield's stadiums in Buenos Aires along with Rosario Central's in Rosario. The organizers built three brand new stadiums in Mendoza, Mar del Plata, and Córdoba. The Secretary of Housing under Videla, Juan Alemann, questioned the excessive spending on World Cup preparations and the corruption of the organizers in his later years: "We didn't agree with how money was being spent… all of the calculations were made by Lacoste and his people… they asked for money and said they would present a budget later. Lacoste had said the World Cup would cost seventy million dollars… Videla said 'even if it's 100 million there's no problem.' Building the color TV station cost 100 million alone, which a private company would have done for 20 million. It makes me want to cry when I think of the money wasted."[19]

The military worked to create a narrative of an "anti-Argentine campaign" concocted by leftists planting negative stories amongst the foreign press ahead of and during the tournament. With an eye towards its image abroad, the military hired the New York public relations firm Burson-Marsteller to craft its image, paid the famed film composer Ennio Morricone to write the tournament's score, and built a multi-million dollar color television station at a moment when color transmissions could only be viewed abroad.[20] Not all went according to plan, as the foreign press did report on human rights abuses and Argentina were nearly eliminated from the tournament before a suspiciously lopsided 6-0 victory over Peru that allowed them to advance. On an "unofficial" visit as a "private citizen," former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger

[19] Cernadas and Lamadrid, 1986, quoted in Scher and Palomino, *Fútbol, Pasión de Multitudes y de Elites*, 161–62.
[20] Rapoport and Seoane, *Buenos Aires, historia de una ciudad*, 2:518–21.

attended the match and joined president Videla in the Peruvian dressing room before the game. Beyond potentially participating in a conspiracy to fix the match, Kissinger praised Argentina's military junta for "fighting terrorism", encouragement that was "the music the Argentina government was longing to hear."[21]

Two days after the World Cup final, Cacciatore announced construction bidding for a one hundred and twenty hectare municipal amusement park in the southwest of the city that would become known as the Parque de la Ciudad, or Interama. First conceived of as a 170 hectare zoo and safari, the Parque de la Ciudad was planned as an enormous theme park with eighty-five attractions, a dance floor for 13,000 people, a 200 meter tower with a rotating restaurant, and a series of rollercoasters. The city contracted a group of three companies that formed the Interama consortium and issued the firm 50 million dollars worth of municipal bonds. The consortium spent 160 million dollars on imported structures, duty-free. When audited in 1981, the city's bank found that 3 million dollars had been embezzled by Interama's managers. Despite this, military officials gave the company an extension on the construction deadlines. Reminiscent of the amusements and family leisure space available at the Ciudad Deportiva, the Parque de la Ciudad would open at the end of 1982. The highways, World Cup improvements, and Parque de la Ciudad were major public works projects that added well over a billion dollars to the national debt.[22]

Given all of this public spending on infrastructure, what happened to the Ciudad Deportiva, especially given the fact that it had received so much previous support from the national government? Argentina's World Cup plans had included the Ciudad Deportiva as a central venue

[21] Uki Goñi, "Kissinger Hindered US Effort to End Mass Killings in Argentina, According to Files." *The Guardian*, August 9, 2016.

[22] Rapoport and Seoane, *Buenos Aires, historia de una ciudad*, 2:443–45.

since FIFA had awarded the bid in 1966. In 1974, with the stadium definitively stalled, the Peronist government had even passed a law declaring the project "of national interest" and granted a three year deadline extension in an effort to complete it ahead of the tournament.[23] The military invested heavily in tournament infrastructure and leisure space for the city, yet the junta did not support construction of the Gran Estadio or further work at the Ciudad Deportiva. Those close to Armando give differing accounts as to why, in the midst of such lavish public spending on stadiums and infrastructure, the military pass over the completion of Boca's project. Jesus Asiain, vice president at Boca, explained that "Armando collaborated in many aspects with the military. He had ambitions to be the national secretary of sport but his efforts died down because they didn't pay much attention to him."[24] Cecilia Demario, the daughter of Armando's wife Maria Mercedes Armando, recalled that "the members of the military during the *Proceso* persecuted Armando intensely. When Armando tried to return to the presidency in the early 1980s, Admiral Massera wanted to have him killed… they wanted him to stay away from Boca." Maria Mercedes added that "he had a terrible fight with one of [the navy officers]."[25] Carlos Alberto Falchi, a club official and member of Boca's historical *subcomisión*, explained that Armando "made the wrong political decision in 1973" by supporting the *azules* military faction with Lanusse's candidate Ezequiel Martínez." He reasoned that "Armando probably believed that becoming close with the military would get him what he needed to finish… Cacciatore destroyed half the city to build some highways so if he had wanted to finish the Ciudad Deportiva he would have."[26] The opaque nature of infrastructure projects during the *Proceso*

[23] J.A. Allende and R.A. Lastira, "Ley 20.853: Declárase de Interés Nacional La Ciudad Deportiva Creada Por Ley 16.575," *Boletin Oficial* 23026 (October 30, 1974): 2.
[24] Jesus Asiain, *Interview with Jesus Asiain* (Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2013).
[25] Armando Maria Mercedes, *Interview with Maria Mercedes Armando* (Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, n.d.).
[26] Carlos Alberto Falchi, *Interview with Beto Falchi* (Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2014).

makes it difficult to know exactly why the military did not seek to complete the Ciudad Deportiva and its stadium, the reasons provided by Armando's friends and relatives are plausible but contradictory and incomplete. While the precise mechanisms and decision making processes are not know, it is nonetheless possible to assert that the club fell out of favor with a regime that instituted its massive spending projects through ties of corruption and patronage.

Boca Juniors' efforts to complete the Ciudad Deportiva were also in jeopardy because of the numerous lawsuits brought against the club for failure to complete the stadium by the 1975 deadline. Holders of *títulos* and, in particular, those who had purchased seats in the new stadium sued Armando and the club throughout the 1970s. In 1977, a judge found Armando guilty of fraudulent activity by running unauthorized rifas after 1968. While the ruling implicated the entire *comisión directiva*, only Armando was ordered to pay a fine.[27] In a letter to the editor of *Clarín*, a Boca fan asked: "those of who bought títulos find ourselves in a situation where all we are left with are papers while the property won from the Rio de la Plata - whose value is incalculable - is taken by the state which did not risk a single cent."[28] Omar Luis de Marco was awarded 105 million pesos in damages in 1978 for the value of what he paid for his seat, the projected value of the seat, and 6% annual interest. This first case set a precedent that *Clarín* predicted would unleash a "magnitude of cases that signifies potentially astronomical sums of money that Boca Juniors will need to compensate the buyers of *bonos* or seats."[29] A judge awarded Salvador Lerman 21 million pesos for a seat he had bought in 1971. Lerman also pressed for moral damages to compensate the embarrassment caused by the club's fraudulence, though the judge denied the petition. The club's lawyers argued in return that Lerman had not

[27] "Incomprenesible Indemnidad de Un Delito de Boca Juniors," *La Prensa*, May 9, 1977, sec. Deportes, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.
[28] "Cartas Al Pais: Venta de Títulos Patrimoniales," *Clarín*, December 2, 1977.
[29] "Dictan Sentencia En Contra de Boca," *Clarín*, June 14, 1978.

purchased a seat in the new stadium but merely first preference or a reservation for the seat, an argument the judge did not find convincing.[30] While a number of lawsuits were publicized, many who had purchased seats did not pursue recompense until the mid 1980s or not at all out of loyalty to the club.

The military may not have helped complete the Ciudad Deportiva, but they did play a crucial role in allowing the club to retain the property. In 1978, Cacciatore passed Municipal Ordinance 35.176. The ordinance allowed Boca Juniors to retain possession of the Ciudad Deportiva under the condition that they build additional facilities and cede use of the complex to the city. The stipulations included numerous facilities that were already completed, more of a symbolic effort to mark the Ciudad Deportiva's contributions to a wider public than any significant transformation in its design or purpose.[31] Surprisingly, the club failed to comply with the ordinance and the municipality took formal possession of the Ciudad Deportiva in August of 1979. *Clarín* reported that an unidentified employee of Boca Juniors claimed that the club was actively negotiating an arrangement with the city, though municipal authorities denied this and alluded to developing plans for a park.[32] In a more conciliatory tone, Cacciatore explained that the city was working to "take advantage of what is already completed for the community's use… we're talking with club authorities on how to do this… the failure to complete the project was not the fault of Boca Juniors." Boca's vice president, Luis Maria Bortnik, said that he was "very optimistic" that the club would not permanently lose the Ciudad Deportiva.[33] Claudio Vaca, a former goalkeeper for Boca Juniors, was less optimistic and blamed Armando's *comisión*

[30] "Condenan a Boca Por Plateas Que No Hizo," *Crónica*, March 16, 1983, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion; "Deberá Indeminzar Boca Júniors Al Titular de Una Platea Preferencial," *La Prensa*, March 22, 1983, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.
[31] "Tres Años de Prórroga Para Boca y Su Ciudad Deportiva," *Clarín*, August 31, 1978.
[32] "Cacciatore: 'La Ciudad Deportiva de Boca Júniors Es, Tácitamente, Propieded de La Municipalidad,'" *Clarín*, August 22, 1979.
[33] "La Ciudad Deportiva de Boca Júniors: Triste Despertar de Un Hermoso Sueño," *La Razón*, August 22, 1979.

directiva for losing the property. He explained that he had never bought títulos and had advised his friends and family not to either: "I'm not an expert in economics but I have an idea of what's impossible… they needed to have started [the stadium] four or five years before they did." Pablo Abbatangelo, a member of the agrupación La Bombonera, explained that "we knew what would happen to our country when the first three rifas were launched… these were never property titles or bonds [as advertised]… Boca was only authorized to sell rifas."[34] The same unidentified Boca employee claimed that people launched such critiques seeking to gain an advantage, "politically speaking."[35] A week after the city had taken possession of the Ciudad Deportiva, Osvaldo Cacciatore signed a city ordinance that gave the club three years to build a number of soccer fields, recreational areas, and facilities on the island which had been destined for the new stadium.

For most of 1980, Armando took a leave of absence from the club. Maria Mercedes explained that her husband was "exhausted… he left the club because he wanted to."[36] That December, Boca Juniors held the first elections in which Armando was not a candidate since 1960. After nearly two decades under Alberto J. Armando, the *socios* of Boca Juniors elected a new president, Martín Noel, at the end of 1981. Noel oversaw the end of an era in soccer terms; the club's coach Juan Carlos Lorenzo left and Boca entered a period of poor results. Seeking to rebuild, the club signed a number of expensive stars which culminated with the loan of Diego Armando Maradona from Argentinos Juniors. Maradona, a rising star after five seasons with Argentinos, came at a high price. Noel and his *comisión directiva* enlisted the help of a number of wealthy Boca fans and *dirigentes* (including Armando) to raise enough money to sign the young star on loan for a single season. With Maradona, the club won the championship of 1982.

[34] "La Polemica de Los Complejos Deportivos," *Clarín*, August 23, 1979.
[35] "Un Complejo Con Incierto Destino," *Clarín*, August 24, 1979.
[36] Maria Mercedes, *Interview with Maria Mercedes Armando*.

In April of 1982, Cacciatore signed Municipal Ordinance No. 37677, transferring legal possession of the Ciudad Deportiva from the municipality to Club Atlético Boca Juniors.[37] A property created as a forty hectare site in the Río de la Plata, loaned to Boca by the federal government, had transformed into more than seventy hectares of land owned by the club outright. AFA president Julio Grondona, Boca president Martín Noel and his *comisión directiva*, and the original congressional champion of the Ciudad Deportiva, Reinaldo Elena, joined Cacciatore and other military officials for a ceremony to celebrate the transfer of ownership. Cacciatore deemed Boca's efforts to complete the project over three years sufficient, explaining that while "missing a few details," the club had built important facilities serving the "public good." The military mayor remarked that the efforts were "a meritorious example of concerted efforts by a private entity in building for the common good." The ordinance specified that the city and public schools could use the facilities free of charge for "whatever athletic, cultural, or recreational activity the municipality would like to realize for the public good." Boca president Martin Noel was the only one to acknowledge the failed effort to build the stadium: "[the project] navigated the natural ups and downs, frustrations, and joy that any enterprise of such magnitude experiences."[38]

In April of 1983 the club inaugurated the Complejo Nautico Malvinas Argentinas, an additional pool at the Ciudad Deportiva. Present at the ceremony were Navy admiral Ruben Franco, bishop Daniel Keegan, a military band, and schoolchildren who all talked about the ill-fated "campaign to retake the Malvinas" that had been launched a year before. Noel gave a

[37] "Pasa La Ciudad Deportiva a La Municipalidad," *La Nación*, August 22, 1979, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion; Osvaldo Cacciatore et al., "Se Otorga Al Club Boca Juniors Posesion Legal de Los Terrenos Que Ocupa La Ciudad Deportiva," Pub. L. No. 37.677, § Boletin Municipal de La Ciudad De Buenos Aires, 52093 (1982); "Boca Júniors Ya Es Dueño de Su Ciudad," *Clarín*, April 1, 1982; Jorge Búsico, "Armando Está De Vuelta," *La Razón*, November 24, 1986.

[38] Cacciatore et al., Se Otorga Al Club Boca Juniors Posesion Legal de Los Terrenos Que Ocupa la Ciudad Deportiva; "Boca Júniors Ya Es Dueño de Su Ciudad."

speech about Boca's founding, tying the club to the community's benefit and the club revealed a monument to the war's first casualty, captain Giachino.[39] Despite winning the 1982 championship, the club's increasing debt and failure to pay the players for seven months were blamed on Noel's mismanagement and he did not present himself as a candidate in the 1983 election.

Bankrupting Boca

Bignone's government placed the highest priority on negotiating amnesty for the military for their campaign of murder and terror, even passing a law that granted them such. The pro-democracy movement that gained momentum after the Malvinas used general strikes and marches to demonstrate against the military in addition to remobilizing the major political parties' infrastructure. The 1978 World Cup had helped make the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo more visible and they were now joined by thousands in their weekly demonstrations. Raul Alfonsín, a Radical lawyer who had defended political prisoners during the *Proceso*, won the elections of October 1983 with over 50% of the vote - 10% more than the Peronist candidate, Ítalo Luder. The electoral victory represented the first time Peronists had been defeated in open elections and the return of democratic rule aroused widespread public enthusiasm. Alfonsín's Radicals also won control of congress, though the party had its own internal divisions and only constituted a minority in the senate. Two months later the National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons (CONADEP) was formed to document the junta's crimes, publishing their report *Nunca Más* in September of 1984. Many of the top military commanders were convicted as a result of their trials but, controversially, Alfonsín's government passed a law

[39] "Inauguracion de Un Complejo Nautico En La Ciudad Deportiva," *El Cronista*, April 11, 1983.

prohibiting the initiation of trials after 1986 and another law protecting subordinates in the armed forces for having only followed orders.[40]

Alfonsín's government faced a dire economic situation featuring a growing national debt, rampant inflation, and a shrinking economy. Argentina's GDP had shrank by an annual rate of 4% between 1980 and 1983. Inflation stood at 400% annually by the end of 1983. Most importantly for Argentina's economic future, the junta had indebted the country heavily with borrowing from the IMF and other foreign sources. In 1976 the national debt stood at around 8 billion dollars; it increased to nearly 19 billion in 1978 to 46 billion in 1983. Interest alone increased the debt by 6 billion dollars over the next four years.[41] Alfonsín's first economic minister was Bernardo Grinspun, a former ECLA economist who had served as part of Illia's economic team. He pursued policies of price controls to combat inflation and lowered interest rates and increased public spending to stimulate an economic recovery. By the end of 1984 inflation reached 713% and continued to rise to 1,024% by April of 1984.[42] Alfonsín replaced Grinspun with Juan Sourrouille and announced the creation of a new economic program and national currency under the Austral Plan. Consisting of more orthodox liberal economic policies including cuts in public spending and the dismantling of trade protections, the plan initially curbed inflation in 1985 and the Radicals gained seats in congressional elections that year. However, inflation gradually increased over the next two years and reached 102% by February of 1987.[43]

In 1987 and 1988, three separate military uprisings challenged Alfonsín's government and demanded the upholding and extension of amnesty to lower-ranking officers and soldiers. While

[40] Romero, *A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century*.
[41] Lewis, *The Crisis of Argentine Capitalism*.
[42] Ibid., 483; Gerchunoff and Llach, *El ciclo de la ilusión y el desencanto*, 394.
[43] Lewis, *The Crisis of Argentine Capitalism*, 487.

Alfonsín's government successfully negotiated or put down the uprisings, the ambiguous ending of each incident eroded public support for Alfonsín's government. With the failure of the Austral Plan, the government announced a new Spring Plan in late 1988 ahead of the elections in May of 1989. The plan aimed to freeze prices and wages in an attempt to gain the confidence of foreign creditors, but this failed and the government announced a devaluation of the peso on February 6th, 1989. The devaluation triggered an economic crisis that feature hyperinflation, a fall in real wages and production, and public looting. Carlos Menem, the Peronist candidate in the 1989 elections, won by a ten point margin over the Radical Eduardo Angeloz. The Alfonsín government's legitimacy had eroded to the point that the president resigned in order for Menem to take over six months ahead of schedule.[44] During the "lost decade" of economic growth in Latin America, the region's six largest economies shrank between 1982 and 1989 with Argentina's amongst the worst affected.[45]

At Boca Juniors, the club's growing debt and inability to pay its players under Martín Noel mirrored the broader national economic crisis in 1983. After Noel's departure, the two main candidates who contested the December 1983 elections were Oscar Magdalena and Agustín Corigliano. In reality, Magdalena was a stand-in candidate for two men: Antonio Alegre and Carlos Heller. Alegre was a close friend of Raúl Alfonsín and Heller was the manager of the bank Credicoop. Both men had helped finance the transfer of Maradona and combat the growing economic crisis in the club but had not been socios long enough to run for office. Corigliano, another key player in the Maradona transfer and part of the professional soccer department at the club, won the election with a slim six point margin.

Corigliano sold a number of key players in order to reduce wages, the first step in what

[44] Romero, *A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century*; Gerchunoff and Llach, *El ciclo de la ilusión y el desencanto*.
[45] Gerchunoff and Llach, *El ciclo de la ilusión y el desencanto*, p.388.

would be remembered as one of the club's most disastrous seasons. After a series of poor results at the start of the 1984 campaign, Corigliano fired the coach and stopped paying the players. The *comisión directiva* abandoned club treasurer Héctor Martínez Sosa, leading him to try and cover the club's salaries with his own money. The players threatened to strike, prompting the leader of Boca's *barra brava* to warn the players that while they understood their plight, nobody put themselves ahead of the club. In Boca's following game, the team was forced to wear white training jerseys with painted numbers due to the coinciding colors with the visiting team, Atlanta. While the incident was the result of poor planning and improvisation, it is widely remembered as a moment in which the financial disaster of the club and poor form produced the farcical image an impoverished club playing in training shirts. The club officially requested a suspension of their next game against Huracán while they resolved the player salary dispute. In a move that surprised all, Corigliano took a sixty day leave of absence. Interim president Cándido Vidales, the club treasurer Martinez Sosa, and an informal comisión directiva from several *agrupaciónes* that would become known as "Los Notables" stepped in to fill the power vacuum. The group included Antonio Alegre, Carlos Heller, Alberto J. Armando, Jesus Asiain, Luis Maria Bortnik, and Oscar Magdalena. Often using their own money and emergency funds requested from wealthy supporters, the group was able to return the club to some level of normalcy by resuming payments to the club's staff and players. Boca won its next game in dramatic fashion at home, leading many to believe that the club's fortunes had turned.

However, Corigliano again surprised many by returning to the club after many believed that his leave of absence had in fact been an informal resignation. The "Notables" continued raising money for the club with a campaign of "Mil por mil para salvar a Boca" in which one thousand socios would donate one thousand dollars each in order to save the club. With Corigliano

undermining these efforts to save the club, Boca suffered a further setback when the city ordered the closure of its stadium on August 24th, 1984 due to structural deficiencies. Carlos Costa, an architect who had done work on the Ciudad Deportiva but had never been paid, lobbied for the closure as a way of seeking payment of the club's debt to him.[46] La Bombonera had been in need of structural repairs for some time and work had already begun before the financial collapse of the club, but the lack of progress and Costa's efforts prompted the city to order its closure. With its stadium locked and emptied, its players and staff waiting for wages, and a deeply unpopular president returning from his leave of absence, newspaper accounts described a club on the verge of disaster. Armando threatened: "If Boca doesn't have money, I'll pay from my own pocket. There's no question of this. Regarding Corigliano, if he returns [permanently] then I'll leave and with me almost all of Los Notables."[47] During a meeting with the comisión directiva and socios Héctor Martínez Sosa gave a financial report detailing the gravity of Boca's financial crisis, prompting one of Corigliano's supporters to punch him in the face and yell "Shut your mouth and don't speak badly about Corigliano!" During a break in the national tournament, the team spent a month traveling in a bizarrely timed tour of Europe and North America that included a 9-1 drubbing by Barcelona at the Camp Nou. The team returned to Argentina not only with Corigliano at the club's helm once again but with a league match the day after landing. The players managed a draw, but had still not received their wages and decided to formally strike with the involvement of the players union, the FAA. Two losses later, the team's coach Dino Sani threatened to sue over not being paid and Corigiliano finally resigned on November 5th.

On November 9th, the remaining members of Corigliano's comisión directiva met with Los Notables and the presidents of the club's various *agrupaciónes* to decide on new leadership and a

[46] Pablo Abbatangelo, *Interview with Pablo Abbatangelo* (Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2014).

plan to pay the club's debt. Antonio Alegre enjoyed broad support from various factions because of his connections and generous financial support. Alegre had loaned the club more than half a million dollars for signings including Maradona, was a close personal friend of president Alfonsín, and a prominent member of the Radical party. Armando, the other possibility, had a history of antagonism with several *agrupaciónes* and was an enemy of AFA president Julio Grondona. The group led by Alegre agreed that drastic measures were needed to save the club, deciding that government intervention would be the path to stability and economic restructuring. On November 29th of 1984 the state appointed Federico Polak, a lawyer and Racing fan, as interventor at the club. Polak was able to bring some political and economic stability to the club. Polak convened the leaders of the clubs *agrupaciónes* and forced them to come to a consensus for a provisional *comisón directiva* to serve until the 1986 elections. The *agrupaciónes* picked Antonio Alegre as president and Carlos Heller as vice president.

It was in this new panorama in 1985 that Alegre's administration began the economic rebuilding of the club. His administration faced nearly two hundred legal cases it had been ordered to pay debts on, a team that would have been relegated to the second division were it not for the *promedio* (a system of measuring average season performances to determine relegation which blatantly favored the larger teams), and a budget that was still wildly inviable. With only a year to negotiate debts and improve the team's fortunes, the 1986 elections were hotly contested. Armando emerged as the main challenger to Alegre, promising above all winning teams and a return to greatness. In a campaign interview, Alegre claimed that his administration had "halted the club's collapse, organized and delayed debts, and revived the team… the club had practically stopped paying any debts since at least 1980." Beyond paying debts and improving the team, Alegre promised to "reorganize amateur soccer to develop better talent, work to grow the

institution as a place where entire families can participate, and eradicate violence in the stadiums so that soccer can recover its festive, popular character." Armando also emphasized the necessity of "reviving social activity and the practice of all sports in the stadium, Ciudad Deportiva, and La Candela."[48] On election day, 49% of the 7116 socios cast their ballots for Armando while 50% voted for Alegre.

In 1988, at 78 years of age, Alberto J. Armando died of a heart attack while at home.[49] During his twenty two years at Boca, the club had won nine domestic titles in professional soccer and three international titles in the Copa Libertadores and Copa Intercontinental. Jesus Asiain delivered his eulogy at a funeral service attended by many players, directors, and fans of the club. Armando's failure to complete the Ciudad Deportiva had been evident since the early 1970s, yet he had remained club president for nearly a decade after. His departure from the presidency in 1980 did not signal an end to his influence at Boca Juniors; he would participate in the *de facto* board of directors known as the "Notables" during the club's economic crisis and he only narrowly lost the elections of 1986. While this longevity can be partly explained by Armando's actions, his ability to weather political conflict within and outside the club was also a result of the dynamics of club governance and national politics. Like many clubs, Armando's board of directors was often a mix of men of influence from varied political backgrounds and allowed Boca Juniors to maintain connections to the national government across a turbulent period in Argentina's history.

[48] Jorge Búsico, "Armando Está De Vuelta."
[49] "Murio Alberto: Un Patriarco de Boca," *Clarín*, December 28, 1988.

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MURIO ALBERTO

UN PATRIARCA DE BOCA

Boca se quedó sin uno de sus más caracterizados personajes. Ayer murió Alberto J. Armando, quien durante casi un cuarto de siglo ocupó la presidencia de la institución. Tenía 78 años y su deceso se produjo por una crisis cardíaca. Durante el ciclo en que Armando gobernó, Boca obtuvo doce campeonatos, entre los que están incluidos los títulos de la Copa Libertadores de América (dos) y la Copa Intercontinental. La comisión directiva de Boca le rindió anoche un homenaje y el club permaneció con sus puertas cerradas en señal de duelo. Varias personalidades del deporte asistieron al velatorio. Los restos de Alberto J. Armando serán inhumados hoy. Antes, el cortejo fúnebre pasará frente a la Bombonera y también frente a las instalaciones de la Ciudad Deportiva, en la Costanera Sur.

Figure 19 - Headline of Armando's death in 1988. Source: Clarín, 1988.

Selling the Ciudad Deportiva

Carlos Saúl Menem began his presidency on July 9th, 1989, six month ahead of schedule because of Alfonsín's resignation. It was the first peaceful transfer of power between two democratically elected presidents in Argentina since 1928. The son of Syrian immigrants, Menem rose to the leadership of the resurgent Peronist party after serving as governor of his home province of La Rioja. Menem was charismatic and his promises of a significant increase in real wages, national production, and a "popular market economy" seemed to harken back to the style of Perón. However, two of Menem's first major laws cut public employee benefits and allowed for the privatization of some of the largest state companies. Argentina's had similar levels of crippling foreign debt as other nations in the region, leading to the emergence of the "Washington Consensus" that prioritized the opening of economies and dismantling of state-led development and welfare. Menem first privatized the state-owned telephone and airline companies followed by electric, gas, and water utilities later. His economic minister, Domingo

Cavallo, fixed the exchange rate at one dollar to one peso by law. Surrendering the ability to control exchange rates was a signal to foreign creditors that the government would not manipulate currency. These measures, along with the reduction of trade barriers, restored Argentina's access to loans from the IMF and World Bank. Between 1991 and 1993, the GNP showed steady growth, consumption increased, and inflation fell drastically.[50]

In November of 1989, Menem signed a presidential decree placing the Puerto Madero district under the control of a newly-created private corporation named the Old Puerto Madero Corporation. The decree empowered the company with almost complete legal jurisdiction over the area and charged with creating a "pole of urban development [attracting] investment of domestic and international capital including the sale of property."[51] Menem's appointed three of his closest friends and advisers to the corporation's board.[52] After years of planning and bidding, construction on the new district began in 1994 and featured the cleaning and refurbishing of the derelict docks and warehouses as well as the construction of new avenues connecting them. Initial construction featured office and apartment high-rises as well as commercial spaces and restaurants in the warehouse district.

At Boca Juniors, the Ciudad Deportiva remained a drain on the club's finances only a stone's throw away from Puerto Madero. The club's multi-million dollar debt figures required a large infusion of cash and Alegre's administration struggled to negotiate, extend, and settle various debts. At the start of 1989, general secretary Jesus Asiain put it plainly: "The economic future of Boca rests on the possibility of unburdening ourselves of the Ciudad Deportiva." Vice president Carlos Heller agreed, "Selling is the only solution… without that money we can't envision a

[50] Romero, *A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century*, 285–93.
[51] Gabriela Massuh, *El robo de Buenos Aires: la trama de corrupción, ineficiencia y negocios que le arrebató la ciudad a sus habitantes*, 2014, 24–34.
[52] Rapoport and Seoane, *Buenos Aires, historia de una ciudad*, 2:590.

modern Boca that provides its *socios* with the infrastructure required of a modern club that is attractive to the rest of society." Heller continued: "Nobody should be surprised, this *comisión directiva* came to the club with the intention of rescuing the club from financial disaster by any means." The club shared a number of early proposals with common characteristics: foreign investors, mainly from Europe, who would seek to build a hotel complex, shopping center, theme park, athletic facilities, or a combination of these parts with a purchase price upwards of six million dollars. The Ciudad Deportiva represented a multi-million dollar windfall for the club as well as a significant relief from the costs of maintaining a property that Asiain described as a "white elephant."[53]

Diario Popular interviewed Enrique Loaldi, the manager of the Ciudad Deportiva, in January of 1989. Loaldi explained that a significant portion of the property and facilities where abandoned, including the swimming pools that had been shut down four years prior due to maintenance costs. A few small soccer fields were in use and the Café Neptuno hosted a tractor exposition arranged by the Soviet-Argentine commerce board. The tennis courts and barbecue areas did continue to draw large crowds, particularly on weekends. Another employee, Norberto Torres, explained that the Ciudad Deportiva was open between 9am and 9pm every day, but that much of the work of the employees involved cleaning the facilities and cutting grass. Indeed, the seventh island destined to support the stadium was slowly eroding as its borders had never been shored. Jesus Asiain explained that the club was spending a significant portion of its operating budget on maintaining the Ciudad Deportiva and paying the twenty five employees who worked there while the revenue it generated covered only a fraction of its cost. "Nobody anticipated that Argentina would become the major site of an economic disaster… the political economy

[53] "Asi Esta La Ciudad," *Solo Fútbol*, September 10, 1990.

changed and inflation wrecked our budget… it's a miracle that Armando was able to do what he did given inflation" remarked Asiain when asked about the reasons for the Ciudad Deportiva's current state.[54]

Alegre's *comisión directiva* needed to gain approval from the *socios*, city, and congress in order to modify the original law and sell the property. Given the *comisión directiva's* political connections, the judicial arbitration over Boca's debt case, and the grave situation in which Boca stood, the club's directors were confident that they would gain the necessary support. Jacobo Fitermann, the city's Secretary of Public Works, affirmed that "any project rehabilitating the Costanera Sur interests us… even more so if we know the plans of the buyer beforehand.[55]" Parallel to these efforts, the club began to negotiate with several parties interested in purchasing the Ciudad Deportiva. In April of 1989, it seemed that a buyer had been found who would pay 8.5 million dollars to lease the property for a period of 99 years and build a touristic complex consisting of hotels and commercial buildings. This deal fell through as the club worked to obtain the legislation necessary to sell, but the club claimed to have two more deals for a permanent sale of the Ciudad Deportiva for 8.5 million and 10 million dollars as the political process continued.[56]

Some of Boca's *socios* and *dirigentes* objected to selling the Ciudad Deportiva as well as the nature of the deals that were mentioned in negotiations. Héctor Martínez Sosa, the club's treasurer under Corigliano, urged Alegre's *comisión directiva* to consider the club's long-term economic future and the rights of people who had bought *títulos*. He argued that given the disastrous financial state of most clubs in the country, the only way to emerge from debt

[54] "La Ciudad Deportiva: Un Sueño Golpeado Por La Realidad Del Olvido," *Diario Popular*, January 23, 1989, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion; "Asi Esta La Ciudad."
[55] "A Pedir de Boca," *Somos*, March 22, 1989, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.
[56] Parviz Lavi et al., "Carta de Intencion: Complejo-Turístico-Comercial," February 16, 1989, Secretaria General C.A.B.J; "Alquiler Por La Ciudad Deportiva," *La Prensa*, April 2, 1989, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.

permanently was to build a social infrastructure that attracted more *socios* whose dues would ensure solvency. In order to do this at Boca, the club needed to negotiate a deal that would allow them to retain a portion of the Ciudad Deportiva for infrastructure or partner with a business group to build athletic infrastructure and share the profits. "It's obvious that Boca has more fans than any other institution, but it's also true that Boca has very few *socios*, especially compared to the other large clubs. This clearly indicates that Boca must transform from a club of soccer to a club with soccer. To do this, we must offer people infrastructure." He reasoned that the club would need around 100,000 *socios* when in actuality it had less than 20,000. "If I have a budget that generates deficits then a sale only allows me to delay more debt for three or four years… I need a budget with a surplus to pay previous debt - there's a parallel here between the nation and Boca." He further argued that under Corigliano, the pools at the Ciudad Deportiva generated an annual revenue of 32,000 dollars and that Alegre and his team were undervaluing the property. Martínez Sosa claimed that an auction for Argentine and international businesses would surely bring a price closer to the Ciudad Deportiva's real value, which he estimated at 30 million dollars.[57]

In September of 1989, the legislation that would allow Boca to sell the Ciudad Deportiva began working its way through the parliamentary process. President Carlos Menem signaled his support with a broad smile: "Now, how could we ever let Boca die?" In congress, Jose P. Aramburu voiced dissent at the club's cavalier actions in negotiating deals before asking for the law to be changed, while others signaled concern that the legislation affected the club's internal politics ahead of the December elections and that Alegre stood to recuperate 800,000 dollars owed to him by the club in selling the Ciudad Deportiva. Congressmen Carlos Auyero and

[57] "Martínez Sosa y La Eventual Venta de La Ciudad Deportiva," *La Nación*, July 31, 1989, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion; "La Venta de La Ciudad Deportiva de Boca, Desde 'Otro Angulo...,'" *Crónica*, August 2, 1989, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.

Alberto Aramouni dissented on behalf *título* holders and also argued that the property should belong to the city since it had only been returned to Boca because of a deal with Cacciatore. La Prensa reflected: "While the nation is undergoing a serious crisis and the parliament passes emergency laws of economic adjustment, congress considers giving away what is really a property that belongs to the community."[58] In a letter to *Clarín*, a Boca fan asked: "Is it right to sell the Ciudad Deportiva when the real owners are those who trusted that the stadium would be built and bought *bonos patrimoniales*? Wouldn't it be better that the club generate revenue from the property in the same way that any interested buyer would?"[59] Another fan wrote: "They're trying to sell what is mine, since I am one of many *título* holders. We're evaluating legal action because at one point this was an asset for the club and a facility for us."[60]

On the day of congressional debate, Aramburu continued his dissent by drawing a parallel to Argentina's foreign debt: "[the club] is selling its most important asset to pay creditors while there are more important priorities to restructuring the club for it to generate its own revenues… right when we are eliminating state subsidies, legislators bestow a subsidy to a club to solve problems stemming from mismanagement that we ourselves, as Boca supporters, should be solving." One congressman insisted that the buyers of the Ciudad Deportiva should somehow guarantee respect for the law's original purpose in serving the community. Another congressman contrasted Boca's financial mismanagement to his own club, Lanús, which he held as a model for proper management. One of the bill's sponsors responded angrily: "Boca Juniors and its directors cannot be disparaged, who reclaimed land from the river after all? Certainly not congress." Alegre insisted on the necessity of the sale in an interview, arguing that it was the

[58] "Tema Del Dia, Ciudad Deportiva," *Sur*, September 3, 1989, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion; Sergio Crivelli, "Politica y Deporte," *La Prensa*, September 15, 1989, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.
[59] "¿Es Justo Vender El Predio?," *Clarín*, September 16, 1989.
[60] "La Ciudad Deportiva: ¿Se Vende?," *Clarín*, September 20, 1989.

only way to pay the club's debt and build facilities for their current needs. Boca's president explained that the club would need 70 million dollars to build a viable project at the Ciudad Deportiva, the kind of capital that only a large investor would possess. He insisted that the club's *agrupaciónes* were unified in this decision and that the *título* holders would be offered discounts at the club. "The national situation did not allow for Alberto J. Armando to realize his dream. He wanted the Ciudad Deportiva to expand Boca. Now that task will be finished and Boca will be even greater."[61]

In an op-ed to *Clarín*, economist Pablo Gerchunoff pointed to the deal as symptomatic of the nation's problem with deregulation. Gerchunoff argued that what congress did was to deregulate the restrictions placed on Boca's use of public land in order to allow the club to profit, privately and handsomely, from a decision made by the state. He reckoned that congress could pass "a tax so that the state capitalizes on the economic value that deregulation generated, but I don't think I'll find support for this fiscal idea." Perhaps, Gerchunoff remarked, this was "a lesson: that just as there are regulations for the privileged there can also be deregulations for the privileged… today it's a few million for a non-profit civic association, but tomorrow it could be hundreds of millions for God knows who."[62]

Boca vice president Carlos Heller welcomed the news of the law's passing, remarking that it was a happy day for the club and that they could now negotiate the current offers of 8.5 and 10 million dollars or entertain others. He did not want to enter any "political games… there are many who say that the Ciudad Deportiva is worth more. Things are worth whatever someone is willing to pay. If anyone has a better offer I welcome them… we haven't signed a deal with

[61] Ibid.; "Hecha La Ley, Vendida La Ciudad Deportiva," *Sur*, September 22, 1989, sec. Deportes, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion; "Por Ley Del Congreso Boca Podrá Vender Su Ciudad Deportiva," *La Nación*, September 22, 1989, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.
[62] "Boca y La Desregulación," *Clarín*, September 26, 1989, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.

anyone yet."[63] With the elections looming in December, the *asamblea de socios* rejected the first two offers and the club reported that it had received four new offers, all surpassing 10 million dollars.[64] Alegre faced Luis Saadi in the December club elections. Saadi was the brother of the provincial governor of Catamarca and a member of the Peronist party. He focused his campaign on critiquing the sale of the Ciudad Deportiva, claiming that he was negotiating a deal to work with investors on developing the property without selling and securing *título* holders' interests. Alegre argued that when he arrived at the club "the stadium was locked up and infested with rats… we've completed 90% of what we promised and will look to sell the Ciudad Deportiva."[65] Alegre won in a landslide with 90% of the vote.

By July of 1990, it seemed that Boca had reached another deal with a French consortium of businessmen. The *comisión directiva* unanimously approved a deal that would not sell the Ciudad Deportiva but instead commit the club to an equal partnership with the French group to redevelop the property. The club would receive a fee of around 10 million dollars and the French group would take charge in building a "nautical complex" that would include hotels, fairgrounds, a convention center, and other facilities. Boca negotiated the deal as the club struggled to keep its creditors at bay with the ongoing debt restructuring case and its 240 employees going on strike after not being paid.[66] In the 72 hour waiting period between the final offer and contract signing, the French group backed out of the deal citing that "the country's situation did not offer the guarantees necessary to realize this investment." Alegre regretted the "ill-fated deal.. Now we wait for the first good deal presented to sell the Ciudad Deportiva. With that money we can pay the club's debts." Club secretary Jesus Asiain lamented that the French were "convinced to

[63] "Por Ley Del Congreso Boca Podrá Vender Su Ciudad Deportiva."
[64] "Quién Da Más Por Esta Ciudad," *Pagina 12*, October 14, 1989, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.
[65] "Elecciones En Boca," *Clarín*, December 9, 1989.
[66] "Boca Vende Media Ciudad Deportiva," *Clarín*, July 18, 1990; "La Operación de La Ciudad Deportiva," *Clarín*, July 19, 1990.

distrust because of the poor image of Argentina publicized abroad." Vice president Heller signaled his surprise with the French group for changing their minds about the country's economic stability in a period of only sixty days.[67] With a looming debt payment in September of 1990, the club's *asamblea de socios* approved a plan from the *comisión directiva* to mortgage the Ciudad Deportiva for 2.5 million dollars, effectively extending the club's debt via mortgage but shifting the creditor.[68]

In June of 1991, Boca's comisión directiva held an emergency meeting to approve the sale of the Ciudad Deportiva for 21 million dollars. The sale would allow the club to cancel all of its debts and build infrastructure on ten hectares of abandoned railway lines, known as Casa Amarilla. This area was adjacent to La Bombonera and was donated to the club by the city. Alegre triumphantly proclaimed that "this is a historic day for Boca. It represents our definitive launch towards becoming a leading club of South America." The purchasers, an Argentine firm named Santa María del Plata had already contracted the firm Garlach-Campbell Construcciones in order to build a hotel and recreational complex. After years of scrambling to make debt payments, the deal made Boca Juniors into perhaps the most economically potent club on the continent. Boca received four million dollars outright, enough to cover all debt, and would receive 3.8 million dollars annually for the next five years. Despite this financial boon to the club, many *título* holders communicated their displeasure to the press and petitioned the judge overseeing Boca's debt case to block the sale. Club secretary Jesus Asiaín explained that the holders would be receiving a "special discount" at the new facilities being constructed at Casa Amarilla. *Diario Popular* published an article questioning the wisdom of the sale, indicating that the club had sold 70 hectares for 21 million dollars when the price for a hectare in the adjacent

[67] "Asi Esta La Ciudad"; "No Se Pudo Concretar La Venta de La Ciudad Deportiva de Boca," *La Nación*, December 11, 1990, Clarín Archivo de Redaccion.
[68] "Boca Podrá Hipotecar La Ciudad Deportiva," *Clarín*, September 1, 1990.

area of Puerto Madero was more than 4 million dollars. The sale of the Ciudad Deportiva and acquisition of the Casa Amarilla terrains allowed the club to continue attracting new members as a part of a campaign to reach 100,000 socios. These accomplishments helped Alegre secure another landslide reelection in 1992, the year in which the club won its first title since 1981.

Conclusion

The sale of the Ciudad Deportiva would play a crucial role in giving new life to Boca Juniors as an institution and winning soccer team. As Argentine sports journalist Ezequiel Fernández-Moores put it, "the project itself was a failure, but the Ciudad Deportiva saved Boca in reality."[69] The facilities had not been completed, but selling the property saved the club from bankruptcy. The project's impact on the club had been inextricably linked to the broader national economic conditions from the outset, and many tied its failure to a broader failure of modernization and development in Argentina. Yet, the project's failure was contingent on many political and personal decisions that either positioned the project within state visions for Argentina's future or relegated it to neglect. In many ways, the Ciudad Deportiva fit within the *Proceso's* vision of a city with orderly aesthetics and leisure. However, Armando's relationship to the junta's decision makers clearly impacted the club's ability to gain support for the stadium's completion.

The sale of the Ciudad Deportiva was only possible within the political and economic conditions of Argentina during the governments of Alfonsín and Menem. These presidents and their economic ministers envisioned particular kinds of economic solutions to the hyperinflation and contracting national economy. The continued economic chaos under Alfonsín almost bankrupted the club, while the brief economic boom under Menem directly enabled the

[69] Ezequiel Fernández-Moores, *Interview with Ezequiel Fernández-Moores* (Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2015).

development of Puerto Madero and corresponding increase the Ciudad Deportiva's property value. The club's desperate financial position would improve between 1986 and 1992, but most supporters of the project recognized the need to sell. The Ciudad Deportiva's fate was still in question during the military's preparations for the World Cup and it's difficult to know how Armando and other club officials navigated the favoritism, corruption, and incredibly transformative capacity of the military dictatorship. After all, the club was able to regain control of the property as the result of a neighborly conversation and the whims of a powerful general. This shows that the dictatorship continued to entertain dreams of social integration through sport and leisure, but within a radically violent and corrupt form of governing.

Epilogue

On November 28th, 2000 Boca Juniors took the field against Real Madrid in Tokyo. The two teams had traveled to Japan to play for the Intercontinental Cup, a competition that pitted the winners of Europe's Champions League against the winners of South America's Copa Libertadores. The heavily-favored Real Madrid team included global superstars like Luis Figo and Roberto Carlos, but it was Boca Juniors forward Martín Palermo who scored twice within the first six minutes of the game. Roberto Carlos answered with a spectacular goal in the twelfth minute, but the Spanish side was unable to find an equalizer. Boca Juniors were world champions, a feat they would repeat in 2003 against the Italian side AC Milan. The world championships were just two of the seventeen domestic and international titles that Boca Juniors won between 1995 and 2007 under club president Mauricio Macri. The son of a wealthy businessman, Macri launched a political career based on his success at the soccer club and was elected to the national congress in 2005. In 2007, he won the elections for mayor of Buenos Aires. Macri would serve as mayor until 2015 when he won Argentina's presidential elections.

The successes of both Macri and Boca Juniors at the turn of the millennium were, in certain crucial ways, the result of the sale of the Ciudad Deportiva. The Alegre administration used the twenty two million dollars to erase its debts and construct practice facilities and a small basketball stadium adjacent to La Bombonera. When Macri took control in 1995, the club was only a decade removed from its brush with bankruptcy, temporary closure of La Bombonera, and the appointment of a state administrator. For three years Boca struggled to return to its winning ways, but in 1998 the team won a national championship and began a decade of nearly uninterrupted success. In a 2009 book titled "Passion and Management: Keys to the Macri era at Boca", Macri and his co-authors lamented the fact that nearly all Argentine soccer clubs ran

large deficits, that the lack of social frameworks produced inefficient, incompetent, and corrupt administrators. By contrast, the "Macri era" had overseen a tenfold increase in the net value of the club. The book's introduction makes frequent comparisons between clubs and businesses, explaining that the key to success was "business abilities" defined as "Acting with passion, but rationally… combining management with passion.[1]

The book's celebration of Macri's impassioned efficiency extends to the success Macri found in building a political identity around himself and his party, the Propuesta Republicana (PRO), that emphasized the neutrality of a managerial ethos found in the business world. In a 2007 *Public Culture* article, sociologist Carlos Forment argues that"Macri and his supporters succeeded in preserving the club's status as a civic association by adopting a variety of market-centered measures which they then used to protect Boca from the ravages of neoliberalism and the privatization campaign launched against it by the state."[2] In reality, it was Macri who led the charge to abandon the non-profit civic association model and privatize the clubs. In 2001, his proposed law (which would become known as the "Macri law") would split clubs into *núcleos deportivos* (amateur sports associations) and *sociedades anónimas deportivas* (professional sports entities run as commercial endeavors).[3] Pointing to the debt crisis experienced by many clubs, Macri argued that the law was designed to rescue clubs from financial calamity but the law found little support amongst his fellow club presidents. Macri lamented that despite their opposition, club presidents "… know there's no other way. In Argentina there is no David Copperfield who will work magic and make money appear to save our sport, this is the time to

[1] Mauricio Macri, Alberto Ballve, and Andres Ibarra, *Pasión y Gestión: Calves Del Ciclo Macri En Boca* (Buenos Aires: Aguilar Taurus Alfaguara, 2009), http://www.lsf.com.ar/libros/03/PASION-Y-GESTION/.
[2] C. A Forment, "The Democratic Dribbler: Football Clubs, Neoliberal Globalization, and Buenos Aires' Municipal Election of 2003," *Public Culture: Bulletin of the Project for Transnational Cultural Studies*. 19, no. 1 (2007): 85–116.
[3] "La Ley Macri: Apunta a Sanear Las Finanzas y a Proteger Los Clubes," *La Nacion*, October 10, 2001, http://www.lanacion.com.ar/326404-macri-presento-su-proyecto-de-ley.

change."[4] The law failed to gain traction with soccer administrators, but it has been revived in various forms since then.

Unable to reform the club as a business, Macri's transformation of Boca Juniors would happen through the marketing department and licensing deals. Boca's successes on the field helped the marketing department increase the value of Boca's branding and sign lucrative licensing deals. While using Boca's brand to sell things was nothing new, licensing became a more expansive and aggressive portion of an official department at Boca. Macri also auctioned off reservations on suites and VIP boxes to remodel a section of La Bombonera, with Diego Maradona paying 305,000 dollars for one. Macri created Boca's own investment fund that would be used to acquire and sell players, licensed the club's own museum to a third party, and even attempted to license the club's entire merchandising operations to the FIFA-linked International Sport Leisure.[5]

Unsurprisingly, given his pro-business and neoliberal predilections, the recipe for success laid out by Macri was very similar in rhetoric and action to the one recommended by neoliberal economists after Argentina's economic crisis in 1989: rationalize social spending and privatize state industries and functions. Menem's administration passed two major laws in 1989 and 1990. The first reduced subsidies and laid off public employees while the second opened the way to privatizing state companies. Menem's economic minister, Domingo Cavallo, passed a law in 1991 that established a fixed, one-to-one exchange rate between the peso and dollar. The Convertibility Law led to an immediate economic boom fueled largely by foreign creditors; between 1991 and 1994 general consumption increased while inflation fell. However, austerity's destruction of the old economy yielded high unemployment rates. Just as importantly, access to

[4] Ibid.
[5] Maria Nemesia Hijos, "El Deporte Como Mercancía: Un Estudio Sobre La Dimensión Económica y Las Múltiples Lógicas En El Club Atlético Boca Juniors" (Universidad de Buenos Aires, 2013).

foreign credit slowed in 1995, making it much more difficult for Menem's economic ministers to control rising prices and high unemployment. The Asian centered global financial crisis of the late 1990s sent Argentina's economy into a spiral, forcing the adoption of more austerity measures and ballooning the country's foreign debt. The cycle led to a severe economic depression between 1998 and 2002, culminating in December of 2001 with the world's largest default on foreign debt and violent protests throughout Argentina.[6]

The famous Argentine director Juan José Campanella's 2004 film, *Luna de Avellanda*, tells the story of a neighborhood sports club in the aftermath of the financial disaster. The protagonist Román struggles to keep the club and its basic services in the face of financial calamity and personal ruin. The film's themes revolve around Argentina's dim future and its promising past: Román's son dreams of a better life in Spain and the Spanish immigrant who founded the club can't face the new financial realities. The film's central tension is one *socio's* fight to privatize the club and turn it into a casino providing jobs against Román's fight to save the club by holding a spectacular fundraiser that relives the club's glorious past in bringing together the entire community. While the film does not focus on a soccer club, the neighborhood club providing services was mirrored in the debates over privatization that Macri raised with his 2001 law. Argentina's long neoliberal turn and state retrenchment has altered the terrain on which debates about soccer clubs occur, but the tension between their roles as non-profit civic associations and professional sports teams.

This dissertation has used the Ciudad Deportiva as a lens for examining the links between soccer and politics in Buenos Aires, but this work has also emphasized the tensions between market logics and associational life. *Luna Avellaneda* dramatically captures that tension, but it

[6] Luis Romero, *A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century* (University Park Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).

also romanticizes the view of a mythical past in which clubs served the apolitical goals of community life. Sports clubs, both small and large, were all sites that tied to political visions of social integration, gender, and consumption in Buenos Aires even when those projects didn't align strictly along party lines. The Ciudad Deportiva itself crystallized the dreams of developmentalism in that planners touted the apolitical goal of national progress as a driving force behind the project.

The early chapters of this dissertation showed how soccer clubs came to occupy such a prominent role in the everyday lives of *porteños* and how the administration of these popular clubs drew them into local and national politics. The Ciudad Deportiva emerged from this congregation of grassroots support and political visions of development to transform the area donated to the club by the federal government. The success of the project between 1964 and 1969 was considerable: the national government facilitated a great deal for the club but it was thanks to volunteer truckers, purchasers of *títulos*, and club officials that seven artificial islands arose out of the Rio de la Plata with a plethora of recreation facilities. The subsequent chapters showed that the original vision for the Ciudad Deportiva was quite durable and genereated a great deal of momentum with the project's early victories. After all, the spectacularly successful fundraising campaign for Boca's stadium came *after* the lawsuits and internal political crises that rocked the project at the start of the 1970s. The final chapters and epilogue examined how the project's sale reflected the politics of privatization following Argentina's neoliberal turn.

This dissertation's focus on Boca Juniors' Ciudad Deportiva has shown the value of closely following a single institution's trajectory and the life of a single project, but it has also restricted the analysis to a club and project that are unique in many ways. Much research remains to be completed on other, similar projects by Argentine soccer clubs including San Lorenzo and

Rosario Central's Ciudades Deportives and Independiente's recreational swimming complex, the Aqua Solarium. These stories also bear situating in the broader world of modernist planning and mega projects in mid-twentieth century Latin America.[7] An expanded study that includes the broader panorama of soccer clubs in Buenos Aires could shed light on social geographies in the city and the ways in which professional clubs operated with similar logics to serve different membership bases. A rich set of comparative angles demands further investigation, in particular comparisons between businessmen like Alberto J. Armando and the careers of Silvio Berlusconi at AC Milan, Moise Katumbi at TP Mazembe, and Suleyman Kerimov at Anzhi.[8]

This work raises further questions on how other clubs, large and small, animated life in the city and changes in the urban environment. Finally, this dissertation demonstrates that teasing out the political significance of soccer clubs demands close and sustained attention to the everyday lives of the people who invest their passion in clubs. All around the globe, the different cultures and material realities of these clubs warrant further study.

Ultimately, this study has shown the specific ways in which soccer intersected with broader political and social transformations in 20th century Argentina. It did so by demonstrating that clubs like Boca Juniors and projects like the Ciudad Deportiva were embedded in—and helped to influence—the evolving nature of consumption and daily life in the city. At each step, the Ciudad Deportiva embodied vital political visions for development in Argentina, even when these visions did not come to fruition.

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[7] Edward Murphy, *For a Proper Home: Housing Rights in the Margins of Urban Chile, 1960-2010* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015), chps 2-3; Fernando Coronil, *The Magical State: Nature, Money, and Modernity in Venezuela* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), chp 4; James Holston, *The Modernist City: An Anthropological Critique of Brasília* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989); Leandro Benmergui, "The Alliance for Progress and Housing Policy in Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires in the 1960s," *Urban History* 6, no. 2 (2009): 303–26; Barry Bergdoll et al., *Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955-1980* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2015); Lisa Blackmore, *Spectacular Modernity: Dictatorship, Space and Visuality in Venezuela, 1948-1958*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2017.

[8] Peter Alegi in discussion with the author, July 2017.

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