

## Identities & Stereotypes:

During my trip to Argentina I had the opportunity to visit different cities and regions, each more sublime than the other. From the North to the South, from the East to the West, I had the opportunity to travel through an amazing diversity of landscapes: "Tropical", desert, icy, hot, cold, dry, wet. From Buenos Aires to El Calafate passing by El Chalten, Mendoza and Salta. I was able to immortalize my different experiences thanks to my phone, so to conclude this academic trip with the UCA I will detail what I learned in these 2 months, what I understood, what I perceived and I will share with you a photo to summarize it.

The photo that represents for me the most my trip to Argentina is the following one:



I nicknamed it "On the way to Argentina". We can see an old bus abandoned in the middle of the mountainous desert of Puente del Inca in the region of Mendoza in the north of Argentina. We can also see the Andes Mountain range in the background with an effect of depth given by the mountain range which we have the impression that it ends in funnel. On this photo we find this Argentinian "gigantismo" which marked me either in the landscapes or also in the architecture of Buenos Aires. This gigantism gives an impression of smallness or even respect towards the nature which seems overpowering. It also makes me think, on the one hand of this power that is Argentina. Indeed, it is necessary to have that yesterday it was one of the most developed countries of the world with a cultural and economic potentiality out of standards. Nevertheless, today the road does not seem as simple as before. The country suffers from a financial crisis that tarnishes its development although it continues to irrigate the world with its passion and the first example that comes to my mind is soccer.

To come back to the picture, we see a rather arid, desert, dusty environment, not really practicable for a bus. Moreover, it has flat tires. On its way to a kind of Eldorado the bus "Argentina" seems to have crossed hell and unfortunately its race seems slowed down or even blocked. This represent to me what I explained previously : the wish for Argentina to be one of the most powerful country of the world and the struggling path to become it.

Another point that I would like to briefly address is the feeling of isolation of the country from the rest of the world. Indeed this "gigantismo" and these mountains lock Argentina from the outside. Indeed, who can see the bus from behind the mountains? Nobody can. No one sees the bus that makes its way behind the mountains and few people climb the peaks to see this small moving point, seen from above, giving a superiority report. It is, in my opinion, this feeling of exclusion, which since the crisis has generated a feeling of inferiority in relation to other powers (USA, Europe, China) that can be perceived in the photo. On the other way the bus has even more difficulties to see the exterior. After all the courses we have follow during this academic program, one of the things that Argentina suffer from is its foreign policies and the difficulty to understand the world outside and even more the way that Argentina represent itself the rules of the world that is not real. I think about art policies and the difficulties for exemple for an artist in Argentina to promote the culture outside whereas in other developed countries like USA it is easier and encouraged.

Nevertheless, this bus turned towards the future is moving forward. For me, it represents the ambition of Argentina despite its flat tires: debts, economic instability, cultural and political scars. Despite all these wounds, we can see through its warm colors that represent for me the spirit and culture of America: Joy, warmth, sharing, folklore.

Although the road seems endless, full of obstacles, rocks, dust and especially obstacles the size of mountains, I strongly feel this desire to go forward, this fighting spirit that pushes the Argentines to work hard to find a prosperous state.

Even if the bus seems to be in a bad state, it invites anyone to get on for this difficult journey which, thanks to the strength of the community, will turn into a kind of initiatory journey.