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**Militant Memories: Family, Gender and Politics under
Pinochet's Dictatorship.**

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To Pablo, Alfonsina and Anselmo

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to analyse political memories, through the life stories of people who participated in political parties or movements during the time of Pinochet's dictatorship. The analysis focuses on two aspects of activism which have usually been neglected, namely family and gender relations.

Several questions were embraced along this research, around the central motivation of learning about the way in which people became politically active. What role family traditions and loyalties played? How gender has been constructed through political memories and political activism? And from a more historical point of view, how State terrorism during the Chilean dictatorship marked political militancy, both rightwing and leftwing, particularly for those who were defeated and suffered human rights violations?

Methodological aspects determine the limits and richness of this work, based on memory narratives taken from interviews. Political identities are analysed through memory work, from the perspective of the ways in which people remember and construct their experiences of activism, through their own narratives. I examine how committed militants view their past participation, how they currently live their commitment, how they relate to the Chilean past, and how they construct their identities through the narrations of this particular and essential aspect of their lives. Political parties, particularly the leftwing, have been criticised because of their failure to stand as political referents and their inability to vindicate current struggles, to reflect new forms of exploitation and the lack of recognition for new social actors. Therefore, and taking the Chilean experience as an example, I also revise some reasons why 'modern' and western styles of militancy, in the last decades, may have become less popular.

Finally, I would like to state that this research intended to stand as a space for the narratives of some Chilean political actors, to confront the official history of this painful period, a history that tends to forget that behind the facts that shocked Chile during the 1970s the protagonists were real and normal people, whose everyday life conditions drove them to live with a strong political commitment.

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INTRODUCTION

I was seven when the Chilean government was taken over by General Augusto Pinochet on September 11, 1973. It was an extremely traumatic experience for me as my family was sympathetic to president Allende and the Unidad Popular (the political left-wing coalition). My father lost his job at the University of Chile, because he was considered intellectually dangerous. No one in my family died or disappeared, no one was tortured, and nobody was held as a political prisoner - but my entire life changed. A sort of permanent fear took over me and my family life: something that no one should have to face became an everyday reality. Forbidden conversations, music, books, even names, were part of my childhood. 'Don't listen to that, it's dangerous.', 'Don't talk about that at school.', 'Don't make noise', etc. I grew up seeing 'other Chileans', who were different to 'us', as suspects. Santiago's streets became even more menacing

Instead of academics, parties and boys, my teenage years were spent worrying about the internal political situation of Chile. In the beginning of the 1980s another social atmosphere was forming; political parties and social movements were being redefined, and the Chilean dictatorship did not seem as invincible and powerful as during the 1970s.

I was nearly seventeen when I decided to get involved in politics actively. I wasn't sure which party to choose - no one in my family was an active militant - but I knew that at least two of my uncles (on my mother's side), left the country during the early years of the regime. They weren't exiled, but my grandparents worried they might be arrested or killed because they were active in left-wing parties. So they didn't influence me since they were so far away. I also knew that my grandfather, again on my mother's side, was a Communist when he was young, but the family story is that he left the party when my grandmother asked him to choose between the party and her. My father was not an activist, but he was ideologically and politically close to President Allende and his government. I also remember that the women in

my family, my grandmother, mother and aunts, weren't active in any party, and I remember they had the most diverse ideas about politics and national situations. They would discuss their ideas and opinions, as a normal routine inside of the house, as simple subjects who talked on their views, without arguing.

I am the eldest of four sisters and spent most of my childhood in the house of my grandmother, where she lived with her three unmarried sisters. On many occasions there were around ten women inhabiting in that big old house. While my father and grandfather were authority figures, they were never overbearing, authoritarian or tyrannical. My grandmother worked outside home just like my grandfather, which was common in those times. I mention this aspect of my life because it relates to my sympathies to feminism and female movements, and therefore to my interest in gender issues, because many times, I felt like an outsider in political parties where masculine philosophies predominated.

Having only notions on what being a militant meant, I searched for a place for myself. The culture in Chile at that time was also somehow pushing a considerable number of young people to do so. I eventually participated in protests, but I never became a 'good militant': I was always on the fringe, doing small things; my commitment was always partial and contradictory. On one hand, I felt good for becoming a member of a political group, to have a kind of 'political belonging', to be active in the struggle against Pinochet's dictatorship; but on the other hand, I didn't feel comfortable receiving orders that could not be questioned, or doing things that seemed dangerous just because the party said so. Sometimes, I felt manipulated and unprotected too. At the same time, I was slowly getting involved in other social movements, such as feminist and human rights organisations, where I felt far more comfortable.

Later on, after democracy was reinstated in 1989, the political effervescence of the early eighties began to diminish gradually but most of the social

movements and political parties, which were protagonists in social and political fights of the earlier period, ended up disappearing.

I started by telling this story because this brief but decisive aspect of my own biography explains in part the motivations for this project. This research is on militant memories of Chileans: how and why people became members of political parties, why they decided to stay or leave. In this sense, this research is also about memories; on how political activists remember their own experiences; collections of things that have not been recorded officially. In the Chile of the 1970s, political activism changed overnight from an environment of very active participation to a state of absolute repression. After the military dictatorship in the 1990s, the reconfiguration of a democratic political system paradoxically led to a state of weakened militancy in traditional political parties. This fact raises many questions on the nature of activism and political attachment, some of which will be addressed by this research project in the light of the life stories and narrations of people who had an active militancy at some point in their lives, or who still have it.

This thesis is also part of a long struggle about memory or memories of our recent history. This struggle relates to the definition of what should be kept in our collective memory as Chileans, and what should be forgotten. In this sense, the most important contribution of this research project is that it shines light on other voices and other experiences that have been excluded from the 'official' records; a version promoted since 1990 along with the so called period 'Transition to Democracy'; a version that has changed over time and has been mostly used to construct narratives about 'national reconciliation'. There would be nothing wrong with these narratives if they hadn't been left aside, because they oppose to the official version. Parts of these marginalised memories are memories of political activists, the surviving players of that time. I consider that they are the most neglected and marginalised voices in the struggle of recent memory in Chile and these were the stories that I wanted focus on; to hear, elaborate and tell.

Moreover, the contribution of this thesis is not only to rescue unheard voices, but it is also to enlighten us on how and why political activism has changed over the last thirty years in Chile, particularly how Pinochet's dictatorship affected political commitments, to what extent the installation of the neoliberal system has changed the way politics from the 1960s and 1970s is now understood. Perhaps more importantly, this work deals with Chile: how the struggle for human rights has been made way for other types of social movements and ways of political activism. Indeed, during the last thirty years, feminists, students, ethnic and sexual minority groups, to mention only a few, have attained more visibility than the traditional parties, suggesting the rise of new ways of political participation in the public arena.

Of course there are several ways to approach these big questions but perhaps only one cannot deliver the full answer. However, this research outlines some answers by focusing on the experience of real people who lived all of these social changes and transformations. Through their narrations I learned how these people became political militants, how their political identity was articulated as a collective context of social and political agitation, how they lived the transformation processes and how their experiences can challenge the official versions of history and records for this period.

Looking for a place in the memory battle

In his book *Historia del Testimonio Chileno: de las Estrategias de Denuncia a las Políticas de la Memoria* (2008) (History of the Chilean Testimony: from Strategies of Accusation to Memory Policies), Jaume Paris Blanes begins with a remarkable comparison of the words by the novelist Hernán Valdés in two historical different moments. Hernán Valdés wrote one of the first and more emblematic testimonial books, *Tejas Verdes: Diario de un Campo de Concentración en Chile* (Tejas verdes: Diary of a Concentration Camp in Chile). It was published for the first time in 1974, in Barcelona, and published again in Chile in 1996. Paris Blanes, compares the forewords by the author in his 1974 edition with those of the 1996 edition, and concludes there is a radical transformation between the two ways the author presents

his experience in the Concentration camps. While his words in 1974 were mainly about condemning the suffering of people, twenty-two years later what the author emphasized was his own personal and singular experience.

According to Paris Blanes, the transformation shown by the author's words has a direct relationship with the changes in the political situations when the two editions of the book were released. Thus, in the presentation of the first edition Hernán Valdés located himself as the spokesman of a collective experience, while in the second version, he spoke from an individual and subjective experience. In this way, Paris Blanes establishes that these two very different perceptions are inseparable of the political contexts in which are formulated

The same as the collective character of the experience [in the concentration camps] had been one of the basic elements of the fights that Valdés identified with his testimony in 1974, his individualization in 1996 was in perfect correspondence with the time in which it was enunciated, that is to say with the neoliberal society the rise of which had blown away the social identities and the collective commitments previous to the coup. (2008: 13)

In other words, according to Blanes, the change in Valdés' perception may be attributed to the fact that in the first fights against the dictatorship there still were projects and collective associations which a wide group of people still felt part of. Valdés considered his experience as part of that collective fight. Conversely, twenty-two years later we see the 'successful' installation of a neoliberal system, which was able to dismantle social networks such as unions, rural organizations, political parties and other forms of collective associations, through political repression. Neoliberalism established individualism as the appropriate way of being, as the necessary way to operate inside of this system. In the latter version, Valdés stopped representing the community to locate his text in the niche of individual experiences, regarding the political violence in Chile.

I detail the observation of Paris Blanes here, on the discursive changes in the forewords of Valdés' book in different periods of time, because it is a

good example of some of the discussions on memory that concern intellectuals and Chilean public opinion during recent years.

There is the valuation of memory, understood as the thousands of testimonies and records that tell the experiences lived by the main characters of the coup d'état and the military, which operate as a resistance device against forgetfulness and generate the conditions for the reconstruction of the history of that period to become possible. While conversely, there is a profound criticism against the proliferation of these memoirs which attacks the abundance of testimonies, in at least two different aspects. First, because the excessive publication of testimonial stories, in numerous formats, has become part of the neoliberal mindset, making it an easy-to-consume product, which undermines its critical potential. Second, because while centring the conflict on the violation of human rights, they have covered up the effects that the coup had on class confrontation (along with the two antagonist national projects). And even more importantly, they have turned the defeated activists into simple victims, ignoring their projects and the reasons behind their struggle. All of this without even considering the appropriation and obvious intention of giving an official character to these records, the governments of the *Concertación*, in order to construct a homogeneous memory to the service of national reconciliation.¹

¹ One of the clearest examples of focalisation of the political conflict of 1973 in the issue of human rights violations is the officialising of these memories by the construction of a museum for memory. Located in the old area of Santiago, it opened its doors to the public on January 12, 2010, at 10am. The *Museo de la Memoria y Los Derechos Humanos* became a popular public work during the government of president Bachelet. As a monument for all Chileans, the purpose of the museum is, according to Bachelet herself, to contribute a space that 'commemorates what we all recognise as, one of the more devastating experiences in our history: the massive and systematic violation of human rights, of thousands and thousands of Chileans' (*Museo de la Memoria y los derechos Humanos*, 2010, p.2). The roadmap for the exposition is given by the reports of the *Comisión de Verdad y Reconciliación* (1991), the *Comisión de Reparación y Reconciliación* (1996) and the '*Comisión Nacional sobre Prisión Política y Tortura*' (2004), which were issued by the State, during the governments of the *Concertación*, and which work on the subject of human rights violations during the military government (I shall expand on this matter with more detail in Chapter 1). These reports are, at great extent, the official discourse on the political violence during Pinochet's ruling. Thus, by following this discourse, the museum becomes protected and legitimised within the logic of the 'official truth'. In terms of content, this 'official truth' is constructed from the victim's figure, and in this sense the Museum stands as 'the memory of the suffering', 'the memory of those who are missing', a 'tribute to those who suffered', and that by all means these situations of confrontation and violence never happen again in Chile, attempting for national unity.

Considering this, we can assert at a general level (we shall deepen these points in the following chapter), at least three periods in which the production of memory in Chile has become relevant. A first period, from 1973 to the late 1980s, in which rather than referring to memory there are references to testimonies. In those years, social organisations of different natures collected testimonies, motivated by the necessity of denouncing the violations of human rights perpetrated by the military dictatorship. These stories have been of supreme relevance to fight against impunity and oblivion. An example of this, is the emblematic publication of the five volumes of *¿Dónde están?* (1978) (*Where are they?*), a book published by the *Vicaría de la Solidaridad* and Santiago's archbishopric, which collected hundreds of testimonies and records on disappeared detainees.

Another period ranging from around March 11, 1990, when Pinochet handed the presidency of the country to the democratically elected president, Patricio Aylwin, until October 1998, when Pinochet was arrested in London. This is a complex period, in which citizens began to understand that the democracy that had been recovered was not exactly like the one before the military coup, but rather a negotiated democracy that somehow promoted impunity and maintained authoritarianism, based on the 1980 Constitution (Richard, 2000; Illanes, 2002).

As a result, memory issues rose in a contradictory way. A State in search of national reconciliation implemented 'policies of memory' as materialised in the 1991 Report, by the *National Commission of Truth and Reconciliation*. The rhetorical resources that accompanied the publication of this Report established certain facts as truthful (recognition of human rights violations). On the other hand, they only committed justice 'en la medida de lo posible' (as far as possible), stressing reconciliation and the future. For an important sector of the population, this meant a pact of silence between the military and the new 'democratic' government, regarding the identification of those civilians and the individuals that violated human rights. In reaction to the 'official memory', understood as a requirement of oblivion, we find rituals,

commemoration practices, actions to rescue emblematic places, carried out by different social organizations, in particular organizations for the defence of human rights that will give rise the slogan 'Neither forgiveness nor oblivion'.

Contemporaneously, the first reactions of the intellectual and academic world began to arise, asking about the issue of memory, about its function, its importance for the construction of the recent past. Some examples of these reflections were published in Elias Padilla Ballesteros' *La Memoria y El Olvido* (Memory and Oblivion) in 1995, which discussed the importance of not forgetting the disappeared detainees in Chile and Latin America.

There is a last period I would like to refer to, starting from Pinochet's arrest in London, in October 1998, until present. This is an equally complex period and the most prolific in regard to the 'production of memory'. On one hand it completes the institutionalisation of a type of 'official' memory, a memory that the State gradually incorporated due to the persistence of human rights organizations and the victims' families, some of whose demands were silenced during the previous period. These organizations demanded the recognition of disappearances and torturing, and that guilty individuals be tried and sentenced.

There were also multiple writings produced by the intellectual and academic worlds, especially in the area of social sciences, which critically reflected on the imposition of an 'official memory' and its impact on Chilean society. Thus, books such as *Memoria para un Nuevo Siglo* (Memory for a New Century), by Mario Garcés (editor), published in 2000, presents more than forty contributions by diverse authors, with critical reflections in regard to the political transition and the importance of re-elaborating the recent past. The same year, from the area of Cultural Studies, Nelly Richard edited and published *Políticas y Estéticas de la Memoria* (2000) (Policies and Aesthetics of Memory), with even more critical texts regarding the intention of the

governments of the 'Concertación' to make memories that escaped the realm of official consent invisible.²

Publications and debates on memory not only arose in Chile but also in other countries of Latin America where coups d'état took place, such as Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil. Thus, for instance, the important and well-known collection of texts *Memorias de la Represión* (Memories of Repression), directed by Elizabeth Jelin and published between 2002 and 2005, gives us a comparative perspective on the processes of democratisation in the South Cone of Latin America, and different discussions regarding the recent past, with issues including commemorations, disputes of emblematic dates and places of memory, the archives and records of human rights violations, and so on. These publications helped spreading the debates in most countries of South America, and consider the necessity of including the subject of memory, the voices that have been eliminated from the official discourses.

Along these lines, the book *La Batalla por la Memoria* (Illanes; 2002) (Battle for Memory) represents, according to the author who coined the expression, the fight of people in elaborating as a group what happened during the time of the Unidad Popular, the coup d'état and the nearly 20 years of military dictatorship. In this battle, memory was modelled, positively or negatively, by the economical, political and/or cultural conditions. However, the author asserts that it is the non-official memory, the one that should dispute some space in the public debate, because it is this memory (or memories) that puts the official version in question, where the actors of that period are referred to as mere victims. Instead, the author understands that in these other silenced memories there are projects and fights that these individuals did not conclude.

It is necessary to mention also, Steve Stern's book, *Recordando el Chile de Pinochet: En Vísperas de Londres 1998* (2008) (Remembering Pinochet'

² Other publications may be added, which also collect texts by intellectuals and researchers from different areas in social sciences, such as for instance the compilation *Frágiles Suturas: Chile a treinta años del Gobierno de Salvador Allende*, by Francisco Zapata, 2006, Mexico, FCE.

Chile: On the Eve of London 1998). This first part of a trilogy attempt to deliver a general panorama regarding the problem of memory in Chile, up until right before Pinochet's arrest in London. This date was chosen because the author assumes that up to this moment, public dates in Chile in the recent past are deadlocked, because it is still possible to find two versions that haven't been dealt with. What's interesting about Stern's work is that he chooses to approach the topic through different life stories to relate "individual" or "intimate" memories with what he denominates "emblematic memories" (2008:38) created from a collective space. This is where the importance of Stern's work is, because as Stern states, "it's possible to appreciate how the definition of 'what's relevant' changes" (2008:39) remembering, depending on the individual's social class, political experiences, and family members that he or she has. Thus, being one of the few books that includes testimonies from politically antagonistic sectors and therefore, their perception of the coup and military dictatorship, Stern's text allows for an analysis that up until now hasn't been explored.

This research also aims to explore antagonistic political experiences that while framed in collective memories and discourses that shape the memory of each narrator, also have contradictions and negotiations with the individual experience of each activist.

In this context of critical reflection on the subject of memory, in Chile as well as in some other countries of Latin America, the necessity arose of investigating the topic of the political militancy, barely explored in the past. This has been so, partly, because of the dominance of the subject of human rights violations discussed above, while part of public discussion, has also been used 'officially' to hide the topic of political confrontation. However, focusing on social actors who played an active role against the military dictatorships in Latin America, as victims and only victims, tends to ignore the fact that most of them were committed social actors with specific political projects, who may have lost an unjust war, a 'dirty war', but deserve being remembered also because of their political activities, as members of political parties and political movements that had concrete projects. This thesis

intends to contribute to this direction, which has not been much studied so far.

Narratives on Political Militancy

The action of recovering militants' memories, which have been made invisible rather than forgotten, is not only motivated by ethical reasons such as rescuing the victims as active subjects of the historical processes they took part of, but also contributes to the reconstruction of a period where most of the Chilean society was highly politicised. For authors like Omar Basabe and Marisa Sadi in Argentina, or Hernán Vidal in Chile, the most radical political positions have been the most silenced ones, because they refer to the conflict that supposedly triggered the coups. These conflicts hinder the concretion of the priorities that the governments of the recovered democracies have set, that is to say, the intended national reconciliation.

More research has been done regarding the topic of militancy and armed struggle in Argentina. *La Voluntad: Una Historia de la Militancia Revolucionaria en la Argentina 1966 – 1978* (The Will. A history of the Revolutionary Militancy in Argentina 1966 – 1978), written by the journalists Martín Caparros and Eduardo Anguita, published between 1997 and 2006, deals with this topic. Focusing on militancy previous to the military dictatorship, the authors collect dozens of biographical narratives and life stories of the main characters of the political fights in those years, from their political commitment to details of their daily life. The publication of these texts that were an editorial success was not exempt from criticism, because they went against 'the theory of the two demons', the theory that explained the military's use of violence to overthrow the government, which was in reaction to the 'terrorist' violence of the radical left-wing groups. In my opinion, this explanation has dominated processes of democratization post dictatorships in the south cone.

In Chile, Vidal's book was published in March 1996. *FPMR: El Tabú del Conflicto Armado en Chile* (1995) (FPMR: The Taboo of the Armed Conflict in Chile), was one of the first texts to collect experiences narrated by the social

agents themselves, militants who believed in the armed struggle as a way to recover the lost democracy. The text also gives clues to understand why speaking about an armed conflict in Chile was a taboo until today. Vidal clearly points out how the transition process to democracy in Chile took place in a context where political negotiation, and the intervention of the Catholic Church, prevailed as dominant strategies over other more radical postures. In this way, inside the official history, the political intentions of these groups have been left, in the best of the cases, either ignored or forgotten.

Other important works published in Chile, after Vidal's, on the topic of political militancy are the works by Rolando's Álvarez, especially his book *Desde las Sombras: una Historia de la Clandestinidad Comunista 1973 – 1980* (2003) (From the shadows: A history of the clandestine communist 1973-1980). Based on oral sources, the research by Álvarez is about the re-articulation and survival of the political militancy in the clandestine, but also of the resistance to the dictatorship. Although Álvarez includes the topic of militancy, his main interest is reconstructing the Communist Party's history and the political decisions that they were making, during the time of the military dictatorship.

In Chile, the omissions in the official history regarding the armed struggle and the political militancy in general has been a constant; although in the last decade the topic has attracted the interest of more researchers. This interest is fundamentally related to a systematic and growing questioning of the official version, that can be summarized by the question of how and who should participate in the reconstruction of the recent history of our country.

In this sense, the thesis aims at contributing to the fight to remember what has been silenced. The memory on which we have an interest, to register and to analyse them, is the voices of subjects who participated actively in the political struggles of the referred periods. Militants of the different political parties who not only witnessed the events but who also made them possible. We are interested in investigating what happened with those people who at some point in time were linked to political projects, to experiences of activism

and militancy, what happened to the people who lived with such passion, intensity and courage the time around the military coup? What happened to the silent survivors, those who carry scars of untreated wounds, those who lost a way of life, a way of existing in the world?

In his article '*The Gender of Militancy: Notes on the Possibilities of a Different History of Political Action*' (1999), Brazilian author Marco Aurélio García, points out the necessity and the legitimacy of elaborating a history of militancy, which is not only concerned with the social, political, economic, cultural and ideological contexts in which these militaries developed, but also from the point of view of their protagonists, because

Militants are specific people, men and women, bearers of ethical values, political convictions and religious influences who reflect, in their daily life, their cultural education, their family background and a set of 'orders' which affect the way in which they will 'apply' the party 'line' in society, whether through a speech, pamphlet, other methods of 'agitprop' or violent armed action. (García; 1999: 462)

In the same way in which García approaches the subject, I am interested in exploring the stories of militants, of that specific type of person, in the Chilean context. But the memories I am interested in are not only those of the combating militants of the defeated left-wing. For the development of this research project, I assumed the necessity of understanding political activism in a wider way, by including different experiences of militancy, from the right-wing and the left-wing. My interest has been to focus on how these militants build the story of their activism through their own words, through their memories and the narrations of those memories.

In this way, one of the premises of this research is the conviction that in the production of the memories that so far have been open to debate and confrontation, the focal point has mainly been the demand for recognition and justice in relation to the violations of human rights, the recognition of the terrible acts that were carried out by state officials during the military dictatorship. However, while recognising the importance that these fights have had for the memory, they are not enough to explain the political

radicalisation in Chile during the 1970s, the coup d'état, or the violence applied on civilians, particularly on militants of left-wing political parties.

In her book, *Fascism in Popular Memory* (1987), Luisa Passerini, collected around seventy stories of the lives of men and women, with the purpose of understanding the fascist phenomenon in Italy, from the point of view of day to day life. In referring to the validity of her work the, author stated

This subjective dimension does not allow a direct reconstruction of the past, but it links past and present in a combination which is laden with symbolic significance. While these oral sources have to be placed in a proper framework, they are highly relevant to historical analysis. These testimonies are, first and foremost, statements of cultural identity in which memory continuously adapts received traditions to present circumstances. (1987: 17)

From this perspective, this thesis contributes by identifying some of the elements that articulated the militancy of the 1970s and 1980s in Chile. The importance of this contribution is that, without these elements, it would be difficult to find out the meaning of the recent history of our country. But even more importantly, without those traces, current politics in Chile appear oblivious, so long as they are unable to recognize aborted struggles, unresolved conflicts and unfulfilled promises, which every so often appear in the public scene but reformulated, recycled and that are always repressed.

I am interested in the militants' stories, precisely, because they are narrated memories, that is to say because it is a look or a reconstruction from the present, on what these activists experienced, on how they look at themselves and how they explain their own past. As Luisa Passerini asserts, "What was invisible previously becomes visible now and at the same nothing is as it was before" (1996: 125). For this reason I decided to confront visions and to incorporate stories of militants from the right-wing as well as left-wing. Since the institutional rupture in Chile is attributed to the radicalisation of these two postures, I considered important to recover voices from both sides.

With respect to her work *Autobiography of a Generation: Italy 1968* (1996) Luisa Passerini elaborated on the memories of that period

The contradictions have changed their meanings, some problems have undergone a reversal: the relationship between reform and revolution, between right and left. In some instants the implications will be drawn out over periods of decades; some still have not been elaborated, such as the implications of the relationship between ideas and their emotional content or their stimulus to action. (1996: 125)

The autobiographical stories of my interviewees, as militants, bring up similar questions. Is it possible to maintain the left-wing/right-wing discourses in the Chile of today? If so, how have these discourses been reconfigured by the players who held them at some point? What is the function of the political dimension, nowadays, in the life of these people?

Interviews about activism, family and gender

With respect to the approach used for the analysis of the collected narrations, this relates to the subjective aspects of militancy experiences, which were provided by the interviewees themselves. I refer to the fact that, to my surprise, the stories on political activism were entwined with emotive family stories, which clearly suggests that people do not only choose their political ascriptions, at least in the rational and objective sense that one would otherwise believe. From this observation, the approach of this research focuses on these 'non-rational aspects of militancy'. While this option limits this work, it is also where its power and contribution is located.

Family and gender issues are truly omnipresent themes in the stories of my interviewees, in some cases even reaching a protagonist role throughout the narrations. Thus, memories about political militancy can be seen from another approach, since they are articulated through gender identities and family traditions. Moreover, as I explained before, gender issues arose as part of my own interest, and of course influenced both the choice of my interviewees and the analysis. For all of these reasons, the analysis' perspective was confined to these two aspects of the narrations, family relations and gender.

From the methodological point of view, many academic works that have intended to rescue the daily experiences of women, both in their private and

public life, have started from oral testimonies, in the same fashion proposed by Paul Thompson in *The voice of the Past* (1978). Oral history has mainly worked as a methodology to rescue those players who are outside of the great narratives of history, as well as those aspects of their daily life that contribute to the historical understand their time. Thus, it is not surprising that oral sources such as interviews and life stories have been highlighted both methodologically and epistemologically since, from the own academy, women were recognised as subjects ignored by history (Gluck & Patai; 1991; Hesse-Biber. & Leavy; 2007).

In the case of Latin America, the gender perspective and its intersection with oral history has been crucial. Along these lines Claudia Salazar affirms

In the 'Third World', women's autobiographical texts have become an integral part of the intellectual, ideological, political, and even armed struggle waged by oppressed and silenced people against the powers of repressive states and hegemonic groups. (Hesse-Biber. & Leavy; 2007: 93)

In relation to political militancy, working with oral sources has become an ever-growing practice, ever since people started challenging the violent and authoritative powers that characterize the recent history in many Latin American countries, which provoked the silencing of non-official versions. An emblematic case is the book by Rigoberta Menchú Tum *Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú y así me nació la conciencia* (1983) (My name is Rigoberta Menchú and this is how my conscience was born). This testimony, not exempt from criticism, tells the life and the political repression suffered by this indigenous Mayan-quiche woman from Guatemala, and the way that she gradually became part of the political life of her country, or as the title of the book indicates, how her consciousness was born when she decided to become a protagonist of her history, instead of spectator or victim.

Another example is Daniel James's work *Doña María: Historia de Vida, Memoria e Identidad Política* (2004) (Doña María: Story of Life, Memory and Political Identity). In his book the author does two things, he tells the story of Doña María Roldan, a woman, union activist, worker in the industry of meat in a town of Argentina. In the first part of the text, James transcribes

extensive parts of interviews with Doña María, in which she tells her life as a hard-working woman and activist. The interesting thing, as one reads the testimony, is to notice how we obtain a view of the particular period in the history of Argentina, labour conditions, the character of union struggles and the importance of the Peronism, along with the peculiar life of one woman.

For the purposes of this research, it is relevant to mention how James reflects on the methodology of oral history and the gender perspective that is treated in the second part of the book, which contains a series of interpretive articles that James elaborates starting from Doña María's testimony. For the author, it is not possible to disregard the fact that Doña María's testimony is a located story, that is to say, a story that in many parts incorporates "available community stories, public myths and formal ideologies" (2004:234³) or the hegemonies that determines roles, such as gender. Indeed, James asserts that in many occasions Doña María's story may appear contradictory, but in these contradictions it is possible to identify discursive elements "that challenge the authority of a dominant series of images on working women and their lives" (2004:235). Thus, for instance, on many occasions the story told by Doña María describes her life as within the expected cultural stereotypes for a hard-working woman, however in other parts of her narration these stereotypes are transgressed. James finds these transgressions remarkable, because "those stories told in the margin, unavoidably imply unresolved contradictions, silences, erasures, conflictive issues" (2004:235), all of them constituent elements of the oral testimony.

James' proposition is important in the context of my own research, because the stories told by the interviewed militants are in the same sense ascribed to shared cultural elements, not only regarding the history of the country, but also to the cultural imaginary of the 'left-wing / right-wing', or even further, to those of the parties where the interviewees militated or still militate. And these cultural elements that determine gender relationships, in the practices of political activism, do so not only in regard to women, but also regarding

³ This corresponds to the Spanish version; the English version was published in 2000, by Duke University Press.

men. For this reason it was important for me to interview militant men, and to verify that in their narrations, they also assume stereotypes which they also transgress. Thus, sharing what Marco Aurélio García outlined, "while it is true that the words of women allow a different history of political militancy to be constructed, it is wrong for this history to be just a history of women (1999:470)."

Some recent literature approaches the issue of women and their militancy in revolutionary organisations. The participation of women in armed actions is usually understood as something abnormal or as a transgression to "the common association of violence with masculinity and male sexuality" (Hamilton; 2007)⁴. Thus, for instance, in the book *La Significación Omitida: Militancia y Lucha Armada en la Argentina Reciente* (Basabe & Sadi; 2008) (The Omitted Significance: Militancy and Armed Struggle in Recent Argentina), on the armed struggle in Argentina, mainly in the 1970s, Marisa Sadi proposes that feminine participation was not an exception because

In general terms, woman did not see themselves different from a comrade... women resisted by assuming the same risks and costs than men. And the roles of wives and mothers that society attributed to them were somehow transgressed by a political commitment that female militants assumed to the last consequences (2008: 126)

However, the author acknowledges that these transgressions did not respond to an elaboration of consciousness of gender or particular feminine vindications, but were part of a wider struggle, understood at that time (the 1970s) as a class struggle, in which gender issues were not yet incorporated (at least in Latin America). Regardless, the author recognises that, in the testimonies of female militants, there is abundance of stories reflecting gender conflicts, in the daily life shared by militant men and militant women (Basabe and Sadi; 2008).

⁴ This is an interesting article in which the author proposes that in the case of women from ETA, the signification of violence is not constructed from the transgression of women towards the masculinity. Contrarily, the collected testimonies point at matters related to the legitimacy of violence as a way of political defence, in which women, as part of the community, are an active part. As clearly expressed by one of the interviewees, "...ETA's violence is absolutely political. It's not about testicles, it's not about ovaries, it's not aggression, it's a front of struggle..." (2007:923)

In Chile, also in recent years there have been some publications with testimonies about political militancy, which cover subjective aspects of activism, for instance in *Mujeres Rojo y Negro* (Women in Red and Black) a testimony of three women militants of a left-wing movement, published in 2006. This is a remarkable book, for the first time in Chile testimonies and reflexions question political militancy from a gender point of view, from the voices of those who lived these experiences. Although they are still supporting political militancy and the armed option as a legitimate alternative, unlike in Basabe and Sadi, the testimony of these three women adopt a more critical position regarding the gender relationships inside of the parties. Certainly, the memories of these women are marked by their current political closeness to feminism, which allows them to clearly remember or emphasize the conflicts and fights that they held inside of the party regarding gender issues, which is related to maternity and political activism.

What I take from these texts, in the context of my own research, is the concern with militancy and daily life, with family, children and the internal fights related to gender matters. This is important because it is a dimension that has been absent from the analyses of the period and that is relevant in at least two aspects. First, in relation to what James outlined, in the narrative articulation of these stories of life, it is possible to find stereotypes of what the culture defines as the characteristic of such and such a gender, of what is understood by family, regarding alliances, loyalties or conflicts. But it is also possible to find the contradictions, the negotiations, the tailoring that the political options allow and that each militant adapts to her own life and to the construction of her own identity. This allows, as Marco Aurélio García proposes, for reconsidering the political dimension beyond the public/private dichotomy, "thereby living to greater complexity to political historiography, including that centred on the analysis of revolutionary processes and organisations" (1999: 463).

A second aspect that is worth highlighting, in researches of this nature, is that political memories allow us to rescue desires, dreams, projects, which despite being related to the biography of each person, provided them for a

collective existence and gave a sense to life to an entire generation. Here it is necessary to declare that a political reason that stimulates my investigation is, following Basabe and Sadi (2008), to understand that the political projects that conflicted each other in that time, the violence that took place cannot hide the motivations and projects behind the political proposals. While we may be against any type of violence, in Latin America and in Chile, it is not possible to consider the armed option of a sector, the left-wing, at certain historical moment, to be equivalent with the violence of the coups d'état and the military dictatorships. A torturer will never be the same as a combatant.

Heidi Tinsmans', *La tierra para el que la trabaja. Género, sexualidad y movimientos campesinos en la Reforma Agraria Chilena* (2008)⁵ (Partners in Conflict: the politics of gender, sexuality and labor in the Chilean agrarian reform, 1950- 1973) was another important publication for political activism and gender relationships. Using oral stories, the author analyzes the effects of the Agricultural Reform of the governments of Alessandri Palma, Frei Montalva and Salvador Allende, including the effects of this process even though it was interrupted by the coup. This work has several implications; from a thematic point of view it proposes different perspectives of analysis, such as the economic and political changes, the day-to-day life of people who lived in the country; and the changes in the patriarchal rural world. Methodically it is also important because while the Chilean Agricultural Reform has been thoroughly studied, there are practically no studies that systematically incorporate the large amount of dispersed oral testimonials, and among those that do exist, there are fewer that use dialogue and criticism related with official and institutional sources

Thus, privileging a gender perspective, Tinsman shows how women lived and experienced political changes differently from men during this period of deep political activity and democratization of the countryside. While the author recognizes the Reform significantly improved life for rural workers, as

⁵ This corresponds to the Spanish version; the English version was published in 2002, by Duke University Press.

it “eroded some forms of masculine domination, such as the right that landowners had over the body of rural women, however, it reinforced others such as the role of countrymen as ‘providers’ of the home” (2008:22). The author stresses that while the reform produces a positive and important change in the lives of women, what could have been a re-democratization of the countryside, turned out to be a shift in the type of patriarchy. Women were set aside; state discourse and actions aimed at reforming the countryside were specified for men, as the main providers of the mentioned changes.

From the perspective of this work, I am interested in highlighting two aspects of Tinsman’s work, which are also part of this work’s goals. First, show how political activities; be they within political parties or unions are completely related to the everyday life and the sex/gender system that the hegemonic culture promotes. Therefore, it is not possible to analyze political activism without considering these other variables. Secondly, while many women actively participated in changing the countryside, within in the movements of the political parties and unions, especially those from the left-wing, tended to exclude women from the main political fights.

With respect to studies that analyse the Chilean elite political militancy and family relationships in the period that interests us, in Chile there is only one published work by the Italian historian María Rosaria Stabili, in her book *El Sentimiento Aristocrático: Elites Chilenas frente al Espejo 1860 – 1960* (2003) (The aristocratic feeling: Chilean elites in front of the mirror 1860-1960). This book was written starting from the oral testimony of five women who belong to distinguished families of the high society, and intends to understand the way in which a part of the Chilean elite conceive itself. Here class alliances and family relationships are the most important base for the analysis. Although, in the course of my research the topic of family appears again and again in the voices of my interviewees and, indeed, there is a chapter dedicated to this matter, where there is a mention to the text of Stabili, the scope of my analysis of political militancy and family is more

modest and clearly suggests the possibility of doing further research on this topic in the future.

The Thesis

From today's perspective, the 1960s and 1970s look very distant not only in Chile, but also to the rest of the Western world; militancy structure has changed so much, principally on the left-wing⁶. Attachment to political parties seems to be in 'crisis', and in Chile the public debate on the 'de-polarization of the youth has become almost an obsession (Navia; 2004; Fuentes & Villar 2005; Fontaine, Larroulet & others; 2007). These public fears are very similar to some discussions on the scarcity of religious vocation inside of the Catholic Church. These fears seem strange, however, if the historical context is considered, since political ascriptions and expressions could not be expected not to change when Chile as the rest of the world has changed so much. In this sense, the perceptions on the current lack of political interest are also part of the concerns of this thesis, because of the fact that several of the stories of militancy give an account of why activism was left behind, or switched towards other realms of the life of the interviewees.

The stories collected in this thesis give an account of how political activism has been displaced from its traditional place, because political parties, despite having been effective tools for the struggle to democratise the world and to obtain recognition for subjects who were historically suppressed, have stopped being the privileged instances for social struggles.

Thus, this thesis hopes to have diverse contributions. First, it intends to generate controversy on the 'official' memory of the recent past in Chile by focusing attention on political activism of relevant activists of the period. In my opinion this dimension has been neglected intentionally to support an 'official' memory utilised for promoting national reconciliation narratives.

⁶ Authors such as Inglehart point out that these changes in the left-wing started during the 1970s (1977), but he mostly refers to cultural changes from one generation to another, resulting from economical development in Western countries rather than from political activism. However, there is not doubt that in Latin America this process was more influenced by 'military dictatorship' and by the fall of the Berlin Wall.

These narratives stress the political radicalization of the period, leading to the military coup, leaving aside the contextual processes that led to such radicalisation and suggesting that every participant has a similar responsibility. This type of argument is problematic because it ignores the different political philosophies, projects and even dreams of people and groups of people who lived in the period and who have something to say regarding the decisions and commitments that they assumed. The political radicalisation was part of the violence, but in no way the only reason for it. More clearly, it is not possible to fully understand the recent Chilean past without introducing new ideas into the political history of twentieth century Chilean militancy; a past that insists on appearing and reappearing over and over like a ghost.

Secondly, this research contributes by approaching political activism from the memories and narratives of activists who themselves lived that period and the subsequent transformations. In this sense, it becomes clear how people constructed their political identities, how these identities have changed and transformed, how people remember their activism and how these political commitments are manifested today. In parallel, I explore how political activism in their everyday life is reinforced or confronted with other aspects of their lives.

Along the lines of this last point, the third contribution of this thesis is related to family and gender issues. My argument here is that political activism is not a complete “microcosm subject to specific rules and codes” (Garcia; 1999: 463) without any relation with the rest of society. Contrarily, political activism is related to family stories, traditions and loyalties, and they also affect and shape political militancy in different ways. Family relationships can help in constructing strong political identities, but can also produce deep conflicts between members of a same family.

Topics and reflections on gender are also part of this thesis at two different levels. First, because political activism has traditionally been related to and naturalised as a masculine activity, then it seems very important to explore

how women experienced political activism, what was the relation with their parties, how parties have dealt with particular demands from women activists. Secondly, because of the fact that gender issues question traditional militancy, by pointing out that class and economic injustices are not the only ways to exercise subordination. Experiences of misrecognition and exclusion, even inside of the parties, also change the way in which the interviewees confront and reconstruct their militancy. Correspondingly, gender demands have transformed political activism, particularly in the left-wing sector.

This thesis is organised into six chapters. The first one reviews the context and discusses the framework in which the narrations of the interviews have been understood throughout this research process, namely as a memory work process and as part of the construction of the Chilean recent past. Therefore, the chapter will deal with debates about memory, how it has been used, the arguments this has generated and the ambivalences which it is implicated with. Taking 'truth claims' into consideration, this section connects memory with history in a fluid relationship, more than as opposite concepts.

The second chapter focuses on a description of my epistemological and methodological options, describing how they have been utilised for the production of this thesis. I will clarify what I understand by narratives and how I managed the interview process in order to finally explain how I will approach the subsequent analysis of them.

The next four chapters contain the core analysis, on the meanings of the collected narrations. Chapter 3 examines how family relationships, with mother and father, brothers or sisters, generate instances of belonging, conflict, suffering, identity, loyalty, among others, which have had a direct influence on the political practices of many of the interviewees. On the other hand, relations can also be present in the modelling of militancy by contrast and opposition. In the chapter militancy is analysed as inheritance, almost as a duty that is handed from one generation to another. Also this section considers the effects of the military dictatorship on national and everyday life,

by going more deeply into those stories in which the militant commitment is strongly linked to political repression and the suffering of all, or some, of the family members.

Chapter 4, 5 and 6 look at the analysis of stories from the point of view of gender differences. It deals with questions, for instance, of how and to what extent political activism is interlaced with gender disciplining. Chapter 4 looks at how women describe their experience as militants of political parties, taking into account that they are normally masculine spaces. It deals with issues related to similarities and differences between left-wing and right-wing women activists, and also on how they negotiated their space as militants inside of parties.

Chapter 5 considers how men experience militancy; in what sense political parties from the left-wing operate in instances of sexual and gender disciplining. Moreover, it importantly shows how in these narrations political militancy appears controlling the lives of their narrators, but also the ways in which these actors have tensed, questioned and modified their practices.

Chapter 6 examines the case of homosexual militants from the left-wing, and how they have handled their activism, inside of parties that have traditionally been very homophobic. This section also looks at which strategies these militants generate in order to survive as militants and the difficulties that they have.

Finally, as the interviews were conducted in Spanish, the un-translated versions of these interviews have been annexed after the analytical chapters. The purpose of this is to preserve expressions and words that do not have a correlative word in English, so that an interested reader can search for alternative meanings to my own translation.

CHAPTER I. MEMORY AS IDENTITY

"My friends, surely this will be the last opportunity for me to address you. The Air Force has bombed the antennas of Radio Magallanes.

My words do not have bitterness but disappointment. May they be a moral punishment for those who have betrayed their oath: soldiers of Chile, titular commanders in chief, Admiral Merino, who has designated himself Commander of the Navy, and Mr. Mendoza, the despicable general who only yesterday pledged his fidelity and loyalty to the Government, and who also has appointed himself Chief of the Carabineros⁷.

Given these facts, the only thing left for me is to say to workers: I am not going to resign! Placed in a historic transition, I will pay for loyalty to the people with my life. And I say to them that I am certain that the seeds which we have planted in the good conscience of thousands and thousands of Chileans will not be shriveled forever.

They have force and will be able to dominate us, but social processes can be arrested by neither crime nor force. History is ours, and people make history.

Workers of my country: I want to thank you for the loyalty that you always had, the confidence that you deposited in a man who was only an interpreter of great yearnings for justice, who gave his word that he would respect the Constitution and the law and did just that. At this definitive moment, the last moment when I can address you, I wish you to take advantage of the lesson: foreign capital, imperialism, together with the reaction, created the climate in which the Armed Forces broke their tradition, the tradition taught by General Schneider and reaffirmed by Commander Araya, victims of the same social sector who today are hoping, with foreign assistance, to re-conquer the power to continue defending their profits and their privileges.

I address you, above all, the modest woman of our land, the contry-women who believed in us, the mother who knew our concern for children. I address the professionals of Chile, patriotic professionals who continued working against the sedition that was supported by professional associations, classist associations that also defended the advantages of capitalist society. I address the youth, those who sang and gave us their joy and their spirit of struggle. I address the man of Chile, the worker, the farmer, the intellectual, those who will be persecuted, because in our country fascism has been already present for many hours -- in terrorist attacks, blowing up the bridges, cutting the railroad tracks, destroying the oil and gas pipelines, in the face of the silence of those who had the obligation to act. They were committed. History will judge them.

⁷ *Carabineros* - paramilitary police

Surely Radio Magallanes will be silenced, and the calm metal instrument of my voice will no longer reach you. It does not matter. You will continue hearing it. I will always be next to you. At least my memory will be that of a man of dignity who was loyal to his country.

The people must defend themselves, but they must not sacrifice themselves. The people must not let themselves be destroyed or riddled with bullets, but they cannot be humiliated either.

Workers of my country, I have faith in Chile and its destiny. Other men will overcome this dark and bitter moment when treason seeks to prevail. Go forward knowing that, sooner rather than later, the great avenues will open again and free men will walk through them to construct a better society.

Long live Chile! Long live the people! Long live the workers!

These are my last words, and I am certain that my sacrifice will not be in vain, I am certain that, at the very least, it will be a moral lesson that will punish felony, cowardice, and treason.”

President Salvador Allende's Last Speech.

Santiago de Chile, 11 September 1973, 9:10 A.M.

On October 24, 1970 Salvador Allende Gossens was inaugurated as President of the Chilean Republic in a process that was labelled a “completely new experience” (Moulian; 1998: 159). It was the world’s first case of a nation that democratically-elected a Marxist leader, who reached power via elections, peacefully, and through the standing institution; the opposite of other countries in Latin America where Marxists leaders were established through violence. So Allende proclaimed, in one of his first speeches, the democratic character which from then on would be known as ‘the Chilean way of socialism’ or “the egalitarian liberation achieved without killings or dictatorships” (Moulian 1998; 158). In Allende’s words

What will be our way, our Chilean path of action to triumph against underdevelopment? Our path will be paved by our experience, consecrated by the people in the elections, as has been demonstrated by the Unidad Popular’s⁸ program. The path to socialism in democracy, pluralism and freedom. (Speech at National Stadium, November 5, 1970).⁹

This proclamation took place in the context of one of the most decisive and crucial presidential campaigns registered in Chilean history. In the 1970 election there were three political sectors that went up against each other with clear definitions and programs. For the right-wing was the National Party, represented by Jorge Alessandri; middle ground politics was led by the Christian Democratic Party with Radomiro Tomic as their candidate; and, finally for the left-wing, the UP coalition (Unidad Popular), with Salvador Allende as candidate.

The election was carried out on 4th September 1970 with the right-wing quite confident of their victory. Nevertheless, that same night the results were announced: Allende had obtained 36%; Alessandri 34.9% and Tomic 27.8%. On not having an absolute majority, Congress had the choice to confirm the candidate with the majority of votes, which had been the case in previous elections. Thus, after asking the UP coalition to sign a statute that guaranteed that Allende’s government would not go outside constitutional

⁸ The UP coalition (Unidad Popular).

⁹ Taken from the magazine Archive No7 ‘Salvador Allende: The Chilean way to Socialism. Message to the National Congress Speeches – Documents’, edited by the Centre for Latin American Studies Salvador Allende, México 1988.

limits, the Christian Democracy supported Allende and he was then ratified as President elect, despite the resistance from sectors from the right.

In the text *Cuando hicimos historia* (2005) (When We Made History), Julio Pinto, one of the authors and the editor of the book, argues that the majority of the investigative work dedicated to the UP “has put emphasis on the drama and defeat” (2005:5), more than the festive character that the period also had. For that reason, this publication proposed to value “the thousand days of the UP” (2005:10), from a more positive perspective. For the authors, the UP’s project wasn’t only political but social and culture, that drew together diverse social actors that had felt systematically marginalised.

Effectively, for a number of important Chileans, Allende’s triumph was experienced as a real party. The reason for this celebration was based on the fact that for the first time another social sector that weren’t part of the traditional political elite of the country, felt that it had real possibilities of laying out its own project, of participating in ‘national history’. This feeling, for the group of Chileans who felt they were getting their first real opportunity, was and still is one of the most important elements that gave the UP a mythical and even epic character. An example of all of this is a song from the group *Inti Illimani*, which practically became the national hymn during the period. Here we reproduce a part of this song:

Everybody come together
The door is open
And the Unidad Popular
Is for all those who want
To throw the Yankee and
His sinister language out.
With the Unidad Popular
We are now a government
Because this time it’s not about
Changing a president
It will be the people who shall build
A very different Chile

*Todos venga a juntarse
Tenemos la puerta abierta
Y la Unidad Popular
Es para todo el que quiera
Echaremos fuera al Yankee
Y su lenguaje siniestro
Con la Unidad Popular
Ahora somos gobierno
Porque esta vez no se trata
De cambiar a un presidente
Será el pueblo quien construya
Un Chile bien diferente*

Nevertheless, the celebration and the effort to build a ‘different’ Chile wouldn’t last three years. The reasons for this are multiple and variable; and they go

beyond the boundaries of this investigation. But we have to mention that they start from the EEUU intervention; the collusion of the right-wing with the said intervention; the radicalisation and the polarisation of the diverse political sectors; the rupture of the Alliance between the UP and the Christian Democrats; even the internal differences between the diverse actors that composed the UP; only to mention here the most commonly referred reasons (Moulian; 1993; Vidal, 1997; Pinto; 2005; Valdivia, Alvarez & Pinto; 2006; among others).

The military's coordinated and violent action brought an end to the UP government in the most dramatic way. From the very beginning, the coup d'état was an "explosion of cruelty" (Moulian; 1998: 158). On the September 11, 1973 the Chilean military announced their intentions and took over the country, proclaiming themselves as the restorers of the national soul; and in one gesture, dramatically aborted the 'Chilean way of socialism'. With these first words they took hold of the country:

On this date the Governing body is constituted, and assumes the Supreme Control of the Nation, with the patriotic commitment of restoring the Chilean identity, justice and the broken institutionalisation. Being conscious that this is the only way of being loyal to the national traditions, at the bequest of the Fathers of the Country and the History of Chile; and permitting that the evolution and progress of the country are vigorously channelled towards the paths that the dynamics of modern times demand of Chile in the company of the international community that it is part of.¹⁰ (Rettig Report; 1991: 55).

Once they bombed and took the government house, 'La Moneda', controlled the mediums of mass communication, and sent soldiers to control the most important cities of Chile, the 'Junta de Gobierno' (Governing Board)¹¹ composed by the generals of the four branches of the Armed Forces (Marine, Aviation, Infantry) and Police, started to communicate with the citizens. It did it through 'military edicts' and 'government decrees'. The edicts were a tool of the Spanish Colonial Administrations used for the formal announcement of

¹⁰ Act of constitution of the Governing Body.

¹¹ It is the name that the typical institutions gave to the colonial Spanish organisation in America; and that played a fundamental and protagonist role in the administration of new nations in the independence period.

new laws that citizens had to observe. The military used this tool with diverse ends, among them: to threaten those who resisted the new order; to establish new rules of conduct to follow (for example the curfews. as propaganda and ideological ends with respect to the legitimacy of the UP; and finally to justify the military intervention. In conclusion, edicts operated as the legal framework which the new government used to exercise its power. Along with the edicts, the government issued 'decrees', allowing the Junta to create new laws without having to turn to the legislative power . (Arrate & Rojas, 2003; Loveman & Lira; 1999).

The first and most forceful of the decrees and edicts, was aimed at shutting down the political system that structured the State administration more than three decades before. So the abolition of the Chilean political system involved – as a first measure – the closing of the National Congress through the Official Decree 27 issued on September 24, 1973. It also established that the Marxist parties would be considered illegal associations that worked against the interests of the nation. Therefore, through the Official Decree 77, issued on October 13, 1973, the confiscation of the property and goods of all these organisations that were considered illegal was ordered¹². The rest of the political parties were declared in recess in Official Decree 78. The Official Decree 1.674 stated that the execution and promotion of activities of political parties were penalised (Lechner; 1985:2). They also prohibited the workers-union CUT¹³ (Unitarian Central of Workers) and the student union FECH (The Federation of Students of the University of Chile); they also intervened in universities by designating military chancellors; and burned the electoral registers, making it impossible to organize elections (Arrate & Rojas; 2003); in conclusion, they closed down every form of citizenship's exercise.

The radical change that everyday life went through – not only through brutal repression, death, torture, and the disappearance of people – expressed itself in the establishment of a ferocious authoritarian regime. Previous to

¹² An emblematic case was the expropriation of one of the headquarters of the Socialist Party, located in the street London, #38, and that after a short time became one of the most atrocious centres of torture.

¹³ The CUT was the largest Union in the country.

the coup, the period was characterised by disorder and in some cases violence, however, the majority of the citizens actively participated in the political process that was being conceived in Chile. Supporters - just as much as detractors - of the UP could express their political beliefs. Politics was exercised as part of daily life, in family lunches, in parties, on the streets, in casual conversations, in workplaces. All of a sudden politics and the public space as part of everyday life and as a form of socialisation was prohibited, penalised and punished. A 'state of siege' was ordered, that's to say they suspended citizens' constitutional rights while giving special powers to the Armed Forces.

Contempt for political activity as a social practice was one of the ideological axes of the military dictatorship. In Pinochet's speeches, he would refer scornfully to 'the politician sirs', making it clear that it was the activists who nearly destroyed the country. In the Opening Declaration of the Military Junta, the new government's objectives were clearly stated and implied the 'depoliticalisation' of all the social organisations that arbitrated between citizens and the State (Correa, Figueroa, Jocelyn-Holt, Rolle & Vicuña; 2001). The right of political expression, or more specifically activism, stopped being a legitimate activity and in many cases it was converted into a clandestine activity.

After seven desolating years of systematic repression against the population, in the 1980s the military faced massive resistance in the shape of demonstrations for the first time. The military organized a plebiscite in order to make the general population accept the new political constitution, finally making the coup government legitimate; popular sectors and groups linked to the left-wing started to mobilise themselves with much greater force. Like the song the *La Voz de los Ochenta* (The Voice of the 80's) by the national rock group *Los Prisioneros*, the resistance to the dictatorship was felt in the main cities of the country. Hidden and protected by the darkness of the night, from the houses' yards, from half-open windows, the dissident citizens accompanied by noisy saucepans shouted 'he's going to fall, he's going to fall', referring just as much to the dictator as his government.

A friend of mine asked me once if it was possible for someone to feel nostalgia for a past that he or she did not experience. I felt very touched by this question: how a generation of people, like mine, could feel nostalgia for a lost project, which was not its own? How does a generation of people assume a project that their parent's aborted? Why is it that some of us still feel hurt when we remember Salvador Allende's last speech? Why do some of us still sing '*el pueblo unido jamás será vencido*' (together, we united will never be defeated) as an emotional gesture of attachment to an 'imagined past', a past which was not such? Because, in fact, the Chilean people were beaten. A fraction of Chileans brutally struck another fraction of Chileans. Eventually, 'the image of the Chilean people united' was irreparably broken on September 11, 1973.

In other words, to whom does the past with its battles and its dreams belong? On September 4, 1970, Chileans elected Salvador Allende Gossens as the President of the Republic, but after only three years, the Popular Unity's (UP)¹⁴ dream was brutally halted; followed by a history of atrocities and deep darkness for almost 20 years under a military dictatorship. Still now, so many years after the coup d'état of September 11, 1973, the nostalgia of the UP's project often revives in different ways. Sometimes this nostalgia is related to a strong feeling of fear that we can feel both as individuals and as a group, which seems to be related to a kind of loss of a different future. This sensation has two different readings. One, as Paul Ricoeur pointed out, is the rearticulation of unaccomplished promises, of a future that was broken (Wood; 1992) , so in some ways it is the fact that the material conditions for the UP project have gone, but the ideals, or dreams of a better society emerge in novels, poems, songs, performances, testimonies and memories of any kind. At the same time, it could be depression, an act that reproduces the moment of loss, and makes us live as if, because we can not change the past, then we can not change the future. The distinction that I am making here, between these two interpretations is

¹⁴ UP or Unidad Popular, is the name of the coalition of political parties that support Allende's candidature for the Chilean Presidency, in the election of 1970.

based on Ricoeur's reading of Freud's text *Mourning and Melancholy* (Kearney, R. & Dooley, M.; 1999), in which mourning is related to memory work and melancholy is related to the repetition of pain. Thus, there is great difference between remembering in an empowering way, in which case memory acts as a connection between past and present, from remembering fixed -past- facts that determined life and justify sadness in a fixed – perpetual- way. However, only political processes can change the way people remember, since these processes are always negotiated between public and private, official and popular, hegemonic or non hegemonic, and so on.

The purpose of this thesis is to analyse a very particular kind of memory, political memories, through life stories of people with a high level of commitment and participation in political parties or political collectives. How do they view from today their past participation? How do they live today with this commitment? How do they relate to the Chilean past? How do they construct their identities through the narrations of this particular and basic aspect of their lives? However, in order to do so, it seems necessary to consider some debates related to the way we understand the concepts of memory, both in general and in the Chilean context. Consequently, this chapter has been divided into three sections: first, I shall analyse the debate on using memory as a way of relating to the past in general, and more specifically in relation with the Chilean past; second, I will focus on memories as identity narratives, which in the Chilean context represents different ways of remembering; and last I will present some reflections on the connections between testimony, memory and history.

The Past of Memory in the Chilean Context

In the current part we will focus on three main points. First, on why memory has taken such an important place, both inside the academy and in the way that people are relating with the past, in the context of late capitalism. Second, how this situation emerges in the Chilean background and in what sense is it a global process and in what sense a local and a particular one.

And finally I will develop arguments on what sort of functions the past has, understood as memory and as history.

The aim of this part is also related to the last 36 years of Chilean history and the way that this period has been remembered by the heterogeneous 'imaginary community'. The Chilean past has been constructed through stories, memories and testimonies that have been produced within various disciplines, such as history, sociology and literature, but also by different pieces of non-academic texts, "eccentric and bastard texts" (Narváez 1988: 15), that can not be classified on any library's shelf. These are texts which also talk about the past, such as letters, diaries and testimonies, all of them speaking about sharing a violent and dramatic past, but also a conflictive present. In the case of this work, testimonies and life stories about political militancy are the main object and subject of this research. The military coup d'état of September 11, 1973 changed the past, present and future of a large group of Chileans, but also the way in which we as a community produce ourselves.

Before developing arguments on how the Chilean people changed the way of relating themselves to the past, I want to explain why this is, at least in two senses, a global attitude. First, it is because a kind of consciousness developed inside the academy, particularly in the Social Sciences, which has shown how quantitative methodologies are far from keeping the promise of objectivity, insufficient and inefficient to work with particular objects, subjects, processes and their meanings. For instance, in history, a matter that will occupy our attention, this sense is related to the acceptance that the past doesn't belong to any class, group or discipline any more, or in Samuel's words

History is not the prerogative of the historian, nor even, as postmodernism contends, a historian's 'invention'. It is, rather, a social form of knowledge; the work, in any given instance, of a thousand different hands (Samuel; 1994: 8).

Second, this attitude is related to the social process in late capitalism, with globalisation on one hand, and local claims for economical, political, social

and cultural independence on the other. For the French historian Pierre Nora, this process can be described through 'two phenomena' and their respective consequences in the way that we are used to relate to the past. First, the fact that "the most continuous or permanent feature of the modern world is no longer continuity or permanence but change", and second, what he names 'the democratization of history' (Nora; 2002).

Following Daniel Halevy, Nora calls the 'acceleration of history' a process that 'has shattered the unity of historical time' and that, in the end, has broken the way that people and groups used to associate with the past. It is not possible consequently to envisage the future in any direction, at least not for a universal humanity. Past, present and future, according to Nora, do not have a necessary and logical continuity of any kind anymore. One possible example of this temporality and universal fracture, according to Nora, is the emergence of different types of resistance to the official versions of history, as for instance in the confrontations of 'national' histories v/s local stories and between different protagonists. This is the case in Chile, of the efforts of Mapuche¹⁵ communities to stand by their own version of the colonisation process, and of its effects on their communities (Bengoa; 2000; Marimán, Caniuqueo, Millalén & Levil; 2006). Another, more current, example is the production and publication of hundreds of testimonies that set into question the official history of Pinochet's regime. For instance, Lom editors¹⁶ have published several testimonies that currently circulate and that have allowed for the possibility of opening legal investigations, historic in character too, so confronting the official history of this period.

At the same time 'the democratization of history' has provoked the emergence of multiple and diverse narratives about the past. This takes the form of a marked emancipatory trend among peoples, ethnic groups and even certain classes of individuals in the world today; in short, the

¹⁵ Mapuche is the name of the native ethnic group of Chile, inhabitants of the Southern Chile.

¹⁶ Lom is a word from the yamans or yagans, one of the ethnic groups that lived in the South of Chile. Lom editors began in 1994 and since then have been famous for their publications of texts that question the official and institutional history promoted by the state (see next page).

emergence, over a very short period of time, of all those forms of memory bound up with minority groups for whom rehabilitating their past is part and parcel of reaffirming their identity (Nora 2002).

These two phenomena that have been described above are directly related to what Nora calls the 'current upsurge in memory' or the 'outbreak of memory' (Nora 2002).

It is clear that the Chilean case fits into Nora's description of what 'democratizations of history' means. The large amount of testimonies, memories, reflections, analyses and of other types of productions, coming from different subjects and published in different formats, expressed in diverse types of narratives, shows us the necessity of a heterogeneous group for recuperating their own sense of the past. To quote some examples of this phenomenon, let us mention Lom editors' collection 'September', and the more than 35 publications related to testimonies on the military period. Some remarkable cases are: *Tejas Verdes* (1996) by Hernán Valdés, an emblematic testimony ; it was one of the first and more vivid tales on prison and torture, telling the experience of the author in a concentration camp located in the north of Chile; *Operación Cóndor* (1999) by Francisco Matorell, based on the study of a journalist, narrated the security mechanisms of the various dictatorships in South America were jointly organised for murdering and systematically violating their opponents' human rights; *Todas íbamos a ser Reinas* (2002), by Paz Rojas et al. narrates the case of ten pregnant women who were detained and went missing, and whose path –as well as their babies'- were lost; *Frazadas del Estadio Nacional* (2003) by Jorge Montealegre, which narrates the author's experience in the Estadio Nacional (National Stadium), the largest sport stadium in Santiago, which was used as a concentration camp during the first months of the dictatorship; thousands of people were locked up; and *119 de Nosotros* (2005) by Lucía Sepúlveda Ruiz, that narrates the testimony of a Survivor of the torture house 'Londres 38' from where 119 people from the MIR (Movimiento Izquierda Revolucionario - Revolutionary Left-wing Movement) disappeared and whose bodies are still missing.

Another important editorial house that has published many types of narratives against the construction of a hegemonic and official narrative of the period in question is 'Cuarto Propio', with several publications from essays, novels, poems and testimonies. They have published works by authors such as Leonidas Morales *Cartas de Petición: Chile 1973-1989* (2000); Eugenia Brito *Campos Minados: Literatura Post-golpe en Chile* (1994), Juan Pablo Cárdenas *Contigo en la Distancia. Crónicas Diplomáticas* (1998), Nelly Richard *Pensar en la Postdictadura* (2001), Mario Amorós *Después de la Lluvia: Chile, la Memoria Herida* (2004), among others.

It was also the case that, in the area of music, new spaces of expression came into place. The appearance of new music record labels such as *Alerce*, that has edited several albums, for instance *Antología de la canción revolucionaria* (Anthology of the revolutionary song) or *Antología del canto Nuevo* (Anthology of the new song) with musical groups such as *Sol y Lluvia*, *Congreso*, *Santiago del Nuevo Extremo* and *Schwenke & Nilo*, among others, reminding us how music used to be one of the most important ways to protest against Pinochet's regime.

It is also important to mention some journalistic research, which have systematically denounced the outrages on human rights by the military dictatorship, such as the works of Patricia Verdugo, who has written the important pieces *André de la Victoria* (1984) on the murdering of the French-born priest André Jarland, in La Victoria, one of the most combative neighbourhoods in Santiago; *Quemados Vivos* (1986) on the happenings of two young students, Rodrigo Rojas and Carmen Gloria Quintana, who were intentionally showered with paraffin and then burnt during a protest; and to mention one of her best known works, *Los Zarpasos del Puma* (1989), a research on the case known as the 'caravana de la muerte', in which a military command headed by Sergio Arellano Stark, ranged in helicopter several cities in the north and south of Chile, kidnapping and murdering dozens of Chilean left-wing militants.

After the coup d'état of 1973, the military did not only apply violence in the cruelest ways, but also constructed a discourse about themselves as the nation's new founders (Vidal; 1989). In order to do that, from the beginning of the dictatorship until the late 1990s, the army systematically denied the State's terrorism against a large group of Chilean citizens. Even after 1989, when the transition to democracy began, the military and citizens that supported the Pinochet regime, continued to deny any responsibility.

From the beginning of their reign, the army would hold war tribunals, setting up concentration camps and arbitrary executions to terrorise the population. As the Valech report establishes, two of the more brutal methods were the application of torture and kidnapping and disappearances of people (2005). The ways of doing this were diverse: first of all, the group who committed these actions was a secret police entity that on one hand didn't identify themselves as police and on the other hand they weren't recognized in the judicial system. After being kidnapped, prisoners were taken to secret places, most of them with the appearance of normal houses located in different areas and cities. Inside of those secret places people were brutally tortured in the most unimaginable ways and all of those who were not murdered or went missing, were forced to sign a document that established that they were never subject to any kind of violence. (Ahumada; Atria; Egaña; Góngora; Quesney; Saball & Villalobos; 1989)

The dictatorship systematically applied a policy of hiding and denying their actions of violence, kidnapping, torture, murder of members of the society. Thus, this secret way of exercising violence, without recognition and without leaving evidence, accompanied by the complicity of the mass media, particularly newspapers and television, produced a social atmosphere where questioning the truth and reality has been crucial to set the basis for social coexistence until now (Vidal, 1997).

The terror applied by the military was planned and managed by organizations related to the new State functions; as a result specialised

entities were created to control Chilean citizens. We have to remember that in South America the influence of the *Escuela de las Américas* (School of America or SOA)¹⁷ as military intervention from the USA, in the context of the Cold War, was shameless. This institution was created in 1946 and was conceived especially to train the military intelligence of Latin American countries. In 1996, documents that proved that this indoctrination and training included how to torture people as part of the interrogatory procedure, were disclosed from the US Army (Kornbluh, 2004). In Chile this influence was materialized in *Dirección Nacional de Informaciones* DINA, from November of 1973 to 1977, and *Central de Informaciones* CNI from 1977 until 1990. Both organizations, DINA and CNI, were basically torture centres, with the power to arrest people without any legal explanation. Therefore violence became an organized and systematic state activity to control citizens, apparently a contradictory practice to modernize a country. (Valech Report, 2005)

In relation to the *Escuela de las Américas* it is important to mention what has been pointed out by Hernan Vidal. In one of his works, *Chile: Poética de la Tortura Política* (2001) he suggests that to attribute the magnitude of torture, in our country, only to the influence of La *Escuela de las Américas* is to assume that in Chile, torture was never applied by state agents before 1973. Contrarily, Vidal argues that in Chile torture had been an institutional technique for a long time, the only difference is that it was used on subjects that were considered to be delinquents and criminals, usually people from the lower classes (2001). Vidal's claim is controversial. It is difficult to compare torture in the military period with other similar practices for several reasons. First, it was related to strong political identities and subjectivities. Second, today in Chile the pain generated by the military regime is still very much open. And third, and most important, torture during the military period was used not only as a punishment, but also as a political instrument for terrifying the population.

¹⁷ As a way to change the face of this Institution the Pentagon change its name on 2001 as Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation.

However, in my opinion, Vidal's statements open ways to research a subject that needs to be explored deeply in our society. To assume that torture is related only with the military period and political prisoners is also problematic, because it doesn't explain the brutality and 'efficiency' applied by the state; also because torture was a way to discipline imprisoned subjects considered criminals. This discussion is not going to be resolved here, but it's a subject that needs to be explored.

From another point of view, we also have to consider that violence and policies of terror, were accompanied by strong official discourses directed to present themselves and their actions as the heroic salvation of the country, in order to produce a unique and monolithic version of what was happening. Control over communication media of all kinds and over formal history in schools and universities was exercised, and imposed on the Chilean population. Thus, all of us were subject to an indoctrination process to convince us that Chile had been devastated by the Marxist cancer, and that the Military had saved the country, the nation. No other account was permitted during the military regime (Vidal, 1989; Rettig Report, 1991). Hence, the answer to what happened became an existential and political issue, especially for the victims, and also an historical matter, as I will show.

Perhaps one of the clearest examples of these struggles for recognition and truth is shown in Leonidas Morales's book *Cartas de Petición* (Petition's letters) where he collected several letters addressed to the military authorities, asking for their missing relatives, and also the answer that they received. This work is particularly shocking because it clearly shows how the military denied what they were doing, and intentionally gave mis-information, causing more damage and pain to people who were losing their loved ones:

To: General Intendente
Mr. Washington Carrasco F.

I am the father of a young first year student of Philosophy at the University of Concepción, who was arrested by police agents on September 19 at 9 pm at our house, located 2166 Carrera Street.

We have done everything possible to locate him; we have gone to the National Stadium, Investigations, Police, the Third Division, Nava Base, etc., Personnel of the Army and of the Sea-coast have read to us hundreds of names of arrested people and our son does not appear on any list.

We hope you will understand, General, the bitterness and sadness that afflicts my wife and my daughters. You are our last resort and we beg you to inform us where Héctor Roberto Rodríguez Cárcamo is. It has already been a long month since he was detained, and nobody has told us where they took him or where he is at this moment. It would give us great peace of mind if you could let us know where our son is.

Please understand, gentle General, we are distressed parents who have been crying over son, not knowing whether he will make it back home. Kindly order us to be informed, even though the truth may be harder than the hope to see him coming back to our home.

Our sincere wishes of happiness for you and our mother land.

Héctor Rodríguez Salvo.

Concepción, October 18 of 1973

From: General Intendente
To: Héctor Rodríguez Salvo
Concepción.

I am very sorry to inform you that it has not been possible to locate your son, Héctor R. Rodríguez Cárcamo, in spite of having requested the information from diverse institutions involved in detention from September 19 onwards.

I have been informed that it was necessary to compare your son with other arrested participants of the MIR, this is why it was impossible to prevent his accusation. Your son was set free the day after his detention and he was recommended to stay away from the city to avoid violence or retribution from MIR associates. Having already asked the pertinent units to communicate any information to you, I am very sorry to not give you a more satisfactory response, but the facts are those I have effectively exposed to you.

Washington Carrasco Fernández
General de Brigada Comandante en Jefe de la III División del Ejército e Intendente de Concepción.

Concepción, November 12 of 1973

These letters are an example of thousands of cases, where people, who were suffering for their relatives, were deprived of truth and recognition, and still worse, the military created damaging stories to explain why their relatives were missing. For instance, in this case the family guessed that their son was dead and only wanted to know what happened and where the body was. However the military's answer suggested that because during the interrogation process the boy betrayed his party, he probably would be persecuted. What I consider particularly difficult, besides painful, in this kind of case is the impossibility of mourning, the impossibility of creating a version of what happened because the facts are not available and not recognized.

This is not the same as saying, 'we killed someone' and then having different versions for why the person was killed. This is refusing to take responsibilities for what was done, and acting as if it never happened. I suggest here, that the impossibility of recreating the facts of what happened and not being able to find the bodies of missing persons, 'los desaparecidos' (the disappeared), has been in Chilean society, until now, one of the elements of why the memory work processes have such importance and are so very strongly attached to certain groups and peoples.

In the same logic Diana Taylor's argument goes further, in her book *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's Dirty War*, related with the situation 'los desaparecidos'. She argues that the impossibility of creating "symbolization" of what is going on in this kind of context might be very problematic because:

If there is no subject before the law, if subjects are produced by the very systems that claim human subjectivity as their basis (law, culture), then the disappeared, as the military leaders said all along, do not exist. The military rhetoric, with its myths of origin, identity, and destiny, repeatedly stresses that they – the male protagonist of Argentine [Chilean] history- came into being, and were coterminous, with the Patria. Their entry into culture (they insisted) marked the origin of culture (Patria)...Everything before the appearance of the soldier male was inert, untamed matter –a nebulous, unfathomable, feminine, prehistoric before. (Taylor, 1997: 147)

Indeed, in the Argentinean or Chilean dictatorships, where the military official version of what happened dominated the social space, the symbolisation and negotiations of different versions of what was going on in our society was difficult and in some ways perverse, because it created a new 'other', not Chilean, not even human, the figure of 'subversive' ones (Taylor, 1997:148) or as the Chilean Admiral Merino used to say 'humanoids'¹⁸. Thus, the sedimentation in the public space of one version over others, the violent enclosure of other voices by the military, the refusal to take responsibility for what they had done, and even more the installation of different ways of confusing relatives of survivors about what had happened, created a kind of 'psychosis', a loss of sense about what reality was.

How can a community understand what is 'real' or 'true', if the perpetrators (who also have control of the state and the power) deny what they have done? It is clear for Taylor that one social and cultural consequence is that "not representing real political violence and atrocity only contributes to its legitimization and perpetuation" (Taylor, 1997: 147). This consequence is also, from my point of view, the answer to the question of why, from 1973 on, it has been so evident that there was a need for generating different ways of symbolizing what happened, and they have arisen in diverse ambits of our society. The military's speech was the most powerful, the only possible version to be mentioned in public, but not the only one; memory works were constantly produced in different levels of the social web, keeping alive what the military wanted to hide. Besides, by now, historical conditions have changed, allowing the elaboration, re-elaboration and production of memories and knowledge of this hard period in Chilean history.

¹⁸ Admiral Merino was one of the most outspoken members of the 'Junta de Gobierno'. At the beginning of the 1980s he established that he would only have a chat with the press on Tuesdays. Thus, during the period the term "Merino's Tuesdays" became very popular, particularly because he used to be very arrogant; his most famous quote, from 1986, was "In Chile and in all of the world there are two kinds of people, the human and the humanoids. We are the humans. The humanoids are members of the Communist Party" (quoted by the newspaper "La Nación" on the 1st of June, 2007).

'Rettig Report'

After 1990, during the first 'democratic government' or what was called the first 'Gobierno de la Concertación'¹⁹, the need to establish the 'truth' around the events that took place during the dictatorship came into the political arena. With Patricio Aylwin as the President of the Chilean Republic, on April 25, 1990, with Government Decree N° 355, the *Comisión de Verdad y Reconciliación* (The Truth and Reconciliation Commission) later known as the *Rettig Report*²⁰, was established. It was the first official attempt to disclose the military versions of the past.

The *Rettig Report* was written with the conviction that, the nation's 'moral conscience' needed to establish the truth about the violations of human rights between the September 11, 1973 and March 11, 1990 because the 'national reconciliation' would only be reconstructed by knowing the truth of what happened. Thus, the main political aim, 'the national reconciliation', tinged the whole context from where the *Rettig Report* was constructed. The binomial 'truth / reconciliation' left problems as responsibilities recognition and justice out of the discussion's compass.

The concrete task of the commission was to produce a report to establish, as accurately as possible, the situations in which human rights were violated by state agents. Thus, it was necessary to individualize the victims and to find out what had happened to them, proposing a possible restitution or compensation to their relatives.

However, the *Rettig Report* contained at least two main controversial points, which later became conflictive issues in both public opinion and in future Concertación Presidencies. One of them was the torture issue, while the *Rettig Report* condemned torture as a horrible and real situation, considering it deeply in its first part (Chapter 2), the victims that suffered but survived were not individualized in the report; their testimonies were not registered,

¹⁹ Coalition by Parties by Democracy and coalition government in Chile from 1990 until know.

²⁰ It took the name Rettig because the lawyer Raul Rettig was heading this commission.

and no compensation was suggested for them. The second difficulty was related to the interpretation of what had really happened. Although it was not the duty of the commission to produce any statement about the facts, specifically, whether they were justified or not, the report did, describing the situation in the country as critical,

But the country's situation at that time can be described as one of deep crisis, representing the destruction or weakening of a high degree of consensus between Chileans. This consensus is related with institutions, traditions, assumptions about social and political every day life and others that are also safeguards of Human. The understanding of the 1973 crisis is therefore necessary, both to understand the genesis of the following violations of those rights we have had to investigate, and prevent these kind of situations from happening again (1991: 33)

The interpretation of the country pre-coup, became an issue of conflict for many, basically because until that point it was the military's most used justification. We were told thousands of times, 'the country was devastated, the army saved it'.

The commission's final report was issued in February 1991, and it was received with different degrees of acceptance. But I want to point out that the Rettig Report was far more concerned about national reconciliation, but without recognition or responsibility for what happened. Both military and civil supporters of Pinochet continued to deny the facts that the *Rettig Report* established. The military were particularly resilient in refusing to accept any single degree of responsibility, and after the Report was published, the army's official reaction was loud and clear:

The Chilean army solemnly declares that they will not accept being positioned in front of citizens on the bench of the defendants, for saving the freedom and the sovereignty of the Patria after the insistent request of the country (*La Nación*, 18 Nov. 2004).

The political context that emerged with the *Rettig Report* had much more to do with national reconciliation and forgetting practices than with acts of recognition and justice. But it fast became clear that the attempt of closing the door at the same time that it was being opened would not work. Part of Chilean civil society understood that a kind of imposed amnesia was

promoted from the government in order to recompose nationhood and to legitimate democracy.

But, as a Pandora's box, the publication of the *Rettig Report* boosted the construction of social networks of memory work, continuing with the production of memory fragments and connections to an unreconciled past, as a way of resistance against official imposition.

However, the political scenario changed and during the last years of the second Concertación Presidency, presided over by Eduardo Frei. On October 16, 1998, Augusto Pinochet was arrested in London, accused of crimes against humanity and genocide. This fact, without any doubt, was a big event, particularly for Chilean society. The dictator's detention proved to the Chilean community that Pinochet was not untouchable and that our 'transition to democracy' was far more fragile than the 'new governments' boasted.

There are many positions and debates about 'the London episode' and I want to point out just a few of them. During Aylwin's government (the first democratic government after the coup), Pinochet was present in public arena as the head of the Chilean Army until 1997, and later as a Republic Senator, meaning that he was entitled to be a member of Parliament for life. This situation was set up by the 1980 constitution, and from these positions he still continued to exercise pressure over the new democratic management. On several occasions Pinochet demonstrated his power in theatrical ways, as for example to threaten the new authorities, mobilizing soldiers at different points of the cities, using insulting language to refer to the new authorities, and so on (Vidal, 2000:212). Thus, when he was arrested paradoxical situations emerged. On the one hand all this apparent tolerance, sustained by fear of a new coup d'état led by the general, vanished. Part of civil society felt empowered and happy, revealing their disappointment with Chilean justice. Pinochet supporters however, were perplexed, still believing in the general as a hero, and did not understand 'this peculiar behaviour' coming from the international community. And, on the other hand, the

government's official position, modulated by the fear of new political instability and using arguments related to national sovereignty, sustained the necessity that Pinochet should be judged in Chile. But in any case, the great symbolic effect, after Pinochet was in London for almost one year, was the loss of his powerful image as a leader or as a dictator. Therefore, the Spanish legal request that made the arrest of Pinochet in London possible, unquestionably provided an open window to all who still felt that their versions of the past hadn't been heard.

At the end of Frei's government, in August of 1999, with Pinochet held captive in the UK, the Defense Minister, Edmundo Pérez Yoma, opened discussion on the situation of Human Rights. This instance, known as *La Mesa de Diálogo* (The Dialogue Table), assembled authorities of different areas of Chilean society, with the duty of finding a 'definitive' solution to the problem of Human Rights violations.

'La Mesa de Diálogo'

On 2000, the third Concertación Government assumed power and was headed by Ricardo Lagos. One of the government's first actions, was to materialise *La Mesa de Diálogo* (The Dialogue Table). However, as Vidal points out, the political context where this new instance was born, was reasonably received as a very suspicious act by part of the public opinion and especially by the victim's relatives, including Human Rights organisations (2000: 225 p.), for different reasons. The most important one was because of the way that it was organized. In effect, how government chose the individuals on the board was completely unclear to the public. Thus, the legitimacy of these public figures was questioned by a large number of citizens. Questions regarding why these individuals were chosen to participate on the board came up (eg. What was part of society did they represent?). These were the sorts of questions that were articulated in the first criticisms of the government's initiative (Vidal; 2000: 232).

The government called to people from different social, political and moral institutions of our national society including representatives from the Armed

Forces and Police. The main objective was to consider the effects of Human Rights violations, principally the fact that more than one thousand Chileans were still missing and detained. As a result, a more precise objective of this convention was to obtain information about missing people, ('los desaparecidos'). Specifically, secret police, soldiers and citizens in general were to give information about where the bodies of those people could be found, or say what had happened to them.

However, the government's call was rejected by the most important Human Rights organisation, *La Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos AFDD* (Detained and Disappeared Relatives Association), because they suspected that behind the initiative, there were secret pacts and negotiations with the Army, related to immunity and impunity. Clearly, the scepticism had grounds. Why did the Army want to help now, after Pinochet was arrested in London? Why now, just when during 1998, for the first time, a new generation of jurists was considering criminal accusations against the Army's members and even against Pinochet? Or, when a new interpretation of the Amnesty Law²¹, was gaining power inside of the justice system? Therefore, *La Mesa de Diálogo* was launched at a time of controversy, and again part of the public understood that the official negotiation was hiding other interests, for instance, to keep the face of our modern and recovered democracy clean.

With 22 members, 6 from the Armed Forces, 5 lawyers related to the defence of Human Rights, 4 religious authorities, 2 historians, 2 psychologists, 1 journalist and one representative of the scientific community, and 2 representatives of the government, including the Defence Ministry, the roundtable was seen as an way to avoid confrontation, to search for consensus, without recognition and justice. This impression was

²¹ The Amnesty Law was created by Pinochet's regime in April 1978 (decree low N° 2.191). This law established that any crime committed between September of 1973 and March of 1978, must be free of any punishable charge, if they were not in process at this moment. However around 1998, the Amnesty Law is questioned because it is incompatible with International Human Rights laws and agreements that Chile signed. In the treaties, Chile agreed to accept that there are crimes such as genocide that can't be authorized / used. Thus, some Chilean jurists decided to accept the prosecutions of some cases.

very strong, even provoking division inside of Human Rights organisations. Thus, some outstanding defenders of Human Rights, lawyers such as Pamela Pereira and Hector Salazar, who participated in roundtable, were highly criticized by other organisations, for example the AFDD. The lawyers, on one hand, decided to participate as a way to confront the Army's representatives, but on the other hand this behaviour was understood, especially by AFDD members, as getting in to bed with the enemies. The group issued a document on June 13, 2000, with their conclusions and proposed solutions only related to some of the cases of missing people. Nevertheless, at the same time the Army as an institution, refused to make any type of declaration apologising and recognising their actions, and rejected even the idea of doing so in the future. However, some particular responsibilities were accepted by the military, in exceptional cases, and always by individual members. (Vidal 2000: 258).

As we see, the roundtable was a very problematic instance in Chile, particularly for victims, or those who were having no recognition for their versions and pains. Here the problem was to reduce the conflict to differences of opinion, as if all versions were equally situated, and all of them should be accepted. Then, even when the army gave some information about the end of about 200 persons, the sensation that the roundtable was above all, a conciliation where the military version was again legitimated.

However, as with the Rettig Report it was officially established that during the dictatorship there was violence, and Human Rights abuse; the report also acknowledged the violent disappearance brought on by state agents. But something really dark was missing, the horrible fact that a large number of people were brutally tortured, and that this practice was organised by state and Army organisations.

With Pinochet being held in London for a year, and with the public debates that the roundtable produced in our society, gradually the military version started to change. From a strong position of 'we saved the country', to 'yes, we saved the country, but maybe we made some mistakes, and perhaps we

went too far in some cases'. Clearly the legitimacy of the military version was losing weight, and the justice system was changing as well. Slowly, some cases of murders and missing people were taken to court and it was possible to arrest some of those responsible, military or civil.

'Valech Report'

Two years after the roundtable, Ricardo Lagos, still president of Chile, decided to convene, through Official decree No 1.040, *La Comisión Nacional sobre Prisión Política y Tortura* (The National Commission on Political Prison and Torture), also known as the *Valech Report*, because it was headed by the Catholic bishop, Sergio Valech.

According to the Chilean journalist Patricia Verdugo, who is well known for her fruitful research on cases related to human rights violations, this Commission became feasible not only because of the fact that Pinochet was arrested in London, but also because of the actions by the right-wing, particularly by members of a political party called Renovación Nacional (National Renovation). In fact, in June 2003 and radically changing their approach, they announced that they were going to present a proposition related to the Human Rights situation. Of course, under these circumstances the government, who did not want to lose the leadership on this matter, without delay called for all the parties and Human Rights organisations to present their suggestions to the government, in order to find a solution. In Verdugo's words "to say simply and clearly that, the 'Pinochetista' right-wing authorized the debate about Human Rights violations inside of the government's palace, in the Parliament and even in the press" (Verdugo, 2004: 11).

For the first time, the government's voice was more concerned with recognition than with forgetting. For the first time, the president's speech focused on "there is no tomorrow without yesterday", not "we have to think of the future" or "we have to turn the page" (Verdugo, 2004:11).

The new commission's purpose was to find out who went to prison and tortured for political reasons, by state agents, between September 11, 1973 and March 10, 1990. The report also proposed compensation measures for every one who was known to be a victim of this unfair and unjust situation. The commission's results were received by Ricardo Lagos in November of 2004; at the end of the research process and after 35,000 testimonies. Consequently 28,459 persons were recognised as victims of torture and political imprisonment. These persons, who the commission reported as victims, were people who voluntarily accepted to tell what had happened to them. In this account there are only people who survived and who were willing to tell what happened to them to the commission.

A few days before *the Valech Report's* results were known by the public, and perhaps having a premonition, the army's official reaction was published in the most important newspapers and television and the tone of the declaration was, for the first time different. General Emilio Cheyre, the new head of Chilean Armed Forces, appointed March of 2002, wrote, *Ejército de Chile: el fin de una visión* (Chilean's Armed Forces: The end of a vision), where he recognised that the Chilean Army had committed crimes against human rights. In his statement, Cheyre justified the actions committed against part of civil society, in the context of the Cold War, in the sense of the political polarisation of the period, but he also wrote:

Does the scenario of global conflict described before justify the human rights violations that happened in Chile? My answer is unequivocal: no. The human rights violations should have never occurred and nobody can find an ethical justification. (*La Tercera*, Nov. 5, 2004)

Later the General highlighted the most important part of the message:

The Chilean Army has made the hard and irreversible decision to take responsibility, as institution, in regard to all the punishable and morally unacceptable facts of the past.²² (*La Tercera*, 5 Nov. 2004)

Even though the General continued to justify the coup because of the historical context, for the first time it gave place to an Army's public recognition of its participation in Human Rights violations, as an institution,

²² Also in newspaper "La Nación", November 5, 2004.

and not as some members who executed excesses. Clearly, on one hand the General's declaration was written under pressure. It was evident that he received some information about the *Valech Report's* content before it was issued. But, on the other hand, it was an opportunity to clean the face of this new and modern 'Chilean Army' and distance itself from that 'old Army' which used to have Pinochet as its leader.

Nevertheless, Emilio Cheire's gesture, fell short in some ways. After his declaration and the *Valech Report* publication, civil supporters of Pinochet's regime, and some retired army officials still continued to avoid any responsibility, and the majority of the Armed Forces continued sustaining the version of 'the excess' of some of their members (Verdugo, 2004: 14). In this context, General Cheire clarified, in the seminar *Human Rights and Military: Compromise to the XXI' century*, that:

By mistake, some people have deduced, and insist with simplicity, that we would have admitted that there was an "institutional doctrine" of violation of Human Rights - this never existed! (Quoted by Verdugo: 2004: 14)

Therefore, Emilio Cheire's position demonstrated the Army's ambivalence in its discourses with public opinion. They rejected human rights violations as war methods, and felt remorse for those who suffered, but they denied any responsibility (Verdugo, 2004: 15).

As a result of the *Valech Report's* publication on November 28, 2004, a large number of reactions, from the Pinochetist right-wing and Human Rights organisations, swamped the Chilean press. Again, the publication was far from reaching social consensus, but even so, the fact that people were systematically tortured in Chile was publicly established and in official discourses on Chilean history.

Chronological Table: *Concertación* Governments and Human Rights Activities²³

Concertación Governments post-Pinochet	Official activities on Human Rights	Became official facts	Head of Chilean Army
1 st Government Patricio Aylwin 1990 - 1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Rettig Report or Report of National Commission of Truth and Reconciliation.</i> (1991) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence had happened, Humans Right's violations during the dictatorship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Augusto Pinochet, from August 1973 until March 1998.
2 nd Government Eduardo Frey 1994 - 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 1998, Pinochet is arrested in London, for 16 months, charged for genocide and crimes against humanity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pinochet is not invincible. • Amnesty law from 1978, can be interpreted differently, accordingly there are some crimes that can be punished. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Augusto Pinochet • Ricardo Izurieta from 1998, until 2002.
3 rd Government Ricardo Lagos 2000 -2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Roundtable (La Mesa de Diálogo)</i> for Human Rights (2001). • <i>Valech Report or National Commission about Political Prison and Torture.</i> (2004) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Chile, human rights were not respected by state agents. • In Chile torture was an organised practice from the Armed Forces and the state, these acts were not just isolated excesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ricardo Izurieta • Emilio Cheire from March 2002 until March 2006.

²³ This table was elaborated by myself.

According to Hernán Vidal, the *Rettig Report*, *La Mesa de Diálogo* and the *Valech Report*, are consequences, in part, of the politics of the new democratic governments regarding human rights, which have been ambiguous and confusing, and highly criticised, particularly by organisations involved in the defence of human rights. From a political point of view, Vidal's criticism is accurate. The violation of human's rights during Pinochet's regime has been managed in the same way as the process of democratic transition, that is considering democracy as a value that needs to be protected rather than a practice that should be exercised by the whole of civil society.

Tacitly the 'Concertación' is accused of negligence because it did not make any effort to reconstruct participative sovereignty and to promote civil participation in the public arena, origin of the legitimacy of every democratic government. (Vidal, 2000: 205)

It is important, for the purpose of this research to consider the brief account, that was made above, on how some Chilean past events were gradually constructed as public knowledge: how realities that were denied by those who took power entered the public arena and became established facts.

The official recognition of the facts is an element that we have to consider, since it changes the material condition where memories arise. During the dictatorship, the role of memory and the production of version of the past were fundamental, since there was no other way to reproduce the facts that systematically were denied as truth and necessary to claim justice. But what happened to memories in the post Pinochet context? How did memory production processes develop? What kind of identity processes are these memories related to?

Memory as a Way to Survive, as a Way to Be and as a Way to Die

It is better to remain quiet and to forget. That is the only thing we must do. We must forget. And that won't happen if we continue opening up lawsuits, sending people to jail. FOR-GET: That's the word. And for that to happen, both sides must forget and continue with their work. (Former General Augusto Pinochet, September 13 1995, two days after the 22nd anniversary of the military coup)

We have to defend our former commanders... and I don't think, personally speaking, that going back to past events helps.... It should be history itself that analyzes the past, because it is not good to bring up matters that are conflictive for the country (Army Commander in Chief, General Ricardo Izurieta, May 27, 1998)

Memory helps people so that the same crimes are not repeated; calling things by their real name, saying a criminal is a criminal.... The worst that could occur in Chile is to think that by forgetting we will do away with the problem (Sola Sierra, President of the Families of the Disappeared, El Siglo, February 20, 1998).²⁴

In this section, I shall elaborate on how memory in the Chilean context has become a problematic way of remembering; issues range from the expression channels of memory processes to the differences between identities represented by these memories. I will argue against understanding memory in terms of dichotomised taxonomies and attempt to develop arguments for understanding memory as a fluid process which is always negotiated and conflictive. In this sense, what subjects are legitimated by memory work? How are subjectivities negotiated through this memory process? And how does it describe political dimensions of memory's mobility? (Understanding by 'mobility' the constant negotiation between different memory narratives.) These are some of the questions on which this section focuses.

Memory Forms, Historical Struggles.

With Pinochet as the ruler of the country for 16 years, people who suffered the consequences of their dissidence had to find ways to resist, both surviving, and keeping the events alive that were happening and were not allowed to be named. Thus, paradoxically, although the military government applied a "strong control of the public spaces and of the artistic and communicative circuits" (Subercaseaux, 2006: 20), social networks such as humanitarian organisations, dissident newspapers and magazines, independent centres of research and cultural movements, appeared from everywhere.

²⁴ These quotations were taken from: http://www.chipsites.com/derechos/index_eng.html

Amongst these Networks and social movements of resistance, Human Rights organisations may have had the more protagonist role, because they rapidly took over public spaces, directly addressing and appealing to the public conscience, on the terror that was applied by the military and state agents (Vidal, 1996). The particular role of the *Vicaría de la Solidaridad* (1976), the organisation that represented Families of detained and disappeared persons (1974), and the *Movimiento contra la Tortura Sebastián Acevedo*, to name some of the more relevant, must be highlighted. All these organisations arose as early forms of resistance to the authoritarian culture imposed by the dictatorship, and gradually confronted the official discourse. It must be clarified that if the military permitted, with much resistance, the existence of these organisations, it was because of the persistence and braveness of each of the organizations' members, but also to a great extent because they were sheltered by the Catholic Church. Regardless, people who participated in these organisations, including priests and nuns, were equally pursued, detained, jailed and even murdered.

Other important organisations that notably emerged during the beginning of the 1980s were organisations dedicated to women. These organisations stood against the military dictatorship and, particularly, confronted the official take on state's discourse aimed at women. They were openly up against the national-military discourse on the role of women as "the moral guard of the patria... the foundational stone for the reconstruction of Chile" (Munizaga & Letelier, in CEM; 1988: 541) etc., materialised in the actions of CEMA Chile. The essence of these movements was far from the significance of 'Chilean women' that the military discourse pretended to establish as a unity, because they were going to appear in the public sphere as specific 'movements and organisations of women', identified as either victims of the repression and their families, groups of inhabitants from definite areas, mainly working class, or militants of political parties (Munizaga & Letelier, en CEM; 1988).

Regarding the media, in 1976 some critical magazines started circulating in the country. In order to overcome censorship, they generally started with the appearance of a publication oriented to international analysis. They were

then progressively introducing analyses on national facts, and became one of the more important channels of resistance against dictatorship. The first of these magazines was *Apsi*, and was followed by *Hoy*, *Análisis*, *La Bicicleta*, and *Cauce*; then some newspapers, notably *El Fortín Mapocho*. The existence of this dissident writing on many occasions provoked a violent reaction by the military, in the way of raids, censorship and requisition (Correa, Figueroa et al. 2001). Meanwhile, journalists and directors of these communication media were threatened, and in some cases detained and assassinated, as in the case of José Carrasco Tapia, in 1986. These publications were important because they allowed for the circulation of information questioning the official discourse with respect to the 'truth', on the happenings occurring inside of the country. And at the same time, they allowed for public awareness of the magnitude of the resistance.

Something very similar occurred with the introduction of news in radio stations. The precursor was *Cooperativa*, and their space for news was named *El diario de Cooperativa* (Cooperative Newspaper). Since 1978, they occupied a broad range of coverage among Pinochet's opponents, becoming the symbol of the dispute for 'the truth' on everyday happenings in the country. They were followed by *Radio Chilena*, and *Radio Balmaceda*. As in the case of written media, the appearance of information as a focus of resistance turned into a constant struggle for transgressing the boundaries of censorship imposed by dictatorship (Correa, Figueroa & others 2001).

The context where all these productions arose is associated, according to Alice Nelson, to a situation in which "a single official story has been imposed to replace a multiplicity of voices –'order' was to replace 'chaos'-(Nelson; 2002: 22) So in this sense, all this massive cultural production was the way to resist Pinochet's dictatorship, both denouncing the violence and injustice, and on the other hand, to oppose and resist the homogenised discourses about 'modern nationhood'. But it was also a memory work, a way to narrate unofficial versions of a loud secret. The Chilean nation was not the military's dream of a sweet family. In other words the 'imagined community'

(Anderson; 1983) that we were dreaming, was very diverse among Chilean people.

La Vicaría de la Solidaridad: Privatising Memory.

Thus, the only way to keep the relationship between the past and the present alive was through the memory process; but it was also the collective conscience of a group of people that made possible the creations of archives with testimonies. In this sense the most important organisation playing this role, as an archive of testimonies and evidence, was the Human Rights organisation *Vicaría de la Solidaridad* created by the Chilean Catholic Church during 1976, and that keep functioning until 1990.

Chile has been constitutionally defined as a Catholic country, and without any doubt that is the religion massively professed. More sensitive than other Catholic Churches in Latin America, the Church in Chile has constantly been in touch with social problems and struggles. After the coup, the Chilean ecclesiastical power, while accepting the new order²⁵, also took in hand the duty of 'national reconciliation'. In October 1973, after the coup, a group of diverse Christian Churches' members led by the head of the Chilean Catholic Church, Monseñor Raúl Silva Henríquez, created the *Comité de Cooperación para la Paz en Chile* (Cooperation Committee for Peace in Chile). This organisation had the task of aiding the victims of human rights violations. However, after two years of intense work it was closed as a consequence of the dictatorship's pressure. After that, Santiago's Archbishop Monseñor Raúl Silva Henríquez decided to create the *Vicaría de la Solidaridad*, an organisation that depended directly on the Catholic Church, and which survived right through Pinochet's period, from January 1976 to December 1992.

The main objective of the *Vicaría* was to keep record of the missing people, and to give medical and legal advice to those who were persecuted by the

²⁵ The relationship between the Catholic Church and the dictatorship was very complex, and suffered transformations during the time. See Hugo Cancino Troncoso; *Chile: Iglesia y dictadura 1973-1989. Un estudio sobre el rol político de la Iglesia católica y el conflicto con el régimen militar*, University Press, Odense 1997.

new regime. As a consequence of this aid, a substantial record was created, with people's testimonies of torture, missing relatives, persecution, and other kinds of violence. In this sense the *Vicaría*, became the most valuable and largest archive of primary sources for several ends. First, during the dictatorship, the archive served compare the Army's information with the victim's testimonies side by side, and later, in democracy, it was used to elaborate part of the *Rettig Report* and the document that *La mesa de Diálogo* wrote. Today it is the most important documentation center for the study of human's right violations in this period.

With the arrival of democracy, the Catholic Church, accused systematically by Pinochet's regime as an institution infiltrated by the 'Marxist cancer', decided to distance itself from politics. The ecclesiastical hierarchy considered that part of the active role the church was playing during the dictatorship, did not have a justification in democracy. Thus, as part of the Catholic Church's internal reorganization, the *Vicaría* was closed.

However, in August 1992, with more than 85,000 documents, microfilms and articles archived, the famous organisation changed its face. Designed for public use, and with a new name *Fundación de Documentación y Archivo de la Vicaría de la Solidaridad* and, *Vicaría* reopened its doors with new aims, now offering all of this valuable information to anyone who wanted to research the period.

In spite of this, the *Vicaría's* files are, today, an example of the conflict and the fight of private memories to become public resources, to write history and to claim justice, but also a struggle related to the property of memory. In her remarkable text *Silencios, Contingencias y Desafíos: Los archivos de la Vicaría de la Solidaridad*, (Da Silva & Jelin editors; 2002) María Angélica Cruz has pointed out how, after democracy had arrived, the archive suffered from institutional privatization, creating a social and political debate about the archive's belongings.

The Catholic Church made the creation of the *Vicaría* possible, but the archive's construction was organised by a big group of different social

organisations, professionals and even international organisations, hence the claim “Why are the files the property of a canonical institution now? Why is it private property and not public” (Cruz, in Da Silva & Jelin editors; 2002:163) since we are in democracy now. However, the legal status of the files remained were private property, belonging to the Catholic Church; the funding for the archive comes from the Church and from international organisations.

What are the implications of this situation? First of all, it is necessary to consider that the privatisation process was not the result of social debate; it was the unilateral Catholic Church’s decision that did not have much of a public discussion, in part because of the reputation of the Church, since the institution actively participated in the human rights defence, consequently most of the democratic actors had confidence in the good use of document. However, beyond the archive’s custody dilemma and how it was resolved, it is problematic that “the last word about how the information was to be used” (2002:168) was also left in the Catholic Church’s hands. Thus, questions such as what type of access will the public have, which documents would people have the right to see and use, since when, and so on, are only in the hands of the Catholic Church.

The open question is whether a file held by social, not state actors, such as the Church, can assure the social demands of a plurality of collective memories, of the democratization of the cultural patrimony that includes the documentation of the authoritarian past.... Nevertheless, it is necessary to ask ourselves also whether public property guarantees such demands...the issue is not that public property assures better custody of the files, but given that there neither a society capable of looking abreast at a painful, complex and fragmented past, nor there are public policies of memory that among other issues may allow to debate, to confront and to agree the way in which the documents of this past are kept.... (Cruz in Da Silva & Jelin editors; 2002:170)

This type of struggle is not a minor point, it clearly shows how the political and social context embraces questions of memory, and at the same time, how these memories are also questioning the democratisation process in Chile after Pinochet.

Morandé 80 street, a Side Door: From Resistance to Co-option.

Another example of these political divergences in relation to memory is the reconstruction of the side door of the Government's Palace facing *Morandé St.* The palace was built at the end of the XVIII century by the Spanish Monarchy, with the objective of having a factory to produce money. During the middle of the XIX century and under the administration of Chilean's President Manuel Bulnes, *La Moneda* was designated as the new Government's Palace, used both as the central administration office for the executive power, and as the private house of the Presidents and their families. Thus, between 1845 until 1959, the east side of *La Moneda* was also the president's residence. In 1906, under Pedro Montt's administration, the new door of the palace was built at *Morandé 80*. The idea was for presidents to use the door as a way to get in and out of the Government Palace as normal citizens, and not as heads of the State, since this entry was unofficial, small, and located at a side of the building. After 1954, the president's residences were moved, but until 1973, this custom of keeping this door open for Presidential personal use continued.



Painting of *La Moneda*, inaugurated in 1805 during the last years of Chile as a Colony. It became the house of government in 1845.

<http://www.gob.cl/>



La Moneda in 1960. A symbol of republican stability and democracy.

<http://farm4.static.flickr.com/>



The aviation strikes against the government palace on September 11, 1973.

<http://www.kalipedia.com/>



La Moneda today (2010).

<http://www.pschile.cl/>

On September 11, 1973, *La Moneda* was bombed, and Pinochet's soldiers took over it. The body of Salvador Allende was removed from the Palace through this side door, and after that, the door was closed and covered with cement, as if it had never been there. From the 1980s, when protests against Pinochet started to be stronger and became public, Pinochet's retractors started to leave flowers, candles and graffiti where the door used to be, making it a memory place of resistance (Nora; 1996). Only during the third democratic government was the door rebuilt, and finally reopened on September 11, 2003.

How *Morandé 80* became a symbolic and emblematic place to our national history is something difficult to explain. In some ways the door turned into a strong representation of republican values, since the idea was to go out and get in to the palace without any kind of honour, just as men, like any other citizen, showing that the Head of the State's position is transitory. But also, because of the historical violence associated with it: on the morning of September 11, President Salvador Allende walked through the front door but that evening his body was carried out of the building, not as the President, but as a dead man, through the side door. Later on that same day, Pinochet came into the devastated Palace with his soldiers, through the official front entrance, to evaluate the damage and to officially take control of the country. The new administration soon ordered the repair of the Palace, but with an important transformation, the side door that faced *Morandé* was to be covered up. The door that used to represent the human dimension of our leader and the democratic spirit of our democracy was covered up, and as history would show, the new rulers did not demonstrate humanity.

The virtual door became a strong and emblematic place of public memory during the 1980s, when opposition against Pinochet became powerful, thus *Morandé* street located at one side of the Palace turned into a battle ground, during public protests, especially at the commemoration of September 11 each year.

The dynamics of the ritual commemoration, until the door was reopened, were diverse. At the beginning of it people intended to arrive to the place where the door used to be, and to make a gesture, to leave a mark or a flower, etc., but this was very hard because police forces were always protecting all the streets around the palace, so that this used to be a real battle. During the 1990s when democracy was recovered, free access to the street was permitted on each commemoration's day, people now stopped in front of the door and used to sing the national anthem, or to hold a minute's silence.



Morande 80. The body of president Salvador Allende is taken out of La Modeda through the door of Morande 80. Thirty years latter, president Ricardo Lagos reopens the door in a symbolic civic ceremony (pictures from <http://www.fundacionsalvadorallende.cl> and <http://www.zonainpacto.cl>)

During Ricardo Lagos's administration, *Morandé* recovered its materiality but, perhaps it changed its old meanings. The emblematic door was rebuilt and re-opened, but in a theatrically, more of a guesstre than to an action, possibly because what the entrance used to represent was lost. The door was opened only for a few minutes that day, in an official ceremony, where the President raised a large Chilean flag that covered the new door, and then opened it and crossed the doorway and entered the palace. But apart from this restoration ritual, during the rest of the year the side door was kept closed; today it does not have any use at all, and it is unlocked just for very special occasions. This gesture reflects, for some of us, both how a memory place was utilised for the official government to legitimize our democracy, and the fact that the door is always closed also shows how a weak

democracy has to be legitimised with gestures of this kind and not by promoting, for instance, the exercise of citizenship.

As we can see, categorising memories as official and popular can be a very problematic distinction to make, especially in our democratic context, because they are permanently changing, particularly from the time of the dictatorship until now. The ways of remembering are not fixed. Contrarily, they are always in movement, and situated. Beyond any doubt, the *Morandé* side door was a place for public resistance, representing a symbolic value of republican democracy; being appropriated by the Concertación (a coalition of political parties) in order to legitimise our democracy, the *Morandé* sidedoor became more of an official than a popular place of resistance.

La Marcha del 11: Articulating Memories

Metaphorically speaking, these 16 years of democracy, the production of memory has been like a patchwork quilt, combining an uncountable number of pieces with others, but this vital occupation has not always been possible. Memory is not pieces, it is a process, always in movement and in conflict, since it is also a crucial element in the construction of identities. Materialising memory in different actions and expressions also makes sense to those who produce these actions and expressions, also reinforcing the individual-self. For instance, in Chile every year people remember September 11, 1973 differently, but the most important expression of this remembering process is the September 11th parade (the *Marcha del 11*, or simply *la Marcha*). This parade starts in the city center; passes by the Government Palace and continues straight to the National Cemetery, where a memorial, with the names of the people who died or disappeared was built. The parade finishes there, usually with a political speech.

These commemorations habitually finish with confrontations between demonstrators and police, which continue at night in different neighborhoods around the country. Since 1990 when democracy was established, *la*

Marcha takes its current form. According to Roberto Fernández²⁶, during the military period, the September 11 commemorations took diverse forms, usually a well-attended visit to the cemetery of Viña del Mar, 70 miles away from Santiago, where the grave of Salvador Allende was, and another even more attended visit to the *General Cemetery of Santiago*, the biggest one in the country. In this last one, people use to walk around 29th Street (*Patio 29*), a particular sector of the graveyard where it is suspected that they buried several disappeared persons in unlabelled common graves. Every September 11, a considerable number of people meet in Santiago's centre; they are from very diverse generations, organizations, political parties, unions; students, families and persons alone, even 'los de abajo'²⁷, but all of them march together to the cemetery. The majority of people do not know who convenes the march; they just know that there is a parade and they go and join. Of course, there is a group of Human Rights organizations and left-wing parties that coordinate the parade but they do not control it. However, the parade has turned into a strange ritual, because of its participants' diversity and their different ways to commemorate it.

In order to explain *la Marcha* as a memory practice, I would like to distinguish its actors into three categories, first people and groups who have been involved in this rite from the beginning, generally associated with Human Rights organizations, left-wing political parties, victim's relatives and survivors. Second, there are people and groups that have participated every year. This is a very heterogeneous group, ranging from neighbourhood organizations, ethnic minorities, gender issue campaigners, the association of homeless people, workers unions, anti-globalization groups, to football supporters. Finally there is a large group of individuals, in general very young people without any organic representation, who stand just as human beings, who do not identify themselves with any group. This manifestation of diversity, has made *la Marcha* a very heterogeneous and peculiar memory praxis.

²⁶ In his MSc dissertation in Social Psychology, at ARCIS university.

²⁷ The supporters of a popular National football team (Universidad de Chile).

During 2005, a group of researchers of the ARCIS University²⁸ decided to explore people's motivations in participating in the parade and also why other people stopped taking part in this commemorative rite. One of the researchers' findings showed that there is not one hegemonic aim, but rather, it is the product of multiple goals. Thus, it is possible to describe for example people related with the first group mentioned above, who have been involved from the beginning, most of them being the older ones, survivors or victims' relatives, people who witnessed the UP's "party, drama and defeat" (Pinto, 2005: 5). In this group, the ritual is related to the remembrance of those who died at the coup and during the dictatorship, but also to the UP's project failure. In this sense, what is evoked by the parade is a melancholic act, because it is related to losses, with a radical change in their lives that marked them forever (Piper; in Lira & Morales; 2005).

On the contrary, for the second group, *la Marcha* is more a political rite, a space to remember but also to complain about their exclusion both from the process of transition to democracy, and from the actual exercise of citizenship. This last conclusion is related to the fact that new political actors have emerged and they do not feel their interests are represented in both the democratization process after Pinochet's dictatorship, and in the new governments. During the period, called 'Transition to Democracy', in 1990, the social movements that had a crucial participation in the struggle against Pinochet disappeared very fast from the public arena, in part because the new administration had to show the military that they were able to keep the country under control. Thus, the State promoted 'go back home, we have the control now', 'we have to protect our democracy'. Thus, the UP's ghost of disorder, of people protesting in the street, operated as a social control method. Because of this particular view about democracy, which was sedimenting itself over time, as something that needs to be protected rather than something that should be exercised, part of the political and social actors felt that they were kept out of the political power arena. Therefore, the parade as a ritual became a place to protest against this exclusion and, at

²⁸ The group was composed by Marcia Escobar, Roberto Fernandez, Isabel Piper and Paula Raposo.

the same time, the desire of reconstructing political activities and to exercise citizenship actively. The last group is hard to describe because they were people without clear motivation, so here the rite becomes diffuse, and maybe they represent the un-attachment process between the ritual itself and the historical facts that supposedly are being remembered.

Even though the ARCIS University's research results are preliminary, and therefore have an explorative rather than conclusive character, during 2006 people involved in the study process produced a discussion network about memory meanings in the 1973 commemorations. *La Marcha* was seen as a repetition of the coup d'état, the citizen's expulsion from the government, the dominance of one group of Chileans over others. The fact that *la Marcha's* direction is from the civic centre, the symbolic location where the politic and economic powers are exercised, to the National Cemetery, a place representing death, was seen by the discussion network more as a gloomy act than as an empowering process as it was once, because it commemorates those who died, but not why they died. And on the other hand it leaves the new generation's political actors in a very peculiar place where to protest, because in the cemetery nobody can hear their complaints.

However, symbolically in *la Marcha* there is also a kind of juxtaposition with the discontents, desires and promises of the 1970s. According to Roberto Fernandez, this fact can be observed, through the parade, because most of the signs, placards, flags, watchwords, slogans and even songs and speeches, refer to the 1970s, to the UP's period. It looks weird and anachronistic to see a watchword alluding to Allende's victory at the election of 1970 or listening to people singing *El Pueblo Unido*, the song mentioned at this chapter's beginning, particularly because the majority of those participating were not even born at that time. But also it can be seen as weird because of the presence of anti-globalization groups, or football supporters (*los de abajo*), and so on. What I want to point out here is the diversity of memories, political and social actors that *la Marcha* has accomplished. It is not possible to describe a hegemonic discourse, because there is a fluidity of meanings. The criticism that the parade

disempowers political agencies is based on the consideration of the political dimensions of memory, as to be more important than those expressed within the experience of *la Marcha*.

Summarising, memory work processes have been conflictive in Chile especially over the last few years. They have helped keep the hope for recognition that ‘what happened really happened’ alive, because memory work has been part of the sense of self of a large group of people. Thus, even after some facts have been officially established and hence some memories have obtained due recognition, it has not necessarily been the case that underlying memory exercises change, because these ways of remembrance were not only a claim but also part of what people were, of their identity. For those who have been involved in remembrance acts that have been exercised over a number of years, it is likely the case that even if the actions have already achieved their original objective they continue taking place over the years with little variation, and the views of their participants have become rather conservative, as they continue to view these actions as empowered and resistant acts of survival.²⁹

Las Funas: Memory as Present's Actions

Funa is a colloquial expression in Chile, used commonly among young people and in working class areas. It is a word that comes from ‘mapudungun’ (the pre-Spanish, native Mapuche’s language); it means putrid, thus it is used to describe situations that are not working well in any sense, as for example a project, a party, a group of friends and so on. But also *funa* became a very familiar word because of a song written by the Chilean musician Joe Vasconcellos, called *La Funa*, which became a hit during 1997. The song’s lyric was a criticism of consumerism; it tells about an individual who uses all of the loans that the market offers to him, and then economically and socially he slumps. The social movement that I will refer in

²⁹ The fact that these acts tend to be fixed may also be based on the creation of new memories on the original remembrance acts. That is to say, remembrance acts generate memories that need a space for expression, and keeping the tradition of the acts is probably the easiest way to express these new memories.

this chapter opted to call themselves *La Funa* because of this song. (Kovalskys, 2004: p 27, 40)

In 2000, a group of people, the majority of them between 20 and 30 years old, decided to form the *Comisión Funa* (The Funa Commission). The greater part of the Commission members are young people that “had suffered traumatic experiences, for example, their parents’ disappearance, execution, detention, or long exile of parents or family groups” (Kovalskys; 2004: 27). In their founding document³⁰ this organization declared that they wanted to find persons that during Pinochet’s period were responsible for kidnappings, illegal detentions, tortures, crimes and disappearances, and who today are free and live as any other citizen, thanks to the impunity permitted by the Chilean justice³¹. For the *Comisión Funa*, these people are in debt to the judicial system.

The action, *funa*, consists in finding, through a real investigation process, the locations of these human right’s violators, and to visit them in their houses or working places. This ‘popping in’ is not a quiet one, but on the contrary, a lot of people take place in these particular actions that are in general very noisy, with music and songs. Funa’s members define their activities as ‘art actions’, where they distribute to people in the street, neighbors and work mates, leaflets with the person’s photo, name, address, telephone numbers, identification card number and the crimes that he/she committed. They define this as art because it is a real performance, with playing drums (‘batucada’), actors, actresses, jugglers, singers, *la funa* wants to captivate attention of people walking by and at the same time denounce the person as someone who should confront justice. The activity finishes when the group sings ‘*Olé, olé, olé, olá donde vayan los iremos a buscar, si no hay justicia hay funa*’ (“Hey, hey, hey, hey, anywhere they go we will look for them. If there is not justice there is Funa). As a ritual, *la funa* is also a struggle “for the right to know” (Kovalskys; 2004: 44). This knowledge means several things, to know what happened with their relatives, to confront the facts with

³⁰ See: <http://www.funachile.cl/>

³¹ Op cit

their perpetrators (looking for recognition) and to make the knowledge public, to be debated.

Funa as social movement and practice of denouncing, it is very similar to 'escrache' in Argentina. The organisation called H.I.J.O.S., whose members are mostly children who survived their disappeared parents, that there were not abducted by military, set a very similar practice of action. These actions were called 'escrache'. The word comes from 'lunfardo' a vocabulary originally borne during the XIX century, in Río de la Plata, Argentina. This vocabulary was related to the world of prisons, immigrants, and marginalized people (Conde: 2004). As in the case of the word 'funa', the word 'escrache' has different meanings, but the way in which the H.I.J.O.S. use it³² is to put in evidence, or as Diana Taylor points out, to expose (2003: 182).

Following Diana Taylor in her article *YOU ARE HERE. H.I.J.O.S. and DNA performance*, 'escraches' are a kind of guerrilla performance, highly theatrical in character (2003: 162). The actions must be in this way, because the aim is to capture the attention of people in the street, in order to let them know what happened near their houses or work places, during the dictatorship (torture houses or concentration camps). Also, in the same way as 'funas', 'escraches' intend to denounce criminals who have not faced justice yet and who pretend to pass unnoticed as normal citizen.

However, to Taylor, the theatrical dimension of these actions is not only to get the attention of public opinion; this dimension also implies many other meanings. First, it involve certain a way of memory conveyance, of trauma from one generation to another, from the Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo, to the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, to the H.I.J.O.S. But it also is a passing on of political agency:

Thus, in understanding performance protests driven by traumatic memory, it's important to bring trauma studies, which focus mainly on

³² See H.I.J.O.S. web page http://www.hijos-capital.org.ar/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=21&Itemid=31

personal pathology and one-on-one interactions, into dialogue with performance studies to allow us to explore the public, nonpathological cause and canalization of trauma. By emphasizing the public, rather than private, repercussion of traumatic violence and loss, social actors turn personal pain into the engine for cultural change. (2003:168)

Thus, the political agency of grandmothers, mothers and H.I.J.O.S has been expressed through the performance dimension of their public demonstrations.

The theatrical nature of this presentation is not metaphoric; rather, it delivers the claim itself. Facts cannot speak for themselves. The case needs to be convincingly presented. So thinking about the DNA of performance means that performance contributes to the proof of the claim itself. (2003:176)

So, the nature of the performance dimension is also political, and because that does not imply only a transmission of memory, it also implies creativity and recreation in the hands of each generation. The carnivalesque and festive character of the '*funas*' and '*escraches*' are thus related to the appropriation of memory, now by the daughters and sons of the disappeared individuals.

Therefore *la Funa* is a real memory network, which on one hand socialises each family trauma by affiliating it with others, also confronting society not to forget some historical facts. In his article *Remembrance and Redemption. A Social Interpretation of War Memorials*, Jay Winter points out

I want to argue here, that these "memory activists" often constitute powerfully unified groups, bonded not by blood but by experience. They share the imprint of history on their lives. They work, quarrel, and endure together; they support each other. At such times, their bonds are sufficiently strong to allow us to call them "fictive kin." Indeed, these 'fictive kinship groups' are key agents of remembrance. (Fall; 1999: 71- 7)

According to Juana Kovalskys, the *Comisión Funa* was created because of its member's perceptions of the lack of reparation and justice by both the Chilean state and the Chilean judicial system (2004). The Funa's foundational text insists that it is not a matter of revenge but an "exercise of public debate" (2004: 26), there is a conviction, in this group, that impunity

promotes human right's violations, and also transforms all of our society into an accomplice. Here the memory work is helping not to forget unfinished business, it is related with establishing the difference between forgetting and forgiving, and the connection between past, present and future. In their own words:

We want to reconstruct the history of what happened (in Chile), to transform the present and to give the coming generations a future which is worthy to live. (2004: 26)

In my opinion the Commission Funa is a good example of how the understanding of memory as collective only or as individual only is not sufficient to analyse the remembrance processes, in a context such as the Chilean one. As a memory exercise La Funa is both individual and collective at the same time. But it is also, as Taylor pointed out, a practice of re-configuration, re-articulation and re-appropriation of memory. Memory work necessarily keeps memory both situated in the present context and politically active.

The Commission Funa is a good example of how understanding memory just as collective or just as individual is insufficient to analyse the remembrance processes, in a context such as the Chilean one. As a memory exercise, La Funa is both individual and collective at the same time.

Disappeared

With the aims of learning what occurred to their beloved ones, and of being able to find their whereabouts, in 1975 the AFDD³³ was created. This organisation is going to play a fundamental role in the struggle for the historic memory. Because it is going to challenge directly and tenaciously the official version about what happened to the considerable number of people who vanished overnight, and never come back to their houses.

From the individual perspective, the relative of a victim does not know what happened. On the contrary, she or he only receives contradictory 'official'

³³ Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos.

information, the denial of any responsibility in the kidnapping of the disappeared person, and in some cases even the denial of the fact that the person in question may have existed at all. In this context, the tendency to forget traumatic experiences is reversed into an 'obsession', the need to keep the beloved one alive, because the negation of 'the other', in this case the disappeared persons, is also the misrecognition of the relatives.³⁴ Besides, the uncertainty of the death and the missing body create a situation where mourning becomes impossible.

From the perspective of the AFDD as a collective experience, the situation was not very different. During the military dictatorship the organisation was part of a large amount of other social movements that actively participated against Pinochet and in the struggle for recovering democracy. However, after 1990, when the first democratic government obtained the power, most social movements disappeared and the AFDD was one of the few that continued their existence. Moreover, since that moment, the political scenario has completely changed. The new official discourses called for calming down and leaving the country in the hands of the new authorities, claiming for the urgency of reconciliation.

For the AFDD the problem was that the bases of reconciliation were sustained in forgetting the past and looking at the future. But, how to forget the past without any recognition of what happened? Without any possibility of mourning? In Ricoeur's words, how to transform painful memory in a "talking cure" (in Simms; 2003: 54), if nobody wants to speak about it, if the official discourses do not want to recognise that the lack of link between the past and the present cannot be forgotten, in this amnesic sense of the word?

This point could be better illustrated if we also take into consideration the pragmatic level, or 'praxis of memory', where Ricoeur connects memories to the necessity of preserving 'identity through time', in relation to others and ourselves (2004). Memory here is used to explain the self in association with

³⁴ It is obvious that if the existence at all of a subject's father, husband or son is set under question, the subject's own existence is under question too.

the past and projecting into the future. In this sense, the use of memory is constantly connected to ethical issues, as Ricoeur points out, because there is often the risk of abuses, for example in the creation of “myths which attempt to fix the memories in a kind of reverential relationship to the past” (Kearney & Dooley, 1999: 9). But for Ricoeur the positive way to understand the praxis of memory is by its unending and unfixed condition, because it is always possible to tell memories in another way.

However, in the case of the disappeared ones, the fixation of the myth is on one hand a necessity of survival, to preserve the identity of the relatives over time, but it is, on the other hand, a political issue: the mythical figure of the disappeared ones embodies the conflict of national identity. Their constant presence, via memory, shows us that there was not, there is not, and there will not be such a unified and homogenised Chilean identity, as the one military dictatorship pretended to produce. Today, the memory work that the AFDD maintains alive is not an official memory, but it is there, in constant struggle against official discourses that want to reconstruct a Chilean homogeneous nationhood, this time not killing the dissidents with their project, but killing their memories.

The ethical-political level is the most subjective, related to what Ricoeur calls ‘the duty to remember’, which is directly connected to the construction of the future, with the transmission of the past to the new generations. Why remember? For preserving and keeping things that time tends to demolish alive - projects, values and dreams of the victims - but also for “forgiving and promising” (Kaplan, 2008: 242). These are necessary conditions for moving on and for changing. And finally, for the “reactivation of unkept promises” (Kearney, 2004: 152), that give us the past-present-future connection.

In conclusion, all of these forms of memory that we have analysed clearly exemplify the tension established between the official discourse, coming from the State and materialised into the Rettig Report, the *Mesa de Diálogo*, and the Valech Report, and the social and cultural expressions of memory that we have reviewed so far. This tension is based upon the distinct

objectives intended by different social actors, while reflecting on the happenings that marked our recent history.

While State administrators in the post Pinochet period have made their efforts to re-establish national unity, by privileging reconciliation over justice, survivors and families of the victims have insisted on resisting this sort of cooptation, basically due to the fact that they perceive that such reconciliation is sustained in the institutional and intentional forgetting, which is a decision to cut with the immediate and traumatic past.

Promoting oblivion and forgiveness without facing the conflicts, ruptures and confrontations that triggered the drama led civil society to compromise with the military. This was, according to diverse authors (e.g. Vidal, 1997; Moulian, 1998; Peris, 2005; and Richard, 2010) directly related to the intention of favouring and protecting the return of democracy. However, this compromise was substantiated in diverse assumptions that, in turn, bring consequences which are hard to assume. Thus, for instance, justice and truth are underestimated as ethical frameworks for social life; consequently, impunity is promoted. It is assumed that, if national unity can not be substantiated on a beautiful common homogeneous past, it is preferable then to focus on the future. This is understood as to privilege the development of a modernisation in neo-liberal terms. Subsequently, it is assumed that there is only one type of social, political and economical project that is qualified to take place, and that the one promoted until 1973 by the beaten ones was only a utopia, a dream, a delirium.

Testimonies, Memory and History.

But, most of all, how to forget the present? Because it is not a melancholic exercise to point out that this is constructed in good part on the barbarity quickly digested as if it was already over, while dozens of thousands of people who made of torture their profession are freely walking around, without prosecution or punishment, without re-socialising treatments or rehabilitation, as if here nothing would have happened. It is not the case that nothing has been done, yet clearly what has been done is not sufficient considering what happened.

Manuel Parada³⁵ (Blog page, 2007)

As we have seen, the reconstruction of the last forty years of Chilean History has been marked by a long struggle, first of all to establish the facts to be considered by history, and then to legitimise other versions of the occurrences beyond the official frontiers. In the context of a monopolised version which for more than twenty years was designed and imposed as 'true', the other versions were left only the possibility of articulating themselves from alternative places of resistance, taking the form of testimonies and memories.

The *Rettig Report*, the *Mesa de Diálogo*, the *Valech Report*, have undoubtedly been part of that effort to legitimise, as much as possible, the version of the victims left behind by the coup d'état. However, these three instances that have given shape to the post dictatorship 'official voice' have been achieved at the expense of abstracting from the turning point of the narration, where versions not only do not coincide, but are also not willing to compromise.

It is in this context that the historic reconstruction of the more recent past becomes flooded by the voices of those who insist on remembering, remembering what they consider has not been recognised as a legitimate

³⁵ Son of José Manuel Parada Maluenda, kidnapped, tortured and murdered together with two militants of the Communist Party on March 29, 1985. Manuel Parada Sr. was kidnapped in the morning at his door of his son's school. Given the violence of the situation and the condition in which the three men's bodies were found, the case became emblematic and is well known as the case of the beheaded ('*degollados*'). The quote was taken from his blog page:
<http://manuelguerrero.blogspot.com/search?q=%C2%BFc%C3%B3mo+olvidar+el+presente%3F&submit.x=13&submit.y=12>

version. In Chile, memory as a theme and problematic has not only become fashionable, but it is, continues to be, the way of relating to the past for those who do not feel that their losses have been recognised, as well as for those who are completely unsatisfied with the present state of democracy and the neo-liberal system.

Policies of Remembrance

Overall, the assessing analyses which have been made on the problem of reconciliation and memory and the ways it has been faced during the transitional period towards democracy, the almost four periods of governments completed by the *Concertación* coalition, is rather discouraging. Most publications on the subject (Richard, 2000; Richard & Moreiras, 2001; Vidal, 1997; among others) coincide in highlighting that these policies of remembrance have neutralised the conflicts, made resistances and disagreements invisible, opted for pacts and avoided public discussions on the matter.

According to Nelly Richard, in the transition to democracy, privilege has been given to the building of consensus based on the minimisation of past differences, the State usually promoting a unified voice, negotiated and supposedly objective, such as those which have been produced in the way of 'reports'. In such a format, with its positive pretensions, any possibility of "critical analysis of the antagonisms dividing the sense of history with its conflictive battles of interpretation and legitimacy" remains without having even been enunciated (Richard; 2000: 10). Thus paused for almost two decades, public debate on the policies of remembrance stayed practically silenced, partially promoted only from the academy.

In turn, Vidal asserts that official versions have tended to separate the concepts of 'truth' and 'justice', bringing us to the paradox that, while the facts have been established, that is to say we have know what really happened, this has not implied any progress in establishing political, judiciary and criminal responsibilities, generating a lack of recognition towards the victims (Vidal: 1997): 'yes, Human Rights were brutally violated, but well, it

is over now'. According to Vidal this unavoidably causes the concepts of truth and justice to become dislocated one from the other, taking symbolic content from truth as knowing it does not necessarily imply a consequence; in other words, displacing the problem of reparation to the victims to a merely formal action of recognition of the facts, and not taking responsibility for the pain and damages that have been caused (Vidal: 1997).

This unacceptable situation is made partially public when, representing the international community, "the *Union de Fiscales Progresistas de España* (Spanish union of progressive prosecutors) initiated on July 29, 1996, before the National Audience in Madrid, a judicial action against the members of the Chilean National Military Board, for the crimes of State terrorism, genocide, disappearance of persons and torture" (Vidal: 1997:15). However, this process that commenced in Spain could never be done in Chile. The most emblematic case is that of Augusto Pinochet, who despite being temporarily imprisoned in London for the charges mentioned above, was then returned to Chile, where he died six years and nine months later, not having been prosecuted for any of those crimes.

Thus, in a context in which the policies of remembrance, that is to say the struggles for what ought to be remembered or forgotten, have been dominated by the factual format in favour of 'national reconciliation', the subject of memory in Chile has gained a somehow unexpected strength. This research is located within this subject matter. To be more precise, it is worth exploring some specific points.

Between History and Memory

One of the most emblematic debates on the nature of History as a discipline takes place in the 1960's between E. H. Carr and Geoffrey Elton. Carr's provocative text *What is History?*, first published in 1961, arrived directly questioning the possibility of an 'objective and neutral history', recognising that historians choose the facts to be historised. Elton's position, on the contrary, was printed in his book *The Practice of History*, published in 1967,

where he mainly defended the possibility of a true and objective reconstruction of the past.

There is no doubt, however, that the way of understanding history as a result of objectivity and the positivistic method has been largely criticised from different fronts. The expansion of post-modernist philosophy came to question the bases of the enlightenment projects, as for instance with the reliance on science and reason as a way of progress, putting in a difficult position the majority of disciplines created under these principles, in this sense perhaps history became one of the most questioned disciplines. A powerful example of this is *Orientalism* (1977) by Edward Said, which shows how the discourse of scientific and objective pretensions operate as the constructor of its subject of study, in this case 'East', rather than to be revealing such subject. History here, as in other disciplines, operates more precisely at the service of legitimating the colonisation processes. From a different perspective, the works by Hayden White also criticize the objective pretensions of history. For the author of *Methahistory*, the different narratives that appear in the XIX century are directly related to the ideological links and aesthetic strategies that were chosen. Therefore, for White, the basis of historical knowledge is more related to ethical and aesthetic principles than with 'realist' pretensions, that is to say of knowing the past as it was (1973).

In addition, the point of view of new epistemological practices such as the feminists, is very efficient in analysing the function of the production of knowledge, were also very influential (Code, 1991; Alcoff & Potter, 1993; Lennon & Whitford, 1994; among others). For an important group of feminist scholars, the historical knowledge had taken a very oppressive role, historical material only having been considered in order to develop narratives of nations and heroes and their battles as protagonists. In other words, that is the patriarchal history, which neglects other subjects such as women's voices. Thus for instance, Luisa Passerini's work on Oral History has shown how women remember, not only different experiences of every day life, but also political and public episodes, such as the Fascist period in Italy or the

European movements in the late 1960's (Passerini; 1987; Passerini, Leydesdorff & Thompson; 1996). This is also the case of *Women's Words: The feminist Practice of Oral History*, edited by Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai. Both authors represent "two generations of feminist oral historians" (1991:1) one of the authors worked in the US and the other in Brazil, recovering narrations from women. They collect different articles aimed at analysing different epistemological and methodological aspects that oral narrations may provide the subjects implicated in the production of knowledge.

Thus, the feminist contribution does not only refer to an efficient criticism, but also plays an important role in the production of new types of epistemologies, where the power position of the research is always considered. In my opinion, the best example of this is Donna Haraway's work, especially in her notion of "situated knowledge", where objectivity is not exercised from an omniscient place. On the contrary, it is always a located and committed look (1991).

In the same logic it is also important to mention the work of a South Asian group of intellectuals, particularly the work of the Indian historian Ranajit Guha who promoted the publication of several volumes under the title of *Subaltern studies. Writings on South Asian History and Society*, published for the first time in 1982. Guha is highly critical of a type of 'nationalistic history' in India, which he relates to a colonial British heritage, which always narrates the elite stories, where the protagonists were the British administrators first, and a small sector of the Indian society after Independence. These two versions, according to Guha, incur the same type of omissions, because they do not consider the contributions of the middle class (Guha; 2002). In this sense Guha's work and the feminist criticism are examples of efforts by intellectuals to show how history as a discipline and as a production is always politically committed and very far from being neutral.

But in the context of this research, I want to distinguish, particularly, two intellectual practices that also raise questions on the traditional way to understand and to produce historical knowledge. One came from inside of the discipline, and it takes the form of a methodological change, I am referring to oral history practice, and the other one is the wide interest that memory has gained inside of the social sciences. This last interest is evident because the subject has become a transversal matter, crossing different disciplines inside of the academy, even the word 'memoriologist' has been coined to name those who have become specialists in the subject. (Gedi & Elam; 1996)

Usually, traditional historical methods, based upon the modern and scientific cannon that implies the institutionalisation of history as a discipline in the nineteenth century, were related to the use of written traces as the only legitimate way to have access to past facts. This 'legitimate way' of constructing past knowledge had an epistemological assumption, consisting of the truth of the past could only be found in the written texts. However, many 'other subjects' would be left out of history by this assumption. Thus, the development of historical research based on 'oral sources', especially during the sixties and seventies, became a more crucial and substantial matter than a question of 'sources', because it implied a deep inquiry on the nature of history and the past (Thompson, 1978; Passerini, 1996; Portelli 1991; Perks & Thompson, 1998; Samuel & Thompson, 1990). In trying to rescue memories and experiences of people from the invisible silence, particularly testimonies of the every day life, oral history practice was slowly changing the historical knowledge, or at least opening up another front in the Carr-Elton debate on *What is History [after all]?* Thus the introduction of memories and testimonies into the academic would break the usual opposition between these two terms and history.

Nevertheless, during the last two decades memory has taken a more independent role, opening the debate again between this expression and history, which usually seems very different and even opposite. It seems that there are at least three ways in which memory became a subject for the

attention of the researcher. The first one is Pierre Nora's publication of *Les Lieux de Memorie* (1984-1992), where he insists on keeping tension between history and memory

Memory is always a phenomenon of the present, a bond tying us to the eternal present; history is a representation of the past. Memory, being a phenomenon of emotion and magic, accommodates only those facts that suit it. It thrives on vague, telescoping reminiscences, on hazy general impressions or specific symbolic details. It is vulnerable to transference, screen memories, censorings, and projections of all kinds. History, being an intellectual, nonreligious activity, calls for analysis and critical discourse. Memory situates remembrance in a sacred context. History ferrets it out; it turns whatever it touches into prose.... By contrast, history belongs to every one and to no one and therefore has a universal vocation. Memory is rooted in the concrete: in space, gesture, image and object. History dwells exclusively on temporal continuities, on changes in things and in the relations among things. Memory is an absolute, while history is always relative (1996: 3).

Nora's work ought to be mentioned because of its impact on the intellectual world, and because it is a usual reference when a research or publications about memory comes out. This quote can be considered to be a very strong statement, where the split between both terms seems irreconcilable. However, the opposition created by Nora relates to the association that he makes with both concepts, where history is related to national narratives, as a totality and with "dynastic memories" (1996: 4), and on the other hand memory is related to the fragmentation of the 'national project', where "memory becomes a purely private phenomenon" (1996:6). According to Nora, "History was holy, because the nation was holy" (1996:4), but since this collective identity of nationhood broke up, memory became a secular, individual and disseminative activity.

In my view, Nora's perspective presents different sorts of problems. One refers to the fact that conceptualising collective memory as a kind of national identity, in this case Frenchhood, and then with a kind of 'French History' as metanarrative, implies putting too much in the same package. It is not evident that the "dynastic [*or national*] memories" (1996: 4) are the only expressions of collective memory, for instance Halbwachs mentioned "religious memories" (1992: 84) as a stronger type of collective memory than

national ones. Also, it is difficult to assume that the break-up of this 'national metanarrative' implies, necessarily, the end of collective memories. However, beyond the debate that Nora's conceptualisation can produce, the idea of memory and history as two different activities in relation with the past was in some sense re-established in his work.

The second source of influence was the debate that took place around the 1980s, in the United States, related to what was called the 'Recovered Memory Syndrome', or what their retractors named the 'False Memory Syndrome'. In accordance with Marita Sturken, in the beginning of the 1980's, while taking therapy treatments, an important number of people - usually women- "began to remember childhood sexual abuses of which they had no prior memories" (Sturken; 1998: 103). As a consequence of these recovered memories, most of the victims broke up with their families and relatives, others even went to court to claim compensation for the damage caused to them. Besides all of the subjects which this phenomenon went public, and the endless debates around sexuality, childhood, family relationships, and so on, perhaps one of the most important points to be discussed in the social scientific framework was the problem around the "truth and falsehood of these memories" (Sturken; 1998: 103), and the issues around the empirical evidence that could eventually corroborate these kind of testimonies. From this point of view, the debate crossed the line of the phenomenon itself, because it put evidence in matters of truth claims, recognition, reality of the past events, the possibility of knowledge on these events, the legitimacy of memory claims, the importance of empirical evidence, and so on, all of which were matters that also occupied historical debates.

The third type of situation which kept the researchers' attention has been the large production of testimonies and memories related to genocides, particularly the Holocaust, which has kept, in some ways, the tension between history and memory. However, in my opinion this tension has been particularly productive, and goes directly into questioning of how the historians take care and assume to work with the traumatic past, extreme

events and suffering. In this sense, a good example of this preoccupation has been systematised through the *History and Memory* journal, published by Tel Aviv University, the objective of which has been to systematise the intellectual discussion between these two subjects (history and memory), breaking down the more traditional dichotomies that situate them as opposite. It seems that in genocidal contexts, not only in the Holocaust's but also in situations such as in the Ruanda Civil war, or the Serbia-Bosnia conflict, and the military dictatorships in Latin America, testimonies and memories become an important sources to confront official histories. Perhaps the great lesson here is the impossibility of reducing memory to history or history to memory. It seems to be the case that there is a dialogic relation between both, where sometimes one influences the other, in other moments there are tensions between both, and in others they are in completely antagonist positions.

The intention here is not to continue with the work of distinguishing between both in order to find the essence that defines each one. On the contrary, I find that the ambiguity and the constant displacement of both terms can be very useful, particularly in the Chilean neo-liberal context. Because to insist in keeping the two terms very far from each other, also responds to a political issue that must be questioned. For instance, in Chile the past considered as 'historical' is assumed to be the only legitimate and truthful type of knowledge, because it is labeled as 'historical'. As discussed above, official knowledge of this type is likely to be serving 'national duties'. This was the case for instance when 'Chilean History' was transformed by the military in a story of their battles and victories, in which they were placing themselves at the libertarian side, and appeared to the public opinion as the only legitimated version under the label of 'historical knowledge'. Yet, amazingly, this situation also happened during these last three decades called 'transition to democracy', in which the 'historical version' has been written under the state power, through people who have been designated by the democratic coalition government, placing themselves in a function of 'national reconciliation', not giving room to any possibility of discussion or confrontation between different versions.

On the contrary, keeping memory practices, as for instance testimonies, at a 'lower level', because they are considered to be personal experiences, subjective material, these memory practises are disqualified; they lack credibility. Thus, the invisibilisation of these memories keeps 'our History' and 'our heterogeneous imaged community' safe from conflicts and contradictions.

On the other hand, in my opinion, since the distinction between memory and history is established, it seems necessary to question the use of the word 'memory' and in which position it is kept. During the military period, the recollection of testimonies about what was going on became an important tactic of resistance, since, as I explained before, the militaries hid and denied what was happening. Thus, some publications such as the five volumes of *¿Dónde Están?* (Where are they?), edited by the *Vicaría de la Solidaridad*, in 1978, with testimonies denouncing abductions and the disappearing of people, or *Chile la Memoria Prohibida* (Chile the forbidden memory) published in 1989, became a struggle, resistance and memory to reconstruct history in a future. These two publications are emblematic, because they are the first to be published during the dictatorship's rule.

However today, more than three decades later, the number of publications of testimonies and memories has grown immensely. The peculiar thing is that most of them are publications without 'historical pretensions', meaning that these productions do not claim positions as experts, they are narratives of experiences, that eventually can help to re-write history. Questions such as, Why is the history label avoided?, What are the political implications of memory claims today?, are crucial.

The answer to these questions will not be delivered here, but possible reactions can be formulated. First, it is clear that memory claims have been made, first, because of the lack of recognition and justice; second, because of the homogenous vision in favour of a 'national interest' that has been imposed, and finally because making their experiences public has been part

of the victims and relatives' therapy. However, in the current context in which testimonies and memories can take place in the public space without strong difficulties, when the neo-liberal market allows and even promotes the circulation of diverse visions without conflict, always in the 'memory' format, it is necessary to ask, what is missing here.

The Chilean Case and this Thesis

In the same way in which Richard pointed out that the 'report format' used by the state in order to appear as objective and truthful, has the flaw of avoiding the confrontation between different versions; 'memory as a format', full of subjectivity, has very similar problems, since it is not an instance of discussion, confrontation or debate. Thus, memory is considered as personal experiences, for instance 'what happened to me', 'I was there', and so on. All of them published without spaces where they can be discussed, where to confront what happened and try to negotiate versions. Thus 'memory as a format' tends to have the same effect of the 'objective' position. In both cases the confrontation and the possibility of conflict is avoided. In both formats the problem is the impossibility of developing a dialogic work.

My argument here does not aim to reject the importance of memory over all of these years, but only to point out that in the present context memory is not enough to make sense of the Chilean past, because in Chile a critical attitude is necessary in order to embrace different versions, to confront powerful versions with the weaker ones. In LaCapra's words

Witnessing is a necessary condition of agency, and in certain cases it is as much as one can expect of someone who has been through a very risky-experience. It is altogether crucial, for an intimidated or otherwise withdrawn trauma victim who may overcome being overwhelmed by numbness and passivity, to re-engage in society, and acquire a voice that may in certain conditions have practical effects (in a court of law for example). But just as history should not be conflated with testimony, so agency should not simply be conflated with, or limited to, witnessing. In order to change a state of affairs in a desirable manner, effective agency may have to go beyond witnessing to take up more comprehensive modes of political and social practices. (1998: 12).

Thus, memory and history in Chile imply different practices related with the past, and they have had different political functions in diverse contingences including the actual one. In this sense, my research attempts to be placed between both, as a memory work because it handles testimonies, more precisely, life stories, and it has historical pretensions because I am understanding 'history' as a critical and political activity.

In the same way that for LaCapra "the 'Nazi' crimes are both unique and comparable" (1994: 47), the crimes committed by Chilean state agents are both unique and comparable, as he emphasises

They are unique not only in that they affect people in a distinctive way insofar as they have a specific 'lived' relation to them and occupy different subject-position. They are unique in that they are so extreme that they seem unclassifiable and threaten or tempt one with silence. But they will be compared to other events insofar as comparison is essential for any attempt to understand. The problem is how this process of comparison takes place and the function it serves. (1994: 47)

LaCapra's statement can also be used, metaphorically, to distinguish and to relate the concepts of memory and history, not by opposition but for the function that they have in traumatic experiences. In Chile, memories and testimonies have been expressions of traumatic and unique events and in this sense they appear through memory as particular experiences looking for recognition. But also at the same time these memories become historical matters, because they need to be explained, because they are part of the political struggles.

Thus, this paper hops to be placed between both concepts, relating different life story narratives, analysing them together, in some cases confronting them, in others looking at their similarities, while respecting their particularities. These life stories have the distinctiveness of being articulated through strong political identities, which in all the cases ended up partially representing the trauma of the military period in Chile. In this sense, this work has also the aim of making a contribution to our understanding of a specific period.

CHAPTER II: CONSTRUCTING METHOD AND METHOD AS A CONSTRUCTION.

As stated in the previous chapter, the thematic openness of the new studies in humanities and social sciences has expanded in such a manner that it is no longer possible to confine ourselves to traditional sources. On the contrary, it is necessary not only to support the use of other types of documents as sources for research, such as for instance literary texts, oral testimonies and images (Burke, 2005), but also to understand that it is the nature of the process itself, of the production of the intellectual and scientific knowledge, that has changed.

Ken Plumer in the preface of his book *Documents of Life* asserts, “For the past twenty years [...] it could be suggested that a marginal method has come out of the closet and became a major one”. However, he continues by stating that this is not the case, since most of the new methods “still remain[s] at the margins of mainstream academic research” (2001: ix), or, we could add, have been normalized under the rubric of ‘qualitative’ research. This division between ‘quantitative’ and ‘qualitative’ that intends to distinguish between the types of methods used for research dismisses the fact that methods are not just different ways to arrive to the same place, but they actually change the nature of knowledge, because they are implied in the relationship between the subject and the object. It is in fact, the method that sustains this distinction, and it can be said that methods are the basis of any research.

Thus, processes around knowledge production are not only related to the impossibility of accessing certainties or elaborated research products, but about a change in the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the researched subject. In the context of the epistemological feminist proposals, one of the figures that had a large impact on the nature of this relationship is Donna Haraway. In her book *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The reinvention of Nature*, she discusses how scientific and technology production in the United States are far from neutral, and point to a “white capitalist patriarchy” (1995:30). In other words, she shows who the owner of

the scientific language is, who produces it, and what type of investment is involved. Thus, she efficiently exposes the partial and political dimension of scientific production. At the same time, Haraway proposes to move on from the understanding of objectivity as a 'neutral' view of everything. On the contrary, she suggests that it is necessary to understand this concept as a very different thing. For her, 'objectivity' is about recognizing that our research is completely involved with place, gender, race, class, political affiliation, and so on; in other words, from where it is produced. More precisely, to assuming 'objectivity' is a patriarchal fantasy, which implies the possibility of being at an omniscient place, from where everything can be seen, and at the same time, to think of that place as neutral.

Following that logic, this research is completely influenced by my own view as a researcher; as can be seen by my biography. From the choice of the subject, to the selection and relationship with the interviewees, nothing is purely objective. For this reason, the contribution of my thesis is to stand as another view, which discusses the recent history of my country. It is not a piece of truth, but a challenge to discuss the truth. It is neither my intention to produce omnipotent explicative laws or frameworks; it is about constructing meanings, views and enunciations, which may confront and challenge the official version of recent Chilean history.

Nevertheless, from a dialogical perspective, this research pretends to reach the truth. This is so, firstly, because the memories which I am working with are associated to claims of truth. Thus, the subjects this research is based upon were witnesses and actors of the happenings that have not only marked their individual lives but also day-to-day life in the country ever since. Secondly, because I follow Ricoeur's view on how different versions of the past, even though they don't agree, always talk about 'what happened'. Hence, "we must never eliminate a claim of truth. This is for ethical as well as for epistemological reasons" (Kearney; 2004: 154). And finally, another aspect in which truth claims take part in this thesis is in relation with the dialogical work that implies using interviews as a source.

Although any research is based on a relationship between object and subject, in interviewing this relationship becomes stronger. Consequently, the result of this dialogical work is varied; it changes the subject as researcher, changes the subject as source, and the production of knowledge that emerges from this relationship transcends the parts involved, because

Every project, therefore, is, more or less explicitly, a working out of experience and value in the world, the search for a personal point of view and a contribution, however modest, to wider ethics and politics (Johnson; Chambers & Tincknell; 2005:18)

The purpose of this research is to generate a hermeneutical view on the phenomenon of political militancy in Chile, marked by the 1973 coup d'état and the military dictatorship. For this, I shall analyze thirteen stories that are centered on the experience of belonging to a political party. The analysis is focused on showing how political militancy is modeled through family relationships and gender disciplining.

After these considerations on the project's general framework, I have organized the presentation in the rest of this Chapter in three parts. First, I shall present the theoretical aspects through which I have supported the epistemological and methodological options adopted throughout the research. More precisely, I shall explain why life stories collected through interviews are going to be considered, primarily, as narratives articulating identity and subjectivity. Next, I will explain how the interviews were made, who are the interviewees, and review the main problems I was faced with during the interviewing process, ranging from transcription to translation. Finally, in the last part I shall present the strategies that I applied to analyze the interviews and that gave shape to the next chapters of this thesis.

Life Stories as Politics of Identity and Identity Narratives of Political Affiliations

Oral expression, the oral story, precedes writing. According to Ong, “oral expression is capable of existing, and almost always has, without writings at all; but, there has never been writing without orality” (1993:18). Moreover, as group identity can only grow by communication, oral communication is a primary basis in group and identity formation. Thus, it is important for this research to bear in mind that in the context of the configuration of a group’s identity, orality as a way of language from which common codes, expressions and contents are established helps the construction of the collective identity.

For this work, the oral story was an appropriate tool, showing and testifying the historical subjects’ reality, even the sometimes-imperative necessity, sometimes precarious, to existentially reaffirm what is told. Rosana Guber, in the context of theories that undertake the issue of social reality, making reference to the works by Harold Harfinkel, states that in the social world

Actors far from being just reproducers of pre-stated laws operating in every space and time, are executors and producers of the society they belong to [...] they do not follow rules, but update them, and while doing so they interpret social reality and create the contexts in which facts make sense [...] the vehicle by excellence for communication within society is language (2001:44).

The necessity of talking, of saying, of telling, either for reaffirming understanding or to inform others, always seems to be present, and that is perhaps the reason why it was possible in this research to count on people being willing and actively interested in telling their version of what they have lived.

Both written testimonies and oral stories fulfill the function of registering what is perceived as ignored or omitted. In line with the work on life stories conceived in this project, the need to communicate the happenings involved with the Chilean coup has grown on par with the number of testimonial publications issued by Chilean editors during recent years. The profusion of

these forms of registering has given rise, for instance, to the 'oral archive' project that is being developed in Villa Grimaldi, which was a place for detention and torture during the time of dictatorship, with testimonies from survivors (Similar to what was done for Holocaust experiences in Europe). Another initiative is the testimonial archive for victims of the dictatorship repression in Chile 1975 – 1990, which is currently under development by the FASIC (Foundation for Social Assistance by the Christian Churches)³⁶ in partnership with the Faculty of History of the UACH (Universidad Academia de Humanismo Cristiano) and the FUD (Fundación Universidad y Desarrollo). In this way, this research is also inserted in the Chilean intellectual and academic context, where production that works with memories has been very intense.

Regarding life stories, Rheume (2000) reaffirms the importance of personal meanings of happenings, explaining that when life experiences are narrated, they are located temporally and also spatially. And that these temporal and spatial references are fundamental for the story to make sense and to be coherent. But also to express the experienced and real dimension of what is being narrated.

It is a place for re-rooting and concrete experience, always social, always individual too, always dialectic, always ambiguous. It is a return to an unfinished search, always reached, and yet always wanted [...] the life story told is the articulation with the experience of time and space that have been lived (2000:5).

The interviews conducted within this project tend to confirm what this author has pointed out. The special references are repeated: to be here, there, in the street, by the door, across, in the square, in that corner or in a friends' place. Or these years, in this time, there were other times, September 11, 1973, the 1980s, etc. These are compulsory directions that go far beyond the description, because they are linked to rooting, belonging, being able to

³⁶ This Foundation, together with others such as the 'Vicaría de la Solidaridad', CODEPU (Corporación de Promoción y Defensa de los Derechos del Pueblo), and ILAS (Instituto Latinoamericano de Salud Mental y Derechos Humanos) had played the function of receiving, counselling and helping people who were victims of repression. For this reason they hold testimonial archives, which has been organised over time in order to make them public.

locate oneself in relation to what one has lived. Thus, life stories account for a spatial and temporal dimension; they are historically contextualized, the dictatorship constantly appearing as an existential mark.

Partially agreeing with Rheume, Narváez asserts that the story

...communicates what was seen and lived, and consequently registers, reports, recreates or constructs, and reconstructs through the language, imaginarily, a set of data, [...it] states the truth of communication from the realist experience, it does so [...] while recognizing itself –otherwise it ought to be recognized- as ideological, as cultural and temporized, as an expression of an imaginary that is socially exercised. Therefore, it is situated truth, never absolute. And it is that their truth is the truth of the feeling, of belief, of men and women thinking and imaging their own history and the history of others (1988:21- 22).

Hence, this situated truth, as in the case of the ‘situated knowledge’, may be understood as the validation of the partial and subjective view of whoever constructs history. Because when someone tells their life story, they do so from a peculiar perspective and then what we have on our hands is an interpretative discourse: bits and pieces of facts drawn by selections and omissions from who is narrating the story, but also and at the same time, it is about facts and happenings.

Understanding Life Stories as Identity Narratives

In the case of this research, the above-mentioned assertions can be clearly confirmed. Somehow, all of us elaborate stories on our own lives, which make sense to us, but those stories are in the plural; there is not a sole and unique narration of our lives which comprehends and gives account of them. The stories are many, multiple, changing over time, contradictory and appear when one feels that one has been called to elaborate. Thus we have stories on our birth, childhood, relations, and so on. However, there are some aspects on which stories rarely appear, or sometimes we do not even have one because we have never felt the necessity of elaborating on it. Such is usually the case of political militancy. None of the interviewees had previously articulated his/her life story, as narration, from the axis of ‘political militancy’, as they told me. On the contrary, in many cases the interviewees

were surprised by the question about how they became militants, because their activism had been completely 'naturalized'. Thus, on one hand an activity like militancy is normally associated with 'ideology', 'rationality', and the 'public space'. On the other hand, my interviewees described that, in most cases, these activities were associated with a mythical origin, old, linked to their family stories.

If we further circumscribe the theoretical coordinates on which this research is going to consider life stories and the subjects who elaborate them, this would be from a narrative perspective. Thus, this work subscribes to what Plummer calls "the narrative turn", usually associated with the French intellectual Roland Barthes. Hence, narratives appear as the way in which the self is constructed and articulated, understanding the self from a non-essentialist point of view.

This idea has been reinforced from different disciplines. For instance, from a Lacanian psychoanalytical point of view, we become subjects when we can say 'I', actually when we can speak, when we are able to provide for others, and ourselves signifiers that make sense of our life. We can say as well that these signifiers are structured as stories, as narratives that place us, as temporal subjects and unique identities (Ricoeur, 1990; Johnson; 1992; Plummer, 2001; Taylor, 1989; Butler, 1990, among others). And these identities, in Couze Venn's words

[are] not the sameness of a permanent, continuous, immutable, fixed entity; it is instead the mode of relating to being that can be characterized as selfhood. Self is not a fact or an event; it is not reducible to the facticity of things-in themselves. The identity of a person, or a group or a people, takes the form of stories told (2005: 284).

Thus, it is not just a matter of talking, but also of the form these words take. Thus, following Richard Johnson's argument, we experience ourselves as subjects, primarily through story telling. In other words, we articulate the self as a subject through the narratives about the self

Indeed that we are positions in narrative, subjectively. Of course we're lots of other things too, you'll understand. We're physical

organizations or economic beings, but subjectively we construct ourselves in stories. We are positions in stories, we are subjects and objects and narrators and characters in storylines. That's the way that we handle our subjective life, that's how we live subjectively (1992).

The stories collected throughout this project are will tell us of subjects who introduce themselves as political actors, subjects whose identities are elaborated from experiences of political militancy, which in many of them is affirmed within the narration with expressions such as 'I will always be a communist', 'It doesn't matter how long time goes by, I will always be a mirista³⁷, or 'I always was and always will be from the right-wing'. Yet, despite the fact that other identity categories such as gender or ethnicity are much more naturalized through biology, political militancy in the stories tends to be settled through such repeated declarations, where ideological reassurance works by constructing what needs to be described (Butler; 1997).

Another aspect to be considered in regard to the construction of narratives is that they are not fixed, but dynamic. They change most of the time, even though some stories seem to be repeated, because we sometimes mean to repeat them over and over, yet they are never exactly the same. They suffer displacements, but these displacements do not escape from an imperative of intelligibility (Butler; 1997). This means that there are aspects of the story that people maintain and repeat, others that are changed, and others omitted. Thus, some of my interviewees recognized that if they were asked the same question years ago, the answer would have been completely different. Others, in the process of narration, recognized how much they had changed, not only for the perception of time in their selves, as occurs for instance when we see an old photograph of ourselves, where in some ways we recognize the person in the picture as us, but at the same time we know that we are no longer that person. Furthermore, this perception is related to the passage of time for the collective, often taken as a generation. Thus, for instance, people tend to say 'that was another time, 'well, those were other times', 'in those ages, people thought differently' or 'that period was

³⁷ A 'mirista' is a militant of the MIR, Movimiento Izquierda Revolucionaria MIR (Leftwing Revolutionary Movement).

completely different from today', and so on. Thus, there are two ways in which people perceive themselves as temporary beings: existing individually and at the same time historically situated (Ricoeur, 1996; Johnson, 2000); that means being able to be a witness.

The narratives' fluidity is also related to the fact that they are always elaborated in relation with 'others' in every sense, not only because stories are filled with other people, but also because they are told to someone, in this case to me as the interviewer, as an interpellator, since the stories that people construct are provoked by my opening questions and interjections, and in many ways this helped to determine their form.

Thus, narrative becomes the way in which we exist as subjects, as a coherent entity, as human beings. These narratives can take different forms, as Barthes points out

[narratives are] able to be carried by articulated language, spoken or written, fixed or moving images, gestures, and the ordered mixture of all these substances; narrative is present in myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, mime, painting ... stained glass windows, cinema, comics, news item, conversation. (Barthes, 1977: 79)

The narratives collected in this project are complex in nature, and their value can be regarded from multiple perspectives. They constitute an autobiographical storytelling exercise, in which each person I interviewed narrated their own story, making sense out of their experience of political militancy. However, since political militancy is also a public activity, the stories also help to enlighten the way in which this activity was socially and culturally produced, in a particular period of Chilean history. They stand as testimonies of such a painful period.

Understanding Political Militancy in the Chilean Context

Even though this thesis is on life stories, it is also about history and memory, not only because of the subject of the thesis itself, but also because of the fact that each testimony is full of social and cultural content. If we recall the

discussion presented in the first chapter, on the dichotomy between individual and collective memories, we may now argue, on better grounds, that memory, particularly in its narrative form, is always both individual and collective. This fact became apparent along this research; the analyses of interviews clearly show how political militancy is shaped by cultural norms, conventional values and even rules, but also by family traditions and gender differences.

Modern western civilizations have allocated the administration of the State to the hands of governments legitimated through a democratic system. In turn, this legitimacy is based on people's participation as citizens, and the most common form of this participation, besides by voting, is via political parties. These entities are organizations that unite people with similar values, principles and concrete ideas on how the government and the State should be structured, be organized and how it should exercise the power granted.

According to Hernán Vidal, in Chile political parties have been studied mainly from an organizational point of view, instead of from a much-needed 'anthropological' perspective

Priority is given to the study of the different social agencies organized in conflict, particularly political parties, as if they were bureaucracies that planned their activities to achieve their objectives in accordance with an adequacy of resources, strategies, and tactics that are rationally applied on their interest (Vidal; 1995:32)

Thus, according to this author, it is necessary to understand the symbolical and cultural dimension of these organizations, in order to understand political participation and the forms they can take, because political parties are also forms of human collaboration and socialization. In reference to 'left-wing political parties', but in my view also his comments are also applicable to the 'right-wing', Vidal continues his argument by asserting that parties also "condition the state of mind for establishing friendship, love, respect, or for questioning authority in its diverse functions (family, work, political), for choosing careers, how to spend time off, entertainment, etc." (1995:32). However, it can be argued that this process is a two-way road; loyalties,

friendships, family affairs, sexual and gender relationships and so on, are not only conditioned through political parties and militancy, but they are modeled in the other direction too. Proving that styles of militancy can become a lifestyle.

In another sense, political parties are also reproducers of traditions and 'national values', because "they share myths and narratives about the historical Chilean experience, as unique and common for all Chilean citizens" (Vidal; 1996: 34). From this perspective parties are then responsible for shaping a specific type of nationhood, and vice versa, whereas it is also the case that some common elements coexisted in all parties. Let us take for instance the traditional belief of the family as being the base of society, which can be similar in right-wing and left-wing parties (not without some strong differences, as I shall show). Thus, political militancy involves several elements which go farther than just the ideological preferences or ascriptions; they are elements which usually are located out of the rational; they are elements which are involved in passions, emotions and subjective relations far beyond of what we would usually think. But also, with processes of identity construction that involve a wide range of everyday life aspects.

In the Chilean case, between the 1960s and the beginning of the 1990s, this phenomena has been described by Norbert Lechner

A strong identity of the 'us' gives the parties a clear ideological profile and affective loyalties, which are well established. They create in this way a feeling of family, a subculture that explains its persistence under the authoritarian regime [...] [however] the defense of the own identity is stressed by the absence of a conception of the political system in its globality [...] The result is that parties grow strong in their internal cohesion but weak in their external cooperation. (1985:37)

It is possible to locate this party cohesion in two different moments. The first one is between the middle of the 1960s and the coup d'état, a period along which the parties constituting the political system became increasingly radicalized in their postures, making any type of dialogue difficult. For many authors, and as also stated in the Rettig Report, party radicalization was

finally one of the causes or conditions for the coup d'état. The second moment is after the coup, and refers to the clandestine regrouping of political parties, in an environment of few opportunities for dialogue, a period in which it was apparent that the actions of the military did not undermine party cohesion, but many times exacerbated it.

Many explanations have been offered with respect to the circumstances and motives that triggered the coup d'état. Their analysis is out of the scope of this research, but it is important to establish the traumatic dimension of this event, not only in terms of human suffering but also for political life and democracy. Because what was abolished with violence was not only the human capacity to think and express different opinions, but also every institutional and public channel for dialogue and the visibilisation of social actors, and in particular, of the practice of political militancy.

The Chilean Party System

In order to understand militancy experience in Chile, it is necessary to give a brief account of the party system characterizing the context in which my interviewees located their experiences.

From the mid 1930s the traditional structure of the political system changed and the usual division between the antagonist-conservatives and liberals was replaced by the establishment of the antagonism between the left-wing and right-wing (Moulian; 1993). This change was the result of the appearance of new political actors, which since the beginning of the century had been becoming popular in the public sphere. Parties associated with the working class and popular sectors, such as the Communists and the Socialists became strong, and their representation in the electorate grew considerably over the years. Thus, the left-wing was constituted by these two major parties, the socialist and the communist party; on the right-wing, the conservatives and the liberals, nineteenth-century parties. In the political center was placed the Radical Party.

The Radical Party made its appearance in the public arena in 1888. Its members shared common political ideas with the liberals, but in a more radicalized way. Thus, they presented themselves as anticlerical, with a strong adherence to the ideas of the French Enlightenment, and sympathies with the popular sector. This party played an important role during the first half of the 20th century, promoting universal suffrage, individual freedom, compulsory education, women's rights, and other important social changes. A large portion of its militants were also members of the Freemasons. From an historical point of view, the legacy of the period in which the Radical party was in the government is usually assessed by historians as a positive one, principally because of its struggle to empower the state educational system and to promote social mobility with the consolidation of the middle class (Correa, Figueroa &...; 2001; 159). From the beginning, this party emphasized its concern with social problems and working class support; however its influence over the latter decreased since the Communist and Socialist parties emerged, and the Radical Party's influence and membership decreased considerably over time. By 1970, 'radicals' were part of the UP coalition, but played no relevant role.

In 1922 the 'Partido Obrero Revolucionario' (Working Class Revolutionary Party) founded by Luis Emilio Recabarren in 1912, formally adopted the name of 'Partido Comunista' (Communist Party), created to defend workers in nitrate mines subject to exploitation from international companies and government pressures. This party was the expression of the first two decades of working class struggle from the beginning of the century. In spite of this, in 1930 the Communist Party was far more radical, differentiating themselves from the more moderate reformist movements of that period, rising the revolutionary flag, it was always keen on establishing alliances with central and moderate positions.

In 1933, a new party was formed and integrated with popular sectors: employees, clerks, artisans, and professionals from small cities. It was the 'Partido Socialista' (Socialist Party). Usually, at least in Latin America, the Communist Party started from a radicalization of a Socialist one; however, in

Chile, the Communist was born first, and their militants' social background was quite different (Moulian; 1993: 82). Until the 1960s these parties represented the left-wing side, sharing a Marxist ideology. Practically, the most important difference was their international position, because the communists had a strong identification with the USSR and were part of the III International; the socialists instead were critics with international postures, and had a more 'Latin American identity' (Moulian; 1993 :83). Besides their revolutionary vision, both parties were part of the Chilean political party system, and throughout the century they implemented alliances in order to get access to political power. Although these two parties were part of the coalition that won presidential elections several times (in 1938, 1942 and 1947) they did not hold a leading position in those alliances. Following Moulian, in Chile, until the late 50's, these parties helped to stabilize the democratic system because of their capacity to build alliances, mainly with the center (Radical Party).

After the 1950s, the left-wing remained moderate, despite the influence of the Cuban Revolution and the radicalization of these parties in other Latin-American countries³⁸ (as for instance Peru, Venezuela and Guatemala), mainly because the electoral falling back of the right-wing generated much expectation on winning presidential elections in 1964. Left-wing parties evaluated that it was possible to use elections to reach power and win government control, in other words to stay within institutional system (Moulian; 1993). The Communist and Socialist parties, in association with the Radical Party, were the protagonists of the UP coalition in 1970, which was known as the 'via chilena al socialismo' (The Chilean Way to Socialism), namely the transition towards socialism without violence, using the valid democratic structure. (Garretón & Moulian; 1993).

Another party was founded in 1958: the Christian Democratic Party or 'Democracia Cristiana' (Christian Democracy, DC from now on). It was

³⁸ However, it is undeniable that the Cuban revolution strongly influenced practically all the left-wing in Latin-America; in Chile this influence can be seen by the creation of the MIR (Left-wing Revolutionary Movement) and in the promotion of the agricultural reform (Correa & others; 2001).

inspired by Christian values and the Church's social doctrine. This party was made up of people from the middle class and political groups unattached to the Conservative Party, counting on the implicit support of a majority sector of the Chilean Catholic Church (Correa & others; 2002:241)³⁹. Christian Democracy quickly became a big electoral force, replacing the Radical Party in the middle. Under the slogan 'Revolución en Libertad' (Revolution in Freedom), the DC won the presidential election in 1964 with Eduardo Frei as their candidate.

According to several authors, the electoral triumph of the DC was at the expense of right-wing parties, partly because this sector was dominated by more conservative views associated with land owners interests who were actually resisting the more modernizing proposals coming from the bourgeoisie (Correa & others; 2001:245). Another reason that is usually proposed as an explanation of the electoral triumph of the DC was the electoral reform of 1958⁴⁰, which increased the number of voters and modified the balance of forces. Between 1957 and 1970 the number of voters almost tripled. The incorporation of these new voters mainly disempowered right-wing parties (Moulian; 1993: 221; Correa, Figueroa, Jocelyn-Holt, Rolle & Vicuña; 2001).

The deep changes in the Chilean political map during the 1960s, has also been attributed to the massive migratory movements from countryside to cities, the political liberalization of the rural population, as the result of novel initiatives by the Frei government, the promotions of countryside workers' organizations, and the creation of workers unions, neighborhood groups, and women's associations. Moulian also explains the electoral phenomenon of the DC as the result of its appeal to redistribution, social justice and equity,

³⁹ According to Correa, Figueroa, Jocelyn-Holt, Rolle and Vicuña, the Catholic Church adopted a more reformist position and supported further structural changes in order to avoid revolutionary stampedes. The same argument explains US support for the DC party in the 1964 elections (Correa & others; 2001:241).

⁴⁰ The series of electoral reforms started in 1949 with the incorporation of the feminine electorate, followed in 1958 with the introduction of the identification card which prevented bribe, compulsory vote in 1962 and, in 1970, the minimum age for voting was 18 and the incorporation of illiterates into the electorate (Lechner; 1985:23)

without questioning the system and without invoking class struggle in the way the left did. This discourse also appealed to the 'Christian' cultural component proper to the condition of a catholic country, which beyond doubt influenced a broad sector of the electorate.

During the DC government, one of the most significant changes that Chilean society would experience was the deepening of the agricultural reform, which was legislated during the previous government. The reform's purpose was the redistribution of land ownership in order to modernize the productive processes and increase agricultural production. The reform also intended to incorporate the countryside population into the civic life, through the modernization of labor relations, liberalizing them, at least partially, from feudal subordination (Correa & others; 2002:248). In this way, to a great extent the agricultural reform set an end to the cultural, economic and political structure in which Chilean society was sustained from the XIX century on. The end of the large estate ownership also meant a crisis within the social sector that until then had constituted the traditional directive group.

The elite, or politically speaking, the right-wing sector, at least until the late 1960s was composed of the Conservative and Liberal Parties. In ideological terms, the conservatives were strongly associated to the Catholic Church and to large agrarian estates whereas liberals were associated to secularism, financial capital and commerce. According to Moulian, the conservatives, the most reactionary sector, dominated the relationship between industrial capital and landlords. This situation may explain why the Chilean right-wing was gradually isolated during the 1960s, because of its inability to establish alliances with new social and political actors (Moulian; 1993). This may also explain why the agricultural reform had such a large impact on this sector. Indeed, they saw themselves as being stripped of one of the basic elements of their power, the 'Hacienda'⁴¹ (Correa & others; 2002:250). The reaction from this cornered right-wing became more and more confrontational and inflexible. Thus, after being defeats in the

⁴¹ Large farm, country estate.

presidential and senatorial elections of 1965, the right-wing parties united their forces into just one party, the 'Partido Nacional' (National Party), in order to face the next election. Later on, that party assumed a main role in the opposition to Allende.

It is difficult to show a panoramic view of this period, because in the western world the 1960s were hectic, full of social expression of discontent, ranging from anti-war movements, to civil rights struggles of blacks, women, homosexuals, sexual liberation and so on. In Chile, these expressions also influenced local processes, particularly regarding people who until that moment were out of the democratic system, and who started to actively participate through the channels activated by DC's policies. Thus, after two years of the Frei government a large and heterogeneous social movement emerged with force into the public arena. These new social actors intensified their claims and their manifestations took new forms, for example, urban and rural 'tomas de terreno' (the taking of a portions of land by force or occupation). (Correa & others, 2002; Moulian, 1993). Polarization also found an expression in a new political movement, the MIR (Revolutionary Left-wing Movement) that will play an important role in this process. Created in 1965, in Concepción (a City in the south of Chile) and inspired by the Cuban revolution, this party was born to be the vanguard of the Chilean revolutionary process to which they strongly ascribed. According to Correa, between 1967 and 1970 this party arrived on the public arena showing its guerrilla capacity, as for instance bombing strategic places, assaulting banks, taking properties in the countryside, and supporting workers' actions (2001; 258). These types of political actions were completely new in Chilean society, and they had an important impact, emphasized by the press, and produced the sensation that the country was subject to a major shift (2001; 259).

Thus, in the late 1960s and the early 1970s, Chilean politics experienced an intense polarization. As Moulian points out, Frei's government implied the end of an 'anti-oligarchic reformism' and the beginning of a period of strong definitions. Slowly the left-wing side stopped being keen on making

alliances with the center, and the contents of their speeches started to include messages on more radical changes and revolution.

Following Moulian and Vidal, the political process as it was lived in Chile during the 1970s has to be described from two perspectives, celebration and drama. With respect to the festive aspect, this is basically sustained by the fact that the triumph of Allende represented the end of an era; social sectors that had been subordinated and marginalized from power were gradually incorporated into the political system and allowed democratic exercise, and for the first time in Chilean history they would have the opportunity of being active subjects. Thus, in his first speech as elected president, Allende acclaimed "I shall not be another president; I shall be the first president of a truly democratic government, popular, national, and revolutionary in Chilean History". He introduced himself, effectively, as the leader of a unique process.

The almost three years of the UP government were exiting and hectic; they had a celebrator feeling. The 4th of September 1970, in the night, the crowd occupied the 'wide avenues' to shout and dance, to hug each other, and to share the triumphal hopes. The human tide crossing Alameda⁴² wasn't a shapeless mass, a heterogeneous aggregate of dispersed individuals but the people, a community that expressed their joy. Everyone carried that sign on their face, but everyone there knew that this act was not only was a cathartic record or the communitarian ritual of sharing with the others the happiness for a triumph highly hoped. They knew that that march, cheerful and festive, did not only have the character of a celebration but also was the first movement of a battle, mobilizing was an act of happiness but also a demonstration of power. (Moulian; 1993: 268)

This vivid description, coincides with the perception of other authors, as for instance in the book edited by Julio Pinto *Cuando hicimos historia: la experiencia de la Unidad Popular* (2005), which seeks to rescue the creative, participative and festive dimensions of the UP. These postures could be accused of being simple idealizations. However, beyond the romantic vision of those who lived that in that period and, of course, of those who participated in the UP project, there is a reconstruction of the fact that, during

⁴² The main road of Santiago, the Chilean capital.

that period for the first time a great majority of Chilean society, including some largely subordinated sectors, where taking 'control of their destiny'. Nevertheless, it must not be ignored that another considerable sector of Chileans, as Sofía Correa⁴³, explained was looking at the party from the opposite side of the road, either because they were not invited or because they didn't want to be part of it. She was referring to the right-wing.

For this reason, the perception of celebration is accompanied by a dramatic dimension, with respect to which there is practically a consensus. The drama is sustained in the radicalization of political postures, in the inability of reaching agreements, in the expressions of support or dissidence each time more violent, and of course in the culmination of all of this with the coup d'état.

The right-wing suffered a first modification in 1966. The Conservative Party and the Liberal Party merged after the electoral defeat in the parliamentary elections of the previous year, giving rise to the National Party, to which also joined anti Marxist nationalist sectors (Correa & others 2002; 159). The position of this party also became more radical, while maintaining expressions more and more confrontational, especially because it could not exercise its power within the institutional frame, as it was a minority. In the same way some extremist sectors appeared in the public scene, which were even ready for violent action, as the case of 'Country and Freedom', which during the government of the UP confronted left-wing groups and helped to create a climate of violence and chaos, a perfect context for military intervention.

After the coup d'état, a number of National Party militants became actively involved in the military dictatorship. However, as a political force, it was forced to stop its activities as any other party, but unlike other parties it never figured in the public arena again. Agrarian reform, on one hand, and neo-liberalization of the economy under Pinochet's regime, reshaped 'Chilean

⁴³ In a speech during a social event, while introducing one of her books.

right-wing' organization. Indeed, under the authoritarian government a new right-wing movement emerged, the UDI 'Unión Demócrata Independiente' (Independent Democrat Union). This movement was founded in the early 1980s, around the time at which social protests against Pinochet began.⁴⁴ The UDI was characterized by its ideological elements of anticommunism, as neo-liberal and fundamentally catholic. The UDI has been signified as the extreme right-wing, closely associated to the figure of Pinochet himself.

After the creation of a law to regulate political parties, by the dictatorship in March 1987, a new right-wing political party was constituted by the UDI, former factions of the National Party and other right-wing sectors, named 'Renovación Nacional' (National Renovation), hereafter RN. Thus they were the first political party registered under the ruling of the new law, and were followed by the Christian Democrat Party (DC), a party by then traditional and with strong identification with the political center, and the 'Party for Democracy' (PPD), an instrumental party hosting more progressive and mainly (but not only) left-wing political sectors. By the end of 1987 these three parties were constituted, giving way to a new way of expression for the traditional political sectors of Chilean society. The fact that the new constituency of political parties was controlled and regulated by the dictatorship made other more radical sectors reject the idea of constituting themselves as parties. On the other hand, it suited the right-wing perfectly.

Thus RN was founded in 1987, when Pinochet had called to a plebiscite in order to decide the continuity of the military regime. This party emerged as an alternative to military permanence, showing a more democratic face, with a less authoritarian profile as they tried to create a certain 'distance' from the Pinochet figure, however, with similar principles in relation with social and economical organization.

⁴⁴ By that time, political parties were still banned. They were only allowed in 1987, after a new law of political parties was established. The earlier appearance of the UDI was the result of the right-wing recognising the fact that opposition parties had started to make public presence and that right-wing needed an organic way of making presence beyond government activities.

Political Militancy in Old and New Ways of Being

After this brief review of the political context, I will look at some relevant aspects to better understand the militancy that I am interested in, which is one that has suffered a disciplining and repression on a daily basis for several years, and also, a type of militancy that has been described as being in crisis, and in process of extinction, practically in all of the western world. Hence, the decline of this particular sort of political expression in Chile is not only Pinochet's achievement, but also a theme of the times; a symptom of late capitalism and globalization processes.

Thus, militancy as known in the previous decades, does not only have a tendency towards decline, but also it has been highly criticized by postmodern thinkers such as Jean-François Lyotard, Michel Foucault, Ernest Laclau, Richard Rorty, Chantal Moufe, and Judith Butler among others, for several reasons. The concept of postmodernity has been associated to a multiplicity of processes and different events, from radical transformations of production in advanced capitalism as for instance high levels of production and labor specialization, with high levels of capital concentration; coexisting with a decentralization of the productive processes, high levels of consumption and sophistication of massive communication media, besides transnational expansion of bureaucracies and increased administrative complexity tending to globalization, which undoubtedly has changed ways of life and ways of being at every level.

The expression 'postmodernity' has also been used to denote a crisis, a breakdown or a move away from the illustrated paradigms of the XIX century. Also with a questioning of the basic supports of the 'western reason', a questioning of the idea of progress, of the idea of knowledge sustained in scientific method as a total, cumulative and absolute. Also, the concept implies criticism of the idea of objectivity, and certainty as possibility, and the idea of 'reason as ethical foundation'. Doubt was cast in particular on the great universal stories, utopias and metaphysic notions of existence. In the same way, essentialist categories of identity production, such as class,

gender and ethnics, are questioned. All of this has undoubtedly affected the channels for participation and the ways of conceiving politics.

In addition, traditional political practices do not represent new political conflicts and struggles any more. Recent problems from decolonization processes, ethnic issues, gender and sexual fights, to ecological concerns, as well as a list that can easily be continued, have taken over the public sphere, completely modifying the political map and its respective style of militancy.⁴⁵

However, despite the explanations of change and criticism of traditional ways of militancy, in many places - also in Chile - the decline of citizen's participation is currently described as political discontents, skepticism, apathy, lack of interest, social drowsiness and so on, without understanding that changes are occurring in the forms and codes in which people understand political practice.

Now, in spite of the fact that, as we have seen, the decomposition processes of political participation have a character that goes beyond the purely local realm, it is very necessary to highlight the particular characteristics of the Chilean case. This is because "the loss of the utopian motive and existential passion that justified ideology struggles of the past" (Richard & Moreiras; 2001) do not vanish with the ongoing and 'natural' wearing of social practices, but end in a traumatic way, repressed by decree. Therefore, once democracy had been recovered what was lived as a loss was the sense of the political dimension of citizenship' exercise and social participation, as they existed before the coup d'état. And since it was lost in a traumatic way, it could only be experienced as damage and not as change.

Accordingly, my interviewees in some way have been witnesses of this transition, they have experienced it in their own lives; a transition that in the Chilean case was conflictive and painful. Here it must be said that my own

⁴⁵ Regarding left-wing parties it is necessary to mention the fall of the Berlin wall and the Marxist crisis, because this affected political militancy of this sector.

position can be partial, because I think and agree with those postures that state that the traumatic dimension undoubtedly affected left-wing militancy more, which until today remembers that period in a melancholic way. Moreover, this melancholy has been passed on to the new generations. However, from a broader perspective, it is not sustainable to think that the coup only affected one social sector. Instead, it is more reasonable to think that the coup affected Chilean society in general.

My attention to the old and new ways of being follows my interest in doing research on the specific impact the coup had on political militancy. Can we find the damages it imposed on citizenship? The ways it affected peoples' fears and their ability of dialoguing politically? How did it change they way people thought of their own political lives, of publically debating and confronting their projects, or reinventing their political militancy and other ways of participation, distinct and effective? And at last, can we stop evoking the past as a loss, in order to be able to move on towards more constructive forms?

Doing Interviews About Political Experiences

I made a choice in collecting life stories about the themes of interviews. Having defined life stories on political militancy as the main source of my research, the collection of them did not necessarily have to materialize through interviews. I could, for instance, have asked people to write their stories down by themselves, without so much interference, in the way of autobiographies. Yet I chose to interview because I wanted to question, I wanted to see, to hear and confront my interviewees, I wanted to confront their experiences with my own. In this sense, the action of interviewing was chosen for the theme of the project. The traumatic experience of a dictatorship that prohibited and illegalized political activism of any kind, hence neglecting daily experiences of part of the population, required in my opinion something of a 'therapeutic exercise'. Thus, the interview does not only constitute an act of information production, but also the elaboration of sense and recognition between interviewer and interviewee.

The Interview Process

Socially, the 'interview' as a procedure to produce knowledge has been granted recognition, but historically it has developed its own framework, as oral history:

Interviews have documented particular aspects of historical experiences, which tend to be missing from other sources, such as personal relations, domestic work or family life, and they have resonated with the subjective or personal meaning of lived experience. (Perks & Thomson 1998: ix)

The idea of researchers accessing new information - otherwise unavailable - via interviewing, such as unvisited aspects of social and everyday life, new actors and agencies neglected or simply invisible to scientists' eyes so far, is the most common argument to defend 'interview' as a way to construct sources that will legitimate a new kind of knowledge. However, following feminist contributions on epistemological matters, it can be added that the 'interview' process does not only give recognition to subjects and topics which were absent in traditional research, but also helps 'questioning' the whole investigative process, envisaging it as a relationship of power. Thus, the interview process arises as a dialogical work where the outcome is the result of a construction from both sides, through constant conflicts, negotiations and even alliances.

Thus, the interview is framed in the relationship between the interviewee and interviewer, where the subjective quality of this tool is not only confined to my interviewees, but also to me, as a researcher I conduct the interview and its interpretation. In Piñas' words, each investigator

Is not a simple reproducer of the discourse that has been generated by another; the interviewer's conduct also influences too – to a greater or lesser extent – in one direction or another – in the creation of that text, for which it is essential that the interviewer's roll as interpreter is recognized and organized in such manner that its own mechanisms of construction and signification are founded (1988:37).

In this scenario, my participation in this research is not restricted to asking. I also play a part in the construction of the story, either through my questions,

gestures, or because of my own presence. In the case of this thesis one of the elements that most clearly influenced both the process of conducting the interviews and their analysis, was my own history of activism and ideological ascriptions, which I outlined in the introduction of this dissertation.

Thus, the objectivity of this research is based on the interview process as an instance to recognize 'the other' as different (Gadamer; 1989), to see, observe and question different positions, between my interviewee and me. In this sense I am using what Johnson, Chambers and Tincknell systematized as reflexivity: a dialogue not only with another, also with ourselves; to look ourselves "in the face of otherness" (2004: 58) and after, to recompose the self; always contextualizing any source; recognize power relation in the research process; and finally use the research's production to question and for "social-personal change" (2004: 58).

In the case of an interview, how the expressions are stated also have to be considered, as for instance, the type of oral language that has been chosen, in relation with the phrases, local groups' codes, etc. In the same way, consideration must be given to what the interviewee displays and shows with mechanisms such as voice emphases, gestures and silences. In the case of this research for instance I found differences of class, age, gender, just to mention some of them (I will explore more this subject in the section 'Doing right, doing wrong').

In the interviewing process I did not apply a structured questionnaire, but instead I established one opening question in order to motivate the speech of my interlocutor. The key opening question was:

- Please, could you tell me the story of your life from a political militancy perspective?

However, this question was in some cases reinforced by with others, for example:

- Can you remember when you started to be interested in political affairs?

- Can you suggest where your interest came from?
- How did you become an activist?
- Why do you think that you became a militant of this particular party?

The initial question was stated as a challenge, the interviewee then decided from where to start telling their story. Thus, the idea was to position myself towards every interviewee as someone who wants to listen, rather than someone who wants to interrogate. This positioning, however, did not imply that later during the interview I would not assume a more questioning attitude. Evidently, this did not always take place as planned; this will be discussed in the section, 'Doing right, Doing wrong'.

My Interviewees

Even though I wanted to meet people with a vital experience in militancy, I was not looking for special, important or public figures inside of the political parties, because these people usually have an image to cover or to protect, so their words are more carefully selected, and sometimes they even have a prepared story. Thus, the kind of militant that I was looking for was someone who had had a strong commitment to a political party, during some period in their lives, but was not a public figure; at least not very well know.

I also intended to cover the broad Chilean political spectrum, people from the right-wing, the center and the left-wing, women and men, and different cohorts, yet I accomplished this partially, as I shall explain later.

Interviewees

Names	Political Party	Age	Place of Interview	Length
Cristina	MIR	41	My house	90 minutes
Erika	MIR	50	My house	90 minutes
Ana	MIR	60	Her office	60 minutes
Danilo	MIR	49	His work	90 minutes
Tamara	PC	50	My house	90 minutes
Tatiana	PC	49	My house	90 minutes
Mario	PC	40	His house	90 minutes
Soledad	FPMR	40	A coffee shop	90 minutes
José	PC	68	A coffee shop	90 minutes
Verónica	PS	58	A coffee shop	120 minutes
María Isabel	PS	58	Her house	60 minutes
Rosita	RN	85	Her House	60 minutes
Margarita	Pinochet supporter	64	A coffee shop	90 minutes
Virginia	UDI	65	Party's office	60 minutes
Heidi	UDI	48	Party's office	40 minutes

MIR: Left Revolutionary Movement
 PC: Communist Party
 FPMR: Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front
 PS: Socialist Party
 RN: National Renovation
 UDI: Democratic Independent Union

In addition to my search for different political backgrounds, another requirement that I set for interviewees was their age; I aimed for militancy experiences of people from my own generation and older, people who were eighteen or more in the 1980s, when the active protest and social movements against the Pinochet regime began. This is because this generation was the last to have a vigorous public presence as political actors through political parties. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, after Pinochet ended his government, yet held control of the armed forces, political participation in its traditional form considerably decayed. This phenomenon was also in line with a global process, where traditional ways of political militancy understood in modern codes, were highly questioned and underwent a crisis.

Another criteria used to define interviewees involved looking for activists that didn't fit a common profile; I was interested in contrasting the possible internal differences within the same political project, at the same time researching if similar problems existed in different political fractions. For example, I made sure that the interviews were carried out with individuals from different walks of life. Particularly, I was interested in finding people from the middle or upper class, within the left-wing as well as someone from the working class that belonged to the right-wing. This was relevant because in terms of the collective imagination, or from a simplistic perspective, in Chile up to the 80s, activist from the middle or upper class in the left-wing was considered problematic, insomuch as someone from the working class was considered a problem in the right-wing. Therefore, I consider that interviewing these types of activists may enrich the analysis regarding the relationships of each party with activists from different social background.

Applying the same logic used in the paragraph above, and considering my interest in exploring the gender variable, I searched for female and male interviewees. It was difficult to find them, I only found two people from the left-wing who agreed to be interviewed; from the right, I only found one person who met the profile from the right. I was interested in these stories, especially from activists of left-wing parties because I knew that it was a controversial topic among the parties. For the right-wing, the gender never even became a point of discussion. In this sector, linked to (at least a part) most conservative sectors of the Catholic Church, sexual preference was never discussed, at least when the interviews were carried out. I don't mean to say that there were not individuals with different sexual professions, but that within the parties and in activism, this topic was not discussed. Considering this, my expectations for finding an activist with these characteristics, that wanted to share their story, weren't high.

Initial contacts with possible interviewees were made using my own personal contacts and networks. Given my own political affiliation, it was much easier for me to contact people who from left-wing parties, who in turn directed me to other militants they knew. To contact people from the right-wing was, however, more difficult for me. I found it fairly difficult to reach people from right-wing parties. I realized that my own world was very segregated. I did not know anybody from the 'other side of Chile', 'the others'. Eventually, friends of friends introduced me to individuals who eventually could collaborate. I had to make a great effort to convince some of them to be interviewed. To these interviewees, I was 'the other', because, of course, before they accepted being interviewed they asked me who I was, and what my political affiliation was. I did not hide my political background, but I said that I wanted to listen to the other side. Even though some of them acceded to be interviewed, others rejected. In the end I received four contributions from the right-wing, all women.

The processing of contacting individuals for interviews began while I was in the UK: The first interview was with Verónica, a 65-year old woman. She went in to exile with her husband in 1974 and never came back to Chile.

This interview was possible thanks to help from a professor at the NTU that knew a group of exiled Chileans. It's interesting to note that this interview was done a year after Pinochet was detained in London to be later sent to Chile in 200. This meeting lasted longer than most because Verónica wanted to know a little about me, so a large amount of time was dedicated to getting to know one another. The interview was taped, it also includes other topics aside from political activity, for example, and we spent time discussing her experience as an exile in the United Kingdom. When I carried this interview out, I hadn't completely defined the topic, which is also why it lasted longer.

The Rest of the interviews were conducted between 2004 and 2005, once I returned to Chile. The first of them, with Mario, was a pilot, because at that moment I was clear on my Thesis' direction. Mario is the only person among the interviewees that I knew before. I chose him because I knew that he had participated in a left-wing party and that he lived partially 'in the closet' and that he criticized the early movement towards the rights of sexual minorities. I knew this information before the interview because, despite not seeing each other frequently we are friends. While I preferred individuals who were not close to me, I felt that Mario met the characteristics that were hard to find: a left-wing, homosexual activist, who accepted to be interviewed. Homosexuality in the left-wing party was taboo for a long time.

The plan was to begin covering interviews from each political party, so I decided to start with the MIR because I had some interaction with them while in the university. I remembered that a friend's brother was a lawyer who represented an organization called CODEPU (*Corporación de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos del Pueblo*), and I called him to explain my Project and see if he could help me. He put me in touch with Cristina, my second interview in Chile. We first met and had something to eat; I explained what my thesis was about and asked him if he could tell me his story, which he agreed to enthusiastically. This interview was very long and very intense. At the end of the interview I asked Cristina if she knew anyone else with the same profile from an older generation. She put me in touch

with Erika, my third interviewee, whom I wrote to explain my thesis and ask if she would be interviewed.

After having interviewed two women from the same party, I decided that I needed male activists. Again, I used my networks, sending mails to some friends explaining my thesis and the profile of the candidates I was looking for. I received three answers, one from a classmate from the University who worked at a well-known editorial; she explained that she had a possible candidate – Danilo. We met at his office and I explained my thesis, and he agreed to the interview. The second answer to my mail, was from a coworker, she told me that her partner, a professor of literature, who had lived many years in exile, knew a poet from the communist party. I was interested in meeting José, because he was not only from a different (left-wing) party but he was from a generation before Danilo. I contacted José by mail and he accepted to meet me.

The third response to my initial mail came from another coworker. She explained that she knew someone who was linked with the MIR, while the organization was being formed. She knew the founding members very well, among them she knew their leader, Miguel Enríquez, very well. Which is why her opinion was less romantic and more critical of the MIR's political activism. I was unsure whether to contact her because I felt that I had already interviewed enough activists from that party; however, after a second reflection, I thought it would be interesting to interview Ana, as she had been so close to the creation of this party and was quite older than the rest of the other activists whom I had interviewed at that moment. So I contacted her and she agreed to tell me her story.

In 2005 the Spanish intellectual, Beatriz Preciado, was in Chile teaching a masters course at the Universidad de Chile and leading workshops in the MUMS (*Movimiento por la Diversidad Sexual*) that I was actively part of. There I met an activist from a lesbian group, who also was an old activist for the communist party. As with Mario, I thought that it would be interesting to interview her as it would be difficult to find an 'old' activist who publicly

recognized her lesbian identity. I explained my Project and asked if I could interview her, she refused and explained that she didn't like to talk much. However, she did offer to put me in touch with someone with the same profile, she later sent me Tatiana's mail address. I got in touch with her, as with the previous interviewees, to explain my Project, and she agreed to be interviewed.

In the last months of December 2005, I felt that I should look for activists from the right. From the start it was difficult. I tried using the same methodology I had used to obtain interviews with individuals from the left, but I didn't receive any answer. I continued asking and the mother of someone close to me contacted me about an elderly lady who was an activist for the 'Renovación Nacional'. I called the contact to explain what my Project was about and she finally accepted.

I got in touch with Margarita in a very similar fashion, the mother of a friend mentioned that in her gymnastics class there was a woman who was a fervent Pinochet supporter. I called the woman, Margarita, and she accepted.

In my search for militants from the right, I became more insistent with anyone I could ask – if they knew anyone that met the profile I was looking for. At that same time, my sister started her Doctorate at the Universidad Católica. She commented that the secretary of her Doctorate program was a member of the UDI, although she was younger than the activists I was looking for, perhaps I could interview her. I decided to go speak with her personally as I feared that by email she would say no. Even so, confirming my fears she said that she didn't do interviews but that she could put me in contact with other activists that she considered were more important. She gave me a list of five women; among the list I only got to interview two of them, Heidi and Virginia. These interviews were very important as they represented two completely different sectors among the UDI. The former was very connected to the leaders of the party and from a higher social class while the latter was an older working-class woman and who had a longer political career. I tried

contacting male militants through these women, but wasn't able to materialize any these interviews, as explained in the next section.

Parallel to my search for activists from the right, I had three opportunities to interview individuals from the left. María Isabel was one of these cases. I met her son at a social event and I mentioned my thesis to him; he was very interested and explained that he had been born in Chile but was exiled with his mother thereafter. He explained that his mother was a member of the Socialist Part and that in the Universidad de Concepción, prior to the military coup, was a student leader, and currently an enthusiastic feminist. He asked if I would be interested in interviewing her and he was sure that she would be more than happy to share her story.

Tamara and Soledad were my last interviews, at the time I was looking for male activists (from the right or left). However, the person that got me in touch with them explained that while that hadn't been leaders, their political commitment was very strong. Both came from poor sectors of Santiago and both had careers of political activism that extended to the present. Neither knew each other. The person who shared these contacts with me was researching memory spaces in a specific sector of Santiago and partially knew about my Project, so I decided that it would be interesting to meet both women. In each encounter I realized that while neither of the two had ever narrated their political experiences, they were clear about their activist history and were eager to tell their stories.

To say that every interview was different is obvious, but it is worth saying it from a formal point of view. In general terms, the duration of each session ranged from 45 minutes to 4 hours. The first interviews conducted lasted the longest and set the framework for the following interviews. The places where interviews were conducted varied, and were chosen by each of the persons who told their stories. Thus the encounters took place in the interviewees' houses, once at the interviewer's house, public spaces such as work places,

libraries, parks, coffeehouses, and political party offices. A tape-recorder was used in the encounters, and with permission of each interviewee it was kept on at all the times, except in the occasional cases when the person requested that it be turned off, or when by my own initiative I considered it necessary. This last situation mostly happened during the more emotional episodes.

In all the cases I had previously approached candidates by phone or email. At that moment I did not give them many references, except my desire to conduct interview for doing a research project. In the first encounter, I introduced myself and explained to each of them my academic situation, the theme of the project, and asked them if would be willing to tell me their stories. I told them that the study was related to the experience of political militancy in Chile, and that I was mainly interested in people telling me about this time in their lives, for instance:

- How they would describe the happenings from their point of view;
- Whether they continued with their personal political activities or why had they left them behind.

Then, I mentioned that the interview would be recorded and transcribed, and that they could have the transcript if they wished. I also told them that even though the object of this research was not its publication, it would be submitted and held in a library, where other people could possibly view it. In regard to this latter point, I also offered them the option to change their names if they wanted so, and indeed several took that option, while others agreed to use their first names only. All of this suggested to me the extent at which, despite the years that have passed the issue of political militancy still frightens, produces mistrust and generates fears. For these individuals I used pseudonyms while for the others I used their first names, unless I considered it necessary and I had express consent from the candidate – the case of Margarita.

From the left-wing there were five interviewees, all of whom preferred to use pseudonyms. Not all of them clearly explained the reasons behind their decision, but the most commonly expressed reason was to protect their work and family. For instance, one person explained that it had been very difficult for her to start working again with a 'normal' identify, as for a long time she had been identified and excluded as 'the terrorist'. Aside from only using her first name, we also agreed that I would not know her last name (to this day, I still do not know her last name). Another candidate preferred to also use a false name as he currently worked for the state and the interview could cause problems. In another two cases, the decision to use a pseudonym was made because both had been involved, in one way or another, in armed activities that are to this day still under investigation.

One candidate requested that I use his/her underground militant name, instead of his/her real name; for this person it made more sense, as he/she would be telling his/her story of activism. The interview was carried out using his/her real name; it was then modified during the transcription. In a final case, the candidate agreed to be interviewed without being identified; this person had no problem giving me their first name, but asked me specifically not to use last name (which again, wasn't given to me).

I wasn't surprised that the interviewees would ask to have their names changed, especially those who participated in armed conflicts. I have done my best to not write nor remember (personally) their last names. I have no problem in admitting the fear of having this information, as it could harm the candidates who had decided to share their stories with me. I think that fear is a symptom; while it has declined over the years, it still exists in many social sectors. Most of us who lived during the dictatorship and opposed the regime share this fear. This fear is hard to describe or understand, as we have lived in democracy since 1990; proving that there are many situations in our history that are still unresolved⁴⁶.

⁴⁶ An example of the fear and secrecy that many Chileans still experience is the treatment that testimonials collected for the Commission on Politics and Torture has received. They have been registered in the Valech Report (2004) and may only be opened to the public starting in 2054.

While the four women, Margarita, Rosita, Virginia y Heidi, interviewed were from the right, they were still fearful and cautious during the interview process, surprisingly none of them asked me to change their names. Evidently, all of them want to know what my thesis was about and what the interviews would contain before they agreed to them, but once accepted, all of them were comfortable using their names. For Margarita and Rosita, their names and last names were fundamental because they were central parts of their narratives; it would have been impossible to use a pseudonym. Heidi, however, had no problem using her full name, she was aware that given her story it would be very easy to identify her; however, she accepted because it was for a thesis that would be presented in another language and abroad.

Heidi's main concern was that the interviews would be used for journalistic purposes that it would appear in some newspaper or magazine with national or massive circulation. She had no problem with the fact that her interview would be used for academic purposes, or that my political background was different from hers.

In the case of the four women, their fear wasn't related with being identified as activists for the respective parties; they were more concerned that they might say something that the party considers inappropriate or that anything they say might be used by a journalist and could harm the party in one way or another. I was sure that it was ethically correct that they knew my political beliefs, but at the same time this generated a certain distance between us that wasn't present with the interviewees from left-wing parties.

Another important element to be considered is the handing over of the transcripts of each interview to the interviewees. The initial idea was to do so with each one of them, however not all of them were equally interested in receiving it, although in most cases they were. This handing over of the interview's transcript was meant to be a present for each interviewee, as part

Evidently this decision is related with the systematic policy of the *Concertación* governments to protect 'themselves' from perpetrators.

of the transactions and commitments established while working with people who gratuitously shared their life and experiences. It was for me a way of saying thank you. If it was not done in every case, this was because in all the cases the same level of interest and commitment was not evoked. Once the transcriptions were delivered to the candidates who were interested in receiving them, no corrections were made.

The political climate at the time of carrying out the interviews was very relevant as the most of them were between 2004 and 2005, which was after the arrest of Pinochet in London. For many authors, (Groppo & Flier, 2002; Verdugo, 2004; Peris Blanes, 2008; Stern, 2009) this unexpected event had different social repercussions, marking a new period in the fights and debates regarding the treatment that testimonials had been given. The first effect of Pinochet's in 1998, allowed for the consensual discourse promoted by the Rettig Report to be given attention again. This attention made the topic unavoidable for the 'Concertación Governments' of Eduardo Frei and Ricardo Lagos; they were forced to confront the testimonials that were left out of the first report, which was the case of survivors of the political prison, concentration camps and torture. The *Valech Report* came into the public spotlight in 2004. This governmental initiative collected the testimonials of the victims that the first report left out, giving legitimacy to those testimonies that weren't officially recognized by the judicial system, the media or the public opinion in general. This made the political context in Chile suitable for the interviews: the arrest of the general weekend his personal image (up to that point 'untouchable') and the *Valech Report* opened doors for new testimonies.

However, it's important to note that this political climate that facilitated the collection of left-wing testimonies, may have inhibited those from the right-wing. For the first time, the State recognized that the government of General Pinochet had systematically violated human rights. The fact whether people from the right or left knew of the tortures, the point is that official recognition of the State's systematic violation of human rights, situated the topic in the public opinion. This situation placed right-wing parties in an uncomfortable

position that was gradually expressed by a distancing from the General's figure.

'Doing Right, Doing Wrong'

Performing interviews is not easy, and if the subject deals with political militancy the difficulty increases. Chilean recent history still is literally printed in the body and remembrance of a lot of people. Interviewing penetrates these painful memories; it took courage for my interviewees and for myself. In this section, I will focus on some of the problems that I confronted in the process of interviewing.

As I mentioned early, one of the first problems was finding people from the right-wing. As my biography modeled this research, it is necessary to declare that also constrained it. The more anxious about interviewing people from the right-wing I became, the clearer it was for me that my own prejudice and fears about the 'others' was larger than I had originally thought. Some real difficulties fed anxieties, on several occasions, when I arranged a meeting with a candidate, they stood me up or they simply never replied again. I assumed that this happened because these people found that in order to talk about the subject they had to know me better, and that was not the case. Indeed, the interviews with people from the left were possible because of people I know well, they introduced me to the people who I eventually interviewed. That was not the case with people from the right-wing. I was a complete stranger to them and they were not sure about they could trust me. Regarding this situation, ('misrecognition'), I conclude at least four things:

- Right-wing people, that I contacted, particularly men, were not comfortable talking politics with an 'unknown' and 'outsider' woman.
- Everyone that I contacted understood or assumed that talking about militancy and politics implicated talking about Chilean recent history.

And people from the right-wing expressed that they did not want to talk about this painful period.

- People from the right-wing who I did finally interview, were all women. And even though they accepted, I felt and observed that they were tense and very concerned about what they were saying, because all of them were very conscious about the tape recorder.
- I had very contradictory feelings about interviewing right-wing militants. On one hand I was disappointed because several attempts at contacting people failed. However I also felt a kind of relief, I thought that it was not my fault. But, I asked myself where did that sensation come from, and I recognized the fear that I felt over the possibility of those encounters.

All four of the interviews with right-wing women (Margarita, Rosita, Virginia and Heidi) implied a certain degree of difficulty, but also a kind of liberation, in the sense that I confronted my fears. The case of Margarita perhaps was the most difficult one. She positions herself as a very strong supporter of Pinochet, and disqualified my views because I was a child during the UP government. It was very hard for me to listen to her when she replied to my question on what she thought about the Rettig and Valech reports, because she said that she did not care at all about the reports, and that actually Pinochet should have killed 'more of them' (leftists). Rosita, a very upper-class old woman, received me in her posh apartment, she was very polite but also distant, before starting the interview she wanted to know about my relationship with the person that recommended me to her, about my family, my father's name, my husband's name (I will analyze this subject in chapter III), I think she was trying to look for other possible connections that we could have in common. She was very careful on what she was saying to me, also at some point she asked me to turn the tape recorder off.

Virginia, a working class woman, was also an unusual case, because she accepted to be interviewed, but only if the interview was in the party's office in her neighborhood and in the presence of the head of the party in this area.

She did not give me an alternative, so I accepted, she did not say why she wanted to do it in this way, and I assumed that she was scared. Anyway, the interview was better than I thought in this condition, because she was a very expressive person and I think that her testimony was very important in the context of this research. Heidi, on the other hand, also wanted to be interviewed in the party's office, so I had to go to the central offices of the UDI to interview her. She works in this place as the secretary of one of the most important figures of that party, a senator and a public figure. For me it was really a difficult situation; clearly I was very afraid to meet this man and at some point I realized that I was intensely wishing that the interview would end soon. Many explanations could be offered, but one that I have worked on is related to the fact that he was the embodiment of the dictatorship itself, and the character I gave him overwhelmed what I was able to control, hence I situated myself in a position of insignificance and impotence.

In the interviews with these four women gender sameness was a good start, because I tried to establish some type of connection, either by looking for some common experiences such as maternity, relationships, daily activities related to homes, or some experiences of gender discrimination, something that would help me to empathize with them. This helped me in most cases to lower anxieties, particularly in the minutes when I felt that it was necessary to question and confront their statements at some extent. Perhaps, the interviews with these women, supposedly from 'the other side of Chile', were done more defensively from both sides, not as profound and less spontaneous. However, I think that they were honest and respectful.

However, gender differences did not help me with men from the right-wing. I did not get any interviews, even though I tried hard. The opportunities I had to approach right-wing male activists were unsuccessful for different reasons, ranging from lack of time, distrust of who I was, and a lack of interest. It was not exactly understood why I was carrying out the interviews. Moreover, the occasions on when I was close to materializing those interviews, my anxiety levels rose considerably. Another problem in finding a right-wing man to interview was that all my connections with these 'others'

did not follow my request about finding an 'average militant'. Most of the time people tried to introduce me to senators, party leaders, and public figures. Evidently, it was always difficult to meet these men, representative of 'hegemonic masculinities', since I was not a journalist, or a public figure, I was not writing a book, or other things that could be interesting to them. On one occasion, when I tried to persuade a man, a militant from a right-wing party who someone introduced me to, he refused because he said that I should interview someone more important than him.

Clearly because of my own political background, it was easy to find militants from left-wing parties to be interviewed; there the type of difficulty that I faced was different. The most serious one was related to my ability as interviewer to listen and contain pain and sadness that emerged in some of the narratives. For the majority of my interviewees, this was the first time in which they told anybody their story of life from a militancy perspective. So in this sense, it was "unfinished business", very "risky stories" (Johnson; 1992).

One of the most difficult stories was Erika's because she had not talked of this period or aspect of her life to anybody for a long time, in part - she said -, because it was very hard to 'clean her image' in her workplace, where she had been labeled as 'the terrorist' for a long time. As militant of a radical left-wing movement, she was an underground combatant against Pinochet's dictatorship; she was tortured, jailed, and her partner died in combat. During the interview her voice was as a whisper, very difficult to listen to and to transcribe. Also her narration was full of silences and for long periods she would look out the window, as if she was in another place. Time to time she looked at me and asked what other things I wanted to know. It was a very hard interview, and I felt unable to contain her. I felt that I opened something very painful and I was not sure if Erika wanted that before she arrived at my house. A week after the interview I met her again, with Cristina, who actually introduced me to Erika. I had lunch with both of them and I felt relaxed, she looked very well, and she and Cristina were thinking of writing something about their experiences in jail as political prisoners. I encouraged that idea

and felt grateful that the interview process may have had something to do with it.

In comparison, Tamara and Soledad's interviews were also very emotional, and at some point both of them started to cry a lot and for a long time. However, I did not feel scared about that, since I knew what to do, both had told me that even though their stories were painful they wanted to talk it. Also both of them have been working with their pain for a long time, and their narratives were far more structured than Erika's.

Most militant women from left-wing parties chose their house or my house to do the interview. That was a very positive and spontaneous situation, because it created a kind of intimacy very fruitful for talking about a difficult subject. Probably, it also aided in expressing feelings that in another context would have not been possible.

However, it was different for male militants; most of them chose public spaces, as for instance their workplace, or coffee shops. In this sense gender differences clearly affect the interview process. In general, men militants tended to be less emotional, more formal, which was the case of Danilo and José. Mario was different because he was the only person that I knew before, and the interview was in his house.

The most difficult interview with men was with José. We did not know each other before and we decided by mail to meet in the National Library; and from there, we were going to search for a place to have a coffee place. In fact we did meet, but then we could not agree in which coffee we could talk. I was looking for a quiet place, because I did not want too much noise for the tape recording. He did not like any of my suggestions, he found these places a little 'snobbish', but he did not either provide any alternative. So, we walked for a while and then we found a place that both of us considered acceptable. I think that from that moment our relationship became a little tense, as an unclear 'power confrontation'. Inside of the coffee shop he was not sure if he liked the place, but eventually we stayed there. He started his

story, and he talked about so many different things, but mostly about poetry. I interrupted his narration several times, trying to set him back to 'the subject' of political militancy. But, my interruptions just confused him, and he then lost coherence in his narrations. Fortunately, I realized that I was trying to impose on him my way of organizing 'his narration'. So at some point I decided to let him go on his way of telling things, a way that certainly was for me unusual. All of the other interviewees went direct to the subject, but José wanted to talk about poetry and other things first. I think he was trying to find some affinity with me, and I was kind of confused and rough with him at the beginning. Also, I understood later, that for him poetry was part of his political militancy, so his insistence to start his narration in this way actually made complete sense. When I stopped resisting his way of being, understood that he was a male with masculinity very unfamiliar to me, I relaxed, the relationship changed and things became easy. I listened more to him, followed his argument without stopping him, and asked questions in relation to what he was saying.

In summary, interviewing women - even from the right-wing - was easier than interviewing men. In terms of dialoguing, I think they were more relaxed talking with me than men did. However it could be also a kind of misrecognition of the way in which men use language, expressive forms, body language and the contents that they choose. Those men who I interviewed avoided talking about emotional issues, and used silence when they wanted to express something painful or sad; on the other hand, men were more descriptive about situations, spaces, street names, dates and things like that.

At the beginning, the research project contemplated interviewing approximately thirty people; however, as the interview process advanced and after each transcription had been done, the volume of each story led to the decision to reduce the number of interviews by half. It became clear that the amount of information obtained far exceeded my expectations and ability to analyze it all. This decision resulted in an imbalance in the universe of subjects, as it was easier for me to find female than male activists.

Regardless, assuming that a larger number of male activists would have enriched this work, I do not feel that it necessarily weakens it, as the methodological option used for the development of the project isn't quantitative, nor was the goal of this project to publish the last word, but rather open a discussion on the topic. Attention to the quality of the interviews was preferred over the number of interviews, which is why the three male activists, with their unique profiles that went against the traditional stereotype, were crucial for the development of this research.

Finally, a last topic to consider in this section has to do with the ethical aspects involved in any interview process. In this respect, a first question that must be taken into account was the difficulty of the topic for everyone involved in this project (for myself as well as the interviewees), given our biographies and political identities and the fact that we were involved in different, even conflicting, ways. Said in another way, we all had and continue to have very well defined and different political positions on the recent history of Chile. For this reason, this research was designed along the lines of what some authors have denominated as 'reflexivity'; Plummer summarizes reflexivity as

a much greater social and self-awareness/ consciousness of the whole intellectual/ research process of (a) the subject of the research along with (b) the social spaces in which the research knowledge is produced, as well as (c) a much fuller sense of spaces/ locations – personal, cultural, academic, intellectual, historical- of the researcher in actually building the research knowledge. (2001: 208)

I cannot say that this thesis successfully captures everything that I proposed; however, I can say that, given the historical context that all of the participants of this investigation were deeply part of, this research project was possible because of the openness that I used to listen and believe in the stories of my interviewees, who were deeply involved especially those from the right with whom I do not share views. All of the interviewees were aware of my political affiliations, they were also aware that among the interviews there would be individuals with opposing positions; regardless, they still wished to participate.

Another point that must be considered that is related with the stories which refer to painful memories and traumatic situations is that while both parties participating in the interview processes were aware of the topics to be dealt with, it is still impossible to ensure where the story would go. In the case of some of interviewees, their histories brought us to painful and emotional memories, which were sometimes unforeseeable by them or myself. In these situations, we opted for different solutions, ranging from asking the interviewee to take a break or turn off the recorder, to avoid mentioning certain contents in interviews. In the case of some stories where memories of torture that had never been told before were not used in the development of this research project.

In *Acts of Testimony: Reversing the Shame and Gendering the Memory* (2000), Temma Kaplan reflects on the relevance of remembering traumatic situations, particularly, torture. The author analyzes the case of Nieves Ayress, a passionate and active militant that is captured by the Military and alongside her brother and father, they are brutally tortured. Kaplan explains that when Ayress made her brave testimony public, she takes the shame and dehumanization that she was subject to and places it on the shoulders of those responsible; however, Kaplan also questions the role of the intellectuals and academics when they are faced with their testimonies in their research:

like most oral historians, I worry about taking people's testimonies without giving them something in return. For Ayress there is no problem. She tells me her stories as she has told them to other witnesses, to pass them along as a way of creating communities of people committed to achieving social justice (2000: 197)

I had a similar thought when torture appeared in some of the interviewees; indeed, the question regarding relevance makes sense. Is it appropriate and necessary to explain these situations in the development of my project? In two situations the answer was no, it is not necessary and therefore that part of the interview was not incorporated into the analysis. My project is about political activism and not about violence against human right; nevertheless, I

considered it was appropriate to refer to torture in Tamara's story: first, because she mentions the violence that her brothers suffered through because of her political activism; secondly because while it was hard for her to tell the story, she had already faced the trauma with family, in some degree she had already dealt with the pain (although it was necessarily solved); thirdly, because when I asked if she preferred to omit this part of the interview for the purpose of my research, she responded that it wasn't part of her story.

In contrast, in the case of omissions, the suffering and pain weren't dealt with, not every therapeutically. Until the interviews, no accounts had been drawn; surprising my interviews and me. In these two cases, it was clear that this experience weren't a conscious part of the story that the interviewees wanted to tell and therefore couldn't be part of this work

The Production of Meaning

According to Hans-George Gadamer, if one wants to understand the possible meanings of a text, one must be open to hear, observe and perceive the difference from which that text is being enunciated (2004). In any case, it is not about having a neutral attitude, but rather an attitude of openness towards dialogue, from one difference to another difference. In order to be able to perform such interpretative action, it is required to recognize that those differences exist. In the case of this thesis, those differences are constructed from a historic narration that tells that at a given time (before September 1973) an important group of Chileans, as 'imagined community', stopped recognizing other Chileans as part of such community.

Thus, the analysis of the narrations collected for the elaboration of this research is sustained by the necessity of generating spaces, however modest, for the recognition of such differences. This exercise in part implies opening and mobilizing meanings that interviewees, and me as researcher, have been settling as part of the construction of our own identity.

Analyzing Interviews: Matters of Translation and Interpretation

Possibly, the greatest difficulty in undertaking this research was the fact that interviews were in Spanish and that this researcher does not fully master the English language. In reality, regarding this problem there were distinct types and levels of problems. The transcription of the interviews, to then translate them into English was one of these problems. This situation was difficult because in some cases I had to ask for the help of translators, given that the linguistic structure of both idioms is different. Not only is this difference manifest in the structure, but also in the orality, in the way of talking and telling. Then, in some instances the translation required a higher level of knowledge, in both languages. To read and to write in English is a different matter than transforming oral language into something that makes sense to an Anglophone reader. Besides, in the same way English has some variations among countries where it is the official language; Spanish also varies, particularly among Latin American countries, where many colloquial phrases have been taken from indigenous languages.

Another important problem is that many Spanish words have no equivalent in English, and vice versa. Thus, for instance, in Chile the word '*roto*' has multiple meanings. Literally the word means 'ragged' or 'broken', but it can also refer to a poor person, ragged, tattered, from a low-class, and uneducated. However, it can also refer generically to the '*roto Chileno*', symbolically an abstract subject who represents the street man, the low people in their whole dimension, not only poverty but also a cultural dimension, and certain astuteness. Thus, the word denotes a category that is wider than its class; it also implies a cultural dimension.

It occurs, as well, that words literally translated do not always have the same meaning. Thus, for instance, the word '*compañero*' that was used and still is used in Chile to denote somebody from the left-wing (even more during the UP time, when to be a '*compañero*' meant to be part of the project) is not used in the same way in English. Accordingly, in hermeneutical terms the more adequate word in English would be comrade, although this is the way members of the DC call each other internally.

But even though this has been the case, the translation process is a challenge rather than a problem; it is a positive process of enriching. I would describe it, following the argument by Gadamer in *Truth and Method* (2004), as the intrinsic difficulty yet the enrichment of a dialogue. Thus for instance it was very practical for me to use words that have no Spanish equivalent, but that for their valuable significance have been incorporated into the language, such as for instance the word 'agency', which in Spanish many intellectuals are starting to use as '*agencia*', but with the meaning it is used academically in English. Agency is a very useful word to describe social and historical processes in which social actors have played a protagonist role. It is also a word that has a political value as it allows recognition of social action. The same happens with the word 'patronizing', which Spanish can also mean 'treating condescendingly', in the context of feminine struggles has a much deeper significance. Finally, to mention a last example, the word 'empower', which I personally like a lot, because it serves to properly describe how people and social groups, at given times, grow strong and take their own destinies into their hands. Thus, the words I have mentioned here that come from the English language have made it possible for me to name phenomena which lacked of a word in Spanish, or that had no precise word to be described with.

In the sense described so far, translation meant large amounts of work, but also undoubtedly of enrichment, which I think that it may also imply future Anglophone readers. According to Gadamer, translation is thus a fusion of horizons between different foreign meanings. In this sense meanings are not fixed things, and this quality allowed producing, in the process to interpretation -translation, a new language, horizon, and situation where the original meanings are not exactly the same because in the dialogical work of translation they are rearticulated and reappropriated.

In the same sense that translation is established as a dialogue between two languages, the interviews were interpreted by observing dialoguing criteria. To better explain these criteria it is necessary to explain the different levels in which interpretation operates, in the sense, as Gadamer understands it. A

first interpretative movement is given by the narration that interviewees made of their past, that is to say to make sense – through language – out of their own past experiences in relation with political militancy; that experience, in turn, was situated in a particular period of Chilean recent history. In this way, a first interpretation of a recent past, which is both individual and collective at the same time, was established in the elaboration of their narrations.

As these narrations were told to me as interviewer, I intervened in them with questions and comments; which could lead us to talk of a second interpretative moment. Because in the minute in which I intervened in the story of the interviewee I was modifying it to some extent, since while questioning, dialogically, I was providing my own senses, recollections and opinions to the narrations my interviewees were telling me. At the same time, their stories were also conditioning my questions and confronting my own story on the period.

A third interpretative moment is the analysis in which, as a researcher, I did once the narrations were transcribed. Such analysis was based on the critical interpretation of the narrations of the interviewees, which mean that some of the new senses that I interpreted did not necessarily correspond to the sense interviewees wanted to make out of their stories. However, the opposite also occurred, because on many occasions it was surprising for me to listen to the meanings the own interviewees gave to their own experiences, hence changing my own point of view. Thus, and in that sense

Interpretation involves tapping new reservoirs of (potential) meaning hidden from those in other historical moments, including those who lived at the time of its production. In new contexts different aspects of meaning emerge; that which is interpreted and speaks in new ways. (Fay; 144: 1996)

Once I had completed the transcriptions of the interviews I considered each of them as a narrative text susceptible to be interpreted. The strategy of analysis was to select relevant contents provided by the interviewees and to focus on each narrative's content, looking first for similarities in subject and in

argumentation logic, and then focusing on the differences. The similarities suggested the topics for the analytical chapters, on family issues and gender matters. On the other hand, the differences between the interviews permitted me to contrast experiences and to offer a comparative analysis along each of the thematic chapters.

However, each chapter follows a different analytical strategy; the chapter on family is strongly based on a category that I have taken from the interviews contents, a concept which I as a researcher, found repeatedly used and referred to in the interviews, which were directed to a different topic (political activities). When asked to explain their political attachments the majority of the interviewees located themselves in relation with their family's loyalties or breaks. In this way, family issues appeared to be the common background, acting as a nest whenever political stories were told, thus political stories became family stories as well, and hence the necessity of analyzing the family category.

The chapter on gender, on the contrary, is based on an exogenous analytical point of view, where I as researched investigated the contents with the gender outlook. In other words, I applied a gender filter to look at the different subjects that interviewees were mentioning. Of course, gender issues were present in the interviews, but also because I made questions in relation to them. Indeed, since exploring gender issues was part of my previous interests, it was independent of the interviewees' first approach in their narratives. Thus, this chapter is more partial than the others, since my interpretation as a researcher goes beyond my interviewees' own views and concepts.

Transversally, and related to the meanings of politics, this analysis is perhaps the most dialogical; because it is based upon the significance and implication that interviewees gave to political activity as an important part of their lives. In this sense, the analytical strategy related to the understanding and questioning of meanings that the stories had on political affairs. Here too,

there is the intention of establishing a negotiation between everyday life, political personal commitment and the understanding of politics.

It is important to clarify why I chose the strategy of using many long quotations from the interviews. There are three reasons, but I must first explain that they are not to interrupt the quotation rather than to use long parts as a principle. It was a rational and thoughtful decision, based first on the observation that when my interviewees talked to me, they did not interrupt their stories. It was then my intention to respect as much as possible the pulse, the rhythm of the interviews, in which people did not make pauses in their narration. This was particularly so in those painful parts of the story, and when they were telling me about it I just did not want to interrupt. I did not want to do it in the analysis either, which was my second reason. Lastly, after reviewing the interviews to prepare the analysis I considered that it made more sense to review long portions of them, because they construct meanings transversally, that is to say that these meanings appear in various parts as compliments. This led to the conclusion that using short quotations would have introduced an unnecessary risk of misleading the understanding of meanings obtained by examining the interview a bit further.

The criteria to select the quotations to be presented in the main text followed the appreciation of those parts in where the message was clearer regarding the research subject. Interestingly, these were, in general, parts of the interviews of great intensity, emotion, in which the interviewee made an effort to be explicit. It can be said that the parts that made more sense to me were, in general, those to which the interviewee gave special connotation, often emphasized by gestures and voice changes.

Finally, I have to warn that in order to create my own narrative from the analysis of interviews, I have used not only biographical material, but also I have used some photographs. These images have the only purpose of reaffirming or better illustrating what is been told, they do not change substantially the meaning of what has been told.

The Right to Confront Stories: There is not Just One Chilean History

More than thirty-five years have gone by since the coup d'état in Chile, and for some historians such as Sergio Villalobos⁴⁷ it still is too soon to write the history of that period. The historiographical tendency he ascribes to, it is necessary to keep distance in order to be able to objectively elucidate and reconstruct such happenings, without the passions that those facts could still provoke. Thus, the idea would be to let time pass, 'so as to cure all wounds, in order to be able to write a coherent history, a unique story – in other words a 'safe history'.⁴⁸

On the contrary, what this thesis precisely intends is, through the different stories, to connect the present with the past, to confront such passions. In this same logic, and following Gadamer, Brian Fay argued, "for Gadamerians time is an ally not an enemy" (1996:145)⁴⁹, because the process of interpretation is always to give new light and meanings to the past, from a new context. This emphasis is a positional and fluid construction of knowledge that is far more relevant in the Chilean context, where there is much "unfinished business" (Johnson; 1992: 29).

Despite the years that have gone by, there are still strong disputes on what to commemorate, what to remember, disputes on dates that were happy for some and unhappy for others; disputes on who were the victims and who the perpetrators, who the heroes and who the martyrs, what to remember and what to forget (Jelin; 2002). When it is still the case that many people, even new generations, are trying to make sense out of an institutional breakdown that implied the rupture of an already ambivalent Chilean identity; rescuing stories and narrations that conflict hegemonic discourses that do not give an account of the depth of what happened, turning these into history, then

⁴⁷ Sergio Villalobos is perhaps the most important historian in the positivist stream, whose influence is very strong in the teaching of history within the educational system. He has expressed strong opinions on the impossibility of writing history of the recent past, given the temporal proximity of the facts.

⁴⁸ I am applying Richard Johnson's distinction between 'safe stories' and 'risky stories' (1992).

⁴⁹ A similar argument in Johnson, Chambers & Tincknell; 2004.

becomes valuable. It is necessary, in the sense exposed by Gadamer, to confront experiences rather than to confront dogmatisms (2004).

History as a discipline deals with truthful claims, based on individual and collective experiences, so in this sense the knowledge that it produces is always related to politics

Making claims to truth is an active process. It engages established truths and practices of legitimating them, challenging them and pursuing alternatives. All claims to knowledge are subject to competing interpretations, assent from some and dissent from others. There are always dissenting voices pointing to the 'untruthfulness' of particular claims, challenging the conventions themselves and potentially cheering us on. (Johnson, Chambers & Tincknell; 2004: 51)

In this way, to make history implies to make oneself in charge of the truth claims, not by trying to homogenize them into a unique story that is the same for everyone. To impose a version upon the distinct versions, a unique story upon stories; which has been the dominant tendency in Chile, in large part promoted by the State and by the governments of 'la Concertación'. It has also been the case, in the opinion of Loveman and Lira, a tendency in the construction of Chile as nation-state, of imposing reconciliation based upon oblivion rather than truth, forgiveness rather than punishment and impunity rather than justice (2000). This tendency is reaffirmed while pretending to homogenize stories and the history of the period, with no intention of dialog between subjects who constructed one to the others as abominable.

CHAPTER III: POLITICAL MEMORIES, A FAMILY AFFAIR.

The first surprising feature that I faced with my interviewees was the type of response that the majority of them gave to my first question: how did you become involved in politics? It is interesting to observe how the majority of them articulated a genealogical narrative, where family and early memories of infancy became the story's root.

However, this particular feature can be explained through what Maurice Halbwachs had pointed out about family memories. For him part of the process of "being a family", as a basic referential group, is to produce a collective narrative about the past:

No matter how we enter a family – by birth, marriage, or some other way –we find ourselves to be part of a group where our position is determined not [only] by personal feelings but by rules and customs independent of us that existed before us. (Halbwachs, 1992: 55)

Thus, each member will produce and reproduce through memory 'the family past', and vice versa each member will construct her/his own life story in relation to their family memories. From this perspective, Halbwachs' analysis of the collective memory of the family can be very useful to understand my interviewees' memory narratives. Not just because they represent the conjunction where diverse memories are articulated, but also because they explain how this type of narrative is related with an identity building process. It seems that families operate as a basic identitarian reference to construct a narrative about our past - particularly in relation to political membership.

The family as an identitarian reference is also related to the construction of an even bigger identity – that of the nation. According to Amado and Domínguez "to imagine a nation always implied imagining a type of family: this would offer, according to those who forged its design, the idealised version of a fiction that is utopian" (2004: 20). In symbolic terms, the 'imagined community' thinks of itself as a great family; in fact in many Latin-American countries it is common to talk of brothers and compatriots as synonyms.

The foundation of Latin-American nations after the wars of Independence and the processes of decolonisation also provoked an ascending social disciplining in which the family, understood in modern codes, was going to be of vital importance. It was through family, as institution, that values and national feelings reproduced, modelled, and educated new citizens, and indeed, the new nations⁵⁰. At the same time, because the nation is legitimised through the family institution, and given that it orders the social sphere, a gulf was fixed between public space and private space.

Thus the purpose of this present chapter is to explore the memory narrative connections between the family stories and the interviewees' political affiliations. The first part, **Political Affiliations as Inheritance**, deals with the ways in which political attachments are narrated as a kind of family legacy, where the main point is to show how the interviewees create a strong political identity based on something that they received and assumed, more than something that they were looking for. The second part, **Political Affairs, Broken Families**, considers how political affiliations are narrated as internal to the family conflict, where the interviewee sets herself as a dissident, and explains how she has to deal with this 'identitarian contradiction'. Also in this part, I shall explore stories in which the interviewees and their families physically suffered political repression during the military dictatorship; stories in which the family and collective pain join with the political militancy of the narrators.

Political Affiliations as Inheritance

Defining inheritance is a hard task. The word refers to many different things, ranging from material property, traditional practices, to physical body

⁵⁰ In the Chilean case, diverse authors identify that since the middle of the 19th century, accentuating until the beginning of the 20th, there is a tendency on the part of the State and the Catholic Church to promote marriage as the only form of association between members of the opposite sex. And that the systematic persecution that it produces towards other forms of establishing links between men and women is systematically pursued. In agreement with these authors, the social disciplining through marriage with the aim of instituting the 'modern family' is in direct relation with the construction of the state and nation in Chile (Salazar; 2002; Goicovic, 2006; amongst others).

characteristics, including genetic material. However, in general it can be understood as something that “derives or takes from ancestors”, or “derives or take over from predecessors”⁵¹; something that came from the past. In this sense, inheritance is a type of temporal relationship, a particular construction between the past, the present and the future, a construction that for David Lowenthal is related, furthermore, to a ‘worship of the past’, with a necessity of ‘fabricating’ a past that legitimates the present, and that casts ourselves into the future (Lowenthal: 1998: 5- 20).

The argument in Lowenthal is very similar to that in Eric Hobsbawm & Ranger’s book *The Invention of Tradition* (2002). Both show a very peculiar relationship with the past, where inheritance on one hand, and tradition on the other, have the function of establishing a continuity with present times which in turn becomes fundamental in the identity building process. The sense of continuity is given by a present construction, which does not relate to the diachronic temporality; it does relate to the ‘ritualisms’, the symbolisations of events than can even be invented or constantly reshaped. Thus, these symbolisations say more about who invents, constructs or fabricates them, than anything else. Throughout this section, the concept of legacy will be understood as a fundamental element that appears in some of the interviewees’ narratives as a “naturalization of their political affiliation”, in the sense that they create a genealogy of their militancy - a place which was given to them - where they just had to turn up. In these stories the question of “how could it have been any other way?” usually seems to be left implicit. It is left implicit that it is not only their own choice but also a legacy. In some of these narratives we will find “exclusive myths of origin and endurance, endowing [the story tellers] with prestige and purpose” (Lowenthal; 1998: 5- 20).

However, this inheritance will be told differently in each story and it will appear in a specific sense in each interview. This happens because, as I discussed in the

⁵¹ <http://www.askoxford.com/>

methodological chapter, these interviews are narratives in which people construct their own identities, willing and wishing to emphasise and to legitimatise different aspects of what gave life to their own selves. Thus, in this context, we will analyse the cases of Tatiana and Margarita with more attention, the first one being a militant of the Communist Party since she can remember and up until now, and the latter being a rightwing woman and a faithful Pinochet supporter. In both cases their political life stories opened with a strong reference to their ancestors' legacy and in a way that shows us that their life stories are part of other stories which took place before they were even born, and which they feel they have had to continue and reshape.

'This Little Girl Will Be My Seed'

Tatiana is a 40 year old woman and is a member of the 'comité central' (central committee) of the Communist Party; she spends most of her free time taking part in the party's activities. Today she works in a private company which allows her to be in a 'good economic position' or at least a better position than she used to be in because as she defines her past background it corresponds to a working class person. She has teenage sons and she is divorced.

How did you get involved in political activities?

Well, I come from a family...as I was telling you... communist... 'pampinos' communists [from the northern Chilean plains] ... communist father, communist uncles ...In the UP (Popular Unity coalition in Allende's times) I was a member of the 'Jota' (the communist party youth section)...nobody in the family asked you what you wanted to do...Especially my father, he used to say 'little daughter you have a meeting this Saturday', then you were inside of the party's base ... that's all. But also, it was not a question to which you could say 'no, I don't want to go'...We lived in a party property, we used to go to the party's celebrations...We were always protecting my mother...the life of my mother was centred around the party...for her it was centred around the party from 14 years old.

Were they party leaders?

No, they weren't. But they were militants...militants from when they were children. My father says that when they used to live in "la pampa" my grandfather was a party leader and of course he was always fired... So

my father and my grandmother were those who sustained the house...My grandma made "gallitos" (little cookies, traditional handmade sweets for children, they do not exist anymore). Do you remember them?

Yes, of course, from the school break time...

Tatiana's narration shows us how her strong communist identity is woven with her family history and identity; a family who, as we will see, she is deeply attached to. Her political story is part of her ancestors' story, and vice versa. She was born in the third generation of a communist family, meaning that their grandparents had participated in the foundation of the party itself. Thus, on one hand, her story has this family historical background (the communist party's story) and on the other, it is also part of this unique group of people's memories that give cohesion and identity to what Tatiana calls 'my family'. In Halbwachs' words, Tatiana's family "recollections in fact develop as in so many different soils, in the consciousness of various members of the domestic group" (Halbwachs: 1992, 54), where Tatiana is one of them.

Thus, it happened that Tatiana was born into a communist family, in a group in which a strong part of its identity comes from being communist - so it must become her identity since she is a member of this particular domestic group. In this sense, in her narration, to be a communist becomes a type of inheritance, a practice, a way to be, transmitted to her by her family and its tradition. However, despite this Tatiana said that she did not have a choice because "it was not a question to which you could say no, I don't want to go" - given that her father had 'informed' her when she had had her first meeting with the basis of the party. Her story is also an attempt at legitimatising her parents' decisions, and of showing how it would also become her own choice.

Well, my grandma made 'gallitos' and my father worked on a farm, in the Pampa region. He cleaned farms and he took their food leftovers to our house...then what they always passed on to us...it was...not the negative side of that, not the hungry side, the misery side; on the contrary, they passed on to us the entertaining things that happened. For example, when my father was a child he didn't understand why a guy who came from outside gave him a shoeshine box, just because he was the

comrade's Rojas son... And in the shoeshine box people put 'stuff', and so my father went to one office to another polishing shoes, and people went taking stuff out and putting stuff in. My father always used to tell this story in a very vivid way. Like when he told us about the elderly solidarity towards my grandfather when he was fired...My mother's family was not militant, except her grandfather who raised her and who died when she was fourteen. She grew up listening to her grandfather saying 'this little girl will be my seed'. He went with her everywhere, with this very beautiful little girl, very elegant ..., and then when her grandfather died she went searching for a party office ...to 'La Legua'⁵²...My mother was a little girl of silk gloves. And she arrived to 'La Legua' in hat and silk gloves...wonderful, beautiful...she always told these things as if it was a...a... a life gain, it was not a complicated life... I feel that all of her teaching was a lesson of life. When someone asks my mother [...]

It is amazing to observe how Tatiana knows part of the life story of her parents and how she reproduces it as part of her own; in the narration she becomes a kind of omniscient narrator who tells us anecdotes that were transmitted to her and her sisters by her parents. We can appreciate how her life memory is woven with a group memory, in this case with her family's memory, how they merge, amalgamate. Her and her parent's stories become entwined. As Halbwachs points out

Each family has its proper mentality, its memories which it alone commemorates, and its secrets that are revealed only to its members. [...] They are at the same time models, examples, and elements of teaching. They express the general attitude of the group; they not only reproduce its history but also define its nature and its qualities and weaknesses. (Halbwachs: 1992, 59).

Let us consider again the anecdote of the bootblack, as this constitutes an example of how a story turns into a model, expressing the general attitude of the group, which becomes an experience of life, lived without further questioning, resulting in a common life practice. Tatiana's father became an active communist militant almost without knowing when he was a child; the bootblack that someone gave to him was actually the secret means of transport of letters and documents between the communist party members. Tatiana says that her dad used to tell this story in "a very vivid way", it seems that this anecdote

⁵² A working class area in Santiago.

represents, allegorically, how in her family becoming a communist is a practice of everyday life, where the new members are not asked whether or not they want to become militants - because in part this is almost the same as asking whether or not they want to become members of the family. In this sense, Tatiana's identity, her feelings of belonging to her family and her militancy are constructed as a complex web in her narrative. Thus, when she refers to the "very vivid way" she exposes the manner in which she remembers part of her father's history, the mode in which her father is kept alive in her life; but also the way in which she constructs herself as a communist over time. She is a communist today, so it was since she remembers and even before that, because her parents were so, and so she hopes it will continue to be after her death, through the militancy of one of her sons.

Tatiana's construction of her mother's history also emphasises her communist legacy, the sentence "she grew up listening to her grandfather saying 'this little girl will be my seed'" with which her great grandfather marked her mother, also became Tatiana's mark. The little girl grew up and had seven children, four girls, and three sons, seven communist kids; Tatiana was one of the youngest. Thus, her great grandfather's seed is still alive because of her and one of her two sons who will be the fourth generation of a family with a long history of militancy which stands as an important heritage, and which Tatiana and her son have opted to incorporate into their lives through their militancy.

It is also very interesting to consider how she narrates her mother's story. During the interview, the tone of her voice softened; the moment turned a tendered scene and she describe her mother as 'beautiful' and 'elegant', usually very 'feminine' qualities. It is important to clarify here that despite there being a chapter where gender issues are going to be analysed, it is impossible to maintain these categories completely isolated from one and other, especially because - as we will see later, to a certain extent - inheritance is also reshaped, through gender issues in the case of Tatiana.

It is crucial to consider the gender category in this present analysis about family because, as Butler points out, it is not only a matter of juxtaposition of categories such as for instance gender, class and family, but instead to search the places where one category becomes constitutive with the others (Butler:1993). We can illustrate this point through Tatiana's words

When someone asks my mother why she became a communist, she says that it was because she believed in a better life, where children were going to be happy...things related to everyday life...nothing about Marxism...or the high academy, nothing of that. And we believed her... When someone asked us why we didn't attend religious classes...we said that it was because we believed that God didn't exist...and because my mother says so. And never in her life did my mother touch a hair on us, and never permitted that someone touched us. We were not ill-treated children, nothing like that; I mean we believed her not because we were scared of her. We respected her... my mother just looked at us once and we left the dining-room, because children didn't eat with adults... but it was a good life... I think that my mother was like something mystical, and my father kept the order, he looked after us... he went out with us on Sundays... he brought us with him to sell "El Siglo" newspaper [the communist party weekly paper]...we went to all the meetings, marches, we knew all songs... it was a lot of magic... I used to live beautifully.

Thus, Tatiana constructs the maternity of her mother in a web with her mother's militancy. Tatiana's mother is a 'good one' because she is also communist, because 'she believed in a better life, where children were going to be happy...' It can be argued that nobody needs to be communist to say a sentence like that; but it is clear that in her narrative Tatiana wants to point out that she does not have just any sort of mother, she has a communist one. And this is a mother who they respect; they believe that what she says is true just because "she says so", a mother who "never in her life touched a hair on us", a mother who was "like something mystical". However, the difference that she establishes between the mother who did the "mystical" and the father who brought the "order" is remarkable; the distinction places tension on some of the common sense beliefs, and in Tatiana's narrative. For example, it is usual to associate the control of children's behaviour at home, the timetable to eat, to sleep, to play and so on with mothers' duties; actually, Tatiana says "mother just looked at us

once and...” they knew what to do, apparently the mother here also “kept” a lot of order, nevertheless Tatiana assigns this role to her father, a dad who “looked after” his children.

I want to propose that this ‘mystical’ element associated with the mother can be a very good metaphor of female political participation in the Chilean context. Female political participation in Chile, as in most Latin American countries, has been associated to maternity (Alvarez, 1990; Guzmán, 1994, Craske, 1999; Taylor, 1997; among others) and emotional behaviour, with “things related to everyday life...nothing about Marxism...or the high academy, nothing of that”.

In Tatiana’s initial narration, the genealogy of her militancy was constructed as inheritance, and hence naturalised and largely unquestioned. However, as we will see, more recently her militancy becomes conflictive. Two years ago she was elected as a member of the ‘Comité Central’ (Central Committee) but now she is resigning from this committee, in part because she has become more and more involved in gender issues since she decided to make her recent lesbian identity public, and she feels that the other members of the ‘Committee’ do not consider this kind of subject as being important (this subject will be analysed in a later chapter). But besides her current conflict in the party, she does not feel that she came into contradiction, in part because she places her communist identity on her family, and particularly on her mother, thus in her words “I’m in this thing because of my mother, nobody convinced me ... not Marx, not Engels, I knew about them later...”; as she explains later on in the interview “this party is also mine” it is not a matter of resigning from the party, it is to construct a new front inside of it, from where to raise a discussion about gender and sexuality, but without forgetting the communist view, because, in her words “...Any view that I give to anything, even to the butterflies, I look at them from my communist political posture”. To her, after all, “the party is sacred”, it is so for my family, so we stand for it, so it is at least that way for an important number of Chileans.

'The Birthplace Goes Inside You'

A completely different case is Margarita's and her story and the meaning that she gives to her ancestors' legacy. Here the relationships between inheritance, political affiliation, and family are established through a 'patronymic mark'. In her book, *Bodies that Matter*, Judith Butler approaches the question of naming as a "site of identification's dynamics" (Butler, 2002: 208), where the name's function is the identity affirmation of the subject over time; from one generation to the other, through names and surnames.

In accordance with María Rosaria Stabili's investigation - where she gathers the testimonials of five women belonging to renowned families of the Chilean aristocracy - one of the most important elements through which the elite recognises its members is the surname. This illustrious mark synthesizes diverse elements through which it is possible, for example, to discover the "type of family, its structure, the relations, the values that the family manifest through the political, economic and social behaviour of its members" (2003: 106), and even the geographical place of origin. All these elements would permit the members of the elite to recognise each other and discard those subjects that have no lineage. So, according to the author, "the surname game" (2003:141) in the family histories that she collects is also related to the construction of the Chilean state because

By considering themselves 'architects' and 'builders' of the country, it makes the members of these families feel that they are above all the possible ideological 'gentlemen and patron' discussions, 'responsible' for the destiny of the nation, so, the said sentiment is a carrier of many implications of political behaviour and decisions (Stabili; 2003: 157)

In a far more prudent and illustrated tone, the women interviewed by Stabili in some way confirm Margarita's testimony with respect to the elite's strategy of conserving themselves as a watertight group, that is to say, the importance of family networks, the genealogies of prestigious surnames and with a past that is associated with building of the nation. In these stories, family alliances are produced through marriage and the family transcends the nuclear group; they

are ties of extended families where for example marriage between cousins is quite frequent. The author characterises this social sector as heavily inbred, except when new rich and successful subjects appear and even though they do not have the surname they can come to form part of the group through a good alliance. The alliance is necessary because despite the wealth or the prestige, the surname encapsulates a historic dimension that is essential in bestowing an elite class identity because for the interviewed women, like Margarita, their respective families' histories are joined with the history of the nation.

Margarita is in her sixties, she defines herself as 'right-wing' and more strongly as a life-long supporter of General Pinochet ". She is divorced and has two daughters and a son; she does not visit her children often because two of them live outside of Chile, and the other lives outside of Santiago. She lives on her own and describes herself as a 'lonely woman'. Let us see how in her narration she places the genealogy of her political attachments:

Where did your affiliations with right-wing ideas come from?

I've always been this way. I was born listening and seeing...and in contact with stories from the right-wing...my grandfather was a republican senator, Joaquín Díaz Garcés. Not the writer. From my father's family, I come from the Montt family...from the gentlemen that were presidents, who were not too right-wing, they were conservatives... I will always be from the right-wing side and I am never going to change that... I will tell you a thing... The birthplace is inside you...I can use ordinary jeans but I'm always going to be me, anyway. I go to a restaurant and the waitresses are going to look at me...It's a genetic thing, I cannot be unnoticed. You know that there are a lot of people who are only appearances...but talking in historical terms, they do not have the lineage. You are born with it. I am not saying that I come from the aristocracy, I say that I came from the 'stalecracy' [*a pun, mix between stale and aristocracy*], because it is very stale, in these gatherings, ... it shouldn't be like this..., and the worst thing is that I have it from both sides, from my mother's side and from my father's side, from my father's side there are people who have been in history...the three Montt presidents...on my mother's side are the Villagras, from the conqueror Francisco Villagra, who arrived in Concepción [city in the south of Chile]... so... the biggest source of pride that I have from the Montt side is that the Montts didn't arrive with the conqueror Pedro de Valdivia, as with my ex-husband's family...Fuenzalida, all of them were bandits...the Montt family

wasn't, they came from a family of chemist's in a small village in Spain, they first arrived in Perú.

Margarita temporarily locates her political attachments 'forever', a 'forever' which is given by her birthplace. And which in turn can be recognized as such in her surnames, which were given to her by her parents; Montt, from her father's side, and Villagra from her mother's side. As constituting marks, they are part of Margarita's self, and her political definitions are rooted in these marks; consequently she can passionately affirm that "I will always be from the right-wing side and I am never going to change that...", because she cannot change her surname. The naturalization turns out to be stronger since Montt and Villagra are also signifiers materialized in flesh and bonds because "It's a genetic thing", and also an objective quality because she "cannot be unnoticed" even if she is using "ordinary jeans" since it is not "only appearance", it is a 'lineage' matter. Of course it is not up to her to change something such as her lineage, even given the fact that she finds, ambivalently, this environment to be "very stale in these gatherings... it shouldn't be like this" but unfortunately, whether she likes it or not, she says that she "came from aristocracy".

It is a curiosity that over the last four years several historical novels and research work⁵³ about particular Chilean families have been published. One of them, published in 2005, is Hernan Millas' book *La Sagrada Familia* (The Sacred Family) that provides an historical account of the top ten Chilean families - according to a ranking based on what the author considers to be "more powerful" and with "more influences"; it was one of the best seller books during the same year. Although the author is an important journalist and the book is written in a more colloquial language than the academic one, it made the popularity of the subject apparent.

⁵³ We can find several publications, ranging from the most recently historical research book *Las Familias Fundadoras de Chile*, published in 3 volumes, to historical novels as for instance *Cara y Sello de una Dinastía* by Monica Echeverria Yáñez 2005, or *Julieta, una Historia de Familia* by Francisca Lyon Valverde 2005.

Millas' text is organized into chapters with titles as for example *The Piñeras, more than a Family, a Tribe*, where each family is denoted with the patronymic mark, the father's surname. The top ten names included are Alessandri, Amunátegui, Edwards, Errázuriz, Gumucio, Matte, Montt, Piñera and Yarur. As can be noticed, Margarita's father's name is on the list; in this sense the legacy expressed in her surname is part of a more extended narrative, the story of the Chilean elite.

Another publication that we have to mention is *Familias Fundadoras de Chile* (Founding Families of Chile). This historical research work, presented in three massive volumes - the first one published in 1992 and the other two, in 2000 and 2003 - is a record of the first colonizing families who arrived from Spain and settled down in different parts of the territory that would become Chile. Again, in the long list of names we can find Margarita's mother's surname as she well knows "from my mother's side are the Villagras, from the conquer Francisco de Villagra, who arrived in Concepción". Whether Margarita is or is not Francisco de Villagra's descendent is not important because "we exalt heritage not because it is true but because it ought to be" (Lowenthal: 1998: 5- 20).

Thus, when she says "from my father's side are people who have been in history [...] the three Montt presidents...", also through her mother's side "from the conqueror Francisco Villagra", she is constructing her family position as a dominant one. Therefore, in her narrative, she is fabricating an identity web that includes her class condition represented in presidents and conquerors, meaning a privileged class and is expressed in her political affections. From this place the authoritarian Pinochet figure makes sense in her narration because, as we will see, the power performance is a quality that she especially values in the political arena.

However, Margarita knows that her surname, which she is very proud of, is also a trap. As she expresses, in a kind of ironic way, all these 'things' are related with aristocratic lineage, so they are in some way 'stale'. Effectively, there is

ambivalence in her story that is related to the fact that she is a divorced woman and that therefore she has not carried out her task of forming and maintaining a family alliance that is appropriate for a woman of the elite. First she chose an inadequate husband and then separated. So, Margarita suggests that her divorce is in part due to her bad choice because her ex-husband came from the Fuenzalida family: “all of them bandits who arrived with Pedro de Valdivia”, which means that he does not have her same lineage, that he never was from the aristocracy.

But also because - as Butler points out - this patronymic line can only be perpetuated through a ritual transaction of women (2002: 221): through marriage, a family alliance. Unfortunately when Margarita decides to divorce, she ends up alone, alone with her surname, without forming any alliance that could perpetuate or transmit her lineage. Thus, her surname is not enough because she did not get married again; Margarita knows this well and, consequently, she is even ironic about it:

Because the only thing that we have...my family... the desire of life... and I... my surname that I have tried to sell but I have not been able to.

Why do you say that?

Because it is not useful at all, it doesn't give me money. I told my mother once I would sell my surname...

It is an ironic joke; it is the place where the contradiction is shown; yes, her surname is the only thing that she has, but it is in her case a mark that not only places her as an aristocratic woman, but also as a woman that failed in her duty of maintaining the family united and of keeping her legacy alive through a correct and successful alliance. That is why her testimonial – different to the elite women that Stabili chose – is more bitter and much ambivalent. It is because the same element that demonstrates her to be a woman of the elite, excludes her from the same space in a certain sense. On divorcing, Margarita is not capable of adequately maintaining herself in the normal social life of the elite women for whom the concern of the family is fundamental.

Another interesting aspect in Margarita's testimonial is about the character and the form in which political power should be exercised. Here her identity as a woman of the elite also manifests itself and appears as a contradiction with her apparent feminist pretensions.

What do you think about the image of right-wing women, of being well educated and conservative?

I am a feminist...yes, I am feminist, that is to say...I am...I am a woman, but to me the feminists...I don't like them because they are overconfident. What do we want a woman president for? Let's continue with men, the image of a good-looking guy is nice. I tell you, I can't stand President Lagos, but it's nice to see him well dressed, with an Armani, a nice looking shirt...

Which bothers you about President Bachelet⁵⁴, the fact that she is from the left-wing or that she's a woman?

That she is left-wing and that she is a woman. I don't know...they both bother me.

OK, but that is because of her ideas, not because she's a woman.

Because of her ideas I see her as a double problem. I don't see her yelling at a state secretary. I think they'll do whatever they want under her.

That scares you?

That scares me. Lagos [the previous president] surrounded himself with good and bad people, but when he put his foot down, people listened.

Margarita finds it difficult to conceive that a woman is exercising political power. The difference that she establishes between President Michel Bachelet and her predecessor, President Ricardo Lagos is very strong - even though they are both from the same political party. Margarita "can not see" Bachelet "shouting at a state secretary", and she also thinks that "they are going to control her", completely different from Lagos who "when he put his foot down, people listened". The gender issue is obvious here: Bachelet is a woman and as such, in Margarita's view, she does not know how to exercise power correctly as for example "yelling at" people or "putting her foot down". Thus, it is also important

⁵⁴ President of Chile between 2006 until 2009 (a woman).

to consider the kind of gestures that she sees as appropriate ways to exercise power, gestures that at least can be considered to be authoritarian such as “shouting and slamming one’s fist on a ⁵⁵table”. In this sense, Pinochet’s figure appears to be someone who knew how to exercise power correctly; he knew how to keep order. And in Margarita’s view, if Ricardo Lagos⁵⁶ has something that she could consider as positive, it is his controlling way of exercising the power.

The relationship between the patronymic mark, the ways to exercise the power, and Ricardo Lagos’ figure do not only appear attractive in Margarita’s narrative, it is also remarkable how José, a militant of the communist party, describes it

There is something in the idiosyncrasy of the Chilean, in the cosmic vision of the Chilean, which makes it like this: You say ‘here in this country people are Frei Ruiz-Tagle, Aylwin Azócar, he is Allende Gossens, he is Frei Montalva, but here there is not Lagos Escobar’, and when a Lagos Escobar arrives you say ‘ah, this guy is Lagos Escobar, he is not like us, he is arrogant, powerful, he studied in the United States’, and immediately you put him in another position, and not the same as yours anymore. You get emotional when he says that he is a former student of the National Institute⁵⁷, I am a son of the Chilean middle class, son of a teacher... bloody awful, you cry... but when he is in power you say, ‘No, this guy cannot be equal to me because of how he bosses everyone about’.

Thus, being bossy is an ability that not only Margarita points to as an aristocratic characteristic, but José too. Ricardo Lagos looks like a middle class man; he studied in the most important state school in Santiago but “he is not like us”, he cannot be like us because he knows how to be authoritarian, he knows how to

⁵⁵ Translation note, “putting one’s foot down” is often associated with slamming one’s hand on a table in Chilean Spanish. A figurative and literal expression used to gain control of a situation.

⁵⁶ Since democracy arrived, Ricardo Lagos has perhaps been the most “charismatic” president, in part because of his authoritarian and confrontational personality. It is worth mentioning that it was Lagos who appeared on TV, during the last years of the military government, pointing at the cameras addressing Pinochet, alive in front of the cameras. This episode -with its great impact on public opinion- practically converted him into a national hero for a time.

⁵⁷ A state school for boys, and one of the most prestigious educational institutions in the country. Many Chilean presidents have attended this school, as in the case of Ricardo Lagos Escobar. Historically, it’s an institution that represents the Republican spirit since it was created in 1813 during the process of Independence. Culturally, it also represents the aspirations and values of the middle classes.

be bossy. And with this logic, this attribute is related to some surnames, meaning some Chilean families.

Another important aspect that connects Margarita's political posture with legacy is related to having suffered and witnessed the expropriation of her grandparent's estate during the UP.

They expropriated them from your family?

Yes, and in the Eduardo Frei era, Bernardo Leyton being my godfather. They didn't expropriate Bernardo Leyton's estate, but my family's, yes. When the first agricultural reform law came out, one of the first estates that they expropriated was ours, Bernardo Leyton being minister of the interior, and being my godfather, because he almost married my mother. How horrible, it would have turned out.

And do you remember what happened?

Totally! Absolutely! They threw my uncle out with just his suitcase, nothing else... the house was going to be mine by inheritance... they threw us out, I only took the saddle... the church's chapel was left... and my clothes were left behind, everything... it all stayed there. They didn't do anything good with the things, unfortunately. The house was disgusting, the cowboys went around breaking everything with their spurs... they threw out the unnecessary things... it started to produce a hatred... being that they had won all the beetroot IANSA prizes from those lands, they were the best beetroot and milk products. They didn't touch the bad estates, only the good ones.

Who was the expropriated land given to?

To the tenants! But ask what they did with the lands. Nothing! Absolutely nothing! They are wasted. Nowadays I feel bad for the old people, seeing the old people crying... you didn't see them. I lived it, I saw them...crying, with suitcases...old people...70 or 80 years old...and they all died here, cast aside like common people. It was violent. And I ended up ruined, ha-ha (laughing). Yes, because I couldn't recover anything. But it doesn't matter, it's very little...I would have given the house away, I don't know. But... it was all for nothing. If someone takes something from you by force, it's to give it to somebody who really needs it, and who is going to work it, and who is going to produce from it, not to leave the lands cast aside, or the houses cast aside... and that is real, there are many cases... afterwards they were gotten back or bought, cleanly or not, I don't know. But in that era it was all cast aside, all wasted, nobody did anything...

The Agricultural Reform as a historical event is interlaced with the process of change in the ways of land tenancy – in practically all of the Latin-American countries. Possibly the most representative example of these processes is the Cuban Revolution. In Chile, this process started in 1962 with the promulgation of Law Number 15.020 that permitted the buying of large estates that were considered to be of poor production. The idea of the law was to slowly modernise the economic and social structure of the countryside, but without radically modifying the large estate as a way of production, or as a social and cultural order. Nevertheless, under the Christian Democrat government – led by Eduardo Frei Montalva (1964-1970) – the reform was deepened in a much more radical way, augmenting and enabling the expropriation processes. But also along with that the farmers' participation and unionisation was provoked by the government – something which the elite sectors related to agriculture had systematically resisted because they considered it a form of “communist penetration in the countryside” (Correa, Figueroa, others 2001: 222). During the UP government, the Agricultural Reform constituted one of the major focuses of conflict between the new government and the right. The limitations on the size of estates increased, expropriations accelerated, even going outside the boundaries of the law. This last situation was transformed into real takeovers of patron houses by peasants, generating violent situations that the elite had not come up against up until this time. For the powerful social actors, the Agricultural Reform meant the destruction of their form of existence, in a certain sense.

According to the same author, María Rosaria Stabili, the land constituted another articulate element of the identity of the elite families. Here the lands demonstrate a lifestyle concerned with the upkeep and reproduction of traditions – much more so than a rational way of sustenance. In that way, María Isabel Hurtado Ruiz-Tagle, one of Stabili's interviewees expresses

In some place, but I don't remember where anymore, I have read that the soul of Chile is the land, and that the cowboy is, in a certain way, our

symbol of national identity. If this is true, I think that the Hurtado family, my father and his ancestors, believing one hundred per cent in agriculture, working and creating various institutions related to the sector have made a great contribution to the formation of the 'soul of Chile' (...) because the money and the earnings certainly haven't been our main concern (1996).

In this sense, the agricultural reform - and the governments that promoted these radical social transformation processes - constituted great threats to the elite, not only for their economic subsistence but also for them as historical subjects – the assumed protagonists of the country's construction. For this reason, the historian Alfredo Jocelyn-Holt asserts that the right-wing support for the coup d'état can only be understood as a last, desperate act of survival. He affirms that, historically, the right had been quite anti-military and secular, but seeing themselves lacking in electoral support and impotent against the reforms they became "fascist and hysterical" (*The Clinic*, 14 September 2008)⁵⁸.

Nevertheless, it is possible to argue that the leading group to which the previously mentioned author refers was always authoritarian and paternalist. They avoided and repressed any attempt at peasant organisation by any means. It is evident that inside the elite there were more liberal postures than others, but at the time of the coup, class interests came before political differences. That is why for Margarita, Pinochet is much more than a simple 'soldier' at the service of the elite; he is the re-founder of the nation, the protector of her privileges and her status as a woman who belongs to the 'stale' aristocracy. This does not stop being paradoxical because under the dictatorship, the system of large estates does not re-establish itself. The country must modernise itself and the elite have to understand this. The military can assure this sector of their privileges, assure them that neither the 'common people' nor the communists are going to bother them; but the elite must also transform and modernise themselves in a certain sense.

⁵⁸ A weekly newspaper.

Margarita does not complain about not getting her inheritance back because in a certain sense she knows that she cannot get back what is lost. It is not only about getting back the land but also a type of life that was unsustainable. In this context, she only has her aristocratic surname left and although it is 'stale' it allows her to feel privileged and part of a glorious past. This may explain her strong emotional fervour for Pinochet; because, it is one thing to have to accept transformations and modernise, but it is a very different other thing to allow 'other subjects' to take over a place that 'historically' belongs to people of 'her class'. Besides, for Margarita the UP clearly represents those who took something away that belonged to her by tradition; and also because they clearly do not know how to manage or administrate, once they took over, in her words, it 'was all cast aside, all wasted, nobody did anything...'. In this sense her resentment is not so much against the peasants but against members of the Christian Democracy and of course the UP.

Both Tatiana and Margarita describe their political participation in terms of legacy, but nevertheless there are differences. For the former, legacy is related to a received training, to an education where the everyday example of her grandfather and his parents – principally her mother – is converted into a lifestyle and a form of militancy. For the latter, legacy is more of the naturalised mythical identity of her upper class female condition. Even though family is important, that importance is rooted in the belonging to a social sector that is considered to be the creator of the nation, the creator of the country and that carries 'original' Chilean values in its blood; a legacy that is transmitted by blood relation, by surnames, and by its old relationship with the rural world.

Political Affairs, Broken Families

However, the interviewee's story wasn't always described exactly as inheritance; on the contrary, some were constructed through internal and very severe family conflicts. Here, I will analyse basically a story marked by the year 1973, in which families were literally divided into those in favour of the coup and those against it, with Allende or with the military, left-wing or right-wing, communist or 'momios'⁵⁹. Here the story describes how political identities divided families. This narrative also provides very similar discourses about Chile as a family, as a country, a nation that suffers an internal tear between 1970 and 1973.

As we have already explained, daily life in the decade before the coup was characterised by increasing social and political participation. Ample and diverse population sectors that historically had been kept aside from the political scene, mainly countryside people, gained space. Citizenship participation was boosted not only through political militancy but also due to the augmentation of the electoral base, the increase in the number and intensity of activity in labour unions and organisations, and in daily aspects of community life. Public spaces and particularly mass communication media⁶⁰ were used and saturated with political confrontations and electoral propaganda. Political discussion on the opposing national projects of the decade, which presidential and parliamentary elections in the 60's were about, took place in daily conversations even in private instances.

According to the historian Julio Pinto, the political parties and sectors related to the left-wing from the 30's, which professed themselves as pro-revolution, had respected constitutional norms and "the rules of the political game" (2005: 10). However, this tendency would change in the 60's, because of the influence of the Cuban revolution and "the electoral rise of the left-wing" (2005: 10; Arrate &

⁵⁹ It come from 'mummies', and refers to right-wing people or conservatives

⁶⁰ During the 60's, television arrives to Chilean homes. And as mass communication medium, it becomes one of the more influential for public opinion, and therefore it is not aside from the political debate, but rather it joins what press and radio stations had been previously developing.

Rojas 2003: 333), which for the first time could see the possibility of beginning a revolutionary process. The radicalisation of ample left-wing sectors observed the triumph of the armed countryside struggle in Cuba as a possibility to be emulated in their countries, spread throughout Latin America.

Arrate and Rojas described changes and social mobilisations in Chile, in the 60's, in the following terms:

Social change turns vertiginous. Young people and student mobilisations, the intensifying of activities by political parties, and the rise of the new 'revolutionary groups, the development of press and communication media, priests' and nuns' manifestations, countryside effervescence, these are all expressions of the amplification of the process of change experienced by Chilean society for years. The energy of this social dynamic involved actors into a whirlpool, which results turned to be difficult to foresee or to calculate by means of the traditional political rationale (2003: 380).

In this sense, the changes that were taking place were totally overwhelming for the right-wing, and as never before in national history, it can be said without exaggeration, that the terror of a possible revolution took hold. According to Loveman and Lira, "for the right-wing and part of the middle class [the triumph of the UP] was an earthquake. Financial panic took place and there was a massive withdrawal of capitals" (2000: 323). In this sense, the Chilean 'imagined community' was slowly turning into a "country of enemies" (Loveman & Lira 2000: 325), enemies who on many occasions shared, besides nationality, the same family nucleus.

In addition, the class confrontation that culminates in the coup d'état affected Chilean society in its totality, fracturing the 'national community' into two antagonistic sides. Militarised state violence against the civilised state did not only cause suffering against particular subjects but also damages, at an intermediate level, to families that composed the society. Thus, the damage we want to refer to, in this section, is related to the trauma, as a collective experience, where the provoked suffering and/or the provoked death of one or

more members of a family group unleashed great disturbances to every member, and also to family dynamics.

In this part I will analyse three different stories. One **'What was a joke on Sunday, became sinister on Monday'**, considers the case of Verónica, an activist from the Socialist Party. Today, in her 60's, she is the only person that I interview who has lived for a long time in the exile, and has never gone back to Chile. There are many Chileans currently in her situation, around the world, yet this is the only interview that I made outside of Chile, in the UK, where she has lived since 1976. The second, **The Family as a Body: Feeling Pain Collectively**, examines Tamara's story, a PC militant whose family suffered repression in several ways: disappearance, exile and torture. Finally, in **Militancy and 'Overcoming the Pain Together'** I will analyse Soledad's case. She was a PC militant, whose family suffered the execution of one of its members – one of her younger brothers.

'What Was a Joke on Sunday, Became Sinister on Monday'

At the time of the elections of 1970 Verónica was in her early twenties. She was both witness and actor of the political effervescence of the time. A member of a well-off family from the North of the country, the different political options of the members in their family group marked her personal history up to the present. Before September 1973, she was a lecturer in literature, and a member of the socialist party, just as her revolutionary working-class boyfriend. Actually, as she explained to me, he motivated her to become an activist. On September 11, he was arrested and Verónica did everything she could in order to find him and to liberate him. During three years he was in prison, all during this time she looked after him, trying to liberate him, even obtaining permission to marry him while in prison. In 1976, in accordance with her narration, she got access to some influential people, and he was soon after out of prison. They went to live in exile, to England. She has never been back to Chile

And you met your husband in the north...

In Arica, he was from Antofagasta...my husband was a fiery socialist, a fiery revolutionary...the man was interesting and he took me along this road...and that's how he ended up in prison and I had to come with him...in '76 I got him out of prison, I got him out of prison because...I was very innocent, very naïve, what you call naïve, because I went to Diego Portales to speak to the soldiers...I didn't know the danger I was in...but all the same I managed it...I got him out, through friends here, friends over there...and people that have connections here and there...and we came directly to England....

Verónica met her husband at the Universidad de Antofagasta; he was not only a committed socialist militant but also came from a working class family, while Verónica came from a well-off family of the region, was well travelled, well educated and fluent in English. Her family never approved this relationship, not only for the class difference but also because her activism in the Socialist Party was a result of it. In her narration, 'he', today her ex-husband, is a very important figure throughout her story. In some way she articulates her arguments in relation to what happened to him.

Did you try to return?

I have never wanted to return...I have never wanted to come back. Do you know why I never wanted to come back? I am going to tell you sincerely...because when you lose your friends, your family and your connections...why are you going to return? I lost everything, everything...I don't associate with the Chileans here either, I have moved on, I have left the nucleus of Chileans, I got out completely, I got out. And I got out when I got divorced more than anything, because when I got divorced I said, "my mission with Chile is over", I totally ended it. Chile disappeared for me when I divorced; it was a question of survival... to go back to Chileans, to Human Rights. I was with Chileans again a little bit when Pinochet was under arrest here, I went along once but no...I've totally moved away from Chileans...

In spite of the fact that Verónica still identifies with the left-wing, in reality her militancy ended when she left the country and when she divorced. Her story is complex, as she tells it with no chronological order and mixing public and private spheres more than usually.

In the opinion of the psychologist Isabel Piper (in Lira & Morales; 2005) many people who lived the coup d'état as a traumatic event, have constructed their lives around this event. As there is no cure, what this author calls 'the rhetoric of the mark' settles and turns itself into the starting event that articulates the present. In other words, people tell and articulate the sense of their lives around that unique traumatic fact. Although the coup radically changed the lives of most Chileans, not all of them converted it into fundamental argument of their present lives. It seems that this occurs, mainly, to all whom did not have the opportunity to repair the trauma. Accordingly, Verónica's story gets close to this description.

For her, life was beautiful before the coup, and then became a nightmare, not only because of the fact the social and political project she ascribed to is beaten, but because her personal project is demolished too. During the interview, she mentioned, "the terrible things they did" to her former husband, suggesting that he was tortured, but at the same time she insisted she did not want to talk about that.

Verónica tried very hard to rescue the 'love of her life' and she was successful. We may assume that, given her socially privileged position, some appropriate contacts, besides her constancy and strength, helped her to succeed in her objective. She achieves what she intended, eventually to leave Chile with her husband. However, insertion into the new country is difficult; he comes with damage, does not speak the language and steps back. She soon finds a job and assumes the pain of her husband, but without naming it. At some point in the interview she speaks of 'Chilean men' in general, yet the situation is very similar to what she experienced within her couple

Chilean man are as 'pollerudo'⁶¹ as can be; my husband got here and lost his mother, and didn't know what to do without her, because here Chilean woman went out to earn some money, a job, and the men start moaning... with all of the traumas of jail and exile...because they don't

⁶¹ Spoiled by Mothers.

have their moms...and start looking for English girls... while their women are working.

He abandoned her, fell in love with an English woman, who according to Verónica knows nothing about his past, a woman he can look at without being reminded of his suffering and pain; a new person, who allows him to forget about his traumatic history. According to Loreto Rebolledo, many men who went to exile, after suffering imprisonment and torture, separated from their families of origin and restarted their lives by rooting their past out completely. It is like trying to restart life by leaving in oblivion the painful things, things that also contributed to lessen their masculinity in several ways, as Rebolledo points out

Another factor that also contributed to marriage crises and masculine infidelity, closely linked to the chauvinistic culture of Latin America, relate to the particular situation of exiled people. They had been politically defeated and in many cases they had also been detained, humiliated, tortured only to then be expelled from the country. They had arrived to a place where they didn't know the language and the cultural codes. And they were no longer the income supporters of their families (at least not in the beginning), nor the protectors, since the institutions aiding refugees fulfilled this task. Later, they saw themselves devaluated in labour terms, since they had 'minor' labours, such as catering and cleaning jobs. All of this lessened a masculinity profile that in the Chilean culture is constructed on the basis of men's strength and their capacity to provide for and protect their families (2006: 89)

Verónica knows and assumes the argument presented by Rebolledo, and because of that she forgives and still loves him. To some extent she thinks that he has been taken away by the coup d'état, jail and torture, and that there is no remedy for that. Because as Piper asserts, while setting the cause of every badness affecting us upon an already distant past, as a positive and unalterable fact, our agency remains absolutely restricted with respect to any type of reparation. It seems that for Verónica the only possible alternative is to break with everything that has to do with Chile.

However, this rupture does not only relate to the breakdown of her relationship, her divorce, but is also related to an even deeper breaking of the family:

I totally moved away from Chileans...

Why?

Like I was telling you, the coup d'état transformed you, like...I don't know... like they cut your head off. And suddenly you start to see people in a different way, those who were your friends were not your friends anymore, and the people who you could trust in were then against you, because the terror was so much... that people distrusted their brothers, their cousins, their father, their children...

That happened to you...?

To everyone. A father had to distrust his son and the son his father, brothers between brothers...

But, did it happen to you...?

My brother was military, my sister was communist, and my brother threatened my sister, then...and Pinochet was successful in creating hatred between families, in creating hatred between sons and fathers. I mean, it's a scary thing...there were mothers who turned in their children as prisoners to the soldiers and they kicked them, they tortured them, and the mothers said, "well, they deserve it for getting messed up in things", you heard those phrases...mothers against children...it was a very scary thing...and it was scary because Chile hadn't gone through anything like it before....

Chile as 'imagined community' was divided into two, or perhaps the coup efficiently showed that that homogeneous community never existed, with a single essence that made us all brothers and sisters. Progressively, a public discourse was installed, allowing members of a community to visualise each other as enemies. For Verónica, this happened overnight, because before the coup a sort of healthy limit kept both sides related, the limit in which a part of Chileans stopped recognising the other part had not been transgressed.

However, from a historic perspective this does not happen overnight; the political polarisation of the left-wing, the terror campaign with respect to an imminent revolution, elaborated by the right-wing, and the discourses about the

destruction of pillars of national life, sustained by the military, were creating a belligerent climate that impinged on daily life. According to several authors, political activities of the left-wing overflowed the channels that were established for participation. "Street demonstrations, strikes, land taking of large farms and urban properties for the construction of houses, conformed to a generalised and permanent mobilisation" (Arrate & Rojas 2003: 380, also Moulian 1993; Pinto 2005), all this characterised left-wing militancy during these years. The atmosphere went beyond political themes; effervescence is also cultural and social. While referring to the UP period, Verónica describes:

Because we were on the streets, shouting, we were happy, we felt the glorious feeling that we were doing something fantastic, the poor were to have milk, to drink, and meat to eat... we had to wait in lines, sure, because people... hoarded and held, and were thieves...but...we were extremely young, and...music...for instance, there they were Quilapayún and Inti-Illimani,⁶² there it was all of that fervour, it was a carnival, it was a true carnival for us, but mixed with those beautiful things because you knew that you were doing something good, not only having a good time, and trusting that your leader would be alright, and that your fantastic leader, namely Salvador Allende, was leading us, and just before the coup...no, after the coup they showed the movie 'Jesus Christ Superstar', where Jesus looks to his people, with a sad face, while they were dancing in a carnival, when all the Romans were around... there I said, this is us, we were happy, we were constructing a new society... and pow!, it vanished, dark... then, they were three fantastic years, they were three very beautiful years

The right-wing sectors, instead, saw and experienced with panic the expropriations, strikes, land takings, and all of the things that somehow announced the possibility of a revolution. According to Margaret Power, already since the 1964 elections, won by the DC candidate Eduardo Frei, the Chilean bourgeoisie developed an electoral strategy that some historians have named 'la campaña del terror' (terror campaign) (2008: 104; also Arrate & Rojas; 2003; Correa, Figueroa & others 2001). This consisted in inundating the media press with anti communist propaganda. Thus, posters, leaflets and pamphlets were

⁶² Popular musical groups that played revolutionary songs based on folklore and urban folk.

massively printed. This campaign reached its highpoint during the UP government.⁶³ Propaganda was directed to specific social groups of a diverse nature, as for instance countryside workers, young people, but mainly women, to whom the messages indicated the dangers and damages that a communist government would cause to their families and day-to-day life. For the presidential campaign of 1964, for instance, some radio stations played an advertisement that started with sounds of firing guns, followed by a woman's voice saying that her son was killed by communist guns. That was followed by a man's voice saying: 'to avoid this, vote for Eduardo Frei'. The ad then concluded with further shooting and dramatic music (Correa, Figueroa & others 2001).

According to Power, the 'campaign of terror' while addressing women as mothers, merges that particular role with nationalism. Indeed, communism does not only appear as a threat to family integrity, but also at the same time to the integrity of the country. What is in danger, finally, is the 'national soul', moral values through which the nation was founded; and part of those values is or was incarnated in women. Thus, for instance, Marxist corruption operated by denaturalising women, by taking them aside from their roles, properly to be housewives and mothers.

⁶³ According to Margaret Power, the participation of the United States in the funding of this campaign was crucial. By the end of June 1964, and only to provide an example, "a group of propaganda funded by the CIA produced 20 radio announcements a day in Santiago, and in 44 stations, news of 12 minutes transmitted 5 times a day in three stations in Santiago and 44 of province, thousands of cartoons and many paid advertisement in the press" (2008; 106).

German Marín in his book *Lazos de Familia*, collects publicity images and photographs of the last decades of the twentieth century in Chile (2008);



especially, paradoxical and ironic is this leaflet from 1970. Here, a boy asks his mother where his father is, and below, in smaller print, it says that in many communist countries this question has no answer, because many men are taken from their homes to be jailed, left in concentration camps, or have simply disappeared.

The painful irony is in that the 'campaign of terror' becomes reality, but now in the bodies of the subjects who were supposed to be the executors of such felonies. The dreadful fantasy that communism provoked in right-wing

sectors became a reality once the coup took place. The propagandist poster announcing horrible pains to the victims of Marxism acquired a sinister dimension at a real and symbolic level.

The 'national family', as real families, became part of this construction of other people as enemy, as somebody threatening the order that was established to that time. Indeed, that threat, as Verónica tells, could come from inside the family itself:

I'm being insistent, but I'd like to know about your personal case, you and your brothers, or with your family. How was all that?

It's that...it was healthy before the coup d'état...differences existed...my older brother was in the military, and on the other hand I believed in the socialists, it was healthy, it was a healthy dialogue in a democracy. Then...you don't anticipate that, ...that person who was in front of you and they are your family, tomorrow they were going to be your enemy and

they wanted to kill you, because that doesn't go through your mind...we had just made this democracy, he is in the military and has to protect the country, and we were going to make the change...the dialogue was healthy then ... "lousy communist" he joked to me, "lousy right-winger", I said to him, I mean... that is healthy in all democracies, besides it's humorous sometimes, but after 1973...

... that changes things...

It's sinister, it changed sinisterly... what was a joke the day before, what was a joke on Sunday, became sinister on Monday, because the coup d'état was Monday the 11th or Tuesday the 11th, I don't remember well...Tuesday the 11th. So, the change was sinister, because it wasn't even gradual...because, of course before the coup, those from the 'Fatherland and Liberty' fought with the MIR revolutionaries and they threw rocks and missiles at each other, but afterwards if they were going to a party and they met each other the 'Fatherland' and the revolutionaries danced together. I have seen revolutionaries and the 'Fatherland and Liberty' hugging in the university, making jokes to each other, because it was a brotherly dialogue, but afterwards there were fist fights, like two footballers from different sides fighting, but after the game they are going to have a glass of wine together...it was like that, sure... I'm saying that also there were real fights, fights existed, it wasn't that they didn't exist, but after that you saw your brother in the house and you laughed with him...and it was, "bro, let's go the movies", or, "let's have a coffee", because he's your brother, right?...or I was a teacher that they knew was socialist and I had my students who were part of the 'Fatherland and Liberty', and they said to me, "miss, you look nice today...", "that's enough, silence", because I was very young and they were almost the same age as me, then...those in the 'Fatherland and Liberty' were lovely boys as well...those that were in my class...so it was normal that a boy in the 'Fatherland and Liberty' knew that I was in the National Front and I was a socialist...we were relaxed in the same place...I was his teacher and he admired me, he responded, he behaved correctly, and he didn't come to insult the teacher because she was socialist or in the UP...he was flirty, and if there was a party in the university I danced with him...do you understand? ...that's what it was like on the Monday and on the Tuesday that boy transformed into my enemy...I couldn't even tell that boy what my name was, more or less, because I didn't know if he was involved in something sinister....

So, you can't have a coffee with your brother either...

Never again... not even now. We are completely separated...I moved away, I mean, I love him, and I am sure that he loves me, but I moved away, I don't want to speak to him, I don't want to see him, because...[long silence]...I know that he was involved in something..., but I don't want to know what he did... that's to say I don't even want to

confront the reality that he was involved in something...even to this level...I have another brother, who isn't military, he lives in the USA...he adores me...but I can't forget that he is on the right and I am on the left, and he doesn't forget it either...and he makes jokes, and he bothers me and bothers me...and when I leave I say to him... "look Tomás, I come here to see you, and I want to have a nice time with you so don't talk to me about politics because I can't stand it", then the fight starts, and that fight was the same as the one brought about by the coup d'état, it was a hate that has caused...brilliantly, you know if you think about the symbols, a little before the coup d'état there was an advertisement on the radio, or on the television...from the people of the right that was called build up anger, build up anger, because they wanted the people to become more and more angry, more and more angry, more and more angry, and for everything to explode, and that's how it happened, they built up their anger.

From the beginning of her story, Verónica attributes the origin of her political militancy to her love relationship. It is him, 'the revolutionary' who converts her, who transforms her, who makes her see things differently. And this transformation towards socialist militancy converted her into an anomaly inside of her original family. In the same way that the anti-communist propaganda announces, the Marxist cancer enters Verónica's family, through her loving relationship with 'a revolutionary'. Something that could have been a simple ideological difference within the group, turned into a radical rupture, particularly with her militant brother. The symbolic parallel with the broken nation is straightforward, and given this similitude it is not fortuitous that Verónica can't return to Chile, in the same way that it is not possible for her to get again together with her brother. In my opinion, in her narration Verónica exemplifies the drama of a nation divided into two opposite sides very well. Moreover, worse than that, she exemplifies the sensation of one side being convinced that for them to exist, they had to eliminate the other side. I argue that Verónica still bears this conflict inside of her as a fractured identity; which is why she cannot live in Chile anymore.

According to Maurice Halbwachs, family is a basic identity referent in which, from a two-way relationship, each family member constructs his identity as part

of the group while at the same time collaborates in constructing the group's identity. This construction works from the settling of everyday relationships in everyday life, which also implies sharing commemorations, celebrations, secrets, norms, etc., which elaborate on a common past; a past that is passed to the new members through narrations. These shared memories, among other things, are part of the group's cohesion. Family dynamics comprehend internal conflicts, changes suffered by families from one generation to the next, and the switching of members from one family to another due to marriages. However, he does not elaborate in depth on a situation such as Verónica's. Collective and individual identities change, move, have new meanings, but what happens when they simply collapse? Verónica does not only break her links with her family of origin, but also with the new family with her husband.

Nelly Richard describes this process as "roturas biográficas [and/or] desarticulaciones narrativas"⁶⁴ (2001: 35) in which the defeated ones, victims, and those who have broken their family links, like Verónica, live life on a day-to-day basis, without a 'great project' or collective dynamics that gives their life a direction, not only as individual subjects but also as social subjects. Many exiled, as in this case, remain outside of Chile with a sensation of being permanent outsiders. Yet they feel more comfortable and relaxed outside, away from home, out of their 'imagined community'. For them, the conflict is so painful and it is so vivid that they prefer not to be there.

In other cases, things have changed so much for them in Chile that they cannot bear living there anymore. This is the case of many exiled that decided to return at some point, but did not last in Chile for long after their intended return. Loreto Rebolledo states that most of them suffered frustration, sadness, anger, and that at their return they found a very different Chile compared to what they remembered and dreamed of. Family, friends, and also them, after the experience of living in different countries, changed (2006: 191). While being

⁶⁴ Biographic breakdowns and/or narrative disarticulations.

away, they did not experience the gradual installation of the national neo-liberal project, imposed by the dictatorship. Many militants fled, defeated, and ignored everyday life, what the dictatorship and its project implied; therefore to return after 10, 20 and even 30 later years meant a sort of second shock. In many cases, people went back to their countries of exile; they opted for remembering with nostalgia what they left behind and lost in 1973.

We can also argue that, in the case of Verónica, not returning to Chile means not having to see her brother, not having to confront him, precisely to keep or preserve a past in which she can continue to consider him as her brother. She expresses it clearly, “I know that he was involved in something..., but I don’t want to know what he was doing...”; she does not want to know. Why doesn’t she? What would that imply? She suggests, “that’s to say I don’t even want to confront the reality that he was involved in something...even to this level”. Did her brother become her enemy; not only because he participated in the coup d’état as a military, or because perhaps he was more active than necessary? Maybe he did things against people who he was supposed to love, such as her and her husband. In some way, not wanting to know what her brother did protects her. Or in other words, ‘ignorance’, ‘not knowing’ allows Verónica to preserve the memory of a beloved brother, despite everything that happened.

Grappling with a past previous to the coup allows her to announce from the present “I love him, and I am sure that he loves me”; although they have not seen each other since she fled Chile in 1976. What would happen if she had to return and confront her brother and learn what that she does not want to? How can the past be confronted if there is no recognition of the damage to which we have been subject to? How differences can be assumed when stories and histories construct ones as enemies of the others?

The Family as a Body: Feeling Pain Collectively.

According to Amado and Domínguez, the relationships and ties in each family group are established from each member's day-to-day actions. The group expression, like that of each of its members, manages a 'natural' fluidity that we could recognise as its particular character, its identity. Nevertheless, this sensation of cohesion and stability is lost when some event threatens the group or one of its members (2004: 127). Such situations can be of diverse kinds, in the case of the narrations that I will present next, they concern political violence. So this section is dedicated to analysing the particular case of the practices of exile, torture and disappearance and to show how they affected the families interviewed and consequently, their political activities. In a certain sense, they are traumatic stories where a temporary experience is lived unusually, because the (painful) past is always present and takes up most of the family space. The whole family re-establishes new rites, stories, commemorations and events that in some way mark the damage to which they went through. The following narrations are examples of this damage; and for Tamara and Soledad, they are legitimate arguments for their persistent political militancy.

Acts of violence like those mentioned here inevitably attach an emotive connotation to stories on the past previous to those events, as these make sense to their subjectivities as explained in the methodological chapter. This is exemplified in the interviews, first, because there are still parts of these experiences that have not been told and that often lead to silences or cries, and second when some of these stories are explicitly acknowledged to be told verbally for the first time.

From the minute the coup d'état began, any attempt of social resistance by President Allende's supporters, political parties or activists were suppressed by the military. For this reason, the military used every resource in detaining and imprisoning, as fast as possible, anyone who was identified as a dissenter. For the military, the enemy they fought was an evil that had to be completely

eradicated from the national community's breast. This medical metaphor is not unfounded because it serves to illustrate the logic that the diagnosis prescribes the cure. For the military, from the national body, from the country's breast, the 'Marxist cancer' or "un-Chilean toxic germ" (Lira & Castillo; 1991: 104) had to be expelled. This dangerous evil appeared as a conspiracy of foreign ideas that had brought chaos, decadence and the destruction of national institutions, and even worse, the alienation and loss of patriotic values. (Vidal 2000). It had to be fought with every possible rigour. 'Those left-wing militants' evidently were cancerous cells, so it was the case of their sympathisers and their respective family bodies. Hence, as chemotherapy is the general treatment in clinical cases of cancer, in the case of the Chile's cancer the prescribed treatment was torture, exile and, disappearances.

This is how Tamara and her family became one of the malignant cells that the patriotic body contained and something that it had to be rid of. The Communist family, composed of father, mother and seven children, five women – the oldest – and two men – the youngest – became an enemy of the country in just one day.

Tamara is the third child who during the coup was 15 years old. She remembers:

My parents were imprisoned in '74, somewhere around June or July... they killed one of my brother-in-laws... (*long silence*)

They killed him?

...yes... I think it's the thing that has hurt me most for a long time... the death of my brother-in-law. Even when they found him in the '90s, when they found the people of Pisagua⁶⁵... (*long silence*)

⁶⁵ Pisagua is a place in northern Chile where a concentration camp was created on the September 14, 1973. From there they not only brutally tortured and carried out mock shootings, but also a considerable group of prisoners were lost trace of. In June 1990 a mass grave was found that contained the bodies of disappeared detainees. Given the climatic desert conditions of the northern zone of the country the bodies were preserved in good condition and it was possible to easily identify the bodies that they found there, as in the case of Tamara's brother-

So he disappeared as well.....

Yes,... but I always thought that they were going to find him... (silence), in 1976 my father came out of prison and we left, they had the brilliant idea of going into exile and then everybody left.

You too...?

Me too... they made me go... I didn't want to go... I didn't want to go because I had a life here. I had a life, I was in university... I was in the party and nobody asked me if I wanted to go... and I live over there angry with the whole world for one year, with the whole world. And I came back... I worked to save up the money for the ticket and I came back alone...

...Alone?...

She believes that if she had spoken they wouldn't have raped or tortured her...

Sure. It's her opinion, it's her pain... Where the difference is, or the thing that I told her, is that she's not the only one that suffered. I also have another sister that was raped and tortured, who lost her baby, because she was pregnant... (*Sobbing heavily, a long time, I turn off the cassette; I give her water and hug her*).

Are you sure that you want to continue?

Yes, I'm just a little weak these days... I haven't told this story before, like that, to anyone else.... They were my older sisters... but the others suffered a lot as well. Everyone suffered. That's the story. I have three younger siblings. One is my youngest sister who is a psychologist... they woke her up with a machine gun. I was 15 and she was 14. And my brother... the next one, they forced him into a car with a machine gun and made him say where he was living (*more sobbing*)... you can imagine what it's like for a child to live with that blame... I don't think anyone can speak about who suffered the most in this country... I think that my sisters are really brave. And it's that bravery that has kept us together as a family and it's what has kept me firm in my convictions....

You survived...

No, I don't want to say that I survived or that my family survived, no, I want to live,... live together, overcome the pain together... my militancy has to do with that as well... because what we are is a communist family... I don't want to be an example... they always make me an example....

in-law. For more information see *La Verdad de Pisagua*, the testimonial of Freddy Alonso Oyanadel, 2004, Ediciones Campus Universidad Arturo Prat.

Who?

Everyone. My mother, my sisters, ... because I stayed there, alone, I worked... I carried on being an activist and the weight, of being for example, it's big, it's heavy. Look, I don't like making myself the victim or the superhero... I went through what a lot of people did in this country, hunger, misery, I studied as I could, I did what I could....

To analyse Tamara's story I will use two strategies. First, in the same order that she uses, I will examine the ways in which her family suffered repression and political persecution at the hands of the dictatorship. I will then comment on each one of these forms of human rights violations because it seems necessary to me to contextualise the narration historically and theoretically. Secondly, and at parallel, I will analyse how, through her narration, Tamara builds herself into a militant subject.

Analysing Tamara's story is difficult because it has a lot of emotion and much unreleased pain, a lot of silence and omissions. Nevertheless, it is necessary since the tracks of how she articulates her political militancy are in this story. It is a complex story.

The form in which Tamara starts her story and how it transforms is a good example of what Richard Johnson has highlighted as "safe stories and risky stories" (in *Annual Magazine of the European Network for Cultural and Media Studies*; 1991: 27). She believes and wants to control the story, as if what she was telling, despite being painful, is resolved and closed. However, as her story deepens, it becomes clear that we are hearing a very risky story. She is not only telling about the storms that the communist family went through because of the dictatorship, but how the situation reaffirmed her political commitment. It is also about pain, questioning and destabilisation that the whole family went through and how this affected Tamara's political militancy, on the demands on her, her own feelings of blame and unresolved pains.

One of the characteristics of modern Western society that it is structured through mechanisms that set out differences between public and private realms. So, perhaps the most basic and abrupt rupture that political violence is going to provoke, on intervening with the citizenry, is going to be the momentary loss of distinction between both fields. Terror and violence as tools of control are going to constitute the elements that homogenise the private and the public.

Continuing with the medical metaphor, the country's body', the national community as a whole is intervened; 'the social body', the fabric of social organisations, political parties, unions, local organization, or even sports groups; on 'the family body', particularly those families that are identified or suspected of being enemies of the country; and finally on 'the individual and militant body'. In this last case they intend to imprint the contents considered to be right, through material and symbolic violence, those who are desirable for the re-foundation of the nation, and to remove those contents considered to be harmful for the 'national community'⁶⁶. So, without making any more claims, the violence reaches the entire existence and daily life of the Chilean citizens.

Hernán Vidal offers a different view, although not an opposing view on the distinction between public and private life. He argues that violence and repression are destined to fragmentise the intimate and particular relationship that militant subjects had with the public space. The opposing militants of the time had a strong commitment with their social environment and violence was justly destined to dismantle and destroy that continuity between the intimate and the public (2002: 207). The violence, then, tries to separate both spheres; said more concretely, to dismantle the social fabric and encapsulate citizens in their homes and their nuclear family.

⁶⁶ Any political, ideological, material or cultural element, that looks suspiciously 'Marxist' or popular, including the physical look, long beard in men, or trousers in the case of women (Montalva; 2004).

Back to Tamara, she started to be a militant almost without realizing it; everyone in her family was Communist before she was born. Her father was a worker and her mother a housewife, both committed and active militants. In a certain sense, the party was part of the extended family. During the dictatorship all the family members directly suffered state military aggression. Nevertheless it is the eldest, that is to say, her parents and her two older sisters that directly suffer the oppression. The violence falls upon the bodies of those who lead the families, and therefore it is Tamara who takes care of her younger brothers and takes control of the situation. She was 15 years old, not exactly a girl, but not an adult either.

In her story, Tamara mentions her brother-in-law first. She does it because of all the pain that her family suffers; the disappearance and then the proof of her brother-in-law's death is perhaps the worst pain that the family experiences. With regard to missing people, a state which Tamara's brother-in-law was in for 17 years, Hernán Vidal explains that the dictatorship did not only use violence to control, silence and stop any resistance, but it also tried to symbolically make any protestor invisible⁶⁷. The best example of this is, precisely, that of the 'missing detainee'.

The disappearance⁶⁸ of people inevitably leaves the family in a state of depression, in the psychoanalytic sense of the word, in that despite intuitively knowing that the family member is most probably dead, they cannot be certain:

⁶⁷ According to Vidal, the invisibility is expressed through establishing a state secret police agents, clandestine prisons and detention centres, mass graves and secret cemeteries, the systematic denial of violent acts, absolute control over the media, the dismantling of the social fabric subsumed in the home as private space, and finally obliging the dissidents to organise themselves, clandestinely, far from public opinion (2002:38).

⁶⁸ The majority of the publications related to the disappearances are written as testimonial stories. Emblematic cases are, for example, Virginia Grütter's text "Disappeared" published for the first time in 1980 in Costa Rica; Raymundo Paredes Ahlgren's frightening story "How many times you can kill a man", published in 2002; or the text of Paz Rojas, María Inés Muñoz, María Luisa Ortiz y Vivian Uribe "We were all going to be Queens: a study of ten pregnant women that were detained and disappeared in Chile", Ed. Lom, 2002. These are notable examples; the National Library has more than 100 testimonial texts related to this theme.

they do not know what happened, they do not know how the member died and, finally, they do not have the body or remains. In many cases the military have questioned the existence missing individuals. Under these circumstances it is impossible to carry out the ritual of a goodbye, and therefore develop the corresponding pain. Tamara's family suffers that experience but in recovering her brother-in-law's body it is possible to erase part of her pain and recover part of the lost communitarian aspirations, social rather than familiar in character (Vidal; 1997:249).

The two views are not necessarily exclusive, but they are better described as distinct phenomena. The military raised a discussion destined to intervene on the concept of family; a discussion about what a 'good citizen' is, at the same time as they took over their bodies. So, the dictatorship reconfigures the public/private separation; it changes the contents and effectively, according to Vidal, it tried to radically separate both. But certainly not for the subjects that they are going to impose order on, in that they require an eye that penetrates all parts to be able to maintain control, they require the domination of the public and the private. On the other hand, it is the rest of the citizens and social actors that must fall back from the private sphere so that the military can do their job.

Tamara is a member of a Communist family in the sense that Tatiana described before, that is to say, they are all activists; they all participate in the party in one way or another. Tamara's family also exemplify the high level of social and political participation that the country experienced previous to the coup, but also their commitment of resistance against General Pinochet's government.

Throughout Tamara's story, she goes about constructing herself into someone strong. For that she uses the strategy of stating, one by one, the repressive acts that her family was put through, trying to leave out the affective consequences that these events provoked. She states them simply, apparently as if it were any type of list and she says "My parents were imprisoned in 1974, somewhere

around June or July... they killed one of my brother-in-laws...". Then, the listing stops and gives way to a long silence, to then recognise that her brother-in-law's death hurt her for a long time. But she says it in a past tense "I think it's the thing that hurt me most for a long time...", suggesting that in this way the wound is already closed. I then tell her that her brother-in-law disappeared, that is to say, they not only killed him but the family knew nothing of him for seventeen years. So, without meaning to, I told her another way in which her family was a victim of the dictatorship. She reacts a little defensively, the position of an uncomfortable victim and responds "Yes... but I always knew that they were going to find him", then she retakes control and continues "in 1976 my father came out of prison and we left, they had the brilliant idea of going into exile". The critical and ironic tone of the last phrase "the brilliant idea" brings her again to the point in the story that she can control. The second thing that Tamara recounts is the exile. It is interesting how she tells it because first she phrases it as if it had been her parents' voluntary option "*they had the brilliant idea of going into exile*" and later she adds, "*they made me go... I didn't want to go...*".

In the first years of the dictatorship, many people were forced to leave the country. They were detained with only the clothes on their back and put on any plane leaving the country. There was a considerable group of people that decided to abandon the country, fearing the risk to their family. Presumably, Tamara's family did this, too. The majority of the family members had already suffered enough pain, imprisonment, and torture. The parents must have decided that there was nothing else they could do but leave.

There isn't any specific figure regarding how many people left the country in this way; however, according to The Vicarage of Solidarity, the number is around 260,000, spread out in different countries (Rebolledo; in Valdés & Valdés; 2005). The social and psychological impact on each nuclear family affected at least three generations: the grandparents (those that generally remained), the parents who left (and who were generally blamed), and the children, who generally went

with the parents, but who also in some cases stayed with the grandparents (Rebolledo; in Valdés & Valdés; 2005: 138).

For those who left the country, exile was political defeat (Rebolledo; 2006; Valdés & Valdés; 2005), something that became a symptom once outside the country. This happened because everyday life started to revolve around the country of origin and if besides it was about militants, as it was in the majority of cases, political activity was accentuated so much that it started to be the element that organised the family life, especially in the first stage of exile. Entire families left the country because of the political ideas of some of the members; the whole family in Tamara's case. She resisted exile; in 1976 when her father left prison, she was 18 years old and had just started studying in the university; she had clandestinely taken up militancy again and did not want to leave the country. Her parents forced her to, but she was away for only one year and decided to come back.

In her story, Tamara also realises the internal problem that exile causes the political parties. In the case of MIR (Revolutionary Left Movement), the order was always to stay and organise the resistance from the inside, emigration was to be used when a complete defeat was thought to be imminent⁶⁹. For the Socialist and Communist Parties, many of their militants were directly expelled, while others who acted clandestinely were taken out of the country by ecclesiastic or human rights organisations by way of different embassies, and a final group of activists were asked to leave the country for their own safety by the same party.

There is a debate, in parallel, between the same militants with respect to going or staying. Tamara explains it well, "in the party there was all this thing about those who left, those who did not leave, and those who went were traitors...".

⁶⁹ In the particular case of the MIR, the complete directive is destroyed before they can leave the country. We will analyse this theme in the next chapter.

Exile as a personal decision, out of fear and as a way of protecting the family group or some of its members was seen many times as weakness or as betrayal, because it was admitting defeat and abandoning any possibility of resistance, most importantly, it was abandoning comrades and the party.

According to Loreto Rebolledo, the memory of 'exile as betrayal' is something that was very common, but it has been more associated with the image of the masculine militant, the combatant, the hero - Salvador Allende defending the house of government, La Moneda, until the end. Therefore, to abandon the country without being forced out by an official decree of expulsion was seen as an act of cowardice and disloyalty (2206:180-186). Tamara's realises this conflict in her story, the dispute between those that stayed and those that left, between those that "[were] abroad earning money and having all the possibilities..." and those that stayed fighting and resisting.

Tamara's story about exile illustrates the conflict that it provoked between 'those who wanted to go' and 'those who wanted to stay'. On one side there she is at 18 years old, wanting to stay, not only for university and her friends but also for her beliefs, and on the other side there is the rest of her family who want to leave the country. But not the whole family goes; there is one member who stays. Her older sister stays in the country, possibly because her husband was still missing. Up to that point Tamara's story is one of a conflicted family.

Then, apparently, there is a movement towards the theme of exile as a conflict inside the party. This is where those that went and abandoned the fight against the dictatorship were considered traitors because they forgot about those who stayed. Nevertheless, this also happens in Tamara's family because there is also someone who stays. How can she leave her older sister who lost her husband, she who was raped and lost her baby because she was pregnant? How can she abandon the search for her brother-in-law? How can she accept the defeat, which is no longer a political project but a family defeat as well? How

can she assume the role of a victim when she still wants to fight? It is difficult for Tamara to accept leaving because since she was fifteen years old she has slowly taken on a more combative role; she has not been directly hurt; she has taken care of her little sister and brothers; she has been a spectator to the pain of the older ones in her family; more than fear she feels rage and she wants to stay, she wants to fight for the rest of her wounded family.

The family in exile not only literally expatriates itself from the national territory but it also symbolically exiles itself from itself, as a group or collective vessel. According to Tamara's story, the family did not talk about what happened to them for a very long time.

She does not want to go, and she's the one who comes home alone, she is also the one that organizes a family meeting. She explains, "I called a meeting with my brothers, sisters, my parents, my cousins, everyone... to talk about it... to cry about it..."; that is to say she generates the possibilities of a meeting that provokes a recovering of family ties broken by a long silence. It is she who leads the family ritual, in which "It was more or less a mess", because they said things to each other that were difficult to say and difficult to listen to, because the individual pain became collective, they socialised it. Finally, she says it was a good meeting, because it the family confronts the pain and suffering that they went through. From the story about this meeting, Tamara recounts the third wounding of her family that must be taken of, the rape of her older sisters.

With respect to this particular violent political practice, it is important and relevant to discuss the practice of torture in Chile before proceeding to analyse Tamara's story.

According to Hernán Vidal, the subject of torture has basically been treated from two perspectives, psychotherapeutic and judicial⁷⁰. Even though these two investigated perspectives have been very fruitful, there is, according to the author, a problem that stems from treating the victims as individuals. According to Vidal, this slant maintains the dictatorship's rhetoric, with respect to how torture was applied as punishment to a small group of Chileans that committed a crime against the country, not against the whole national community. The psychosocial effect of this argument is that the damage caused is insignificant and must be treated by the each victim privately, and that in no case is it a subject to be debated publicly (2000)⁷¹.

The Valech Report (A National Commission Report about Political Prison & Torture), to which we refer in the first chapter, comes to light in November 2004. At that moment it was established for the first time that in Chile mass torture was carried out for political reasons and it was public knowledge despite the silence and complicity. Even though the facts were brought to light, it continues being – if not taboo as Patricia Verdugo says – an uncomfortable subject that the people, effectively, do not want to talk about (2000).

Violence, terror, and torture in particular, have the objective of damaging the militant's body just as much as the social. In the same way, resistance to it not

⁷⁰ In any case, it's undeniable that institutions' therapeutic work like the COPACHI (The Committee for Cooperation For Peace in Chile) created in 1973, the Vicarage of Solidarity in 1976, ILAS (Latin-American Institute of Mental Health and Human Rights) created in 1988, and CODEPU (Committee for the Defence of People's Rights) created in 1980, amongst others, have been fundamental in the rehabilitation and integration of many families and victims that survived the repressive processes. In many cases, the rehabilitation implied the elaboration of testimonials, which were vital later on, for the judicial process that put many perpetrators in prison. Therefore, in one way or another, the work of these organisations has been fundamental in bringing the subject of torture into the public sphere.

⁷¹ Patricia Verdugo, in her text, published in 2004, "Torture is not talked about", seems to confirm Vidal's hypothesis, telling of the meeting between the two academics, Agüero and Meneses, that were employees of the same university. Agüero, who had been a victim of torture, recognises Meneses as one of his torturers and decides to tell it to the academic community. The same case, Verdugo's book, caused a public outcry, in part because it happened in a university context where for the first time the debate surrounding the subject entrenched itself as a social and national problem.

only has to be elaborated individually, by way of therapy, but it also must be elaborated collectively, and in that sense it necessarily requires social recognition. Tamara understands it in that way, and then decides to call “a meeting with my brothers, sisters, my parents, my cousins, everyone... to talk about it... to cry about it...”. The family meeting achieves its goal, and it names and socialises that thing that it possibly knew, but it had not spoken of. The rite is necessary, not only “to cry about it...”, but also to comfort the damaged subject and recognise that that damage affects the whole collective.

With respect to rape or sexual violence as torture, Olga Grau reflects upon its effect in the social sphere. The author suggests that torture – injuring the corporal zones considered to be erogenous – also hurt, symbolically, the social capacity to construct trustworthy ties. That is to say torture not only hyperbolises patriarchal power relations in sexual violence, but also the positive and symbolic dimension implied in a society. For the author, that dimension is related to the capacity to establish associative relationships and links with others (in Institute Foundation of the Woman, various authors 2005: 27).

How does the body resist electricity applied to the vagina, armpits, temples, tongue, limbs, and eardrums, bleeding from every orifice? It ‘switches off’ as one of the tortured states in a short memory; a psychological and temporary switching off to deal with the humiliation of eating without a spoon, not having tampons, not bathing for three months, not having a personal toothbrush. A psychological switching off, so to be able to put up with seeing the torture of a beloved one, a death; not knowing how to pick up a bloodied body (2005:30).

A body reduced to a “bloodied body” is a body without an edge, a body without definition, a body that through the violence loses its capacity of connection with others. In some way the family ritual that Tamara talks of is absolutely necessary, just as for the direct victims of the torture – her older sisters - as for the rest that went through that suffering like impotent spectators. Tamara needs to say and establish that she also suffered for her sisters even though she was not tortured.

According to Nubia Becker, rape as a form of torture was also a punishment for “being involved with politics” (2005: 57), since they were “automatically converted into dangerous, loose whores, degenerates, a bad example for the future of Chile” (2005:57). The bodies of women considered to be enemies were “at the mercy of the patriarchal rite of the winners”, (Amado & Domínguez 2004:123). Carolina Carrera, psychologist and therapist, adds

All the women were the object of sexual violence, women of all ages, women of all socioeconomic levels, ethnic women, pregnant women or not. Rapes were carried out individually or in groups. The women were used as a war strategy, territorial occupation, demoralisation of the enemy, and also as booty or a reward given in parties and celebrations. The women’s ethnic and class conditions were the basis for more humiliation and jokes. Militant and non-militant women were raped, professionals, students, workers, women for the countryside, housewives. In this sense, for the repressive agents and the military ideology, the women are converted into something that represents the whore/traitor (In Foundation Institute of the Women, various authors 2005:67)⁷².

Klaus Theweleit in his book *Male Fantasies* (volume 1:1987) analysed a particular group of men from a sort of private army ‘that fought, and to a large extent, triumphed over, the revolutionary German working class in the years immediately after World War I’ (1987: ix). In his remarkable work, he showed how these fascist fantasies construct communist or working class women as aggressors, in some ways, sexual aggressors, since they are whores,

revulsion at these monsters-of-the-imagination, ‘proletarian women’ and ‘female communist’, is no doubt related to sexual ideas that are charged with even more intense anxieties, so great that they cannot be expressed. (1987: 68)

⁷² The national Commission Report on Political Prison and Torture shows that even though rape was carried out as a form of systematic torture against detained women, it was also used against detained men. Nevertheless, masculine rape, understood as anal penetration and a way of feminising the detained man, in my opinion, hasn’t been sufficiently established. The 700-page report only indicates “the execution of sexual abuse under different forms, hetero and homosexual rape were simultaneously a humiliation for the female or male prisoner and their social and family surroundings, and additionally recompense for the state agent” (2005: 50).

In the Chilean case perhaps the fear produced by 'female Marxist bodies' is to some extent, a fear of 'social and cultural corruption'. In some way rape as a punishment is a kind of compulsion to confirm that terror. Thus, as Theweleit points out

Woman who don't conform to the image any of the 'good women' are automatically seen as prostitutes, as the vehicles of 'urge'. They are evil and out to castrate, and they are treated accordingly. (1987: 171)

This is undoubtedly relevant if we consider, as a counterpoint, the strong discussion of gender that the dictatorship imposed, tending to reconstruct the traditional family system, where women had a practical role as mothers as much as wives. And according to the same author, the torturers normally reminded their victims that the punishment they were receiving was for having abandoned their roles⁷³.

Metaphorically, the 'expropriation of the feminine body' through rape is also, in military logic, the recapturing of the country that was being invaded by foreign ideological communism. It is a foundational rite and has a national character. Rape operates as a punishment, but, and particularly in a Catholic country, punishment is a form of purification. Besides that, in military logic, rape in a certain sense refers to the foundational myth where the nation's race is conceived as a mix of Spanish father soldier and the possessed indigenous mother. In that way the 'corporal expropriation' of left-wing feminine bodies (militants, or relations) through rape also means getting back to the original order.

Continuing with the analysis of Tamara's story, the family meeting that she convenes with curative intentions makes sense. This is because, as Halbwachs points out, families not only have commemoration rites or secrets that are only

⁷³ In this sense the Chilean military dictatorship operated with very similar codes to Franco in Spain, where the bi-parental family, consecrated in marriage constituted the fundamentals of society, assigning the woman a primordial role in the home. See Dolores Ramos in *The History of Women*, volume 10, edited by Duby y Perrot, 1993, first edition in Spanish.

shared by their members and gives identity to the group, but there are also certain ways of remembering the past that contain educative elements.

Each family has its own mentality, its memories, which alone commemorate, and its secrets that are revealed only to its members. But these memories consist not only of a series of individual images of the past. They are at the same time models, examples, and elements of teaching. They express the general attitude of the group; they not only reproduce its history but also define its nature and its qualities and weaknesses we speak of a physical or moral quality which is supposed to be inherent in the group, and which passes from the group to its members. (1992: 59)

So, the family meeting, to 'cry about it', also has the objective of remembering who they are, as family group, remembering those things that unite them. And for Tamara one of those things is that they are "a Communist family". Therefore, she confronts her second sister when she tells of how she regretted not having spoken when they were torturing her. Because, in Tamara's point of view "we... all were very shocked", in her opinion, maybe her sister has a right to feel and think like that, but clearly she's not thinking of the group, in the family as a collective subject – she's only thinking of her own pain. For Tamara to think like that is a problem because when one thinks of individual survival, it is when one could become a traitor. In the same way when the family thought of their survival and left the country and went into exile, what they did in reality was abandon the cause, abandon the party, but mainly, abandon the eldest sister.

Thus, Tamara confronts her second sister, reminding her that she is a member of a group, and she explains, "the thing that I discussed with her, is that she's not the only one that suffered". Here Tamara wants to establish that her older sister also suffered, but she also wants to set out that, finally, all the members of the family suffered and it is not possible to compare, nor decide, 'who' suffered more than the other; because from her perspective the family, as a collective body, suffered. So, she wins back the right to suffer for herself despite not having suffered violence on her own individual body.

With the recognition of the trauma and all the pain suffered by the family, Tamara's narration comes to crying and sadness. The place of the witness is painful; it is painful to reclaim the right to suffer if, as an individual subject, nothing happened to you. But Tamara's pain for her family, for her sisters, is there, not at all overcome, not at all controlled, expressed in tears, still without words. After crying a long while she asked me to pardon her, she tells me that she does not know what is happening to her, as if all that she is telling me is not enough to feel pain. She tells me that she wants to continue. I turn on the recorder and ask her if she's sure, she says to me "Yes, just that I'm a little weak these days... I hadn't told this story before, like that, to another person..."

Tamara not only makes her sisters' pain hers, she also collectivises the bravery that she attributes to them, because for her that is where she locates the strength that keeps the family together. So, she says, "I think that my sisters are really brave. And it is that bravery that has kept us together as a family and it's what has kept me firm in my convictions and my commitment...". In this sense her militancy is much more than the expression of an individual conviction; it is more of an extension of the bravery and strength that she attributes to the family members, especially those that suffered the torture.

Nevertheless, her militancy as an experience that comes out through her individual convictions is related to having become the leader at an early age and responsible for the care of the younger members of her family, but also being in charge of keeping vigil over the political identity of the group. Because finally it is her, mainly, who continues with the most committed and most persistent militancy; it is her who wants to continue fighting and resisting defeat. Her commitment is then also related with the preservation of the collective identity of her family that is, before everything, 'a Communist family'. And this commitment is also melancholic, because after all 'the family' was never again what it used to

be. Her second sister and the youngest never return to Chile, they married and settle in foreign country.

But, Tamara experiences these tasks in an ambivalently, as she expresses. “I don’t want to be an example... they always make me an example...”, I ask, “who?”, she responds, “Everyone. My mother, my sisters, ... because I stayed here, alone, I worked... I continued being an activist and the weight, of being for example, it’s big, it’s heavy”. It’s a burden, not having directly suffered the repression; you are responsible for being the face of the rest of the group.

There is a moment in the interview in which I comment that she is part of a family that survived the dictatorship, but she reacts by rejecting my observation with resentment. So, the voice from the beginning – strong, clear and in control – is regained; she does not like the word survivor. She does not like the place of ‘victim’, she refuses to assume this identity and it seems that the opposite place where to be is her militant identity⁷⁴.

Militancy and ‘overcoming the pain together’

Many survivors or families linked to those who suffered State terrorism in their own bodies, resist remembering their beloved ones as ‘victims’. The argument is that this word emphasises the remembrance of a loss, pain and death, over

⁷⁴ Tamara hardly mentions her parents’ detention. We know that her parents were detained in 1974, but we don’t know how long her mother was detained. We know that her father was in prison for approximately two years. But we know nothing of what happened to them as prisoners. Nevertheless, we have sufficient testimonials, besides the National Commission Report on Political Prison and Torture, to be able to suspect that they were tortured or at least harshly treated. The report establishes three phases in which mass detentions took place. Tamara’s parents were detained in the report’s second phase that was from January 1974 to August 1977. According to the report, this phase of detentions was characterised by being arbitrary and lacked, practically, the legal permission to legitimise it. State agents acted as civilians and didn’t even identify themselves. The findings of the Commission show that, first in Santiago and afterwards in other important cities, the detainees were taken to secret detention centres where they were immediately subjected to interrogations by way of torture (2005:214). It’s very probable that Tamara’s parents suffered this process, but we don’t know - the story doesn’t give the indications necessary to reconstruct these possibilities.

ideals and the objectives many militants fought for. In this sense, 'victimisation' confuses the combative character of many of who died or survived. It is the case of Soledad, a woman in her 40's, militant and member of a Communist family that suffered the loss of one of its members who died in a confrontation with military. She is the second of three children, the youngest to be killed. Since this happened, Soledad's family is trapped in an internal debate on whether remembering her executed brother, as in the case of his father and his older brother, or in a positive and combative way, as in the case of her mother and her,

...look, I come from a family with a social disposition, ah, with a lot of devotion, you know. A father, a militant mother, militant siblings, so ah, that always accompanies the decisions that I have taken in terms of commitment. Ah, a brother who is on the list of political executions,... although it's not the way I like to remember him, precisely because I don't find him to be a victim. At the time of his death, Manuel was a member of the Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez (Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front), and he made that decision, and with that decision, at a certain moment, he decided to fight to the death, ...a therefore I don't necessarily consider him a victim, but a person who understood that that was the way to be consistent with what he was fighting, obviously in the context of those years, those conditions, I see it that way. My political prisoner parents also. My father was imprisoned seven years, and my mother a few weeks; so, the both of them spent time in prison during the military dictatorship...

It is important for Soledad to establish that her family was not passive against the dictatorship. They, as a group, effectively had a political commitment linked to the UP (Unidad Popular), and more specifically to the Communist Party, and in that sense fighting against the dictatorship was a consequence of their convictions. At the same time, this confrontation implied that they should face the consequences of their acts, which in the case of Soledad's brother lead to his death. Considering this combative character, it is important to say that class differences existed between Tatiana's and Soledad's narrations, compared to Margarita's, because both Tatiana's and Soledad's families belong to and identify with the working classes. Thus, the 'historic' role that they give to their

respective activism has to do with a social practice, while being associated with their family history, it is not a naturalised question. Here political action is neither given by birth, nor by class, but rather an everyday practice, by history. In Margarita's case and of some 'aristocratic' sectors, as demonstrated by Stabili (2003), political participation is given almost as a natural mandate because of birthplace. In a certain way, it is also an obligation coming from the 'natural order'; if you belong to the ruling class, then there is no alternative but to exercise power. Instead, in the narrations of Tatiana and Soledad, being able to participate politically is a gained space, a right. Evidently it is also a duty, one that was obtained as the result of a social and family struggle.

What memories do you have of that era?

... I was six in '73. Before that I remember that I always participated in the political marches and rallies, activities in whichever plaza it was, demonstrations on my father's shoulder. My father was an employee of the *El Siglo*⁷⁵ newspaper, and also a Communist Party militant, so we went everywhere with him, everywhere. My younger brothers, even used the berets with the typical Che Guevara stars, or like that, in that way... really committed to the *Unidad Popular*. Then, on the 11th of September '73, I remember having felt scared, scared because I didn't understand very well what was happening, I was six, I felt like everyone in my house was running from one place to another, and my father shaved off his beard quickly, he cut his own hair, in the house, and he got a gun he had hidden away and he left. So I remember that made me afraid. Later my mother got us ready to leave and we went through the neighbourhood to go where my grandmother was living, that must have been at least two hours walking I imagine, two hours walking whilst hearing heavy bombing sounds, and..., fear in the streets, because what I remember is squeezing tightly my mother's hand and, and, continuing to walk, because I had to help the most. My brothers were a year and two years younger than me. So, to feel like that, in that way, that I had to take notice of my mother and that I had to walk fast... ah, ah, ... the years continued like that, seeing my father very sporadically. We stayed for many months in my grandmother's house, we didn't go to school anymore, ah, and when we returned to the apartment on the weekend for example, it was to see my father, who appeared one minute and then left quickly... mmm, at least, ah, until that moment I only felt fear, that's to say, I understand it now,... it was a big fear, because afterwards you try to..., to, for the memories to

⁷⁵ 'El Siglo' (The century) is the name of a weekly paper published by the Communist Party since 1940.

give you more idea of what happened at that time... I would say that those six, seven years after the coup, were very hard, very, very hard, because we went around permanently moving, changing home, ah, we saw my father very little, ah, we even left Santiago..., I don't know I was eight, nine years old, very young. From those times I also remember visits from uncles who had been detained in *Tres Alamos*, they came to the house for two, three days and from there they went into exile, two uncles in this case, therefore, with this I want to show that I grew up in the middle of fear. Today as an adult, I can give it new meaning in the sense of how difficult it must have been, of how difficult my childhood was. Always thinking they could arrive. I remember once, at one time my father sold candy outside the school, when they were making the holes for the metro. And I remember that they came looking for him, those that I imagine today would be, I mean, in that time they would be, excuse me, the *DINA* (*secret police*), and he set off running for the metro holes. Another time was when, also, they followed him in the centre of Santiago, and I was alone with him, and he left me with somebody in a newspaper stand (*sobbing...*), they were looking for me for many hours, almost until nightfall, (*crying...*) shit, I hadn't remembered that for a long time (*waits for a few seconds*). My father got someone to look for me hours later, many hours later. After living like that, you know, now you can see those things (*continues sobbing*) how bad they were. You know, for many years I hadn't told anybody, it had been hidden away, I didn't even remember it, it was blocked. With time I started remembering details like that, like that. And ah, things came to be calmer many years later ah, imagine all the things my father escaped from, he must have really escaped from many things, because around that time, around '78 he decided to go to the south of Chile. We were in Punta Arenas for four years, we recovered there....

In the opinion of the psychologists Elizabeth Lira and Maria Isabel Castillo, the military dictatorship installed into the Chilean society, both in supporters and opponents, threat and fear as ways of political and social controls. They refer to this as producing 'chronic fear' (1991:7), a concept apparently contradictory but particularly useful to illustrate the first 10 years of dictatorship. Subjects normally feel fear when they perceive a threat, in some contingency. But when the threat becomes permanent, when fear stops being a reaction and becomes a constitutive state in everyday life, 'when thousands of subjects are threatened simultaneously within a given political regime [...] everyday life transforms. People become vulnerable.' (1991:7).

It is important to highlight the idea of permanent fear because, certainly, many of us grew up that way. However, it is also important to make distinctions, since in the particular case of Soledad, and as we will see in the next Chapter with Cristina, the day-to-day violence that they experienced was even worse. Effectively, both of them lived in popular sectors of Santiago, where police repression was an every-day thing. It was different for people who lived in central Santiago, or in well off areas, where appearances were kept, and repression was more hidden. Fear was also experienced in a different way in the case of families whose political participation was more publicly linked to the UP government, as in the case of Soledad's.

Thus, childhood memories of our interviewee are still very painful, because these are pains much less worked on than her brother's death. This is so, possibly, because the narrated experiences are from when she was only six, therefore the perception of permanent threat towards her family must have been fairly traumatic. For the same motive, she remembers the trip and stay in Punta Arenas as a relief, as a break, where, as she explains, "we recovered".

In addition, in a part of her story that is reproduced next, she describes the recovering of her family group, in terms of normality, that is to say without apparent political activity. In this way she remembers that period as "to be like a family" or living as a "really normal family". To Soledad, the political militancy of her parents and their links with Allende's government meant, in her childhood, a sort of anomaly. However, as she grew up and became an adolescent, the anomaly becomes incorporated as another element in her subjectivity, as a part of her individual and collective identity.

The prohibition of a public debate forced the militant sectors of the population that survived, to organise themselves secretly. This situation involved experimenting with forms of "making and living politics in a radically different way to any previous historical experience (Álvarez; 2003: 25), but also modifying in a

radical way everyday life, social and family relationships, as narrated by Soledad. Thus, militant's clandestine lives were ruled by utterly rigid norms.

The 'iron laws' of the clandestine life, namely the '*chapa*' (or political name), minimum contact between superior and minor structures, sharing activities, tasks, missions and roles inside of the party, dressing style, what type of press to read, who to keep in touch with, what to say or not to say in every meeting, punctuality discipline, etc. (Álvarez; 2003: 25)

In summary, all the elements of daily life were modified, even moving home, neighbourhood or city. This situation could be experienced by militants either individually or collectively, as in the case of Soledad. In some cases it was to protect militants who the military were looking for, and in other cases it was to pursue political life safely.

Everyone went there?

My father went first. Then my mother followed, and then we followed. We lived in Punta Arenas for four years. We recovered from child malnutrition when we got there, that was at ten, ten - eleven years old; between nine, ten and eleven. '81... that year I think we lived outside political activity. During those years, I was sure that we were a really normal family, that only dedicated itself to overcoming the sorrows, to be like a family. And years later I found out that my father never stopped being part of the party and doing things there as well. Afterwards we returned to Santiago, from Punta Arenas, at the beginning of '82, we returned. And there, we were already a little bigger. And that's when the younger ones started being political active (*laughs a little*).

Your siblings?

Yes, me first, and then my siblings. I was in secondary school, yes, it must have been '82 because I was in secondary school. And there it started, I signed up for *La Jota*, and once I was in, I told my father... Even *La Jota* had come to be small, and they started other alternatives, (*long silence*)... ah, us three siblings were in the Front, and heavier things started there, which I will obviously never speak about, you know... Shall I continue telling you about the family?

The Patriotic Front Manuel Rodríguez (FPMR) officially started on December 14, 1983 (Lozza, 1986; Vidal, 1995). According to Hernán Vidal, this political-military organisation was formed in the '80's due to the conviction, of those who were a majority within the opposition to the dictatorship, that a negotiation with the military to recover democracy was practically impossible. For this reason, it was necessary to generate policies of resistances, in coherence with the projects that each of the movements and parties within the opposition had. Thus, from the centre-left sector they promoted civil disobedience and 'popular rebellion'; in the more radical cases, that 'all ways of struggle were legitimate', without clearly specifying what was understood by that. The left-wing, and the Communist Party, following that logic and given the intensity of public demonstrations against Pinochet were taking, decided to create a combatants unit. This insurrectional organisation had to act as a unit that was practically professional and independent from the party, at least publicly (1995).

The same author considers that the history of the FPMR, as well as of the armed resistance to the dictatorship in general, has become taboo. This taboo is manifested as a historic silence with respect to the protagonist role of these groups during their confrontation to the military government. The taboo consists in protecting our current democracy and supposed national reconciliation, by avoiding speaking of the confrontations, in the same way that we do not talk about torture. For Vidal, this occurs for varied reasons amongst which the following three are considered to be the most important:

In spite of the fact that in a first instance the statement by the opposition was that 'all ways of struggle were legitimate', Vidal points out that the non-violence thesis was imposed over time. This author argues that, in some way, a discourse that came from the Catholic Church and human rights organisations gradually overcame public opinion and became an instrument to hide 'other' forms of resistance. This discourse was shaped around a 'yes to life, no to violence' concept, referring to the violence promoted by extremist groups such

as the FPMR or the MIR. Vidal points out that the discourse came from the Catholic Church as a “cultural authority” (Vidal; 1995: 114), shaping opinion in a way that hid ‘other’ ways of opposing the military regime, which also existed regardless of their acceptance. Moreover, Vidal states the displacing of the word ‘extremist’ towards ‘terrorist’, which was raised by the military and established in everyday vernacular as it was legitimated by the Church. By doing this, the Church compares violence coming from the state’s security mechanisms with the armed resistance, as in the case of the following quote from the editorial of the ecclesiastic magazine *Mensaje*.

The authority’s warrior mentality has led the country to confrontation. This is doubly fatal, not only for the pain and death it implies but also because this way does not lead to democracy either. In the same way we do not accept torture, nor do we accept terrorism. These attempts, which have already meant several victims amongst policemen, seem to us as despicable as the dark terrorism applied by the CNI to safeguard order (*Mensaje*, 11th of January of 1984: 199. Quoted by Vidal; 1996: 116).

Thus, the first element that constitutes the armed conflict in Chile as taboo is its denial. That is to say, instead of armed organisations that decided to resist dictatorship through violence, these military and combatants are turned into ‘irrational terrorists’, without a political vision. Yet it would be necessary to add, in my opinion, that this official discourse does not necessarily achieve its disqualifying objective in public opinion, but rather provokes a sort of double standard. This is because the discourse of ‘terrorism’ was publicly accepted. On the other hand, in many sectors of the population, actions by the armed groups were admired, praised and respected on the sly. In this sense, Soledad as a combatant militant of the FPMR feels proud, but at the same time expresses “I will obviously never speak about it”. Why does not she want to speak about it?

Closely related to the first point, the discourse of 'the cultural authority of Church' is imposed within the resistance to the dictatorship, because, despite the Church's usual anti-communist vision, this institution from the beginning is linked to the defence of human rights, and hence achieves a legitimate respect from public opinion. Thus, the discourse of non-violence and the negotiated exit to democracy was imposed as a political way.

But, this also relates, according to Vidal, to two contingent situations that are going to show the small military capacity of the FPMR, and therefore the slim possibilities of an armed confrontation with the military. These two situations occur in 1986. In July, the military discovered 76 tons of arms in 'Carrizal Bajo',⁷⁶ which was organised by the Communist Party. This situation alerted the security mechanisms of the dictatorship, which applied their entire capacity of action in order to detain those who were responsible of the actions behind this discovery. The second fact was the failure of the '20th Century Operation', in which the FPMR sought to kill General Pinochet, on September 7. The ambush was planned from 1984, following the FPMR consideration that the social climate generated by the massive protests against dictatorship was similar to "a pre revolution climate that would go in ascent" (Verdugo & Hertz; 1999: 11). The reaction by the military to this attempt implied massive detentions, harassing, torture and isolation for many of the detained ones, but the bigger retaliation was what is now known as the 'Albania Operation', undertaken on June 15 and 16, 1987. This military operation consisted in the simultaneous murder of 12 militants of the FPMR, in several places of Santiago.

All of these situations generated a climate of social commotion, in which expectations of the viability of overthrowing dictatorship via the armed struggle were discarded by most political parties, including the PC. In fact, from October 1987, the PC proposes to take "immediate action to disassemble the FPMR" (Vidal; 1995:123). In practice, what occurs is the formal disaffiliation of the

⁷⁶ A location in the North of the country.

FPMR as armed extension of the PC. From 1987, this group begins to work independently.

These facts are relevant because, in a certain way, all of the political fractions, in their majority young people who had had military instruction in Cuba, Nicaragua or even in the USSR, are left isolated from the hegemonic political tendency which is established in Chile. A pacific and negotiated tendency began to be promoted by most political leaders from the opposition, including the PC.

This isolation also manifests itself in the invisibilising that the media makes of the actions by this group, as well as of its demonization through their qualification as 'terrorists'. According to Vidal's interpretation, on the testimonies of FPMR militants of that time

The National Direction of the FPMR had to face two immediate questions: the first of psychological order, to overcome initial disorientation, rage and emotional depressions caused by the rupture of the relations with the PC (since most militants came from families with a long Communist tradition). The second, structural in nature, was to adapt the armed organisation to the political task of captivating masses [...] in other words to convert themselves into a political party. (1995: 128)

With respect to the first question, it is clear that the history of the FPMR is a difficult one to tell, and this is possibly another reason why Soledad does not want to talk about her experience as a militant of that group. She comes from a communist family and, clearly, the history of the FPMR exposes the erratic politics by the PC in that time. They actually called for 'popular insurrection', while on the other hand joining the tendency of supporting the plebiscite, as the 'strategic' way to recover democracy. This situation forced the PC to maintain a double standard preventing them from recognising members of the FPMR as legitimate combatants. By not recognising the legitimacy of the militants' armed resistance as a 'just' war against the dictatorship, the PC left these combatants at the mercy of the disqualification of 'terrorists'. Metaphorically speaking, the PC, as the 'father', left the rebel children to their own fortunes, or the children

disobeyed their father and became independent. In any case, it was a painful rupture.

The second question implied that the Front decided not to “legitimise in the long run their situation as combatants” (Vidal 1995: 138), given that after their rupture with the PC it was necessary to provide the organisation with political sense, as well as to obtain new militants.

Finally, according to Vidal, it is difficult to recover history in this armed group, since many of its militants have opted to remain silent, as in the case of Soledad. In part, because even today some of them have unfinished business with the justice system; or due to the fear of being socially stigmatised as terrorists; in many of these cases even in their families they do not know about their political options. In other cases, this is because they have decided to turn away from that past, which for many of them is painful.

Shall I continue telling you about the family?

Yes, if you like...

In '84 my father was arrested, in a confrontation with police. He's badly hurt and he goes to prison. We have to get out of there because the house is raided and the only thing they wanted was to get rid of us. So we had to get out of Santiago, and be outside a lot. We returned to the apartment in '85 with our mother. To stay, to live, to try to live alone, without a father because it was a really difficult thing, to be without a father. And life continues absolutely committed, there, fighting, every centimetre, trying to do the maximum damage to the dictatorship. And understanding that this struggle, my father might come out of prison. Because, we thought that he was going to stay there forever... Now the three of us go to the Front, at different times, but all three of siblings go. I spent more time in La Jota, because at the same time I had more responsibilities, so I stayed longer, but there came a time when we were all into the same thing. And that's where my brother, in '86, dies in an, in an ...an action with the Front, (*long silence*)... I think that's where a strong tremor hit the family. It was like, you are going through a break up,... before, I think before that really, even with the detention of my father, and the detention of my mother in 85, we thought of it as a growth, about being an adolescent, eighteen years old, nineteen years old, we felt a little immune to, to death, for example. I think a big tremor comes with

my brother's death, I couldn't experience my brother's death here, I was outside Chile, and I recently came back at the end of 87. I went through a very, very difficult mourning because I wasn't there and I couldn't accompany my mother, my brother. My father couldn't either, because he was in prison and they didn't let him attend either (*silence*). So, it was difficult, it was,... it was hard. Because, besides, the family didn't get together again, completely, until 1991.

Until your father came out?

Sure, and my brother came back from abroad. Because my brother was in the funeral and straight away he goes. He leaves Chile, then, the four of us meet up again, in 91. That's to say, none of were there at the moment that my brother died. So that was really hard, I mean, it's the most difficult experience I have had in my life, you know, not only in terms of, ... what that death does when it takes away someone you are so involved with, his presence, in your life, you know, but besides that, the fact that the family was separated, dispersed, and with no possibility of seeing each other again, the impotency of being kilometres apart, and not being able to hug your loved ones again. That has been a really painful road, that ... I think that my father hasn't been able to learn to live with. He hasn't learned to live with that strong pain, and today, a great part of the difficulties that he has, are products of that enormous sadness that he wasn't able to reduce at all (*silence*). There each of us has tried to continue to help, because in reality with my mother we have remained militants, like active participants, keeping things moving, sometimes with objections, angry, with a lack of agreement with our people, but my brother, and my father have chosen to live their lives despite the political activity, and I think that, besides not helping them in any way, hasn't permitted them to go further in overcoming and learning to live with the pain... but all the same we are together and I think that that can change...

Soledad wants to resume the story of her political militancy in relation with her family and how painful it has been for all of its members. Her father, a PC militant was arrested in 1984, hence her family and quotidian life is strongly affected. In her words, "it was a really difficult thing, to be without a father". With the father in jail, and with no expectation of liberation, the three sibling militants of the Communist Youths decide to join the combatants of the Front. We do not know what it was, or what it would have been the reaction of his father to this situation; but we know that while he was in jail one of his sons dies in a confrontation against the military. We know that none of the members of the family can participate in the funeral. This traumatic situation, in which the family

cannot do the farewell ritual properly, leaves a permanent mark in their lives. Indeed, in order to compensate for not supporting each other as family normally does in a situation of loss; they installed a situation of commemoration for the remembrance of Soledad's brother.

Thus, every year the family organises a remembrance ritual in the place where Manuel was riddled with bullets in combat. In this ritual not only his death is remembered, but also his condition as a combatant militant, his option for fighting in the way he decided to. But the commemorative ritual, in which Soledad, her mother, neighbours and PC militants participate, is also a work of memory, a constantly bringing to the present Manuel's memory. It is an attempt to make sense of his death, both in the past and the present.

However, not the entire family shares this rite. After five years from his son's death, the father leaves prison and the family reunites. But the father retires from any political activity and after a strong depression develops an alcohol addiction that continues to the present. The surviving brother as well, as in the case of the father, retires from political activities. Tamara, Soledad and her mother have however decided to continue with an active and committed militancy, as if family integrity and cohesion depends on that. This militancy is also part of the collective memory of the group, a sign of continuity and preservation of the family as political subject. That insistence and perseverance may also be read from a gender perspective, as a gesture to rescue the defeated and submerged in sadness of men (father and brother). Soledad does not lose hope in recovering them, because she is convinced that being outside politics is "not helping them in any way, has not permitted them to go further in overcoming and learning to live with the pain..."

From the perspective of the present, these types of militancy sustained in relationships, traditions and family loyalties could be questioned. It could be argued, as suggested by Margarita when referring to the 'aristocratic' right-wing,

that they are 'stale'. However, in the case of Tatiana, Tamara and Soledad it is not possible for me to make the same statement, because their loyalty is also, to some extent, an act of resistance, of stubbornness, of rebelliousness; resistance not only to the dramatic past they survived, but also to the neo-liberal and well-ordered present on which our flourishing nation swells with pride.

As suggested in this Chapter, activism and political identity are largely related with family history, this is the case for each of the interviewed activists. These memories are transversal, considering that, they are biographic memories told from the point of the view of family, in the sense that Halbwachs (1992) established, but the memories are also part of the collective memory in the sense national history, in other words, they belong to what Chileans reminisce about in our recent past, what Stern denominates "emblematic memories" (2009).

Regarding these senses, we have seen how activists like Margarita and Tatiana, as well as Soledad and Tamara, relate the transition of a family legacy with their strong convictions manifested in the memories, as the origin of their political activism; memories that strengthen the family identity of the group, as well as fortifying each individual's political identity. Margarita, for example, links her activism to the family her surnames (as well as the aristocratic origin of her family). These memories are intertwined with emblematic memories, in the case the memory of the founding family that embody the roots and spirits of Chilean – the families who have a prerogative to influence the building of the nation. In short, the memories of a privileged class that Margarita feels part of. In this same mindset, Margarita's history is also an emblematic memory of the 'natural' social order, which is based on the political history of the country, where events are marked along with the heretic figures that contributed to the construction of the nation, worse show us guard and transmit to their ancestors wisdom and the duty to support the "natural social order".

For Margarita, this natural social order is attacked with the arrival of Frei Montalava followed by Salvador Allende, which will exemplify the memory of expropriation, which her family suffered. Thus, disorder, chaos, the uprising of people. In this sense, Margarita's speech reaffirms and legitimizes (Ricoeur, 2000) the coup as a "necessary reaction" to deal with desertion and lack of political control and lack of political control by a group of people that haven't experienced the government, or have had to do so.

Tatiana is on the other side of this situation, in her story a different emblematic memory. A memory linked to the history of the worker movement that had just started to be written more systematically in the decades of the 40s and in the voice of authors such as Hernán Ramírez Nochochea or Julio Cesar Jobet, both are historians and activists from the left. Tatiana's political biography exemplifies this; we find the working class, hard working, aware of their exploitation but also aware of their agency. A social sector that has been built its political practice in daily life and family, where it isn't lands or social position that is handed down from one generation to the next, but the belief and hope for a better and more just world, based on work and individual and collective will.

In this context, both stories face the coup completely differently. For Margarita, coincides with what Stern distinguishes as "memory as salvation" (2009) or rather, restoration. Salvation from chaos, from the destruction of the nation, in other words, the "natural order"; making Margarita's political activism more dynamic, inasmuch as her active participation in the movements against Salvador Allende's government, even supporting the Military's violence as a way of restoring order and putting things in the place. From this perspective, Margarita's memory, similar to a large number of Chileans, attributes the cause and violence of the coup to the violence of the two previous governments.

Memory as a salvation is a sort of core through which right-wing political parties continue to ascribe to, which wasn't modified by the Rettig Report or the Valech

Report. These reports shed light on the systematic violations of human rights, conflicting with memory as a salvation as it attributed the violence used in the coup as a necessary reaction.

While the stories of Tatiana, Soledad and Tamara are among those that remember the coup as a “rupture” (Stern, 2009), fracture or breakdown. In these three cases, the political breakdown represents the failure of a national project during a time when revolutionary hopes spread throughout Latin America; in Chile this revolution was peculiar, bring a “democratic revolution” which made it more accessible for activists of the time. For this “emblematic memory”, the coup was an annihilation of this project, its authors and protagonists. For the interviewees who came from militant families, who belonged to the Unidad Popular party, the political rupture also represented a biographical change.

Memory post-coup falls into two versions: an official and hegemonic version which remembers political repression; the other, silent, is where Tamara’s and Soledad’s voices appear, and is related with recovering the political dimension of the those who suffered through the repression. Regarding this last form of remembrance, Ricoeur proposes:

The idea of a debt cannot be separated from that of inheritance. We owe a part of who we are today to those who came before us. The responsibility of memory is not limited to keeping material evidence of past events, texts, or anything else, but rather the responsibility has to do with cultivating the feeling of being compelled by other who no longer are, but who once were.. (Ricoeur 2000:120)

Tamara and Soledad’s memory not only helps them represent their current activism or give them meaning to their broken familiar; it is also a collective need that has to do with recovering the political inheritance from those who no longer exist – not in order to repeat the action but to give the present since, to “combine horizons” (Gadamer).

The fear of confronting the “emblematic” memories of “salvation” and “rupture” are founded as they act antagonistically. If we assume that the coup was a material express that culminated with the conflict between class, it is difficult to evaluate if both memories can reach an understanding, especially if the in the present, the trend is to legitimize competing political discourses.

CHAPTER IV: WOMEN AND POLITICAL ACTIVISM: A DOUBLE RELATION

The common perception of how people become involved in politics is full of gender distinctions. In part, this phenomenon can be associated with the political reconfiguration after the French revolution, which was helped by the institutionalization of the 'citizen' figure. According to Carole Pateman, the political foundation of the modern state is based on a social contract (Pateman, 1988) where women are literally excluded from a citizenship condition, yet simultaneously included in the contract due to their relationship with men, particularly to their sexual subordination to them. Indeed, the main goal of the social contract, according to Pateman, is the establishment of a distinction between the public and the private spheres as a way of naturalising women's exclusion from the political participation associated to public spaces, as well as to hide the political implications of such a distinction by relegating women's duties to private spaces that appear to be 'naturally' non-political.

However fruitful women's struggle had been to get the vote and achieve a full citizenship condition during the 20th century, politics has continued to be naturalised as a masculine activity and is often described as a rational, tough or dirty pursuit, unbefitting the so-called 'feminine attributes'. This gender distinction can explain why women can appear to be less active in terms of political militancy, and more 'emotional' or less 'rational' in their political preferences. This is especially noticeable, in the case of Latin American countries where women's political expressions are so impinged by their lifetime commitment as mothers and housewives (Craske, 1999; Taylor, 1997), as shown by, for instance, the well known case of the 'Madres de la Plaza de Mayo' in Argentina.

If we return to Pateman and accept that the dichotomy between private and public is itself a political taxonomy, then it is not strange that women's political activities are full of everyday role performances. In some historical contexts, for instance in the case of Chile during the events of the past

decades, the political face of motherhood became visible not only because it is instrumentalised by women and men, but also because it was a political category in the sense that Pateman describes. Political militancy, then, is an identitarian category which is not pure; it has numerous other meanings, and is particularly a place where other identification categories—including ‘womanhood’ and ‘manhood’—are reaffirmed and questioned.

In her book, *Ser política en Chile: Los nudos del silencio feminista* (1986) (The Female Political Being: The Knots of Feminist Silence), Julieta Kirkwood analyses the political participation of Chilean women during the 20th century. She starts by pointing out the fact that, from their early mobilisations, women’s organised actions have been very strong in some periods, and have completely vanished from the political arena in others. The absence of women’s political action, or ‘feminist silence’, can be expanded and be considered a ‘feminine silence’. According to Kirkwood, women’s political actions have been comprised of two types of mobilisations, which are sometimes in juxtaposition: one against more general oppression, the other related exclusively to oppression against women. Kirkwood describes how, in the early part of the century, women made appearances in the public arena by taking part in different types of organizations, including the ‘*Centros Femeninos Belén de Zarraga*’ (Feminine Centres of Belén de Zarraga) in 1913, the *Círculo de Lectura* (Reading Circle) in 1915, the *Club de Señoras* (The Ladies Club) in 1916, the *Consejo Nacional de Mujeres* (National Council of Women), in 1919, the *Partido Cívico Femenino* (Feminine Civic Party) created in 1922, the MEMCH (a Pro Emancipation Movement), and so on (Kirkwood; 1986: 87-113). These groups transcended social classes: they had specific aims to improve the conditions of women, however they also represented other struggles, such as working class demands, state secularization and improvements in social laws (Kirkwood; 1986:87-113). Having achieved many agreements on how to develop better conditions for women, they also had deep differences among them. Such was the case, for instance, of the *Partido Cívico Femenino*, which after working very closely with other women’s organizations in order to get the vote, became unpopular

until disappearing after advocating divorce law, a project that the *Club de Señoras* considered to be an 'immoral' action against the institution of family.

Kirkwood reviews the history of the Chilean feminism, showing how complex and paradoxical it is, since it involves other women's movements that are not necessarily feminist. She details 'the feminist conscience' (Kirkwood; 1986:25), women-specific demands that have been postponed several times in place of more 'universal' requirements. However, this pushback of self-interest is not merely a sacrificial act; it occurs because of women's answers to several kinds of interpellations, most of which are unassembled or even contradictory. From the perspective of today, it could seem that Kirkwood was asking questions that take for granted the possibility of finding or defining something such as a 'feminist conscience'. Perhaps that was exactly the point of the women's oppression problem: its existence cannot be denied, but it also cannot be seen independent of other types of culturally constructed subjugation, including age, class, ethnic, sexual preferences and other distinctions. In this sense, the political stories that I analyze here will show these contradictions and tensions, along with all their similarities.

Thus, the aim of this chapter is to analyse how gender and political militancy are articulated, one with the other, through the political memories in these narratives. How is womanhood constructed through political activism? How is political activism constructed through womanhood? How could political identities destabilise gender identities, and vice versa?

This chapter has been organised in three sections. The first section, **There is Only One Way to be a 'Chilean Women'**, considers the cases of Margarita, a 'Pinochetist', Rosita and Virginia, militants of the rightwing political parties 'RN' and 'UDI'. The three of them were very active in their participation against the government of Salvador Allende, and their testimonies show the complexity of rightwing activism for women. The second section, **The Others: Cristina and Erika**, analyses the stories of Cristina and Erika, militant combatants of the revolutionary movement MIR. Their testimonies are important as they show the ambivalence of activists in a political

organization of a very masculine character. The last section, **Being Trapped in Gender Scripts**, is a reflexion, comparison and conclusion from the five stories analysed in the previous sections.

There is Only One Way to be a 'Chilean Woman'

In the sixties Chile experienced a deep democratisation process, with social subjects that had previously never had access to political power appearing in the public arena for the first time. During the three years of Salvador Allende's UP government, the confrontations between different social actors became an everyday occurrence. In December 1971 the first public demonstration was organised against the new president. This social protest was called the '*Marcha de las Cacerolas Vacías*' (The March of the Empty Saucepans) by the press. Coordinated essentially by women, the purpose of the march was to protest food scarcity; however, it also became the initial expression of the most emblematic and paradigmatic movement against Allende and the UP coalition: the *Poder Femenino* ('the Feminine Power').

Very little can be added to the work of Michele Mattelart and Julieta Kirkwood with respect to this movement; however, it is necessary to highlight some specific aspects in the stories that I analyse here. On one hand, Mattelart recognises that, for the understanding of this peculiar association against Allende, it is essential to consider the social imperatives on womanhood as constructed in the official discourses in Chile (1977:174). On the other hand, Mattelart insists on arguing that women who participated in these mobilisations were manipulated and used by the male-dominated rightwing parties. These two arguments are not necessary contradictory, but, in my opinion, the manipulation thesis obscures the fact that most of Feminine Power's actions were absolutely women-initiated. The questions that arise, then, are: what kinds of identification were the women making? What elements of a supposed 'Chilean Womanhood' were they representing? In what sense were they used and in what sense they were not?

We already know part of Margarita's narrative regarding how she became a Pinochetist militant, found in the chapter on family. We now return to her because she defines her most active political period as her time as a member of Feminine Power, specifically, as a member of an organization called SOL.

And did you participate during this period in concrete political activities?

I did so in "SOL" and in the march of the pans too. There they beat me too, now that I remember. The cops chased us with their sticks ... sure ... there was every kind of people, people from the Christian Democracy, many. ... Elegant ladies and rightwing people from every social class. Look, let us not speak of rightwing but of people who did not want Allende to continue, because Allende was taking us to ruin. Had he been like Lagos, nothing would have happened. Let us not speak of Aylwin, because he just cocked it up. Sorry ... sorry ... he did not leave the country in good shape. Instead, Pinochet left the foreign debt paid, and all the people who are now in government could enter [the country, after exile] and now they treat Pinochet badly ... and I ... to Pinochet ... whatever he does, whatever he did, I am always going to thank him. I will always be a grateful woman, because if he hadn't 'put on his trousers'⁷⁷, we would have ended badly, I'm telling you. In this country we would have ended badly. Because if there already was hatred in that era, imagine if the same story would have gone on and on, it would have been worse.

Do you think women played an important role then?

Undoubted. Undoubtedly. While men were in their offices, scared like shit, we were 'messaging the chicken house' in the supermarket to get more food, because the JAP⁷⁸ didn't give us food. And, how do I tell you, it was very smart looking people ... and women started to stir up their husbands, all the women of the uniformed ones ... I remember being with the wife of a former president of the republic, throwing corn kernels to the militaries in the military hospital.

Kernels of corn? Why?

Because they were chickens!

Chickens?

Cowards, cowards...

⁷⁷ This is a Chilean expression that means behaving like a real man (a macho man), as in taking control of a situation, imposing a point of view, being bossy, and so on.

⁷⁸ '*Juntas de Abastecimiento y Precio*' were organizations promoted by the state whose objective was the management of consumption goods in order to control scarcity in light of the hoardings and black markets.

I had never heard of SOL before. What was it?

A women's group, we did stuff because the things were very wrong in this country. But we were also part of Feminine Power.

Why SOL?

Solidaridad, Orden y Libertad (Solidarity, Order and Freedom)

And didn't men participate?

No! Nothing! As I told you they were in their offices and we were stirring it up. And it was like a pyramid, so something occurred to the two at the top and they started phoning each other. I remember going to the house of a very high class lady in Vitacura, she was Christian Democratic, and her husband, was a minister with Frei. The meeting was at ten because at ten o'clock the husband would come home. It's clear, isn't it?

They declined to participate, or ... ?

No, they didn't care about it. Sure, afterwards when the thing started they saw that we were going out. ... At the beginning we were a few, the mad ladies who were going out, and then more and more started to join. ... There were nannies who followed us, saying 'Mum, tell me when there is a meeting', servants, modest people. ... And people think the rightwing are all rich people but that's false, there are modest people too. I remember, for the pans, having been with two nannies, looking after them. ... Sure, I preferred that they beat me rather than them, when the cops came over, and the MIR people came over. And all of these things were made in the houses of these ladies, and I am telling you, one of them was the wife of a former president of the republic.

Apparently, there is no written record, or any other reference to SOL, the organisation that Margarita referred to. However, it seems that it was a special group composed of women related to the Christian Democrat Party that were against Allende, but who also went to the street in collusion with '*El Poder Femenino*' with rightwing women members.

The first thing that I want to point out about Margarita's narrative is her tendency to depoliticise her political actions, for instance when saying 'let us not speak of rightwing but of people who did not want Allende to continue'. This is striking because, on one hand, she does not have any problem in placing herself as a rightwing woman, even as a Pinochetist, but when she describes her political concrete actions, she tries to suggest that it was more a reaction 'because Allende was taking us to the ruin'. This situation is also observed in Virginia and Rosita's stories and it can be explained by

considering that the most powerful argument to continue justifying the coup, within the political sectors that support Pinochet actions, is in explicit relation with the chaos and violence observed during the UP period. It is possible to suggest that in Margarita's story there is a kind of ambivalence because she defines her actions in terms of a reaction and opposition (to a disastrous government) and not in terms of her allegiance to other ideas, or class interests in her case, as we know, being a rightwing and aristocratic woman.

In Mattelar's view, this ambivalence is explained by the type of interpellation to which these women responded: by emphasising a kind of universal womanhood, upper class women seek to 'evade the class antagonism' (1977: 189) and promote 'a tangible kind of bounding between women from all social classes' (1977: 189).

Margarita's narrative mentions 'many, elegant ladies', 'very smart looking people', including 'the wife of a former president of the republic', as well as meetings held in 'a house of a very high class lady in Vitacura' [a very posh and expensive area of Santiago]. On the other hand, Margarita tries to establish that the movement was not just one of upper class people, explicitly stating that 'people think the rightwing are all rich people but that's false, there are modest people too'; however, the modest and poor people in her story are represented, basically, by nannies and servants. It is well known today that the women's movements against Allende were not constituted by upper class people alone, but what is interesting here is how Margarita relates the story to show her condition of 'upper class woman'. It is quite symbolic that they are the subordinates (nannies and servants) who ask their patrons details of meetings. Margarita positions herself as a patron while defending them if necessary, as she says, 'I preferred that they beat me rather than them, when the cops came over', as a good patron must do.

Another interesting point is Margarita's description of men's attitudes during this turbulent period. She refers to men that were against the UP as being very passive and frightened of the situation, in her words they 'were in their offices scared like shit'. Margarita does not seem to feel that men

manipulated women into political action at all. She believes the contrary: that it was women who pushed men to do things. However, it is implicit that what women did was 'messaging the chicken house', 'the mad ladies who were around' making 'their' men do something. In her view it was men's duty to change the situation. In this logic, going to the military and throwing them grains of corn, and in some cases chicken's feathers, was a way of appealing to their masculine values to say 'don't be cowards, do something'. These actions accord with Mattelar's explanation.

The literal evidence, between others, that for these militant women of the bourgeois order, the State is a macho business [...] so they don't mind transgressing the normal feminine decorum when they want to insult, in a very sexist way, these army forces that still were loyal to the UP government [...] all these insults as cowards, chickens, even paedophiles it can be summarized in 'you cannot do it', or said in other way 'you are impotents'(1977: 189).

This situation calls our attention if we think of the brutality of the coup d'état and of the terrible and imposing faces of Augusto Pinochet, José Merino, Gustavo Leigh and César Mendoza, representing the 'new unquestionable hegemonic masculinity' embodied in the armed forces and the police. Thus, what Mattelart asserts is reinforced, because in the eyes of rightwing women, soldiers stop being 'cowards' and became 'real men', imposing order appropriately, considering the political circumstances. If the UP members as well as those men who according to Margarita didn't do anything or didn't care, were cowards, Pinochet's figure rises to her as someone to whom 'whatever he does, whatever he did, [*she is*] always going to thank him. [*She*] will always be a grateful woman, because if hadn't worn his trousers, we would have ended... badly'. Thus, to Margarita, Pinochet represents a man who 'can do it'; a 'potent man'.



In Margarita's case, it has to be added that her 'personal' experience as a battered wife influenced her position a lot with respect to Pinochet, because her husband, who was from the Christian Democratic Party, was for her a 'terrible husband' who not only left her to care for three kids, but also hit her often. So, she constructs her husband as 'bastard' and 'unfaithful', and the Christian Democracy Party takes on those mantles by extension. Thus, it is possible to explain Margarita's insistence in establishing that her conspiratorial actions were in association with women militants of this political party, because this experience is, for her, evidence that the DC party had always been disloyal. In order to understand Margarita's view it is necessary to remember that at the beginning of the UP government, the Christian Democracy underwent a first internal debate in which the party becomes polarised into two sectors: those who supported Allende and those who resisted the idea of supporting him and the UP. When Allende was confirmed as president by the Congress, it was with the support of the DC, which finally decided to give the UP an opportunity.⁷⁹ In 1973, a large part of the DC's militants agreed with the coup and supported Pinochet's actions,

⁷⁹ During that period, the internal polarisation of the DC caused militants more inclined to Salvador Allende's policies to leave the party, giving rise to a new organisation called '*Izquierda Cristiana*', founded in 1971, that became an active participant in the UP government.

including former president Eduardo Frei⁸⁰. However, after 1976 the majority of them started to work against the military, and became very critical of the Pinochet regime. One of those who did was Patricio Aylwin, who would become the first president after the dictatorship, elected a year after the plebiscite of 1989 where Pinochet was rejected. Thus, Margarita's insistence is understandable, as an attempt to show the contrast between her political commitments, always faithful and loyal with Pinochet, and the opposite behaviour of her ex-husband and his party.

To Margarita, the military represent the 'correct masculinities' of men who are going to put things in order, who are brave and not scared to take the power to defend the 'patria', men who are 'going to do what they have to'. As an upper class woman she endured humiliation and even beatings in the streets, and the military are those charged with saving and protecting her. This rescue appears necessary even though she knows that she can defend herself very well, describing herself as a pioneer in matching her husband for violence, managing to stand against her family and her own mother to win a divorce and having the fortitude to take care of three kids without any help. In her story, only the military's fighters appear to be stronger than she, as it is their masculinity that she values. She thinks only they can govern, only they are admirable or perhaps enviable.

Before starting Rosita's story, it is relevant to point out that Mattelart refers to insults from rightwing women directed against UP men, and others who the women believed were not doing anything to save the country. However, sexist insults to discredit the 'other enemy' were not only women's behaviour, but a very frequently used tactic in this political struggle. For example, after the first women's public demonstration against Allende, press headlines included the following: *'El toque de queda salvó a las pitucas.*

⁸⁰ It is worth mentioning that a small group of 16 well-known militants of the DC did not support the coup, and published a letter strongly condemning the overthrowing of Salvador Allende and the institutional breakdown. This letter was signed by Andrés Aylwin, Bernardo Leighton, Radomiro Tomic, Claudio Huepe, Ignacio Palma, Renán Fuentealba, Mariano Ruiz-Esquide, Mariano Penna, Jorge Cash, Jorge Donoso, Belisario Velasco, Sergio Saavedra, Fernando Sanhueza, Waldemar Carrasco, Ignacio Balbontín Y Florencio Cabellos (Arrate & Rojas; 2003).

Ahora no podrán quejarse de tener los hoyos vacíos (The curfew saved the stuck-up mums. Now they cannot complain about having their holes empty); «¡Oye momia pituca, cocíname esta diuca!» (Hey stuck-up mummy, come and cook my dick) (Clarín, 3-4/12/71). The first headline refers to the fact that Allende decreed the curfew on the day of the manifestation of the 'Ollas Vacías' (Empty Pots). That day, everyone was required to be at home before ten o'clock; the determination was the use of a presidential power for an emergency, and it would occur regularly during the Pinochet period. Thus, the first of the above headlines refers to the curfew saving posh women, because that night their men would be at home and women could not complain of having 'the hole' empty (a play-on-words referencing the March of the Empty Pots). The second headline is an example of how sexually offensive language crossed political parties, tendencies and classes. In this case, the offence originated in the masculine, 'dick-possessing' press. Here the sexual connotation juxtaposes classes, because the message is directed at 'stuck-up women' and 'posh mummies'. This phenomenon is captivating since this verbal violence will be transformed in material and concrete examples after the coup, through the sexual torture⁸¹ of thousands.

From a German background, of which she is very proud, Rosita's political experience began with her participation in the mobilization against Allende. Today she is an eighty-five-year-old widow, and, along with one of her sons, is a *Renovación Nacional* (National Renovation) party militant.

How did you get involved in politics?

During the UP my older son was in the university, and my husband was working in a bank. During those years one of my daughters got married ... and everything was very traumatic for everybody because the UP government intervened in the bank and my husband had to leave the country and travel to Argentina to work in a financial organization, something like that, and he travelled every weekend to be with us. I spent the rest of the week alone with my children. At the time my eldest son was doing his professional practice at CORFO⁸². ... He was not a leftwing guy, but he was with the UP. And my third son was young, he struggled with the students against the

⁸¹ Torture was not only sexual; however, it was one of the 'normal' procedures, not only to women but also to men.

⁸² Corporación de Fomento de la Producción (Production Promotion Corporation), a state organization created in 1939 with the objective of promoting national productivity.

government. ... So inside my house I got the two forces ... but then between them they never fought because they were very bonded one to each other. ... But both of them were very strong minded ... so you can imagine how much I suffered with this situation and with my husband far away in Argentina. I especially suffered with the younger because he was not violent, but ... but he was always in danger... they were looking for this son of mine ... so I think that that was my first contact with politics ...

And what happened?

We had to go out to ask the soldiers to do something. ... You know, for example, my husband brought me toothpaste, toilet paper, oil, everything, from outside of the country because here in Chile you couldn't find them. ... Then here there was a big disorganization, something so wrong ... so all of us agreed that the soldiers should go out and make orders Because you can imagine making a long, long queue to buy a half pint of oil, and when it was your turn someone saying 'OK, it's finished ... go back'. ... Then you just cry ... because you didn't have food. ... We felt so insecure, not just us, with other women in the neighbourhood we put bells on our front doors, so that in case of something happening to us we would make the bell ring. ... On other occasions, for example, when my older son who was living in La Florida [popular neighbourhood in Santiago] was ill, and I went to see him by car with my sister. And two young guys stopped us and we had to get out of the car and we had to keep our arms up a long time with them saying 'What the hell are these 'viejas momias' (old mummies) are doing here?' ... So, why? Why? We did not do anything. ... Why? ... I don't know

Why did they call you 'viejas momias'?

I don't know. ... Perhaps because we were going by car ... I think it was a class thing ... because people were completely lifted up ... actually I don't know what they were seeking. ... It was horrible, particularly because I was without my husband. ... The workers were very uppity. ... For example, my gardener, who worked in my house for more than 30 years, ... told me one day, 'Don't worry, lady Rosita, because this house where you are living will be mine ... and I'm not going to throw you out, you can stay here, I will give you a room', [long silence] ... You see? ... That happened because they lied to these poor people, they [the UP government] promised them these things. ... I remember that the government gave cards to the poorest people, I don't remember the name. With these cards they could get food ... butter, meat and so on ... and my gardener gave to me half of his ration. ... He was nice ... he said, 'Don't worry, I asked for this house for me'. Because they asked people where do you want to live. ... How they betrayed them. Why? Why they did that?

What happened to your gardener after the UP?

He continued working with me until he died. I buried him and I still see his wife sometimes. I helped them to buy a house after the military

declaration. So people were with Allende because he deluded them, they promised and promised....so people became lifted up...but later they realised that they were just promises. ... Everybody wanted Chile to go back to what it was because those three years were a disaster, a chaos. ... I do not want to remember. ...

Rosita also participated in anti-UP women's mobilizations, but her version is different from Margarita's. In her opinion, men did not take part in the movement because 'they were scared of losing their jobs or of being fired'. Since men were those who provided the family income, it was just 'the normal thing to do' that women went to the street to protest with 'our saucepan'. She places herself in a far more depoliticised position, since 'politics' were something that arrived from outside to the inside of her home, disorganising her everyday life. First, her husband had to leave the country in order to continue his duty as provider. Then, two of her sons became political adversaries. Finally, the scarcity of food and everyday goods made the situation intolerable, thus 'all of us agreed that the soldiers should go out and make order', in which case 'us' can be understood as 'Rosita's family', 'Rosita's neighbourhood, 'all Chileans' and, of course, people of 'her class'.

In Rosita's narrative, 'politics' of the UP government upturned her life dreadfully, and, as we will see later, she still today associates 'politics' with something obscure that she does not like, as well as something that she cannot avoid.

The scarcity of consumption goods was created by intentional actions of rightwing groups, from inside and outside of the country⁸³, and led to a decrease in food production and distribution. During the first half of 1972 the inflation rate was 28%, intensifying to 100% in the second half of the same year (Correa, Figueroa, Jocelyn-Holt, Rolle & Vicuña 2001: 268). The government attempted to stop the inflation through a price-fixing system, which added to the scarcity, causing the emblematic 'colas' (queues) of people trying to buy things at the authorized price. Rosita recalls how this

⁸³ For instance, there were many occasions of food hoardings, striking truck drivers' stopping the normal flow of distribution of consumption goods, these and other actions being paid by the CIA and interest groups who were affected by the policies of Allende or who were simply seeking to make a profit from the flourishing of black markets.

experience at the level of her everyday life became a political matter to her. In some ways her private life became a public matter; or, as Catherine Boyle explains in her text, *Touching the Air: The Cultural Force of Women in Chile*.

When the upper-upper class women of Santiago's *barrio alto* took to the streets with their empty pots their motivation was anger: the welfare of their domain had been seriously compromised, the comfort of their domestic set-up destroyed. The government had failed them on the most basic levels, the level of nutrition. In this instance ... the pot was a symbol ... the empty pot was the representation of the failure of the state to satisfy a basic need ... resulting in the inability of the mother to carry out a key role ... (Boyle in Radcliffe & Westwood 1993:165)

One of the most powerful explanations to understand the women's movement against Allende, besides the upper class strategy, is found in the concept of 'Politicized Mothers' (Craske; 1999: 2). Indeed, most Latin American women's political organisations and actions have been understood under this 'maternised agency paradigm' (Montecino; 1991, Fisher 1993, Radcliffe & Westwood 1993, Jaquette; 1994, Craske; 1999, among others). The paradigm also appears in the voices of our interviewed, however in profoundly different ways.

In Rosita's case, politicised motherhood, particularly through the kitchen pot symbol, was a complex thing to emerge, because, as Mattelart reasonably points out, the upper class women trumpeted their demands as if they were proletarians, as for instance in the following pamphlet's headlines:

Chilean Women
Mr. Allende does not deserve to be the President of the
Republic
Mr. Allende has led the country to catastrophe
We have no bread for our children!
We have no medicine for our ill!
We have no clothes to take shelter!
We have no roof to put over our heads! (quoted by Mattelart;
1977:182)

Upper class women were the dominant group in these mobilisations, and they certainly suffered food and goods shortages like almost everybody else at that time, but as we can see in the pamphlet, the tone is far more dramatic and places them in a terribly poor position, without even a 'roof' to protect

themselves. To Mattelart this proletarianisation of their claims obscured their fear of losing their privilege of being the main consumers in a capitalist system (1977:182). They also addressed the problem to 'all women of the country', and not just to 'some of them'. Thus, the class confrontation was disarticulated as 'scarcity, chaos, detestability, violence, and so on' experienced by everybody and embodied by 'the Chilean women'. In Rosita's story, the development of her feelings towards the UP government can be seen from her distress about scarcity, her fear about 'something happening to us', and her perplexity because of uppity workers, symbolised in her gardener's desire to possess her house.

In Rosita's story, however, motherhood and class are strongly articulated. She was educated to be 'the best wife you can be' and in her case that implied supporting her husband's career, organising the household duties, but, most importantly, maintaining family cohesion in any situation. It is not only her individual upper class benefits that she defends, it is also her family privilege and wealth, the things that gave meaning to her life. In this sense, the gardener episode is allegoric because it illustrates her position as an 'upper class mother'. For the first time in her life, she has the possibility of recognising her gardener as a person who could be her equal, because he is able to articulate a wish that could be the same as hers. However, Rosita is not able to see that; she did not even become angry, upset or scared, but thought that her gardener's delirium was because 'they [the UP authorities] lied to these poor people'. She doesn't recognise any kind of agency at all in these workers who were 'lifted up'. She does not have a problem employing the same gardener after the coup, after 'order' was established, because in his delirium the gardener never forgot his loyalty to her, 'he was nice'. In this alliance between servant and patron, Rosita completely recovered her role as the 'lady of the house', and re-established her duties to take care not only of her children but also of her servants, including her gardener who 'continued working with me until he died, I buried him'.

Rosita's story is the only one that does not place the beginning of her political activities in her family past (parents or grandparents). On the

contrary, she confesses that she 'hates politics' but the son who opposed the UP government, became during the 80's a RN militant 'and of course'. says Rosita, 'me too, in order to support him'. She adds, 'because as his mother, I started to be a RN militant in order to hold up his political activities'. She is very explicit on this point: the only reason for her militancy was her son, especially when he was elected a deputy. In her words, 'I went to the RN meetings, only the ones that were related to my son, because I was very proud of him, so I participate because of him ... because of the family ... not because I like politics'. She also acted in a similar way when her older son, the UP supporter, was arrested the day of the coup. She used all her influences to locate him and to rescue him from the 'Estadio Chile'⁸⁴ (Chile Stadium). She was without her husband, but with a military friend, and convinced the head of the new concentration camp to liberate him. She says of the episode, 'I don't want to remember ... but I never in my whole life will forget his face'. At this point she refused to discuss the episode further and this part of the story is full of silences. However, she emphasises at least two points: that her sons 'never fought between them, because they were very bonded to each other' because she and her husband educated them 'with family values', and the fact that even though her son was 'too idealistic, and because of that, he was involved in the UP' after she rescued him, as any other mother would do, he realised that he was wrong. Thus, in her mind, she saved him not only physically from the concentration camp but also from the bad influences of UP ideas.

Rosita's story is an example that shows us how motherhood is not a neutral category. In her narrative she is, before anything else, an 'upper class mother', a label that is itself political. She knows well that her duties are keeping family cohesion, defending family interests and so on, and also she knows how to exercise power from this place.

⁸⁴ This place operated as a concentration camp and a place for torture. It was one of the most sinister ones, and at the same time emblematic, because it was the place where they detained and brutally tortured the well known composer and singer Victor Jara, who was a member of the Communist Party. Today the stadium has been named after him.

Margarita and Rosita illustrate the upper class rightwing women experiences under the UP government. It is useful to contrast their experiences with a rightwing woman of the working class, as in the case of Virginia. Virginia remains an active militant of the UDI party, and is sixty-two years old.

How did you get involved in politics?

I was born in a rightwing family. Everybody, my aunties, uncles, nieces and nephews, all of them are from the rightwing side ... so I grew up with this. ... For us Jorge Alessandri⁸⁵ was like my grandfather, so ... I participated in '*Patria y Libertad*' (Fatherland and Liberty) ... because the country ... because of all the things that the country was suffering. ... Because we couldn't talk, we couldn't say 'this is my voice, listen to me'. ... I have been very brave, I have to say, because I worked in a firm for 17 years and I went to work there when I was sixteen years old, and there were just three of us who were [workers] from the rightwing side, so you can guess how hard it was. During the UP, when the rest of the workers went to the street to support Allende, I stayed in the factory with the boss, defending what was ours ... because I always got a good job there, because the boss took care of us, he always was worried about keeping us in a job ... So then when Pinochet took power one of my mates said 'Virginia we are fucked', I looked to him and I said 'No, no, we win!' ... I always confronted them, I was always very brave ... my father taught me how to fight for what I wanted and for my ideals ... so I do not like people like those who say, 'I have changed now, I'm here, not there anymore', 'now I don't like this', and so on ... because people with conviction don't change. ... My convictions are the rightwing values ... always ...because I am never going to change. ...

Can you describe these values?

Tranquillity ... tranquillity, order, opportunities, being a better person, a better housewife, a better woman, being responsible, also a lot of opportunities, because to me the rightwing has always represented prosperity. ... So they [her work mates] always pulled my leg and asked me where my farm was, my lands ... because people think that only rich people are from the rightwing. ... And that's not true ... because I'm from the rightwing and my land is as big as this room. ... To me, militancy is related to social work, to help people, to resolve concrete problems. For example I worked in the campaign of this mayor's council, here in '*Estación Central*', and I have a big photograph of him in my office. ... He is my mayor, I'm a trusted person to him. I also work in a neighbourhood organisation and also with the elderly. ... In this way I show others that people from the rightwing have a heart, that we are also human beings, because leftwing people think that we do not have ... In the UP period I used to

⁸⁵ He was the leader of the National Party and became the presidential candidate of the rightwing in the 1970 elections.

rent a small room in an old big house in *'Estación Central'* and in the whole house I was the only one of the rightwing side and when the JAP⁸⁶ gave this card in order to get food they didn't give one to me. ... Why? Why? Because in their opinion I didn't have the right to eat. ... But I never felt hungry. I always found a way to get food so ... I never felt defeated. ... I never ever felt scared, in spite of the fact that my house was marked so many times. They told me that they would kill me, that I was on the black list that they got, but I didn't feel scared because my son was with my mom, so I told them, 'Well, if you want to kill me do it, but I'm not going to change' ... Imagine, today I am a 62-year-old woman, and I still wake up at six o'clock in the morning and take my shower and I go to work. I've still got the energy, I have never been frightened. ...

What did the UP represent for you?

Certainly not Chilean values. These people always worked for their own interests, not for all the Chilean people. ... Resentment, social resentment, because I'm also poor but I've lived my poverty with dignity. You can be better if you work harder. You don't need to see how much other people earn because it is not their fault. Or you assume your poverty or you are always going to live with this resentment that you are going to pass to your children and grandchildren. One day I was in a meeting and someone called me 'vieja momia' (old mummy) and I said, 'Yes, thank you, I'm very proud of that'. I said that because that marked a difference between these uneducated people and me, because I thought that most of the Chilean people wanted to live in peace, in tranquillity, with dignity in the place where, by chance, we live. ... It was all of this rubbish about the 'class struggle' where this holocaust started. I didn't like this tale, I didn't like this story for my children. I just wanted no more bombs, no more fights, no more temper, no more interruption of our job because this or that meeting, because also if you said 'no' they would throw you out. ... All of that was very tiring for everybody. What 'class struggle'? I was fed up with all of this shit; I just wanted to take care of my family, to work in peace, to live in peace, buy normally. ... Can you imagine, for instance, that you wanted to buy food with this famous card that the JAP give you, but you couldn't decide, for example if in your family there were five people and you wanted to buy a chicken they would tell you, 'No, a complete chicken is too much, half is enough'. Can you imagine? Why, why they should decide for us? It is not correct if you work hard to give your family the best that you can, it is your right to buy whatever you want, because you earned this money and it is for your people. Can you see? Why someone is going to tell you what you have to eat or how much? These things were really crazy to me, an aberration. ... That is not freedom, not a free country. ... I was angry. Not scared, but very angry. It is true that we called for the militaries. We did, of course we did. ...

⁸⁶ 'Juntas de Abastecimiento y Control de Precios': "in rough translation, a committee to oversee price control and fair distribution of food and other products" (Chavkin, 1982: 179).

Perhaps the most important difference between Rosita's story and Virginia's is her attachment to and vehemence regarding her political ideas and activities. Her self-identification as an UDI militant and a rightwing person is very strong, since she was 'born in a rightwing family' and she 'is never going to change', but also because she has always been active. She shows her strong affiliation even more than Margarita, who perhaps does not need to be so expressive because she also attributes her political allegiance to her class condition. Virginia does not have this chance.

Virginia's story constructs a different 'rightwing woman'. She is able to admit 'I participated in "*Patria y Libertad*" ... because of the country... because of all the things that the country was suffering.' It is not common for people, in this case a woman, to admit participation in a group such as "*Patria y Libertad*" (Fatherland and Freedom), a violent group associated with the most extreme rightwing, responsible for several sabotages of state property during the UP period, and also an organization funded by the CIA. Virginia admitted her participation proudly. It is a kind of proof that she has 'never ever felt scared', in spite of the fact that, according to her, she was threatened several times. Her story is far more in touch with nationalistic discourses, and in this sense her construction of the 'woman militant' is closer to a warrior.

The nationalist movement '*Patria y Libertad*' (Fatherland and Freedom) emerged into the public sphere in April 1971, led by Pablo Rodríguez Grez. Ideologically the movement defined itself as anticommunist, nationalist and in favour of an authoritarian government. The movement was created mainly to undertake concrete and public actions against the UP government, with the aim of generating the sensation of social riot and chaos (Correa; Figueroa; Jocelyn-Holt; Rolle & Vicuña; 2001). It was also defined as a paramilitary group and members of the group often confronted leftist demonstrators on the streets. Their actions were typically aggressive and its members used to go out armed with 'nunchakus' and Molotov cocktails. The

group was mainly composed of young men related to high and middle classes.

For this reason it is strange that Virginia belonged to this group and was clearly proud to have been a member. The anomaly represented by Virginia's choice of this organisation to demonstrate against Allende comes also from the existence of female-led groups such as '*Acción Mujeres de Chile*' and '*Poder Femenino*'. Why should she choose a confrontational and violent organisation?

Virginia knows that she is part of a minority, constructed as the 'abject other' in the places that she used to inhabit. The majority of her colleagues and neighbours would make her notice the apparent contradiction between her militancy and class condition 'so they [her workmates] always pulled my leg and asked me where was my farm, my lands ... because people think that only rich people are from the rightwing. ... And that's not true ... because I'm from the rightwing and my land is as big as this room'. She needs to establish that there are rightwing people like her who are not rich or high class, but at the same time she knows that her position is held by the minority and that that makes her different, a difference of which she is proud. In her story she constructs herself as a poor but dignified woman. This dignity is based upon accepting her position of poverty 'without envy' or 'resentment', and in facing it with her own effort and individual working ability, and not from that 'rubbish about the "class struggle" from where this holocaust started'. Contrary to Margarita and Rosita, to construct herself as a 'rightwing side and poor woman' Virginia needs to articulate an ideological discourse to which she can devote herself with fervour, since in her case her class condition and her political position are not naturalised. It requires a more elaborate argument than would legitimise her option. This is why she is probably able to directly say 'what "class struggle?" I was fed up with all this shit'.

It is also necessary to consider that, to her, the problems of shortage and rationed food and goods were even more bothersome than to Margarita or

Rosita. 'Why is someone going to tell you what do you have to eat or how much? These things to me were really crazy, an aberration'. Thus she outlines the limitations of her identity as consumer, a condition that Mattelart attributes much more to bourgeois or high-class women.

Mattelart argues that working class women's participation in rightwing movements can be explained by two situations. One is the creation, under the Christian Democrat government (between 1964 and 1970), of the '*Centros de Madres*' (Mother's Centres, from now on CEMA), neighbourhood organisations where women were basically disciplined in the art of motherhood, and which, during the UP period, were also a focus of indoctrination against the government. The second method of participation of women was as mothers, wives, sisters or daughters, as an extension of the miners' and truck drivers' strikes (1977:180). However, this is not Virginia's case, as she didn't participate in CEMA because she had been working full time since she was sixteen and her husband had never participated in politics. Thus, Virginia's agency looks far more autonomous than Mattelart's description. She is not a fragile mother who needs orientation and help; she is not a miner's wife or a worker's, she is a worker herself, a double worker since she works inside and outside of her house. As Virginia says. 'I always do my job well, and participate in a lot of political activities but I never neglected my home and my family'.

However, besides the fact that she presents herself as a very active, energetic and independent woman—not at all fragile or submissive, a woman that just needs 'the correct opportunities' to rise in life—she seems to find these opportunities in people who are in a better position than her. This is the case for people like her first boss, with whom she established an alliance during the UP time. 'I stayed in the factory with the boss, defending what was ours. ...' This is also the case for people for whom she worked as a subordinate, as nowadays is the case of 'her mayor' (as she says, 'I have a big photograph of him in my office ... he is my mayor'). Also on her list is Jaime Guzman, UDI's first leader, for whom she feels devotion. As she expressed, 'he was an apostle'. Of course there is also Pinochet, whom, as

we know, 'saved the country'. Introducing herself as a really tough woman, it is peculiar that Virginia's attachment is only to masculine figures, and that she uses possessive words to describe these connections, for example, 'defending what was ours...' or, 'my mayor', suggests she was an extension of these male subjectivities.

In some ways, Virginia represents 'almost' the perfect woman to the 'New Chilean State' after the coup. Hard working, a good mother, a decent wife, politically compromised, loyal, brave and so on, she fits the image that '*el Poder Femenino*' described:

The Chilean women whose sacrifice, humiliation and heroism safeguarded to Chile the hope of freedom [...] understand that the reconstruction of Chile will be a worthy effort of a patriotic and disciplined people. For this reason '*el Poder Femenino*' calls all Chilean women to, once again, show their inexhaustible spirit of sacrifice. (Quoted by Mattelart 1977:190)

This call to all Chilean women to reconstruct the patria will be part of a bigger discourse related to the creation of a 'modern nation', with 'western values', in accordance with the new regime that the international configuration required. To Virginia, this request had many significances since she found that the UP government 'worked for their own interest, not for all the Chilean people'. Thus the dictatorship represented the opportunity to work for her Chilean 'imagined community', for the values that she thinks are the best ('tranquillity, ... order, opportunity, being a better person') are values that tend to homogenise a kind of 'Chileanhood' apart from class differences, but also ideas such as being a 'better housewife, a better woman' which encourage gender differences.

In my view, however, Virginia's story shows some interesting contradictions. On one hand, she promotes tranquillity and order as a way of life, but during Allende's period she was an active member of '*Patria y Libertad*', meaning she was also responsible for the chaos and disorder of the period. She constructs herself as a fighter rather than as a serene housewife or a frightened woman. Indeed, here her 'womanhood' is constructed in a very

untraditional way, for example, she does not seem to have a problem leaving her son with her mother, where he is safe, and confronting the 'enemy' and 'telling them: well if you want to kill me, do it'. Nevertheless, after the coup all of this warrior's energy will be transformed into a new shape, nearer to the figures of a 'better housewife and a better woman' as the patria administrators required. Indeed, it is peculiar that during the Pinochet period she started to work at CEMA Chile, an organisation commanded by General Pinochet's wife that never attracted her before and that, for the military, became one of the most emblematic organisations to discipline Chilean women.

As soon as the political system was re-established and the rightwing was able to reorganise itself into political parties, Virginia left CEMA and became an UDI militant. Today she understands that militancy is not related to violence or 'messaging around', but, in her words, 'To me, the militancy is related to social work, to help people, to resolve concrete problems'. It even seems necessary for her to demonstrate that she 'works in a neighbourhood organization and also with the elderly. ... In this way [she] can show others that people from the rightwing have a heart'.

Why does she need to show 'that people from the rightwing have a heart'? A possible reading is that a woman like her, a member of the violent group '*Patria y Libertad*', needs to show others that she has a heart. In addition, she had to subordinate herself to the 'new Pinochet order' that she actively supported, and became an obedient member of CEMA. The peculiar thing is that the social work elaborated by this institution was not contemplated as a duty for males who were supporting the regime, thus it was not men who needed to demonstrate that they could be compassionate or sensitive, but women like Virginia. Virginia's rebelliousness was well-channelled and after several years in CEMA she was able to become a proper UDI activist, but always under the orders of a male leader. Perhaps this subordination was the only way that she was able to enjoy being 'in power': through the figure of the 'upper class men'.

The Others: Cristina and Erika

In the same sense in which the UP government changed the life of Margarita, Rosita and Virginia, so did the coup d'état change Cristina and Erika. Both of them were members of MIR, a small, selective party created to produce a revolutionary vanguard. To be a woman militant in this party implied, in some sense, transgressing 'the traditional construction of womanhood', given that, first of all, they had to be 'revolutionaries' without considerations of gender. Thus, for instance, everybody was prepared to go into combat in the case of an army confrontation; the only type of distinction permitted was related to military capabilities. Nevertheless, as our stories will show, the image of an egalitarian party, where all its militants would be at the same level, as '*miristas*' (MIR militants), was the reflection of a masculine uniformity and requirement rather than of the construction of a new 'revolutionary subject' lacking class or gender distinctions.

Cristina's story—a 42-year-old woman, formerly a MIR militant—begins with her traumatic experience during the coup d'état. She remembers her childhood under the UP government in a very vivid way, as a strong experience of community action in her neighbourhood, a working class area in Santiago. She remembers how the coup d'état aborted this enjoyable experience.

They met ... in fact they had a group called Angela Davis, and that group organised diverse activities for children ... and we were the children. I was about seven or eight years old and they organised activities for us such as recreational activities with games, with gifts for Christmas, and we joined them many times in voluntary work in the area: cleaning streets, painting trees ... so the bond with them for me was very important. In seeing their actions, in participating with them in their meetings ... and me being a child ... and I remember having had some affinity with ... especially with the girls. Like some closeness, like affection, they cared about me very much, as the group's little girl, they called to me 'come here sweetie' and I sat on their laps and enjoyed a lot the things that they used to do. So I have the impression that the first connection that I had with the political issue was related to a communitarian organisation, and that brutally and drastically changed with ... September 11, 1973, because many participants of this group were detained, others killed or disappeared. ... Then it was brutal ... I remember that these places were broken into, the houses ...

Hmm, really...

Later, when I became a teenager, 14 or 15 more or less, I started to pay attention to the news, to listening to what was going on ... I learned that some groups were doing things, they were called 'terrorists' ... well, first it was 'extremist', a less violent term, but for those of us who were feeling different, it was like it was well named, because it reflected some level of recognition (laughs). Besides, I always had the sensation that as long as things were catalogued with a negative connotation, they would become more positive to me, more accepted, more possible, I mean that the thing would make more sense. I never believed too much, though ... and that without too much knowledge, I never, never had affinity with the official discourse. I never believed this thing about goodness or about the common good for everything. In that time I remember particularly the CEMA's workshops, for example. In my area it was established, and there were women who participated, and it was a discourse on family, on how beautiful it is, on family being the most wonderful thing, protecting and ... untouchable in terms of values. ... And that openly contrasted reality, I mean you could see aggressive families too, beating, bad treatment, with conflicts, not families loving their children very much either ... then it was the absolute opposite. Thus, all that was negatively valued by the '*milicos*'⁸⁷ was positive to me, the contrary. And it was in this same context that ... I remember having seen in the newspaper, for example, actions taken by the MIR, and asking my mother, and she with no answer, but neither judging nor disqualifying that sort of ... action.

Asking your mother what?

Having asked her, directly, I mean, 'look mama', to having shown her the paper and having seen that sort of headline, that would make an impression on you, such as, 'triple assault on a bank, by the MIR', I mean, it was a sort of impressive, heroic thing ... I mean, three banks at once, then my mother ... not very categorically disapproving either in terms of that. And on the other hand, my mother was very suspicious of some sectors of women, despite being a woman fairly ... I mean, working class and all of that, she was very clear about that on family was a lie, and in spite of the fact that she participated in CEMA at some point, it was to see whether it offered alternatives for survival ... or to see if it could help to develop activities for her to generate any sort of resource ... sewing for instance. ... That in that time were the sort of courses given in CEMA ... I remember having seen my mother participating, but she wouldn't believe the discourse, or make it a part of hers.

The beginning of Cristina's narrative is, in a symbolic sense, a contraposition between two different family paradigms: the one that she lived in during the

⁸⁷ '*Milicos*' is a colloquial, somewhat disrespectful way of referring to the members of the military.

UP government, and the other one that the dictatorship wanted to promote through CEMA. In the first version, family is understood as an instance which is open to the neighbourhood, where parenthood is shared with other people in the community as, for instance, by these young people, including men, that Cristina describes as a group that 'organised diverse activities for children ... and we were the children'. They even made Christmas presents for them. Thus, to her, all of this became a strong collective experience, a vibrant memory and an important part of her identity. In this experience, for Cristina, the conception of family as a private figure is displaced by a public conception of family life where communal participation is highly required and appreciated, and where the genderised version of parenthood in the mother/father dichotomy is much more vague.

The second version, which was installed as an official discourse after the coup, is the traditional family model and its values. Promoted by the state through the CEMA, the principal actor of this family's refoundation would be 'Chilean women', enlightened in their more important role, the one of 'being a mother'. But, what is considered as a woman's duty is maternity, as a collective and cultural signifier. On one hand, this will be a public requirement; however, on the other hand, the exercise of this duty is expected to happen in the private sphere. Thus, taken by the mom's hand, the family goes back home, something that Cristina will certainly reject.

Cristina grew up putting herself in antagonism with this authoritarian model. She never believed the 'discourse on family, of how beautiful it is, or family being the most wonderful thing, protecting and ... untouchable in terms of values ... and that openly contrasted reality'. Cristina's resistance to the new order in her everyday life will be transformed into a strong conviction, in which 'all what was negatively valued by the "*milicos*" was positive to [her]', and in this time the 'extremists' represented by the MIR will be the ones most persecuted by the dictatorship, and of course the most desirable ones to Cristina.

In a way, Cristina's resistance to her new everyday life will also be an opposition to the new 'official womanhood' requiring mothers for the *patria's* new citizens. Since she was a child, she lived this conflict through her mother's functional but distrustful relationship with the CEMA members; and, through her mother's apparent acceptance, she will search for new identification subjects and new ways to construct herself. This is a story of how resistance will be transformed into confrontation and struggle. And from a gender point of view, it is a story of how Cristina will displace herself from CEMA, a feminine symbolic inscription, to align herself with MIR, an 'extremist', masculine organisation.

In her narrative, Cristina names four painful circumstances that marked her life, and, in a way, determined her political decisions. For now, I will address two. One was 'September 11, 1973, because many participants of this group were detained, others killed or disappeared', which to her means that part of her family was disintegrated. The second painful circumstance marks Cristina's initial participation in the MIR. It happened at the beginning of the 1980's, when she was about 17 years old. She describes it in the following terms:

From the Christian community, I began to work with children in the '*colonias urbanas*' (urban colonies)⁸⁸, and I started to develop a connection with fairly extreme poverty situations ... the drama of '*campamentos*' (camps)⁸⁹ and really it was very hard, for them and for us. To face, for example, starvation hours ... and I remember the mud and so much cold and the little kids without shoes and all of these very sad things, I lived all of that with them, and that thing was kind of feeding our desires for rebellion, because at the end that was what it was about. But I also remember that era as a very beautiful one for me, because I was working with the kids. The kids came to my house ... and I went out every weekend, every Saturday we were at the '*campamento*', because at the beginning the '*colonias urbanas*' were conceived only as two weeks' work during a holiday, but the

⁸⁸ The urban colonies started to operate at the end of the 70's. Promoted by the Catholic Church, their objective was to develop social work, particularly with children, in the poorest areas of Santiago, usually during holidays or summer time.

⁸⁹ The camps were and still are massive human settlements offering very precarious conditions. Usually the urban lands where the camps are established were other private or state properties, taken by people just arriving there and occupying these lands ('*tomas de terreno*').

NGO where I was volunteering felt the need to extend that period. Then they offered a workshop on children recreation. Every weekend, a group of little kids and teenagers went to this workshop, and we worked with them, supporting them in their school homework. Then we organised the children into small groups, because they were so many, and I was in charge of the group of the younger ones, of seven-year-old kids, and I worked with them on their homework. We painted, I taught them to add, to rest, to read, and my little group was my little group, my kids were my kids. I mean every weekend we met, then I started to establish tremendously important affecting links with them. I was the auntie, 'Auntie Cristina', they would say. 'Auntie Cristina, can we do that?' 'Auntie Cristina, can we play?' And we played a lot. Then I was supporting them for the school, but also for play, and at night, on protest days, the children helped us to organise the protest. They also got involved in this stuff. Well, one day, around 1984 or 1985, this '*campamento*' was moved, taken away by the cops, they took different families to different places, far away from each other, and we never met again. ... That was a punch, a second punch. At least to me it was terrible, because I'd never see my children again. Imagine, one year bonding with them. It was very painful, because I have a very strong bond with children, very strong ... very strong. ... That gave me a lot of pain [she cries for a moment]. ... I lived that as a second big punch, a punch where it was more painful ... I think that the little kids marked me, a lot, because they arrived with their youngest siblings and we had the possibility, too, of giving them milk and a piece of bread with cheese, for them it was ... 'Fuck! Great!' Imagine ... and then they take them away, separated, and I can't see them anymore. ... That was ... the minute in which, kind of ... there was nothing else to be done. I mean, only the militancy was left, only a militancy fairly more radical, not a militancy for negotiating as in the present terms, but a far more decided one, far more. ... Because in that era, in general, all of us who participated with the children in the '*colonias*', we were all converging to political militancy, all of us, and all at once too, very radicalised. I mean there were no middle points, and really there were not. They were people who were mainly in the MIR and ... communists. ... So that, in reality, after it wasn't possible to continue with the work with the children, I decided to dedicate myself one hundred percent to militancy.

This part of the story can be interpreted as a kind of repetition in Cristina's life, a second disintegration of her 'extensive family', but here she was not the little girl anymore, she was in a parental role, a kind of 'social mother'. In the beginning, she explains how almost all of her mates who worked in the '*campamentos*' with children were gaining a consciousness of the extreme poverty, and how this experience 'was kind of feeding our desires for rebellion' and mobilised them to get involved in political parties.

Nevertheless, this strong pain—the impossibility of continuing to work with her ‘kids’—caused Cristina to get more involved in militancy.

It is not difficult to make a parallel between Cristina’s reaction with the genderised description of a ‘furious and uncontrollable mother’ when she feels that her kids are in danger, or the hurt that she feels when they are being taken far away from her. The narration is very clear here. ‘To me it was terrible, because I’d never see my children again [...] that gave me a lot of pain’. Usually it is expected that mothers behave in this way more than fathers. In this sense Cristina’s reaction can be seen as almost natural. In actuality it is, according to her story, the cause of her most radical militancy: as she says, ‘There was nothing else to be done. I mean, only the militancy was left, only a militancy fairly more radical, not a militancy for negotiating as in the present terms, a far more decided one, far more’.

There is no doubt that Cristina’s profound pain is genuine. However, it seems that it is not enough to justify her radicalisation and her later commitments in the party. Her story is told in this way to be understood as a normal reaction, but not everyone facing a similar experience would take the same decision. Of course, there is not one cause or one origin for explaining the way in which she became a MIR militant. It seems that the situation is more related to the process of identification and disidentification in different circumstances and contexts. For instance, her sorrow for losing ‘her’ children can be added to her first loss, an important part of her childhood. In her words, ‘I lived that as a second big punch, a punch where it was more painful’. This second punch was the disintegration, again, of her strong sense of communitarian belonging, and it was lived as a second obligatory abortion.

If we consider the way Cristina describes her childhood, it is possible to explore other aspects of her identity.

The other thing that I remember, which also influenced me to get involved in the MIR in the way that I did, is related to my childhood games, where boys and girls games were not differentiated very much. I mean, between wanting to play the gunners, one of the

recurrent games, or playing with marbles, or having a spinning top, or climbing up the roofs, or the grid, or walking shoeless in the street, or playing with water, they were all games where there was no difference between boys and girls. Especially after tea time, all of us went out to the street and we played whatever we wanted, a lot of ball games. Boys joined us in jumping rope, and they would teach us how to play 'payaya' with small pits, which was a very entertaining game. ... Then, that also kind of allowed me not to make many distinctions between male and female playing, since that wasn't, at least, my experience. And on the other hand, I gathered quite a good physical condition and abilities. I mean for everything. I was very naughty, a risk taker, ah ... very crazy in terms of not having a restriction playing with them. Then, later, sure it wasn't a game anymore, but I felt like an equal.

Do you remember the first time you held a gun?

Yes, I do. It was terrible. ... I don't know if the concept of terrible equates to what I felt, but it is curious because it is a kind of attraction, of strong attraction and ... like something very important ... one feels important ... feeling also that from that moment you were even with the *milicos*. I mean ... because when they strike, they would attack you with guns, so that now you felt that you were going to strike and you were going to attack with guns. For me it was that.

Contrary to the most common perception of the MIR, of having been a very masculine party, not only because of its ascription to the armed confrontation and the cultural associations between guns and men, but also because of the fact that its central committee and all of its leaders were men, Cristina never felt any kind of discrimination that other female militants did. For instance, in Vidaurrázaga, 2006, the MIR is described as a very masculine party where women as a specific need were never considered. On the contrary, Cristina, at the interview's end, despite recognising the absence of women leaders, thinks that in the everyday confrontation 'it was demonstrated in facts, that it wasn't a problem, that women could do the same as men, that it wasn't an impediment'. She is aware of the fact that her position meant some kind of gender transgression, which she assimilates the same way she did during her childhood, never taking too much attention of gender distinctions, since to her 'boys and girls games were not differentiated very much'. Thus, she extends this experience to her militancy where she always felt that she could do 'the same as men'. Here, however, we see the paradox of Vidaurrázaga's argument and Christina's. Why does Cristina need to show that she can do 'the same as men'? And more

importantly, why does she think that to 'do the same as men' implies a kind of egalitarian relationship? Is it not the case that in her story she rejects the traditional woman's role promoted by the dictatorship and makes a gender transgression? In this logic, it is exemplary the way she describes the recurrent game of 'gunner' in her infancy and, later on, the way in which she remembers the first time she held a gun in her hands, feeling completely empowered. More exemplary is the fact that, as a parallel to her more active and clandestine militancy, Cristina started to work every morning as a servant, in a house located in a posh area of Santiago, so that her morning job would provide her with a feminine mask (since working as a cleaner, servant or nanny is considered a 'woman's job'), a perfect cover for her 'real' commitment as a MIR fighter.

If we consider the three testimonies that Vidaurrazaga analyses, we will find a different point of view to Cristina's. There, women felt attached to the party's structure—and actions without women's voices and particular necessities—for instance the issues related to relationships between party members or maternity⁹⁰. Particularly in respect to this last point, 'maternity' became an emblematic issue inside the party in the 1980's, while the '*Operacion Retorno*' (Return Operation) was being implemented. It is necessary to remember that around 1977 the MIR was practically disintegrated, with its members completely dispersed, most of them killed or expelled from the country. At the end of the 1970's a kind of resistance started to be coordinated from outside the country. Militants spread around different countries were asked by the central committee of the MIR to return to Chile illegally and to reorganise the armed struggle against Pinochet after undertaking military training in Cuba. (Vidaurrazaga, 2006; Vidal, 1995; Valdivia, Alvarez & Pinto, 2006) These three women took part in this operation, and their decision changed their view on MIR, since they had to leave their children in the charge of other people, without whether they would see them ever again⁹¹. In their testimonies, they criticise how the party's

⁹⁰ The different versions between gender dynamics inside of MIR, is also an example of the big debate inside of feminism about equality and differences.

⁹¹ A caring system to fighter's children was implemented in Cuba.

preparation in resolving their problems as ‘women militants’, in part because the central committee of the MIR, composed only of men, never considered that women, particularly with children, were going to take part in this operation. They always assumed that it would be men who were going to fight (Vidaurrázaga, 2006). In this way, for these women, the party constituted a masculine structure.

Most women who participated in the ‘*Operación Retorno*’ left their children with relatives or in Cuba, and quickly became pregnant, even in the very extreme and unsafe circumstances they were in. As a team, the ILAS members⁹² asked themselves about the origin of this phenomenon, about why this would happen in such circumstances, and why these women—aware of the big risks that they were taking—still carried on with both the pregnancy and their clandestine militancy. They concluded that most of these women, consciously or unconsciously, were feeling guilty about having left their children, and in some way became pregnant to compensate for the loss of their children; in other words they couldn’t cope with this type of ‘far away maternity’ identity. This analysis is interesting since it proposes a difficulty for these women to deconstruct the genderised ‘maternity role’. However, this analysis ignores the role of male militants in the decision of having children or leaving them, in the context of a violent confrontation.

On the contrary, Cristina’s story doesn’t seem to recognize gender conflicts in her militancy. Nevertheless, there is one small passage that can be interpreted, perhaps not as a conflict, but at least as a contradiction. In 1986 Cristiana was arrested and jailed with other women. She remembers the episode in this way:

Of all of the things I did, and of which I participated, I don’t regret any, because I was convinced that the armed struggle was the only solution for what we were living. But, actually, I am ashamed when I remember the time I was in jail and I met many women, political prisoners like me, at some point we were around 52, and I think none were as bad as me, in the sense of doing so much messing.

⁹² Based on the interview with the physiologist Maria Isabel Castillo, a specialist in treatments for people who have been tortured or who have returned to the country after several years of exile. She is a member of the ILAS institute for mental health, Chile.

Bad? What do you mean?

In the sense of making trouble, setting bombs. To have put bombs in this country ... I remember to have set ... I don't know how many ... blowing away high tension towers, blowing train lines, I must have blown away more than two kilometres of train lines (laugh) and let's go putting bombs, making trouble, carrying a "fierro" (gun), carrying a machine gun. And so many times ...

In the context of imprisonment, Cristina confronted her experience with other women militants and it is here where she concludes that she was the "bad" one. Why does she use the word 'bad'? Why does she think that she was the worst? In her narration she seems to be very clear and convinced about her political option, where the armed confrontation was not only a reaction but also an ideological conviction, thus, why did she then, suddenly, describe herself as 'bad'? It looks like a word is missing in her sentence, 'nobody was as bad as me' meaning 'none of these women'. She is comparing herself with the rest of the female prisoners, associating 'bad' with 'setting bombs', carrying guns and 'other things like that', presumably violent things, that years before she constructed as being 'heroic things'. It can be argued that in Cristina's narration she is connecting the concept of 'bad women' to the use of violence, but that notion appears in her story only in the much genderised context of jail.

Before she was arrested, she describes herself as a 'good militant', as a solitary MIR fighter, but once in prison, a state institution, where female political prisoners were confronted with the dictatorship discourse on 'womanhood', she became a 'bad woman'. Cristina explicitly verbalises that she does not regret what she did, speaking from her militant identity, but when she says that she feels ashamed when comparing herself to what other militant women did, she speaks from her 'jailed militant women' identity, articulating in a completely opposite direction, making the conflict apparent.

There will be two other situations in the life of Cristina that she describes as third and fourth punches that mark her: one is the death of her boyfriend at the beginning of her clandestine militancy, and the other is the break-up of

the MIR. With respect to her boyfriend's death, she does not say very much. She meets him when both were clandestine, and both know the big risk they were taking; they used to talk about what would happen if one of them died. When police kill Mauricio in a street confrontation, his death reinforces Cristina's convictions, as she explains, 'I could not defraud him, I should continue with more reason now'.

Cristina and Erika, being both militants of the MIR, met for the first time in prison. They lived together under this institutional roof for almost five and half years. Belonging to an older generation, Erika was already a militant by the time of the coup d'état. She was a medical student, the same as her partner and boyfriend. She was 'enjoying the UP party' when the soldiers made their rough eruption into the national landscape. From the beginning of the dictatorship she worked and helped in different ways, basically in relation with the '*Vicaría de la Solidaridad*', while carrying on with her studies. Slowly, she began to do some more clandestine work for the party, as for instance in contributing to the edition of "*El Rebelde*" (*The Rebel*, a kind of weekly clandestine newsletter by the MIR), until she was required to become a full time clandestine militant.

How was it that you decided to become a clandestine militant?

I don't know, really. I think that Juan Carlos helped me to define myself, finally, but I had the impulse before ... besides, we had been instructed a lot on the social thing, I think that there was a life project together which we finished to state there, and which influenced the decision ... of militating more actively, which was actually a commitment, because I never wanted to be a militant. ... And in that decision I think that my partner was key, our life project together. Otherwise, perhaps I would have continued to help or doing things like that ... then we go into clandestinity together.

Did you ever hesitate?

Yes, when they said 'you go to the military structure', then I said 'I am not able to kill anybody', I remember that I said that, then I talked to Juan Carlos, I told him, 'You know, I don't think I am of any use for this, because I cannot go with a gun making assaults'. I don't know ... but then he told me that I was supposed to be for backing, that I was not going to be the '*mujer metralleta*' (shooter woman) or something like that, that I was for supporting or backing the others. The medics, that I had to organise the medic structure, that is to say that I was

actually going to save lives. ... That kind of calmed me, because I didn't see myself with a gun killing a cop; that made me feel an internal contradiction. In the end I did both things, I saved lives, but I also participated in attacks. ... Perhaps the worst thing was that my partner fell much before I was arrested in a fight. He fell in 1979 and I lasted a few more years clandestinely, and there, later, I had another partner, and when they killed my second partner I was arrested in that event. ... It's rare, but I can tell you that Juan Carlos is the love of my life, the most important one, together with the one I have now. I had other relationships, but not as strong as with Juan Carlos. ... I remember going walking [after the death of her partner] to the agreed point to receive my orders ... and I thought, 'Where the fuck do I go like this?' And it was that I couldn't cry. I could not arrive crying to the place. Crying is not proper for a militant. ... I don't know if it was me who demanded that of myself, or if it was a tacit thing, I don't know. And later, with the second loss, the one of my second partner, there I felt imprisoned, and my comrades there offered me a lot of emotional support. And I think that that helped me a lot to get over my mourning. I cried and cried and cried. ... It was an accumulated crying...

Accumulated?

For the deaths... for Juan Carlos's death. In that time I thought that the bourgeoisie relationships were rubbish, I found them terrible, like the typical bourgeois thing of doing hidden things ... I had no problem in not getting married, and the matter of children ... I never had the nerve to have children; I never got the nerve to have children whilst I was militating under those conditions. ... I took preventions, and then when I wanted to, I couldn't, but in that time I took preventions. I didn't have the courage to have children, because I thought that if I had a child I would have had to go back to my mom's house, because I didn't imagine myself with a baby in clandestinity.

And that decision? Wasn't it painful?

I never felt the imperative necessity to have children until when I got pregnant now, recently. Vicente [her current partner] raised the idea of having children, and I said, "Ok, it could be." And when we started the project there I started to get enthusiastic about it. And well, I got pregnant many times and all were losses, and what do I know, it was kind of very sad, but ... but perhaps because of the fact of not having children ... kind of that not even was an issue anymore. ... I don't know ... It has been difficult, but it has also been a discovery that has taken me about ten years. I mean ... to find out that it is very important: the relationship. Because before it was instrumental to the project, however in love you could feel ... if tomorrow your partner said to you, 'You know what, we have to separate because the party has told me to go to China, and you cannot go to China'. Fuck, I will suffer it, but well ... it was assumed that the relationship was not the centre of your life. ... And suddenly, in this recent time I assumed that it is, that I want my relationship to be one of the things ... maybe the most important thing in my life, and that gives it a different content ...

of accepting that I want it that way, and that it is not wrong that I want it that way, and that it is not to be petite bourgeoisie or something that they would criticise, but something that I assume so, and that I want so, and I have to ... I don't know, kind of that I begin to fill myself with that content that was badly regarded by the imposed party morality instead. I mean, you have to build a new morality, a value thing of your own. ... Now it is mine, with all the flaws it may have.

Despite Erika being a militant of the MIR before the coup, her militancy had occurred in the context of the university, as a consequence of a time that she remembers as a politically effervescent one, as well as a sort of social concern she held since she was a child. After the coup, her narrative turns into one in which her militancy is, at the same time, the story of the love of her life.

Paradoxically, Erika decides to commit to a much more active and clandestine militancy, after her partner's request. She says, 'I never wanted to be a militant ... and in that decision I think that my partner was key, our life project together'. She accepts and understands that political commitment to be the couple's decision. However, from the beginning there was a contradiction in that decision, as it appears later in Erika's narration, because clandestinity implied being one hundred percent available for the party's decisions, where personal plans had no place, so that if the party decided that they had to be at different fronts, and had to separate, as Erika said, 'Fuck, I will suffer it, but well ... it was assumed that the relationship was not the centre of your life'. Effectively, that was what was supposed, that was the desirable thing. She knew that, however, in her narration, her militancy turns into the following of her partner Juan Carlos's steps. Even when she hesitates because she thinks that she 'didn't see [herself] with a gun killing a cop', it is he who convinces her, he who tells her that her role will be another one, although presumably she would know that that was not true, as in clandestinity the conspirator's activities were decidedly violent in character. Thus, through her narration, Erika's militancy turns less combative and more traditionally romantic.

Another interesting element to highlight is the strong criticism that she makes of 'petite bourgeoisie' relationships, among which were the couples' relationships. In contrast with 'this recent time [in which] I assumed that it is, that I want my relationship to be one of the things ... maybe the most important thing in my life'. If we consider that Erika comes from a fairly well off bourgeois family, in contrast to Cristina, who comes from a working class family, it is reasonable to think that her fear of being criticised for that was greater, since in her case being a militant of a party associated to the extreme leftwing, implied an even stronger rejection of all that 'content which were badly regarded by the imposed party morality'. In her case, the couple's love had to be subordinated to the interests of the party, even if that happened in a contradictory and painful manner. It is only at the present time that she is able to defeat that feeling, considering the couple to be something important, 'maybe the most important thing in [her] life', not a bad thing to do, 'It is not to be petite bourgeoisie'. And it is melancholically, from a phantasmal past, that Juan Carlos was and still is the love of her life.

After Juan Carlos' death in 1979, Erika continued as a militant and got involved with a new partner in the party who also died at the moment she was detained in 1985. She remembers, 'I cried and cried and cried ... it was an accumulated crying...' and then she adds, 'for the deaths ... for Juan Carlos's death'. The minute she is taken prisoner and is forced to stop being a combatant, she allows herself, for the first time, to express the pain that death, particularly the death of the 'love of her life', caused her. It is in this context, surrounded by comrades who offered her 'emotional support', that she can start her mourning. Before that she could not cry, because the same as the saying that 'men don't cry', combatants don't either. In Erika's words, 'it is not proper of a militant'. In some way, jail abruptly stops this rigorous militancy that was never an individual project. This is why Erika, later in her narration, comments on how being detained was almost a relief, and her time in jail not as bad as her clandestine life.

When Erika says, 'I never had the nerve to have children, I never had the nerve to have children whilst I was militating under those conditions,' or, 'I never felt the imperative necessity of having children,' she is not telling us that she did not want them; indeed, it appears she thought about the issue seriously, but at that moment maternity was not only incompatible with her political activity but also with her romantic relationship. Had she had children, she would have had to leave both her militancy and Juan Carlos. If, at that time, she made the decision to use birth control, that does not imply that looking at she regrets it today, in spite of her particular experience intending and failing to have a child with a new partner. However, her maternal desires appear to be partially alleviated, in her narrative, when she remembers that she met Andrés, the son of Juan Carlos from a previous partner of his, who had grown up with his mother in France. The child, today a psychiatrist, travelled to Chile after the dictatorship, looking for traces of the father he never met, and found Erika.

And it was a very beautiful thing because he was not angry with his father, not like, 'This bastard who abandoned me', because he didn't meet his father, but he doesn't have that feeling. ... I think that also in that way you go completing this mourning. ... He looks very much like him; he looked the same as Juan Carlos when I met him, it was such a weird thing ... but very nice. ... It was very beautiful to meet him. His name is Andrés. Now I feel as if I have him again. ... I mean, I am in love with a new partner anyway, but...

What a hard experience, isn't it?

Meeting his son? Yes ... but beautiful.

Meeting Andrés was very comforting to Erica; it was almost like meeting Juan Carlos again, because through his son the father was not completely dead. She explains that Andrés does not have any kind of resentment against his father for abandoning him, and she values this gesture; it seems that she probably once felt 'this bastard who abandoned me,' but never allowed herself to articulate this sentence, and now she does through the voice of Andres. This idea seems to be reinforced later, when she says, 'I think that also in that way you go completing this mourning'. Andrés never had a father, his loss is different: he is looking for the image of an absent father. The one who really needs to mourn is Erika, who had refused to let

Juan Carlos go for a long time, even today when she has a 'new partner', who is not really new because he has been with Cristina for almost 10 years. She still says, 'but ...' and uses the present tense to say, 'Juan Carlos is the love of my life'.

Erika's story is made through her political memories, interwoven with a love story that became possible because of her militancy and developed in a way in which it was always a project of two; and that never changed. In some way, Erika today regrets part of her past, particularly the subordination of her relationship to the party requirements; she knows that she couldn't be clandestine again in her life. But, in spite of that, it is unfair to reduce her political commitment to a love story, because both things are articulated together. Erika's melancholy is not just a personal inability to accept her first love's death, it is also a superposition of several losses. Not only is Juan gone, so too is the relationship's social and political project of building a better society through MIR.

Before closing this section, it is necessary to indicate that Cristina's and Erika's experiences were not part of the huge women's movement against Pinochet that was occurring at the beginning of the 1980's as a solid and confrontational social mobilisation. Their experience is part of what Hernán Vidal calls 'a taboo', the taboo of an armed resistance against Pinochet, because that experience was not only dramatically crushed, it has also been systematically made invisible by the reconstruction of the period (Vidal; 1995).

Being Trapped in Gender Scripts⁹³

The five testimonies analysed above are very different from each other, showing that it is very difficult to reduce political experiences to a single category, like 'women'. Class, age, race and, in particular, everyday life contingencies will also influence these experiences; thus, the point in this

⁹³ I have taken this headline from Diana Taylor's book *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's 'Dirty War'*. I have a high opinion on the chapter that has a similar headline, because of the wise way of describing what happened to politics and women in Latin America.

section was not to show that 'women' have similar behaviour with respect to political matters, but, on the contrary, to show how from these different experiences and situations, different types of 'womanhood' are constructed, or reinforced, and sometimes also displaced.

Virginia and Cristina showed, in their narratives, that both made a sort of gender transgression while taking their political options: one, by using violence, and the other through becoming very active and enthusiastic militants. Both suffer a sort of unconscious questioning of their identities as women. Virginia, because of her anxiety to show others her 'good heart', and Cristina because of a contradiction between not regretting what she did, and simultaneously feeling 'ashamed' and 'bad' when comparing herself to other militant women.

It is also necessary to consider the difficulties of becoming involved in activities with a political ascription that are not supposed to correspond to your class condition, where demanding commitment needs to be shown, as in Virginia's and Erika's cases. Virginia's way was to make a strong alliance with upper-class rightwing males. On one hand, she transgresses part of the 'traditional gender behaviour', being a '*Patria y Libertad*' member and never feeling completely comfortable in CEMA Chile, a 'women environment'. On the other hand, this situation can be read as Virginia's preference to be subordinated by upper-class males rather than by upper-class women. Alternatively, this may have been the only way to be on the masculine front, having metonymically, at least, the experience of exercising power.

In Erika's situation, the contradiction between her class condition and her political ascription will directly affect her 'woman identity', since she strongly rejected all of these things which are constructed as 'bourgeois', including maternity and relationships. These were things that for Cristina, a member of the same party but with a different class background, never became an issue because she constructed her maternity as a kind of 'collective parenthood' and also because she did not need rejecting any 'bourgeois deviations' since she was a working class woman.

Another interesting point is maternity as a political signifier. In Rosita's case, the traditional upper class woman's role as a family pillar is reaffirmed and used in all of its manifestations. In Erika's position, however it will be repressed; she did not have children because she found it incompatible with her militancy, but she also found it incompatible not only because of her clandestine condition, but also because, presumably, she was constructing maternity in the same way as Rosita, meaning children are a women's business. Perhaps, an interesting maternity signifier's displacement made by Cristina in her story, is a sort of common parenthood that destabilises the traditional woman/mother or man/father role; since she had 'her children' who were not biologically related to her, not even legally adopted, when she took care of them as part of the community works and as part of a youth team, composed by young men and women, where she was 'one parent more'. In this way she is strongly questioning the CEMA's discourses about the traditional role of motherhood and family.

Without doubt, women's political activities dislocate the proper concept of politics, because they destabilise the public and private dichotomy. In particular, issues such as maternity, relationships, the use of violence, or the discussion on the type of activities that women develop inside of their parties, among others, put this dichotomy under question. However, in my opinion, and in relation to the stories analysed here, women's political participation is, as described by Kirkwood (1990) and named by Diana Taylor (1997), 'trapped in bad scripts'. More concretely explained, all of these political stories are set in very particular historical contingencies, in these cases, the UP experience and the Pinochet regime. Therefore it seems to be the case that these political expressions cannot be presented without their historical framework. Moreover it seems to be the case in Chile, as Kirkwood has pointed out, that most women's political actions occurred in reaction to the extreme and unusual context, that most of the time women appeared located in the frontline of the conflicts. In her view, after those concrete problems had a solution or were negotiated, women's political activities were

taken far away from the frontline and became disciplined in the new political state of affairs.

That is what happened to the '*Poder Femenino*', which transformed into CEMA, one of the most important pillars to legitimate the dictatorship. But it also happened to the vast and diverse women's movements against Pinochet, which became institutionalised through the SERNAM (National Service of Woman), an organisation created in 1991 to promote equal opportunities for women, in the 'new democracy context'⁹⁴. That is also the case if we look at the present day context of the five women: Margarita is completely away from political matters; Rosita is active because of her son; Virginia is working at the UDI, under 'her mayor's orders'; Cristina and Erica are not active, but feel incomplete in some part of their lives. Thus, in the 'new democracy context', the appeal for women's equality does not imply an invitation to construct the democracy. That is, to accept women as active citizens only if they do not change what has already been made. In this sense, the 'citizen figure' continues to be 'masculine'.

Undoubtedly there are substantial differences between the militancy stories of these five women, but there are also similarities that relate to the expression of a permanent contradiction to which Carole Pateman has already alerted us. This contradiction relates to the social contract, in which the rise of civil and modern society carries a hidden and naturalised difference that is also political: the difference between the public and private spheres. The difference between these two spheres leads, according to Pateman, to women's exclusion/inclusion from the public and political realm: they are included in the political life, but as subordinated subjects, naturalised with respect to their capacities, especially the reproductive. Therefore, in countries where the naturalisation of maternity is even stronger, it is not strange that in situations of political contingency women organise themselves as social agents from the basis of such a signifier; or, that when

⁹⁴ Why under a democracy do women need to be protected in such a way? This question needs be addressed in future research.

they militate in some political party they can suffer some degree of frustration and the questioning of their activist role.

As seen in this chapter, female political activism has drastically varied from one period to the next. During the 1960s and 1970s, the political identity of female activism was related with the demands that parties adopted. There were no particular requests that connotation gender claims because the parties as collective subjects have operated around the notion of a working class, internally undifferentiated internally, or as the leading class, high class or right wing. However, there is a sort of gender based divvying up of civil duties within the State and political parties, or as Alejandra Ciriza and Eva Rodríguez Agúero put it “a sexual division of activism” (2004-5: 85-93); maternity appears again as the essential difference, which stipulates which roles women can and cannot assume.

In the case of the activists from the right, this appears to be evident; in the cases of Margarita, Rosita and Virginia, activism is associated with the family's activism, which has naturally been handed down to each of them. Considering the radicalized politics of the 1960s and early 1970s their activism would acquire a visibly “feminized” character; for women from the right, practicing politics became a “womanly right”, which was a way of publicly standing against the Frei and Allende's Governments attempt against the nation and the family.

Thus, organizations such as SOL or *Poder Femenino* would take to the streets to march against Salvador Allende. It was these women, as Margarita and Virginia declared, that encouraged the armed forces to intervene in the UP Government and set things straight. Symbolically, the protestor was the “mother-woman”, the universal, unaffected by ethnic or class distinctions; this “woman” represented the majority of the attributes which were (and still are) part of the national heritage: usually sweet, sensible and unselfish but when necessary could become fierce in order to defend the integrity of her family and children – the natural reaction of a mother defending her children. This woman was also endowed with an

innate wisdom and privileged moral strength that would make her a “living symbol” against the UP (Mattelart; 1977: 194). Margarita, Rosita and Virginia’s story correct a certain memory of the UP as a lean period, full of violence and chaos, a memory in which a tattered nation needed the coup.

The problem with this frame of thought is the incapacity to assume responsibility for the tragedies that the coup would cause; on the contrary, this mindset justifies it. It is the UP’s chaos that is the catalyst for the tragedy – but this narration omits parts from the story of other sectors that had been abused, discriminated and marginalized for decades. This narration omits that a large part of the violence of the UP was first and foremost a confrontation between social classes; as Margarita and Virginia admit, women were the most frightened and angered by the idea of “radicalized maternity”, they were defending their privileges as high-class women (although Virginia defended her rights as a consumer).

It is much more common to hear this memory that justifies the coup as a “salvation” (Stern: 2009) from women of the right, regardless of their social class; this is the case of Virginia. However, in these cases there is an identification with the national *Católico-Nacionalitas* (mothers, moral reserve for the country, conservative in values and cultural roots, etc.) was handed to all of the social classes, but in particular to women.

Women from the left, for example, Erika, as well as Ana and Isabel (later) remember the 1960s and the early 1970’s as a period where the focus of the activism was aimed at a profound social shift, towards a new, more just society, without hateful class differences towards the end of the 1950’s there was a sector that until the end of the year and that left an immense part of the Chilean population outside of the political activity of the country. However, in retrospect, they also remember the period where it was possible to propose gender-based requests from employees, some parts. This was also because “feminism” which came imported from the United States.

Different from the memories of the women from the right, the memories of the women from the left are more critical of the effectiveness of the political parties; when it came to incorporate women into their ranks, Heidi Tinsam, in her research on the Agricultural Reform in Chile concluded a side by a side analysis that underneath Frei there was a specifically sexist discourse regarding the function that country people. The author shows how these discourses are directed towards men as workers, as workers, protagonists of the organization union and establishes the home and family, etc.

The author shows how these discourses are directed by male workers, such as protagonists of the social union organization of the home and family and the women could start supporting me. At the same time, the political parties from the Reform celebrated of women regardless of her status.

The coup restored order to the nation, but it deeply affected the society; and according to Erika, Cristina and Tamara's, it employed a particularly disciplinary discourse with women. The Military's approach towards women as an exceptional being, a visionary, pure and un-corruptible is directly associated with the capacity to be months, not only for their reproduction capacity but rather the "natural" sociological characteristics that are part of being a women. Consistent with Munizaga and Letelier, the Pinochetista regime "appealed to a publicly exercised motherhood", in other words a "universal definition of what a mother is, similar to the Virgin Mary". Each Chilean woman is the Mother of all Chileans, just as the Virgin is the mother of all Christians (Munizaga & Letelier; 1988: 544).

Following this logic, activist women from the left had been corrupted and therefore had lost the feminine essence associated with the traditional national culture. Exemplary punishments and specific tortures, especially sexual torture, had to be applied. Paradoxically, the Military's approach brought upon a reaction. In the early 1980s a large group of women, many of them from left-wing parties would face Pinochet's government through activism. In this case, what was altered was the claim of a national female

identity, the “Chilean women” as understood by the dictatorship was no longer the same, the ideal embodiment of the “woman-mother-homeland”, but rather diversity, the multiple forms of being a “Chilean woman” through the poor, professional, old, young, indigenous, lesbians, etc.

This is the moment in which the resistance against the dictatorship went public, when the left-wing parties would have to face their female activists’ demands. In this moment, just as Isabel remembers, in the following Chapter, women would reconsider their role inside the political parties; and parallel for military activism, a large group of women begin to understand that the fight against the dictatorship also was the fight against feminine oppression. This political experience of the 1980s would mark the memory of the left-wing activists that would have to remember the 1960s and early 1970s as a period when there was no “consciousness” of the gender subordination in their political parties.

The majority of the social organizations created during the dictatorship, especially groups created by women, were doomed to remember the missing, to tell an unofficial story of the happenings of 1973, to look for proof they could bring before the justice system; but also to rethink the past and give the future sense and to criticize social imbalance present in the neoliberal model. In this sense, the arrival of democracy and the policy that the *Concertación* governments employed to commemorate the past was at least disconcerting. The conception of democracy devised by the *Concertación* created two types of problems that particularly impacted female participation in politics. First, at a symbolic level, because while Pinochet had refunded the nation, the *Concertación* now redounded the democracy, their approach appealed towards sacrifice and order, first in the name of the Country and second in the name of the political institution; the figure father-hero was the protagonist of choice to lead these processes for both. Second, because the *Concertación* deliberately opted to omit and marginalize the experience of social participation during the dictatorship.

The SERNAM was institutionalized, silenced again within its own parties and was hidden by the press.

In this sense, the memories presented in this work – the right- and left-wing activism – show how women were given specific tasks deemed fit for women, they show how women were trapped by “the sexual division of activism” (Ciriza & Rodriguez 2004-5: 85-93), within their political parties and by the state. These same tasks only continued the gender divisions. However, the stories here also show some of the women were able to subvert the order as we will see in the following chapters with Isabel and Tatiana, there are cases, such as Cristina’s, and in a certain sense Virginia’s, how they deliberately managed to place stress on the relations between gender, sex and class within their own political parties.

CHAPTER V: POLITICAL ACTIVISM AS MASCULINE POWER

Analysing the construction of masculinities through political memories can prove to be intricate. Men tend to naturalise their political participation and militancy more than women. Connell asserts that “public politics in almost every definition means men’s politics” (2006: 205), and Chile is not the exception. As suggested throughout the interviews of this project, gender issues were neither an evident problem nor a clear subject in the militant world. However, it is beyond doubt that these issues impinge on many aspects of the interviewees’ narrations.

This section focuses on a type of masculinity that is closely related to the figure of ‘the left militant’. Certainly, there are differences types of manhood among leftist, and they are indeed recognised in the relations among them, just as Connell stated: “it has been common to recognize multiple masculinities” (2005: 76). However, he also explains why it is important to understand this multiplicity in a dynamic way, in the “relations between them”, avoiding new static and settled typologies.

From the perspective of the construction of masculinity, political practice has helped modelling various types of manhood. The present chapter explores how political activism in Latin America’s leftwing militancy has been influenced by the combatant figure, idealised and marked by the masculine image of the Che Guevara. The British author Graham Dawson, in his book *Soldier Heroes*, asserts that the figure of “the soldier hero has proved to be one of the most durable and powerful forms of idealised masculinity within Western cultural traditions since the time of the Ancient Greek” (1994: 1). In this sense, and sharing what this author stated, it would be necessary to accept that, in the Chilean case as in the case of Britain, there are different types of heroes. Chilean dictatorship gave the soldiers who participated in the coup d’état the status of national heroes, but against these image the leftwing rose their own alternative heroic images.

The section is therefore organized in three parts, the first one, **From the Perfect Militant To the Rebel** analyses two stories which construct very different styles of militancy, that also describe two different types of masculinity: Dario's story corresponding to an example of the MIR's militancy and José's story to the Communist party militancy. The second part **Miguel 'the hero' and Jaime 'the martyr'. Reproducing Hegemonic Masculinities Through Political Figures**, changes the research analysis strategy followed so far, because it is not based in any specific story, but it is based in two 'male mythical figures', corresponding to two party leaders, Miguel Enríquez from the MIR and Jaime Guzmán from the UDI (Independent Democratic Union), both of them dead in violent circumstances, and constantly mentioned in some interviews as 'exemplary masculinities' and models to be followed. The last part, **Performing Politics as Male Activity**, is based in the stories of two women, one is Isabel who explains how she transforms her militancy from a leftwing party to a feminist movement; and the other is Heidi's story that shows how militancy is directly related to the production of gender differences.

From the Perfect Militant to the Rebel

The masculine identity installed by the dictatorship was based on the heroic action of soldiers who saved the nation from the claws of foreign ideologies, from international Communism. But the figure of the brave and courageous combatant was also utilised by a certain type of leftwing militancy, mainly that that decided to combat dictatorship through armed confrontation. This figure incarnated in the person of Che Guevara undoubtedly influenced the militant model for a particular type of leftwing masculinity, idealised, and necessary to confront the soldiers involved in the coup.

According to Vidal, the symbolic universe in which the MIR was inserted had references not only the Cuban Revolution and the image of Che Guevara but also an influence of religious features based upon the 'Teología de la Liberación' (Liberation Theology). This influence was manifest in their concept of Chilean society, inhuman and unjust, corrupted by capitalism; in other words, the evaluation of a state of moral corruption affecting the entire

population. In this sense, according to Vidal, for the MIR the 'pecado estructural' (structural sin) (1999:52) of the traditional leftwing was to follow the political game of the rightwing, without establishing a real radical and revolutionary change. For this reason the MIR had to be more than a revolutionary party, a vanguard social movement whose militants would be the model of the 'new man', completely rescued from bourgeois deformations.

Graham Dawson, author of the text *Soldier Heroes*, states that one of the more influential images that has collaborated in the modelling of a particular type of masculinity in western culture, is the figure of the "soldier hero of adventure" (1994). Although Dawson's text refers to the construction of British national identity and its relationship with a particular type of masculinity associated to the idea of nation, his approach is extremely useful to analyse the case of Chile, since its leftwing militant combatants despite having countless differences with respect to the military of the coup, held similar elements within the logic of war. These similarities are explicit especially in the narrations by some of the interviewees on the period in which they actively participated in confrontations against the pro Pinochet militaries. In these memories, the mythical unreachable heroes appear and so does the fear of not complying with this model. At the same time some interesting ways of resisting these models are shown.

In what follows we shall explore the story of Dario, a member of the MIR, and will analyse how a particular type of masculinity was constructed through leftwing militancy. Then, we shall examine the story of José, a militant of the PC, and his peculiar form of resistance towards militant disciplining.

Then, you were gradually getting involved through your brother...

Yes, well, at some point they offered me to become a member of the party's Central Committee, and I accepted while understanding that it was because of urgency, I thought "I am here on loan, because there was no other choice at that time". I went to the Central Committee but

I wasn't an outstanding cuadro⁹⁵, nor was I a militant who had stood up from the military fronts... I had my working experience in the mass political arena, and during the overflow of the party they coopted, and that's why I was there, not because I was a cuadro...! But afterwards, I humbly said: "No, really there are more companions with greater capacity, who are in better position than me to become a member of the Central Committee". And, then, there nine people were elected, not me..., I wasn't among them, I didn't want to... I don't know, perhaps I was wrong not to accept...

Mmm, why do you say you were wrong?

Because I should have accepted. I don't know if that would have changed much... it wouldn't have changed the outcome, but ... really one should... I... there... really did not measure the importance of this I was telling you, that politics is not pure rationality, it is also affection, is ... how to tell you... complicity, that doesn't only allude only to a rational thing, ¿do you understand me? It is not pure calculation, and at that moment I acted with calculation. I said, "here there are others who are older, with more experience, better 'cuadros'", "those are 'cuadros'"... and I rejected being whereas perhaps I would have made a good contribution... perhaps things would have been different".

Why did you not feel to be a 'cuadro'?

I don't know, well basically because I did not have preparation in every aspect, I had done mass and political work, but did not have the military instruction.

You didn't consider yourself a cuadro or the rest of them did not consider you such?

Both.. I think, to be a cuadro was part of the MIR culture too... Although, in strict sense, look how things are, like anecdotally. I, till... to be honest I didn't feel a cuadro. The first time it went click to me was when one of these historic cuadros said to me, "but if you are a cuadro of the party..." "Am I a cuadro of the party?", I went thinking, "I am not a cuadro, I am a militant, I am not a cuadro..." I am telling you because, in reality, maybe I had... I think it was part of my generation, because to us there was a reference of cuadro... those great cuadros who had had in the MIR before us. Who was going to put himself beside... let's not say Miguel, but of any other, those who had died...?

Wasn't it about valuing the military thing?

No, no, no. Me, at least... with the persons I worked with, and I am very glad of have worked with them, they didn't believe so... well,

⁹⁵ It is hard to translate the word 'cuadro' since it seems that there is not an equivalent in English. Summarily, 'cuadro' means a superior type of militant, an 'exemplar militant', one who is well prepared and, in the leftwing context, being a 'cuadro' implies being 'a real revolutionary', being competent politically and as combatant . Because the difficulty to translate I will keep in Spanish. In English context, it can be used a French equivalent such as cadre, but tend to be used as a collective noun. By contrary in Spanish, "cuadro" designates an individual person or a type of person.

except some of them, but they were the minority... who... overvalued the military thing, and who considered all of that to be central... That is to say, it was an integrating part of the formation, it was consubstantial to politics, to the strategy, etcetera, etcetera, but it was not excluding, the military thing was not the central thing. Nor... say... I did not think everything was politics. That is to say, there could be central tasks which were political, but that did not mean not to pay attention to, prepare or think how to develop the strategic thing in military terms, even if that did not mean being in a guerrilla, but to construct a military policy. And I still think so, independently from the fact that I no longer believe in Leninism, and that in terms of fundamentals I am much more open now, that my head is more open, I think that from the perspective of power the military subject is central. This does not mean that the conclusion is that guerrilla war must take place, or operative groups, but the military thing is present because it is part of power and that has to be considered.

Mmm... and that military part was what you needed to consider yourself a true cuadro?

Yes, I lacked that part. I had the other one, the political experience, but didn't have the military... and the MIR proposal implied both... yes...

In some way Dario is right when he does not consider himself as a 'real cuadro', in the sense that the MIR was born being a revolutionary armed vanguard, hence knowing how to properly manipulate guns was almost inherent to the militancy of this party. However, it is also a matter of masculine construction, because he really was an exemplary militant on the social front. For long periods he dedicated time and energy only to his militancy. He even lived clandestinely for a long time under very poor conditions. Hence it seems, according to his story, that the only reason why he did not feel a 'real cuadro' was his inexperience with guns. In his narrative, this identity conflict (not to be able to name himself a 'real cuadro') is related to at least two elements of his masculine identity, one that has to do with the use of guns itself, and the other one being his image of 'exemplary masculinities' (Connell;2005).

Dario's kind of 'inferiority complex' has contradictory results, because in some ways he knows and recognises that his work in the mass political front were important, and that he had a lot of experience there, but he felt that something was missing, namely the military practice, a practice without

which it was impossible to be considered a 'complete revolutionary militant', at least to his eyes. On one hand, Dario expresses that being in the party's Central Committee was almost an honour, the MIR's head, but on the other he thinks that he did not fulfil the prerequisites, therefore he refused to have this status position, but also he regrets having done so. With some sort of ambiguity, he, honestly, thinks that if he had accepted to be in one of the leader positions "perhaps I would have made a good contribution... perhaps things would have been different ", then why did he reject the request to be in that position? Apparently, the image of others better than him was stronger than his conviction about his political abilities. However, it seems in accordance with Dario's narration, that it was not a matter of capacities; but rather a matter of hierarchies and status position, as he expressed "here there are others who are older, with more experience, better 'cuadros'", "those are 'cuadros'"...

If the military image has been understood as a 'masculine role', then 'the revolutionary vanguard militant' is not too different, because it is defining a male subject, ichnographically embodied in the figure of Che Guevara, another type of soldier but a soldier after all. Here the use of guns has different meanings, as for instance courage, valour and toughness, implying being part of a special frontline elite, a warrior who is able to die if it becomes necessary. In this sense and talking about the army in general, Barret asserts

The military is a gendered institution. Its structure, practices, values, rites, and rituals reflect accepted notions of masculinity and femininity. But it is also a gendering institution. It helps to create gendered identities. (Whitehead & Barret, 2001:97)

The MIR had another source to become a masculine party; it is the fact that its founding group of young men was also related to Chilean Freemasonry, which had a strong influence in among middle class Chilean men, especially those who were active members of the Socialist Party, as for instance Salvador Allende. The experience in the Freemasonry modelled the revolutionary practice of these young men in diverse ways and aspects. For instance Vidal proposes that part of the MIR's charisma is related to the fact

that the Freemasonry rituals and ceremonies organized under a strong hierarchy, based upon a deep respect towards members with upper grades, influenced the organizational dynamics of the MIR (1999: 44), reproducing a kind of relation among masculinities that Connell defines as hegemonic, of domination/subordination and of complicity (Whitehead & Barret, 2006: 42), which then shaped MIR's life.

The MIR's origin also reveals a mythical foundational moment established through a kind of brotherhood alliance. Thus the composition of the party's first leaders was not casual, because it was based upon previous relationships, not only because of political or ideological ascriptions. Indeed, Miguel Enríquez and his brother Edgardo, Bautista Van Schowen, Andres Pascal Allende, Nelson Gutiérrez y Luciano Cruz, were young men and friends from their childhood, members of middle class families from Concepción (a southern city of Chile), then their bonding was also established by family loyalties, personal relationships and a strong brotherhood (Vidal, 1999: 46). The masculine character of the party was marked by this type of relationship, common to most members of the first MIR's central committee. This is also the impression of Ana, another interviewee militant of MIR, who was a sister-in-law of Miguel Enríquez (the party's general secretary, and the top leader in any sense)

I believe that miristas were very macho. I think that them... what happens is that the discourse of the feminine vindication was not inside of the MIR. It was a group of political vanguard, it was said, but within the political thing the gender issues were not considered. The companions were good militants but they were girls; that was the impression that I got when they spoke. There was a kind of masculine superiority. Even more, I think that... I think that when the toughest struggle began Miguel wanted to protect my sister and made her to return to Concepción, that is to say, to take her to her parent's, don't it?, a little. To return her to the maternal womb for them to make the revolution. It was the same with Inés, her sister. I feel that, after long after... when he was with Carmen... they assumed a different thing, by allowing their partners to go with them but... at the beginning the idea was to protect them, to set them away from danger,... "We are going to play bandits, you stay at home, protected"⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Ana's perception is also reinforced through the text.... However, during the Chilean military period, inside of the MIR, to be in the front line was not exclusive for men, in the sense that woman also had access to these positions, as for instance Cristina and Erika.

Some of their more general ideas, as for instance “to struggle for the human liberation and more justice in society, through the light of reason and higher values” (Vidal, 1999: 45) were also modelled under the Freemasonry perspective. In the particular case of the Enríquez brothers, the influence of their father was crucial. ‘Don Edgardo Enríquez’ used to encourage his children to participate in intellectual meetings and discussion. In Edgardo Enríquez’s published memoir, he remembers

To encourage the interest of my children for sciences, arts, culture in general, I took always care of bringing home teachers, artists, researchers, scientists, masons, and erudite priests. Contrarily to other parents, we sit the children to the table when we had visitors. They did not only hear our conversations, but actively participated and asked questions. (1994: 403)

From Vidal’s perspective, this kind of utopian education with which the lives of the Enríquez brothers were imbued also helped to radicalise their points of view on society, even at their very young age. Thus, the contrast between what they learned inside of the private sphere of their home and their evaluation within Chilean society was slowly but surely experienced as a great contradiction. Anger and repulsion about social injustices and political hypocrisies, were taking place inside of these brothers, particularly in Miguel, the younger one. Vidal points out that, in a way, Miguel broke up with

the cultural order represented by the symbolic father embodied in the Chilean welfare state...and that he will replace this close, concrete but hypocrite father by a fiction of other two imaginary, far-away fathers: Fidel Castro and Che Guevara (1999: 46).

Following Vidal’s argument, the real father figure and the symbolical one, will influence Miguel’s political ideas, but determine also will his figure as the MIR’s foundational father when in 1965 he became the Party’s first National Secretary, and without any doubt, its most charismatic figure.

Thus, it is with this kind of mythical revolutionary image that Dario is partially comparing himself. He says “...to us there was a reference of cuadro...

However, this situation does not change the fact that this revolutionary party was modelled under a strong masculinity figure, and only just few women were able to assume this position.

those great cuadros who had in the MIR before us. Who was going to put himself besides... do not talk about Miguel, but any other, those who had died...?" On one hand, he expresses in a very modest way that he cannot compare himself to the historical figures, those 'great cuadros' (especially to those ones who died in confrontations with the military), but on the other hand, it is precisely with these mythical figures that he is comparing himself and the reason why he puts into question his position as a 'cuadro', as he points out: "...I went thinking, "I am not a cuadro, I am a militant, I am not a cuadro...". In the end, Dario was not able to consider himself to be a 'cuadro'; it was almost impossible to qualify, since 'a real revolutionary' was a mythical figure, a kind of 'perfect masculinity' a 'hero', not a real person or a concrete man. Consequently, Dario was in a paradox since these figures were shaping his militancy but were practically unreachable.

According to Connell,

The figure of the hero is central to the Western cultural imagery of the masculine (a point reinforced by the 'warrior' and 'hero' archetypes in the current wave of neo- Jungian books) Armies have freely drawn on this imagery for purposes of recruitment (2006: 212).

It could be added that the hero figure is not only useful for recruitment purposes; it also models masculine militancy itself, since it operates as the desirable perfection, the target every militant should have. This situation is reinforced when these figures have died 'heroically', as for instance in the cases of Miguel Enríquez or Jaime Guzmán. I shall come back on this point below.

In the case of Dario, the situation is also complex because of his working-class background, and the MIR leaders were all members of middle class families, so presumably his 'modesty' or shyness in assessing his militancy is also a consequence of his subordination as a working-class male. This point is important because from the beginning the MIR founding members were thinking in terms of a vanguard party, a very exceptional group of persons who could lead 'the abandoned and suffering people' including the working-class. Thus, the moral superiority of this exceptional group was

given, in part, by the fact that they could recognise their bourgeois origin and set an end to it. This type of 'rupture' was achieved through the obligation for militants to leave behind their previous lifestyles, completely separate the activists from their family and everyday life, for them to be turned into the new men, leaving behind their bourgeois handicaps. This almost 'spiritual' experience became an exigency to every MIR militant, as Vidal points out:

The other leftwing parties in Chile in general did not alter the lifestyle, the labour activity or the everyday environment of their militants... On the contrary, the MIR Directorate demanded that its militants – generally middle and high class' young people- suffer a violent and profound purging in terms of their past bourgeois personality, through an existential rupture. While confining them for a long period to the workers front, to the country workers and to the marginal villages, they had to adapt to a radically different environment... The Directorate of the MIR expected that by experiencing this type of consciously induced violence against oneself, 'guiltiness' for the 'petit bourgeois' social origin of the militant would arise. To survive to the physically, intellectually and emotionally violence of this social eradication, was supposed to generate a rebirth of the 'cuadros' in a new revolutionary identity related to the mentality of the poor and dispossessed ones. In this transition they would eventually learn to found and balance the personal, the political and the military things. (1999: 59).

It is utterly valid then to ask what happened to the militants who did not come from a middle class background, as is for instance the case with Dario. How could they possibly experience this existential change that would shape their revolutionary identity? Or was it the case that working-class militants were considered to be already 'real revolutionaries'? It seems, in accordance with Dario's story, that this was not the case; the almost 'mystical and existential' transformation was fundamental in the construction of 'the revolutionary identity' and, therefore, he did not have this experience since he had always been 'poor', and hence he did not suffer any transformation. Are we here perhaps told with a new form of class subordination, a transformation of the middle class malehood into a revolutionary paternalistic vanguardism?

It is also unavoidable to relate this process of personal transformation of expiating the bourgeois sins with our Catholic culture. The 'new man' is a pure one, an exemplary man with integrity, similar to Jesus Christ. It is a man who is prepared to die, not for the fatherland like the Pinochetist

soldiers, but for his ideals, for an earthly paradise, just and human. The figure of Che appears again connected to Jesus Christ, because both of them have transformed, god and bourgeois have converted into exemplary men. Both of them have died to become models for imitation. To Pierre Kalfon (1997), it is interesting to observe the similarities between some of the photographs taken to Che's dead body, with some of the pictorial representations of Jesus' dead body, as for instance that of the renaissance painter Andrea Mantenga (1431- 1506), as shown below.



From another perspective, the severe instruction of MIR's militants was part of what most of the interviewees identified as 'the revolutionary spirit of the MIR', which helped to create a strong cohesion among militants. Moreover, this severity modelled not only the political aspects of their revolutionary consciousness but also other aspects of their everyday life, including sexuality, as for instance Ana points out:

At the end of the day, it transmitted very puritan things, because... I think that the instruction that we had in the MIR was very puritan, it was of a horrid puritanism.

Where did it come from? Do you think...?

Well, we lived in a pre neo-liberal world, first. I think that there is a kind of... a Chilean foundation... from the Chilean culture... that was very sober. Later, I believe that the directive of the MIR had much to do with the masonry. Miguel was from a masonries family, and Mr. Edgardo and all of them were of a brutal rigour. The Universidad de Concepción was masonic. All of these things about money and consumerism... didn't exist. I don't remember... surely many did so, but I don't remember that it would be well regarded to smoke dope, for instance... and we were in the 60's, everyone would then smoke dope! That was not for a militant. It wasn't well regarded that girls

would get laid so... easily, even though we were in the era of the pill. The MIR was very rigorous in that, very rigorous. I think that there was a brutal lack of the sense of pleasure, much related to the Chilean culture. The Chilean culture is one in which you can hardly develop the sense of pleasure. And I feel so after living many years in the Caribbean, where revolutionaries and intellectuals also know how to dance... That's why I insist, the MIR's instruction was rigorous, very rigorous. Very terrible, very much so... you had to be a perfect 'cuadro', that is to say, it was the perfection itself.

Ana's perception of the rigours of the MIR, including the sexual policing, particularly of women's bodies, is perhaps the extreme of morality or puritanism that can be observed in other leftwing parties, as we will see in José's story as well. But also, part of this severity can be based in the association between pleasure as a bourgeois deformation, a sin of weakness and cooption. Thus, 'the perfect militant' in the MIR context, following Ana's perception, is someone severe who avoids quotidian pleasures, someone who seems to be close to an ascetical figure, a mix between Jesus Christ and Che Guevara. This puritanism is also the reason why Dario rejected the idea of being in a leading position, since he was not 'perfect'.

José's case can show the contrast between different types of masculinity that can be modelled inside of the leftwing political parties. This 65 years old man, a communist militant, creates an interesting rebel identity, full of transgressions and resistances towards the party's controls.

Look, this comes from ages ago; I shall tell you in gross terms... my childhood situation... I used to live in a place... nearby here... my dad was a very young man, who also married very young... he worked... he was only a 'social climber'... our home, the flat... it was actually a workshop. He bought typewriter machines and fixed them, and I was his assistant. I was his 'pen pusher'; I was really there for everything. Then, I had a worker consciousness since I was very little...

... typewriter machines?

Yes, he fixed typewriter machines. He bought them, painted them, reconstructed them, and then sold them. I went with him everywhere, then... suppose, in that time (we went to) the mill San Cristobal, the forge Libertad, places where they did chicken food... thousands of places where I went with him, as an assistant. Therefore I had a relationship with the workers world since I was a little child... and I was as worker myself too,... I got in contact with the factories' inside.

That was marvellous. Sure, because I was seeing all about work, how they carried loads of flour, how they did everything. Without knowing a drop of Marxism, I was really very involved in... Well, my dad was not from the left, at all, on the contrary, he behaved as if he was part of the rich. Since he was blonde, is blonde, say, then, he looked at the others as 'rotos'⁹⁷. He always talked about the rotos, 'los rotos...'. It seems that he was who began... because his father died young, then they were in a bad situation... well, the thing is that... since I was a child I was getting involved in this idea, because... I tried to learn a thing, what the world was, what it was... what the night.

The night?

Yes, the night life... I like it more going out and peering around, because I was also a rebel, I was a rebel because my father caused in me, be such as to be rebel. He was a very violent guy.

Did he beat you?

Uh... everyone. My mum, me, he beat me badly... well, there... I think that there I went forming a social conscience... like class consciousness. I felt poor. Now, later on, I have seen photos and I didn't... didn't look like a poor one. I don't know why I felt poor (laughs). My dad was an upstart, he had a car. He had a car and we didn't have shoes... (laughs). I went leftwing on my own, out of necessity, let's say. In spite of having a mixture inside, Christian... I had a Christian cousin, but I did not believe a thing from him because... He went saying he was a Christian but he didn't give a shit for anyone. But I cared about people... I looked for friends... and I was a friend... I liked to know about other people's lives... later I went to live there in Carrascal⁹⁸, and then... we were two years there and my dad got a house in Las Condes. I don't know how it got it, but we moved to Las Condes⁹⁹s. But there it was a fully different world. The guys of Las Condes were selfish, individualistic, they hid their cigarettes, they tried to take your girls, whereas the Carrascal guys were friendly, we were united, we were like a band, we went hugging everywhere... we went to restaurants to listen to burtlizers, the latter rock and rolls, and everything, Little Richard... besides, I skipped school a lot, hey... I went to the Toesca Cinema... that was a fabulous thing; it was at Huérfanos with Teatinos¹⁰⁰. All the students went there, the show started at 11... I remember to have seen there all the Italian realism, the neorealism... I saw all the nueva ola, I World have seen movies... I saw, for instance, (retos multiples) some twenty times. But the curious thing is that we went in, there was a girl by you... we were men and women, between 14, 15, and 16 years old, we took our hands and we went kissing, we went kissing not knowing us or anything...

⁹⁷ A national expression for the very poor, sometimes used for working-class in a pejorative way.

⁹⁸ It is a popular neighbourhood in Santiago.

⁹⁹ It is a very posh area also in Santiago

¹⁰⁰ Huérfanos with Teatinos is a very central intersection in Santiago Centre.

...very liberal...!

Totally liberal... and before the movie would end the girl took his bag and went off. Everything was under the anonymity. Incredible? ... Incredible! It was like an addiction to get there and to go kissing like that ... but then you wouldn't know who was who... good times!. Other times I remember... some tremendous wars of flying stones. Here in the hill Santa Lucia, groups of kids from my school, with kids from other schools engaged in flying stones wars with us, kicking each other, it was a violence that... I said... how to fight throwing stones, you break your head... but so we went becoming men... anyway it was hard for me, I was violent too, because of my father thing, I guess... In the beginning I was a dummy, but then I was getting stronger by punching.

It is very interesting to consider the way José identifies himself with the leftwing political side since so early in his life, as he tells it. It seems that on one hand, in his story, the figure of his authoritarian violent father operates as a pivotal device which articulates, by opposition, several aspects in his life. Also, and by contrast, it will be through his group of friends, at school first and at university later, that he will try to construct an alternative male identity.

Thus, his 'worker consciousness' was modelled very early in his life as a consequence of his father's exploitation and maltreatment. First, because working with his father allowed him to be in contact with the 'workers' world' and with 'the factories inside'. He remembers these experiences in a very idyllic manner, as a "wonderful" time, perhaps as the product of his strong identification with the 'working-class'. But second, because he made a kind of metonymic relation between his feelings about his father's abuses, and the situation of 'workers exploitation', he felt poor and exploited as he explains "I felt poor. Now, later on, I have seen photos and I didn't... didn't look like a poor one. I don't know why I felt poor (laughs). My dad was an upstart, he had a car. He had a car and we didn't have shoes... (laughs)". By looking at an old photograph he does not identify himself with the image of a poor child, in part because his family class situation was confusing: his father had a car, at some time they went to live in 'Las Condes', a very upper class and well accommodated neighbourhood in Santiago, he studied in quite a high quality state school and so on. However inside of the private sphere,

and as a personal experience, he felt exploited and unfortunate, subject to a situation that he will displace to the public space through his identification with the leftwing side, “I went to leftwing on my own, out of necessity, let’s say”. But also this necessity was based on the location of himself in opposition to his father, who “...behaved as if he was part of the rich”, looking at the ‘others’, presumably also at his son, in a very depreciative way, “he looked at the others as ‘rotos’¹⁰¹. He always talked about the rotos, ‘los rotos...’”, the ‘rotos’, those who shortly after became his son’s friends, and more than that, one of whom José wished to be.

In addition, the arriviste and racist character of his father is reinforced by the fact that he was ‘blond’, a phenotypical ‘attribute’ that in Chile is a sign of status associated with upper class people, who have no indigenous blood, purely white people, contrary to José’s actual complexion. Also this description of his father, as a very snobbish person symbolically associated to a geographical area, the ‘Las Condes’ neighbourhood, where people (actually young men) were “...selfish, individualistic, they hid their cigarettes, they tried to take your girls...”, people who he identifies as upper class, ‘posh people’, people whom his father wanted to be with. He felt in a rather different way, as he points out “I cared about people... I looked for friends... and I was a friend...” similar to the people of Carrascal, a neighbourhood where he really made good friends, “were united, we were like a band, we went hugging everywhere...”, people related to working-class sectors, people whom he wanted to be with. And it will be here in this space of friendship, with these teenager boys, where José will put his more intense feelings of belonging.

José also describes himself as a ‘rebel’, as he points out, “because my father was such as to be rebel”, in the sense that his authoritarian father was generating a big resistance from his son, towards his manners, a resistance

¹⁰¹ ‘Roto’ o ‘roteque’ is a Chilean expression, which refers in very depictive way to someone with working-class background. As an adjective, it also implies poor education, poor economic condition, and even a poor aesthetic look. There is also a more positive meaning, which symbolically embodies a national mythical figure: the ‘Roto Chileno’. This supposedly represents the soul of popular Chilean people.

that José expressed and even showed off by going around in the street alone, playing truant all the time, any time, as soon as he was old enough to do it, even though his father continued to use violence against him until he grew up and left his home. Thus, José associated rebelliousness with a variety of things, especially with the possibility of challenging his father's authority and of showing him that he was different, even an opposite type of man. But he also links rebelliousness with his resistance against any ruling order in more general terms. Thus, his absences from school in order to go around with 'inappropriate' friends ('rotos'), go out late at night without permission, meet other boys and play war with stones in the 'Santa Lucia' park (boy groups fighting by throwing stones at each other), kissing unknown girls in the cinema, watching films for adults, and so on, are also examples that he gives of his rebelliousness.

Another important element of his male identity was his group of friends, all boys, boys with whom he used to spend a great deal of time in the streets going around, boys with whom he constructed a kind of brotherhood. "We were united, we were like a band, we went hugging everywhere...". Thus, it is not difficult to compare this situation with Freud's mythical story, developed in *Totem and Taboo*¹⁰², about the 'primitive horde' where the brothers organize themselves against the father, killing and eating him in order to finish with the monopoly of his privileges (1923). In the same way José used this kind of brotherhood as a way of being out of tune with his father, to provoke him, to disobey him and to refuse to identify with him and all that José thinks his father represented. His friends, on the other hand, will give him a space where to construct another kind of malehood, not however exempt from violence, as he remembers. "But so we went about becoming men... anyway it was hard for me, I was violent too, because of my father thing, I guess... In the beginning I was a dummy, but then I was getting

¹⁰² Freud describes the father's murderer, executed by the primitive horde, in the following terms: "One day, the brothers who had been driven out, came together, killed and devoured their father and so made an end to the patriarchal horde. United, they had the courage to do and succeeded in doing what would have been impossible for them individually." (1923: 186) After the murdered, the brothers sword that they were never going to treat each other in the way they treated their father. Thus, the collective crime is mythically related to the birth of modern social order.

stronger by punching”. Violence does not change. He used it several times with his friends and vice versa. It almost appears in his history as naturally associated with men, but it is different since he does not feel abused or does not victimize himself as when it used to be the case with his father against him. Obviously the sense of abuse is related to the fact that on one hand the father figure is a fixed authority by itself, someone who almost by definition has always the power and the control, and who because of that should not need to use violence for exercising this privilege. Completely different is the experience that José seems to describe as happening inside of his group of friends, where violence is experienced as a game, as a masculine way to be, where everyone can eventually have access to the place of authority , where violence is necessary and part of the rules.

José’s childhood experience was fundamental in the construction of his male identity, and his boyhood friends will always be an important point of reference in his story

... And what was the America group?

That was a group that we founded while in the University, friends, men only, guys who were easy going, jokers, ironic... We met in houses, we were about 30, and we drank a lot, we wrote poems, and we laughed... There it was also where the hitch-hiking travelling began, that was absolutely fabulous. More and less, around those same years, we started travelling to the north. It was, spectacular, really, because it was already in my consciousness... and well, there it was, the working-class, Recabarren, the saltpetre refineries... We went through the whole country that way, an amount of times... thumbing lifts, in lorries... I have the memory of being in the desert at night... it was an unbelievable happiness... imagine, we were in between years 64 and 70, there it was rising what was going to be the UP... besides the fact that the power of the leftwing working-class was great, there were structured things so... I remember to have arrived to a hostel where they said “yes, there are rooms but with two beds”, and that meant that another one was going to sleep there. Once there was an old worker, and we went chatting one night, with a bottle of wine, in the darkness. And he went talking to me about everything... so... because, besides going through places, it was about talking to the people, talking to this one and that one, with the old one... and I went walking and writing, since I felt I was a poet... I saw scenes such as... cloth hanging... Chuquicamata... and I went walking, say, 10 days walking...

mmm... and is it in that epoch that you started to be a militant?

Yes, I don't remember very much how it was exactly, but I do remember that I wanted to be part of the popular movement, to be with the workers, where they were, so I joined the communist party... because I had met people from the MIR... but I had a thing with the MIR I didn't like... in Philosophy, for instance, they were all 'pijes'¹⁰³, like only pijes... social rebels, rebels. Then, they were posh boys and girls, and all of that... It was like a fashion wave, like ... "how cool is Che Guevara, and all of that", but I consider myself... I mean, I had pride from having lived the things... from having my hands with work. I looked at these guys, how they didn't understand... It was also there that the group America got divided, because some of them become MIR militants and others went to the 'J'...¹⁰⁴

Thus, the group of peers that modelled his childhood was reproduced again in the university; the group America marked all of José's university and political life, until now, since some of these guys still are his closest friends. In the same way that he used to go around with his friends, he went with this group of young men, "guys who were easy going, jokers, ironic...", also guys who did not fit with the image of 'good students' since they enjoyed drinking and laughing too much, missing a lot of lectures because of their improvised trips. It will be in these friend's company that José will rediscover, according to his idealised story, his contact with 'the Chilean working-class', on these trips that symbolically will also sculpt his political militancy.

José's description of his journeys to different parts of Chile is very idyllic, as the mythical trip of Che around Latin America. The way that he describes the landscape, the conversations with different people, memories of being out walking days and days, his association to a mythical past, exemplarily represented in the figure of Recabarren, and in the 'old worker' he shared a room with, and a bottle of wine in the darkness. All of this seems to produce in him a sense of enjoyment and freedom, similar to what he felt when he was a young boy, escaping from his father.

His decision to become a militant of the Communist Party, as opposed to the MIR, can also evoke his childhood's resistance to making friends in "Las

¹⁰³ Snobbish, posh.

¹⁰⁴ 'J' from 'juventudes comunistas' (communist youth).

Condes”, the posh area, in to which his father wanted to be socially inserted, and his choice to be with the ‘rotos’ in Carrascal. Similarly, he rejected the people from the MIR because he considered them to be ‘high class’, guys playing at revolution without having the working experience and without understanding ‘the real things’, different to him as he says “I had pride from having lived the things... from having my hands with work”. Choosing the PC was a consistent choice for him, confirming his strong identification with ‘the working-class people’, ‘the poor’, ‘the exploited ones’, the abused ones’.

However his life as a militant is not going to be easy.

Mmm... and wasn't it hard to get used to be a militant? ...I mean, since you defined yourself as a young rebel...?

Yes, sure, it was hard, very much, and therefore I was never considered to be a serious militant... I actually crashed at once... I crashed because I didn't like it... and nor ... would I obey the party thing... for instance, when I heard “the party said”... I said “who would the party be?... as if there was somebody there...” it was like a church. And later on I realised that there was no democracy at all in the party, not at all. It was a very rare democracy... that is why I preferred to work with people, with poor areas inhabitants, with workers... Yes, because it was another thing. I respected them and cared about them, and all of that. They were not like this other bourgeois ... because I found these guys to be petite bourgeoisie too. CX¹⁰⁵, for instance, ugh, disgusting petite bourgeoisie, ego. SX¹⁰⁶, who was a very good leaders and all of that, but... a little bourgeois... guys who confused their individuality, their egos, with that leadership thing. But they were not leaders; they were little dictators... they I didn't... I wasn't in that mood... I met other people and not those who played ‘leaders’... I liked to go around with workers, I went out to drink ‘chicha’¹⁰⁷ with them, ... I remember... then, the kid who was above me at that time,... he told me ‘companion, you have been seen drinking chicha somewhere’, “yes” I said, “so what, I do as I like” ... besides, he met the posh, good looking girls,... so I never went out with him... But it was like that, in the pedagogic institute they looked at us as rubbish, because we drank, we messed around, we went to the whores...

Couldn't a good militant go to the whores? ...Why?

No! Are you mad?, No!... That was in the party's statutes... where it talked about the problems of a licentious life... for instance... a very pretty girl arrived and a guy slept with her, and he was called to be recriminated... just because he had sex... and I remember that he

¹⁰⁵ The name was taken off because he is now quite a famous writer.

¹⁰⁶ Same situation, but in this case he is a respectable historian.

¹⁰⁷ ‘Chicha’ is an alcoholic drink, similar to cider, a very popular drink given his cheap price.

pulled the interrogator's leg and said, "comrade, it was her who took my trousers off", and they said to him, "comrade, do not come to make jokes here". Eventually they punished him, but not for long... there were different ways of punishing if you didn't behave, reprehension, suspension of militancy and even expulsion. The charges were these, look, "comrade, a new lady comrade... you cannot behave like a bourgeois, you cannot try to seduce her, you have to teach her, to educate her". Well, in the MIR was also like this. A current friend of mine, he was chief of something, somewhere, he got involved with a countrywoman and went to live with her, and he was expelled right away.

José's life as a communist militant become a constant resistance and confrontation with the party's norms. The price of this was that he would never be considered to be a 'good militant', presumably not good enough to be given more important responsibilities or a better position inside of the party's hierarchy. The curious thing is that he never left the party and that he accepted his conflictive militant position, perhaps a part of him even enjoyed it. From the beginning he questioned the party's authority, in the sense that he wanted to know who was setting the rules, and who was behind the party's voice. For instance, when he heard "the party said"... he said "who would the party be?" But even in the case he knew who was behind an order, he would say "...I do as I like".

It is also peculiar the way he refers to other militants situated in better hierarchical positions; he describes them as individualistic and egocentric little bourgeois, even more, as "little dictators", different from he who preferred spending, enjoying time, and constructing bonds with "working-class people", for instance drinking "chicha". In some way he is reproducing again this binary opposition that he created in order to break with his father's ghost, disqualifying authority figures with expressions such as for instance 'petit bourgeois', not like him that actually avoided having the responsibility of exercising authority on others, since this position symbolically reminds him of his father. Thus, it is not only that there are some people who can behave in an authoritarian way, but it is also the case that he does associate any type of authority to this dictatorial behaviour, so that it is not only the party that does not want to give him more 'responsibilities', but also himself who

does not want them, because he does not want to be in the 'father's place'. He feels comfortable by continuing to be 'the rebel son'. (Freud: 1923)

Another contradictory point in José's story is the way in which he utilises women as a kind of class marking signifier. He does not like going out with men such as for instance his superior in the party who used to meet "posh, good looking girls". Similarly as he mentions this would be also the case with men from the MIR. By contrast he prefers 'going to the whores' with his 'working-class' friends. However it is strange how, on one hand, we have these upper class posh women whom he finds extremely attractive but whom he rejects, and on the other we have in his story just whores as if it was a synonym for working-class women. This is not just a misogynist and classist construction. It is possible to consider another point of view, where this construction of female is related to the kind of masculinity that José is performing, because on one hand 'posh girls' are not accessible for 'working-class men', then since he identifies himself as one of them, he avoids meeting 'these kind of women', and he frequents 'whores' just as 'working-class men' do. Nevertheless, 'working-class men' are not the only ones who frequent 'whores', nor are all women who they frequent are 'whores', and finally not all 'whores' belong to the working-class background. Thus, José's construction of different females corresponds to the split he makes between class-based masculinities. To him, in the same way that there are 'ruling men' (fathers) and 'working-class men' (sons), there are 'posh women' and 'working-class women'. But curiously, in his narrative, José, who wants to identify himself with 'working class men', constructs 'working class women' as whores. Perhaps, and ironically, seeing 'working class women' in this way is his 'bourgeois deviation'.

In any case, José constructs women in relation with sexuality, and more specifically with his condition of being a working class man, evidently heterosexual. Thus, women who he classified as 'posh' or 'whores' are not thought by him as struggle comrades, militants or friends, but as sexual objects of desire and fantasy. The ideological description of 'posh girls' as unreachable objects, sexually speaking, for working class men, serves José

in his own construction as 'working class heterosexual man'. On the other hand, it seems that for José a 'working class man' should be heterosexual almost by definition, and hence he needs a reaffirming counterpart, the figure of 'the whore'.

The situation can also be read as José's difficulty in bonding with women, since his masculinity is constructed through his story around his father figure (his mother is not mentioned) and around 'other boys'. For instance, he remembers when in the cinema he could kiss a girl without knowing who she was, without talking at all, and how much he enjoyed that. Perhaps his construction of a much polarised womanhood conveys fears of girls and women in general.

What will it happen if he becomes attached to a woman? What if he falls in love? How will he perform on commitment and responsibility towards another one who, for sure, will be asking for it? What if he becomes a father? What will it happen to his 'rebel son' position? Well, later in his life José fell in love and married. However he confesses how he used to spend long periods of time far from his family and he could never be loyal to his wife. He constantly avoids taking on 'the father position'. He became the oldest and rebel son of his wife (who actually took the control of the house)¹⁰⁸, a creative poet and a conflictive member of the communist party until now.

As a conclusion it is interesting to see how in both cases but in different ways, masculinity is modelled through militancy. On one hand, Dario is trying very hard to become an exemplary militant, and on the contrary, José is constantly confronting the party's orders and rules. In both cases the kinds of masculinity produced are very complex, because in some ways they seek to be hegemonic, but in others they constantly fail. Dario wants to become a party leader, he thinks that in terms of capacity he could do it well, but he

¹⁰⁸ At this level José's story can also be interpreted as an example of Sonia Montesino's thesis, in her book *Madres y Huachos* (1991). Where she explains Latin-American masculinities as a difficult model to follow, since the colonisation process resulted in the rise of mixed cast children, resulting from relationships between Spanish men and indigenous women, where men were the absent party, always moving because of the war, travels, or because in most cases those were not permanent or formal relationships.

does not allow himself to do so because of his lack of attributes to fit with the 'perfect leader image' which he fantasises. José complains that the party does not take him seriously, giving him more responsibilities, but on the other hand the kind of masculinity that he is performing does not allow him to take these sorts of duties, since he does not want to be 'in charge', exposed as 'the father'.

This ambivalence in both stories is also reinforced by the class issue, Dario is an excellent militant, but he comes from a working-class background, in a party that was founded by a group of middle class, very well educated men, where also most of them were murdered by the Pinochet regime, becoming heroes. Hence Danilo's difficulties in 'taking their place' (Fanon, 1968; Bhabha, 1994)¹⁰⁹. José's situation, instead, is even more complicated because although he worked with his father from a very young age, he does not have exactly a working-class background, since he had a very good education. He attended one of the most prestigious state schools for boys, and after that he also went to the university, so he does not fit exactly with the typical 'working-class men' image. Thus his strong identification with this 'type of manhood' looks more like an escape from this other 'type of manhood', middle class, little dictators, individualistic and egocentric little bourgeois, similar to his father. Thus, it seems that, for José, there are no other alternative masculinities but these two, both being opposed, extreme and fixed.

Finally, it is remarkable how the internal politics of parties can produce and reinforce gender differences, particularly by controlling sexuality as being part of militants' duties, showing how public and private spheres are actually very well connected. Hence, the slogan that the second wave of feminism put in circulation 'the personal is political' as a way to denounce the exploitation in the private sphere and to pay attention to the dichotomy

¹⁰⁹ Both authors show the complexity and ambivalence in the identities of subaltern subjects, when they identify themselves with 'the other' who is in the power position. If Dario accepts a position that nobody with his social background had held before, his class identity is conflicted, because it implies inside of his party, in praxis, to assume a subaltern role.

between the public and private spheres. In the Chilean left parties during the 70's and the 80's however, controlling militants' life in almost all facets was actually a normal procedure. Personal activities of militants such as sexuality were very much concerned with their militancy and public actions at the time, at least until the late 80's.

Miguel 'the Hero' and Jaime 'the Martyr'. Reproducing Hegemonic Masculinities through Political Figures.

This section is quite different than the previous ones, because it works around two strong masculine figures that appear in some of the interviews in a much idealized way, and clearly became icons inside of the political parties concerned. Also, as I will show, besides the strong similarities in their construction as "exemplary masculinities" (Connell; 2006) they represent the opposite extremes of our political spectrum. As a result of this last point it is not easy to write this section, particularly because I as a researcher am not neutral and I am conscious on how much animosity the figure of Jaime Guzmán provokes on the part of the people with whom I myself feel more politically connected. In this partisan logic, both sides consider comparing these two characters an aberration; however it is impossible for me to forget the similar way in which people remember and construct these two mythical personages. In some ways these two figures represent, two different national projects in confrontation; the curiosity is that both are men, considered for different people heroic subjects.

In *Soldier Heroes*, Graham Dawson compares the imperial hero Havelock to the more ambivalent figure of T. E. Lawrence; whereas the first represented power, greatness and the identity of British Empire during the Indian Mutiny-Rebellion of 1857, the latter represented instead a more adventurous type of hero, with a sexual identity much more ambivalent and transgressing. Thus, for Dawson, Lawrence's figure is equally "an imperialist fantasy" (1994: 170), but more complex since it "embodies contradictions and enigmas that have remained potent and unresolved into late -and post- imperial Britain" (1994: 170). Following a similar logic, I examine the figure of these two Chilean

characters, Miguel and Jaime, as heroic examples that until today model styles of political militancy and the public conception of masculine identity.

As explained before, Miguel Enríquez became not only one of the MIR's founders but also the party's head. He was described as an 'unquestionable and legitimated leader', a 'moral authority', a 'charismatic personality', a 'natural speaker'. Increasingly over time and after his death, Miguel has turned into an irreplaceable hero, not only for MIR's militants, but also for the whole left imaginary, a kind of 'our local Che Guevara'. This image that was constructed from the beginning of the MIR's life, was also promoted, exploited and utilised by this party, as a metonymic strategy to appear in the public arena as a solid party, with strong and prestigious leaders. In this sense, even his corporal image was used as the face of the MIR, as Vidal points out.



The official photos of the MIR aimed at highlighting the personal magnetism of Miguel. Frequently, they showed him sitting, with a black background that accentuated his youth features, dressed in a simple way, always leaning forward and talking, projecting a voice of absolute certainty, undoubted truth and sincerity. Once his public image became well known, Miguel was often pictured from a short distance, looking sidelong, with a frowning gesture to reflect a clear vision of the future, wise and vigilant, an expression in which he looked like if he couldn't miss a detail on the historic forthcoming, standing up against a shadow background to emphasise a sensation of huge preoccupation and human commitment. Over time, Miguel Enríquez, his brother Edgardo and Bautista Van Schowen developed a political style in which, in the important ceremonies of the MIR, they always had recourse to the romantic performance of a shadowy environment to exhibit their best profile, their virility, youth and audacity, with black cloth, long hair, attitude and a firm and resolute expression (1999:48).

Miguel's image as the party's public face will reinforce the masculine character of the MIR itself. Thus, the majority of the adjectives used to describe him as a 'great leader' are positive only because they are considered and naturalized as male attributes. It is difficult to think that a woman could be described in the same way, for instance "always leaning forward and talking, projecting a voice of absolute certainty and undoubted

truth and sincerity”(Vidal, 1999: 48). On the contrary, women who talk too much in the public space risk being highly criticized, particularly if they show too much confidence. Or also, definitely it would not be positively valued if a woman appears “looking sideways, with a frowning gesture”.

Miguel Enríquez was the charismatic person of the group. He had a great gift for oratory; he possessed an easy and passionate verbal and written rhetoric; he was young, thin, handsome, sharp featured, adorned with a thick moustache -a la “revolutionary fashion”-, and a vivid, friendly and frank smile (Vidal; 1999: 48).

This charismatic physical description of Miguel can also be found in the documentary film ‘Miguel, la Humanidad de un Mito’ (Miguel, The Humanity of a Myth), directed by Victor Gómez and Pablo Villagra and released in 2005, by Antu Productions, where most of the testimonies also emphasise his physical attributes, particularly his good looking appearance, very celebrated among women. Actually, it is interesting how the film is structured, because it reproduces gender distinctions at different levels and reinforces Miguel’s image as a much gendered myth. The first thing that can be noticed in the film is for instance how his childhood is reconstructed through the voices of his younger sister and an old aunt, whereas his younger and adult life is told by his friends and political mates, all of them males, and some of his sentimental and sexual partners. This way of reconstructing his life, symbolically reproduces the fact that women talk about him only in relation to his ‘private life’, and men talk about his ‘public life’. It seems that he did not have women friends, or that the type of things that women could tell about him as political leader, were not relevant.

The second point is how all testimonies, men’s and women’s, mentioned his physical attributes, enhancing his much sexualised heterosexual masculinity, for instance “very, very handsome”, “very attractive”, “beautiful physiognomy” “like a film actor”¹¹⁰ and so on. In general, it is supposed to be the case that physical attributes have more impact when they are associated with women bodies, especially beauty, or erotic and sexualised characteristics. However

¹¹⁰ This description of Miguel appears in the documental ‘*Miguel: La Humanidad de un Mito*’ directed by Victor Gómez y Pablo Villagra, but it is also part of the popular knowledge, in a similar way than the image of the Che Guevara.

in this case it is used to reinforce a kind of 'integral and perfect' masculinity, of a 'male revolutionary hero', who in the same way as the Hollywood films can not be an ugly character.

Immediately after the coup and the consequent chaos produced on the left political spectrum, each party had to make the decision of what to do, since the dictators announced that all kind of political organisations would remain illegal until the contrary order was declared. From that moment on, an important group of militants and people related to the UP government, from different parties but particularly from the Socialist and Communist parties, decided to leave the country, correctly assuming that their lives were under threat. By contrast, in the MIR the central committee decided to stay in the country, trying to combat the military, a situation that rapidly caught the attention of the DINA (National Intelligence Direction)¹¹¹ and lead to their particular dedication. Thus, by the beginning of 1975 "the clandestine political-military structures of the MIR were annihilated" (Vidal, 1999: 29)

Miguel Enríquez himself died in an armed confrontation with DINA agents on October the 5th, 1974. The 'combat' took place in a side street in Santiago, called 'Santa Fe', where Miguel was living clandestinely; the armed confrontation lasted about three hours until he was riddled by the DINA's bullets.

According to the Rettig Report and to Hernán Vidal, between the day of Miguel's death and the beginnings of 1975, the political presence of the MIR was dramatically diminished, the party being reduced to a very disarticulated and small clandestine group, most of the time without being able to establish connections among its members. By the end of 1978 the MIR was reorganised from outside of the country, and the party gained a social

¹¹¹ DINA '*Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional*'. It was the first secret police organised by the Pinochet regime, operating as a repressive organization, responsible of the majority of the crimes by the Chilean dictatorship, abductions, tortures, murders and so one. In the beginning of the 80's the DINA was replaced by the CNI '*Central Nacional de Informaciones*' (Central of Information), as an attempt to clean the face of brutality associated to the DINA-However, the CNI continued the same job, with more sophisticated and modernized techniques.

presence again. However, it never does so with the force that it did before, since most of its leaders were killed or disappeared¹¹².

Miguel's death clearly had an impact on the party, because for most of its members, the MIR 'could never be again what it was before', as Ana expresses

I have the impression that Miguel is a very important figure for the MIR...

Very important and emblematic! Because the Miguel period marked the MIR in a way, afterwards... a different thing began. When Miguel dies things began to change. He gave a strong leadership... he was very much a leader, very much. And I am telling you that for good and bad, because being so leader he didn't have much time to take care of the things of the quotidian life or affections.

The rest of the MIR militants interviewed do not mention Miguel as directly as Ana does in part because she knew him. She was from the same generation, from the same city and at some point she actually became his sister in law. Instead, Cristina, Ely and Dario never met him and they represent a new generation of the 'MIR', to whom Miguel is really a mythical figure. For instance in Dario's story Miguel appears more evidently, since he explicitly says "Who was going to put himself beside... let's not say Miguel, but of any other, those who had died...?" meaning 'how am I going to compare myself to a hero?' Curiously, there is a very similar answer that Miguel gave in a television program in 1971, when a journalist asked him if he thinks about himself as the 'Chilean Che Guevara'. In the same way as Dario, Miguel rejected this idea for he did not consider himself to be at the level of his own ideal¹¹³.

In this sense "exemplary masculinities" (Connell, 2006) are very important to model militancy and it is never a real place to be. A militant is modelled

¹¹² In 1978, the MIR's head in the exile decided to implement the '*Operación Retorno*' (return operation), consisting in the preparation of militants, especially militarily, in order to get back to Chile as clandestine and reorganise the resistance against the Pinochet regime. Militants received indoctrination in Cuba, after which they travelled to Chile. The '*Operación Retorno*' failed; with most of the militants who arrived to Chile being tortured, killed or disappeared.

¹¹³ Part of this interview can be found in the documentary '*Miguel: La Humanidad de un Mito*'.

under the shadow of a given figure, but at the same time it seems always unattainable. Thus, independently from Miguel's 'real' qualities as a leader or as a 'human being', these qualities are not disassociated from the exemplary and masculine character that his figure takes. As Connell points out, also

...the imagery of masculine heroism is not culturally irrelevant. Something has to glue the army together and keep the men in line, or at least enough in line for the organization to produce its violent effects. Part of the struggle for hegemony in the gender order is the use of culture for such disciplinary purpose: setting standards, claiming popular assent and discrediting those who fall short. The production of exemplary masculinities is thus integral to the politics of hegemonic masculinity". (2006: 214)

Here, Connell is referring to the army, but what he points out is also useful for understanding these 'left revolutionary heroes' too. Perhaps the difference is that the function of these figures is not just to keep the militants aligned, but also to give a united signifier that makes sense to the entire collective organisation, a type of 'foundational father' who gives 'us' a sense of belonging. In the case of MIR, Miguel became in life a very powerful and charismatic leader but after his death he became a mythical figure, an expression of a necessity of remembering and providing a meaning to the survivors' tragic past.

For women militants it is not too different, Cristina and Erika are also under pressure to become 'exemplary militants' but in male codes. Cristina makes an effort to avoid any gender distinction, she wants to show how women can do exactly the same as men; she wants to be one of them. And Erika, on the other hand assumes that her militancy was part of a relationship's project; she never thought about herself as a warrior, like her partner. However she did identify herself with this man, a man whom she wants to remember as a 'hero', since this is a way to continue to love him. Both of them evoked the MIR as a radical, heroic and revolutionary party, which is symbolically embodied in Miguel's image of a perfect revolutionary militant.

This way of constructing hegemonic masculinities through emblematic figures is also present on the Chilean rightwing side, paradoxically, in a very different type of masculinity, but one remembered with similar intensity and

admiration. Perhaps, the displacement, where the difference can be found, is related to the substitution of the word 'hero' by 'martyr'.

The UDI or 'Union Demócrata Independiente' (Independent Democratic Union) appears in the public arena on the 25th of September in 1983, the same year in which protests against the Pinochet regime became stronger and massive. Linked to a group of students from the Catholic University,



called 'Movimiento Gremial Universitario', and headed by Jaime Guzmán, this new party will represent a new version of the most conservative political sector in Chile, and part of a new configuration of the rightwing side, provoked by economic changes during the dictatorship. With a strong Catholic formation, and coming from a very wealthy family, Jaime Guzmán took active part in the opposition against the UP government from the university, becoming one of the public faces against Allende, because of his participation in a very popular political debate TV program. Although almost the first things that the military 'Junta'¹¹⁴ did when they took control was to declare illegal all types of political associations including the rightwing parties, many of members of this sector became active and enthusiastic collaborators of the new regime, and Jaime Guzmán was probably one of the most committed ones. Thus, after the coup d'état he was nominated by the military regime to take part in, probably, its more important elaborated and sophisticated legacy, the Constitution of 1980, which rules the country until now. Moreover, for the public opinion, Guzmán was actually the mentor and mainly responsible for this constitution, even more than the military.¹¹⁵

In 1983, he and a group of his old university associates founded the UDI, and he became its president until 1987. Thus, in 1989 when the political system was re-established and the congress was re-opened, a new group of

¹¹⁴ Board of chief commanders of the arm forces.

¹¹⁵ A similar analysis on masculinities is presented in Richard Johnson, *Blair and Masculinities and Terror Today*, in *Soundings* N° 28, winter 2004. In this work, the author shows how the figures of Bush and Blair, in the context of the Afghanistan war, represent very distinct masculinities towards public opinion, although they complement each other and assume different functions during the war.

senators was elected, and Jaime Guzmán was one of them. From this political position, during the first democratic coalition's government, he became the strongest obstacle to the possibility of reformulating the constitution. One of his last speeches in the Congress was against conferring on the President the power to amnesty political prisoners, imprisoned under the antiterrorist law. Thus, to the UDI militants, this situation was one of the reasons why Jaime Guzman was murdered on April 1st of 1991, as he was leaving the Law Faculty of the Catholic University, after one of his lectures. This action, considered as a 'just execution' by the more radical leftwing sectors, was claimed by FPMN 'Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez' (Patriotic Front Manuel Rodríguez), an army fraction of the Communist Party.

Jaime Guzmán's murder was a strong shock to the UDI party, which from this moment starts claiming its leader figure to be a 'martyr'. Heidi, a militant of the UDI, remembers Jaime's death in this way

Jaime was a person of such high principles that, you can see, that the speech he was doing before the senate against amnesty or indulgence for terrorists, he perfectly knew that that was going to cost him his own life, and he did it anyway. And effectively, a week after he did his speech he was murdered... what I knew was that he even realised the murderers were out there, but he considered... you can see how he was, he considered that it was ridiculous to call the police to take him outside with bodyguards and everything, and he didn't do so for a reason of humility, because he considered it would be ugly to do a scandal in front of his students and colleagues, and he preferred to go out like that, unprotected, even though he had already seen the guys who were waiting for him... I mean he was a man who literally gave his life for his principles, catholic and political...

The definition of martyr, in the Oxford dictionary, is "a person who is killed because of their religious or other beliefs", but also in a Catholic context it implies that this person knows that he or she can be killed, but he or she does not do anything for stopping or avoiding this situation, because it is assumed as a kind of sacrificial destiny, in the same way than Jesus Christ did. This religious connotation of the word 'martyr' also complements the Catholic aspect of Jaime's image. From the foundation of the party he

always intended to relate the political dimension to the religious one, as Guzmán himself points out

In many opportunities in my life I have thought about being a priest, but the divine providence has always guided me through other paths. And, eventually, I believe that its hand has been very clear to indicate me that, at least for now, my Christian apostolate is in the lay world. (Quoted by Pinto; 2006: 83-88)

In this sense, from the beginning the UDI wanted to establish themselves to be a 'new' political alternative, far from the traditional parties, which they considered negatively as "very ideological" (Pinto; 2006). In Guzmán's view, it was these 'ideologies' that polarized the Chilean citizens and caused the situation previous to 1973. On the contrary, this party, constituted by a new generation of people, wanted to become an option for independent people who were for the military regime, and who did not want to go back to the 'Chile of the past'. The party should be, first of all, an instance of 'public service', mainly focused on 'the poorest', making the contrast with the traditional rightwing parties that, according to the UDI, were always focused on the elite's needs. With this option the UDI's head wanted to rescue the popular sector from leftwing control and go beyond the idea that parties had to be associated with class distinctions (Pinto; 2006: 102). Thus, the UDI's corporative character was presented as a 'healthy depoliticization', where different institutions and organisations – such as for instance the student unions- should define their own objectives without any prior or external ideology, and from these places influence the rest of society. (Valdivia, Alvarez, Pinto; 2006)

This new style of doing politics was directly connected to the figure of Jaime Guzmán, who for instance Virginia remembers:

I started working at the UDI, from the beginning, and what marked me was to have met Jaime Guzmán...

Why?

Because Jaime Guzmán means everything to me and his death was a very big loss for me. Besides being an supreme political leader, he was an apostle, an apostle of an supreme and incredible humanity, Christian all the way, a spectacular man... for instance, sometimes he was in his car and he saw a man with worn out shoes, he stopped the

car, took his shoes off, gave them and got home without shoes, yes... because he was like that, sometimes a sweater, a coat, if he saw somebody in the cold, he took it off in the street, gave it and got home without a thing, that man was incredible, an apostle, hundred percent Christian. Jaime was incredible, supreme, irreplaceable, because it was him who founded the UDI, he grouped the people with the aim of serving society, not making differences because for him the needy ones were the needy ones, and if it was the case that someone needed a hand he gave it no matter who he was, even regardless of the political colour or religion, he asked no questions, he just served, not like people from the left who always helped their own ones. That is why I think that for those of us who met Jaime he was a great example, a great, great example that has become a way of being in the UDI, this sort of serving vocation.

In the same way that Miguel embodied the MIR's values, Jaime embodied UDI's, the party's soul, becoming the 'model' to be followed by all militants. As Virginia points out, Jaime Guzmán used to help everybody without distinction, just as Jesus Christ did, and so the UDI will and must do. They do not 'discriminate between people' as leftwing militants do, in a way of discrimination that Virginia experienced during the UP government and that she associates to a dangerous ideology that threatens the idea of a peaceful and homogenised 'imaged community'.

In terms of masculinity, Jaime Guzmán' image is in my opinion more complex than Miguel Enríquez's. Small sized, of fragile build, several times called 'effeminate' by his opponents, it is not obvious what is the 'hegemonic masculinity' that he represents; however, probably it is one even more hegemonic than Miguel's. Both of them came from wealthy families, but while Miguel's background can be better associated to a kind of 'enlightened bourgeois' masculinity, Jaime symbolises a type of 'aristocratic upper class' masculine condition. Both of them have been described as highly smart and intellectually well prepared, but in association with two very different educational models; while Miguel is related to the Masonic project, Jaime comes from a strong and traditional Catholic education, which is profoundly rooted in the more conservative sectors of the Chilean society.

Indeed, Jaime Guzmán represents a type of masculinity that can be analysed, for instance, at the three following levels: first, in relation to his religious dedication to Catholic fundamentalism; second, in association with his involvement in the dictatorship's administration, and particularly in connection with his ideas of 'modernization, order and progress'; and third, in the performative dimension of his 'upper class malehood'.

Perhaps the clearest aspect in which Guzman developed his masculine control was in his public crusades against the abortion law and other initiatives, where he could articulate public discourses on womanhood and family, as the most important 'moral pillars of the patria', strictly attached to Catholic fundamentalist ideas. In this sense, as I have already mentioned, the military dictatorship developed a very efficient disciplinary control of 'Chilean Women' through CEMA Chile, in the precise way that Guzman thought society should be organized, namely with institutions reflecting the particular necessities of specific groups, as for instance woman, without differences in their class or ethnic condition. Guzmán promoted the naturalisation of womanhood as motherhood, following the image of woman of the Catholic Church, where Virgin Mary takes this as her most important role.

Thus, just as Carole Patteman points out, women were incorporated into politics precisely by virtue of their reproductive attributes, which in the Chilean case was reinforced by the Catholic Church¹¹⁶ and the conservative groups Jaime Guzman was clearly associated with.

At a second level of analysis, we can consider Guzmán's association to the dictatorship's administration. The regime implanted a marked 'masculine

¹¹⁶ It is important to clarify that the Chilean Catholic Church had a very complex participation in the political process during the 70's, and 80's. The high hierarchy in the period was part of Allende's opposition, particularly in relation to the reformulation of the educational system. However, after the coupe the Chilean Catholic Church helped articulating Human Right organizations, to protect people and to take an active role against the dictatorship abuses. Thus, Jaime Guzman represents, during this time, a minority, the more conservative part of the Catholic Church. It is said that he was always related to Opus Dei fundamentalist groups.

military style', reflected in their public actions from the beginning of the regime and in different ways. This can be seen, for instance, in the occupation of public space by men in uniform, whereas at the same time women were being pushed to 'get back' home, 'the others' (women related to 'marxism') were punished in the most unimaginable forms of degradation for exemplary purposes. Thus, 'military masculinity' imposes the order using gendered violence; on the contrary, Guzmán preferred another type of male image, less violent, more judicious. Instead, the discourses in which he took part referred to the modernization, rationalisation, order and progress of 'our nation', a nation defined as brotherhood.

We can refer to Jaime Guzmán in analogous terms to Dawson's description of Lawrence's new type of masculinity

...Lawrence preserves continuity with older traditions, but inflects it in a new direction. [...] Lawrence's youth and sexual ambivalence are combined with more conventional associations of the soldier hero in an ideal integration of 'active' and 'passive' qualities, so elusive to most modern masculinities. (1994: 176)

Clearly, Guzmán represents that ambiguity too, continuity and change, order and progress. However, despite the difference that he intended to establish between his smooth masculine style and the tough one of the military, they both work as one. Thus, violence is exercised by someone while the others accept it and silently support it, as was the case of Jaime Guzmán.

Finally, a third level of analysis is the performative dimension of Guzmán's 'upper class malehood'. This can be explained through the argument of Connell, on the co-existence of different types of masculinities, thus "men who are targets of disproportionate violence, for instance, are not the same men as those who hold military and political leadership positions" (2005: 248). Thus, Guzmán appears in the public sphere as an active collaborator of a dictatorship, but always keeping his image as a peaceful, intellectual and Catholic civilian, far from the violence exercised by Pinochet's army. In other words, he did not do the dirty jobs; he was even somehow contemptuous of Manuel Contreras, DINA's General Director, but he was

part of the regime anyway, doing the clean and intrepid intellectual job of developing a new constitution, the legal architecture that was necessary for the re-foundation of the patria. He needed to look different from the military males, and so to look 'effeminate' for the 'leftwing militants, for instance was not inconvenient. It was helpful to keep his figure far from violence, establishing a big distinction between him and the army's factual power. He also came from an aristocratic family; he was in the 'gentleman' position that can be misrecognised, particularly by 'the working-class culture', as feminine. Then, his masculinity was not based on his body attributes, or on his aggressive character, but it was based on what Redman has called 'muscular intellectualness' (Redman, 1997) proper to well educated men, like Guzmán.

In the fourth volume of their *Contemporary Chilean History*, dedicated to masculinities and femininities, Gabriel Salazar and Julio Pinto point out that the 'military masculinity' represented in the Chilean Army, which during the XIX century plays an important role in the construction of the nation state, during the XX century was slowly displaced by a kind of more 'civic masculinity', less authoritarian and monolithic, related to the welfare state. However, with the coup d'état, the army -"master model of masculinity proper of the previous century" (2002: 54) - reappears in collusion with a new kind of masculinity, that the authors call "eunuch masculinity" (2002: 63). This suggestive name refers to the fact that the old oligarchy, that during the XX century is pushed by social movements and working organisations to be more open, to incorporate new social actors for some of the political decisions, by the end of the 1960's is not able to control power anymore, and furthermore, it is scared of losing its influence, a situation that will push these sectors to ask for protection from a more efficient and authoritarian organization such as the army. Thus the "eunuch masculinity", in the point of view of the authors, refers to the inability of the traditional social groups to exercise the political power that they used to, being forced into an alliance with the powers that be. From this logic, one of the more emblematic representatives of this "eunuch masculinity" was Jaime Guzmán.

Nevertheless sharing in some ways the perspective of Salazar and Pinto, it must be said that this description of political masculinity has an implicit feminisation, or at least portrays a fragile masculinity, since the need of the army's protection. It can be argued that it is this behaviour precisely what makes them stronger. How is this oligarchic social sector able to establish an alliance with the army? Why does the army accept this alliance? How was this "eunuch masculinity" able to participate so actively in the 'national reconstruction', taking the control of important places of social and cultural influences as for instance the universities? How did they become the more important actors in the production of the Constitution of 1980, which produced the legal architecture and the legitimating framework to exercise the power, in their terms? How was this 'artistic and efficient production' made by this "eunuch masculinity" able to re-articulate the old political traditions with a new face, with a strong influence to popular sectors? If we accept that Jaime Guzmán represents the best example of this masculinity, can the UDI's political phenomenon be understood as a reconfiguration of the rightwing, with its strong influence in the most popular sector of the Chilean society?

One thing is to ask for help 'to create order', to do something that is not part of 'my qualifications', and another completely different thing is to lose control of the entire situation. One thing is to appear as a victim of a political chaos, as the UP is constructed by rightwing sectors, and a different thing is to promote the chaos in different ways in order to destabilize a regime, and thus legitimate the argument to request the army intervention. Thus, this 'eunuch masculinity' of Salazar and Pinto can also be explained as a good and convenient strategy to establish the difference between the army, who did the dirty jobs, and a peaceful sector that only wants to recover democracy, but of course under their own terms.

From an alternative point of view, Guzman's feminisation (because of fragile and weak appearance, his soft personality, and other attributes considered to be feminine) particularly promoted by leftwing side representatives, has often taken a homophobic tone, also reinforced by several rumours about

Guzmán sexual preferences. This type of disqualification is also interesting, from an analytical point of view, because it overlaps femininity, homosexuality and class into one thing. Guzmán is seen as feminine not only because of his complexity, but also because of the gossip about his sexual life. In addition, because of his class condition he is often cartooned as a 'refined gentleman' who does not have anything to do with any physical job, which shows some homophobic anxieties that are present in some traditional leftwing parties.

Summarizing, through the hero and the martyr figures, Miguel and Jaime have been constructed by the militants of their respective parties, which they formed and led, as mythical figures and 'exemplary militants' that embody practically all of the principles and values of each political organisation. In this sense, it is not accidental that both of them were men; it is just another example of how political activity is shaped by gender differences and also of how gender is modelled through politics.

From the point of view of memory, these two figures have been useful to articulate strong political identities, in the sense that Maurice Halbwachs points out

...it is the same in regard to most elements of the past that we preserve and of the entire system of traditional values that –as we know –no longer corresponds to contemporary conditions of politics or morality. We are nevertheless not certain that traditional values do not still have a role to play; we fear (perhaps mistakenly so) that if we were to eliminate them, we no longer would possess the necessary faith and creative power to find an equivalent. That is the way we remain attached to formulas, symbols, and conventions, as well as to rites that must be repeated and reproduced, if we wish to preserve the beliefs which gave them birth. (Halbwachs; 1992: 120)

In the case of the MIR, 'heroes' such as Miguel represent a more nostalgic past, since the MIR does not exist anymore. In 1986, and after the dramatic disarticulation of 'Operación Retorno', MIR was suffering intense internal division, and in this context the rest of the Central Committee decided to stop any kind of activity, meaning that the MIR disappeared from the public scene in 1986. This situation provoked confusion and disillusion in the majority of

its militants, because it was understood as a public declaration of the MIR's defeat. Thus, for people like Cristina, Dario and Erika, the end of the MIR political existence implied the death of their life of militancy, a life that they are constantly remembering since the political party disappeared. However, all of them declare in some part of the interview that they continue to be 'miristas' as an existential condition, because it is a way of being. Here Miguel's figure is more melancholic since it is a kind of militancy that is extinguished. I will come back to this point in the last chapter.

The case of the UDI is different, because this party is considered as a new configuration of the rightwing side, a mixture between the acceptance of modernity in terms of science, technology and the economy (understood in neo-liberal codes) but not with respect to the democratisation process, in the sense of more participation of people as citizens. Valdivia points out that it is difficult to classify UDI's thoughts, because it is a kind of 'conservative-modernism'. On one hand they admire the progress of science and on the other "they look to the past in terms of political and cultural subjects, trying to recreate the sense of authority and hierarchy" (Valdivia, Álvarez & Pinto; 2006: 100), which is characteristic of the traditional rightwing side. From an alternative point of view, Sofía Correa explains that this type of transformation is a typical behaviour of the Chilean political elites, from the beginning. It is a strategy to survive as a dominant class, which is also described in Luchino Visconti's film 'The Leopard', where the main character, a member of the decadent Sicilian aristocracy, explains that it is necessary to change in order to continue to be the same. In this similar sense, the figure of Jaime Guzmán embodies all of this old and new mixture, traditional values associated to the Catholic fundamentalism and respect for hierarchies, where only some people (the most prepared ones) should exercise power, mixed to these ideas about modernisation and progress based on strong economical transformations.

Thus, Miguel and Jaime represent very different political ideas; but both express two version of the political exercising in masculine codes, and hegemonic masculinities as well.

Performing Politics as a Male Activity

Feminine militancy in Chile has notably increased from the sixties on, particularly in leftwing parties. Nevertheless, this feminine incursion did not change the masculine dynamic of parties, because the incorporation of women was part of more general collective social struggles, which do not necessary question gender differences¹¹⁷. In fact, a more structural questioning would only take place in Chile during the 80's, after several years of increasing participation, at the same time that the most diverse social movements would begin to capture public spaces, until generating a massive protest against the Pinochet regime. One of these pressure groups will be a heterogenic and strong women's social movement, which was often leading the struggle to recover democracy, that at the same time included other types of democratisation demands as for instance in the private sphere, as said by a well known slogan in those days: 'Democracy in the country and at home'. If in some ways these questionings would affect parties' internal dynamics, putting gender issues on the table, that situation did not necessary imply that parties were going to change their 'masculine' dynamics, as I shall show through Isabel and Heidi's testimonies.

Remarkably, after women obtained the right to vote, the resulting –yet modest- electoral force happened to privilege the conservative sectors, tending to halt “the revolutionary or even reformist initiatives” (CEM; 1988:535). This situation was later going to change with the rise of the Christian Democratic government in the 60's.

Part of the explanations so far offered of the women limited participation at political activism and its conservative bias are related to the political discourses of that time, in which women were constantly addressed. These discourses invited and promoted female participation, but to get involved in welfare activities or charity institutions. Munizaga and Letelier asserted that this image was eventually going to be incarnated in the figure of the “first

¹¹⁷ It is also important to clarify that most women that participated in this movement were also militants of different parties, not all of them were in this situation. So the heterogenic women social movements the 1980s convene more women's participation than the parties themselves.

lady, as the public symbol of a secularized charity” (CEM; 1988: 534), clearly establishing in this way, from the State, what were considered to be the public works for women; and in which, evidently, political militancy was not included.

This situation was partially modified in the 60's, not only because of the political, social and –hence- cultural changes that the country was going through, but also because of the politics of “social promotion” implemented by the Christian Democratic government, which was going to catalyse the action of women in the public arena, towards “an important and not previously known participation of them in other instances of social organization” (en CEM; 1988: 535).

These manifestations were characterized by strong participation and social mobilization capacities, and in some moments, for instance during the 80's (against Pinochet), they could even operate in very transversal forms, by articulating diverse types of identity frameworks such as class, age, employment, sexual preferences and other differences. However, whenever crises seemed to be controlled, women vanished into the invisibility of their private spheres.

I would like to recall some points made at the beginning of this chapter. The literature relating to the political participation of Chilean women, both as a particular social movement with its own vindications and as members of the traditional system of parties, is not too abundant. In most of this literature it is concluded that ‘women’, as social actors, used to be visible in the contingent ‘social crises’, displaying what Salazar and Pinto called a “maximum solidarity”. This last expression, however, despite having a positive connotation -since it contains the intention, from these authors, of rescuing this type of ‘feminine’ participation-, implies in my opinion an implicit trap. This trap consists of maintaining and insisting that political participation of women is inseparable from their nature as “sensitive, emotional, affective, not rational” (CEM; 1988:36). It would be due to this reason that they participate by sympathizing with other social actors in times of crisis, not

because they are affected by the crisis or because they are conscious of it, but as a matter of empathy.

For Kirkwood, however, the issue is more complex than that. The massive participation of women in the public sphere during the 80's, against the military regime, has more content than simply sympathy. Kirkwood asserts that this participation is also related to the fact that while facing the authoritarian government, women are facing a known phenomenon, which at higher or lower extent is part of their daily cultural experience (1986: 164). It is because of it that many of these organizations connected the struggle to recover democracy with specific vindication demands, with respect to the subordination of gender thus tensioning political militancy, in particular inside of the leftwing parties, as we shall see next in the case of Isabel.

Indeed, Isabel's story is very attractive because she narrates how, after her exile in Germany; she suffered a transformation that would deeply question her militancy status in the Socialist Party. She began her militancy by the end of the 60's when she finished university, and she rapidly became one of the few women inside the party who would have a leading position. After the coup her partner was arrested and she was forced to leave the country with her little son.

Once in exile, did you continue to be a militant?

Only a short time, then I retired...

Why?

Let's see... hum..., I think that it was because of three reasons. After the coup there is a big division inside of the socialist party and that affected me a lot; second, for me it was becoming less clear what sense it had to be a militant being so far... mmm... and third, I was strongly influenced by the social processes in Germany, ... for instance, the anti-nuclear, the ecologists, and Latin America and Africa supporting movements... in general all of those movements became very interesting to me because they did strongly criticize the parties, with criticisms about the lack of participation and the horizontality in the ways of working, as well as criticisms about the way in which processes in eastern communist parties took place. I didn't know about that before, I hadn't had access to that information,... and well, besides, among the things that marked me more they were the women's movements. Then, all of these movements made me reflect and the party became less attractive,

since I am becoming part of these criticisms and there the style of militancy that I had experienced became authoritarian... And there I was every time more militant of those movements, for instance I worked in the movements supporting Nicaragua and El Salvador and in women's groups... and there... err... I became a feminist...

A feminist?

Yes, because before Germany I did not perceive any gender difference inside of the party or with respect to militancy, but afterwards I notice that indeed, because I identify the ways of excluding, sexist things... but look, you know what happens, it is that when one is a woman director as I was in Concepción by the end of the 60's, I was very in demand and possibly therefore I did not feel discriminated, because in some way I shared the space of power with men and I didn't realize the discrimination, on the contrary, I would tell you that I was pretty macho myself in my view on women... I thought women talked only unimportant things, that they were not interested in politics... No, in Chile I didn't realize... I realize about discrimination once I was in Germany... for instance, I realized that that closeness I had with the men of the party before, was related to a closeness to the power, because I was one of the few female director... because inside the party, most women did completely secondary jobs, or better said, jobs that were considered to be less important, related to the organization and not properly political, from taking care of the coffee to getting and cleaning the meeting rooms. In the end, all the things that in one way or the other were the projection of the social roles, then the power part was left aside... I also remember some pretty sexist things such as the construction of women as objects, of looking at them so, as things... Now I made myself a feminist in Germany, and I did so from the more traditional roles, because I went out in exile alone with my son, so I had to do everything by myself... and when my partner arrived, after being imprisoned in Chile, he almost hadn't known our child, practically they did not know each other, ... and in that process he kind of remained as an observer and I went on doing everything, and I felt that that annoyed me, but I didn't know how to say it... and suddenly my German friends were asking me questions that, at the beginning, I didn't understand very much, but that then made me reflect, and little by little I understood... look I am never going to forget a situation in which I was invited with a companion from the MIR to a meeting with German women, I have it very vivid because it was with a translation, and they asked questions, kind of personal, about what we did in our daily life, things like that, and I was very disconcerted, didn't understand why they were asking that sort of question. Later they asked us about the roles in Chilean culture, about the things that women do, the things that men do, if there was any discrimination, how was it during the UP, and so on... And I replied very relaxed about how it was, but at the same time I saw certain disenchantment in their eyes, although I didn't understand why. It was as if they were asking one thing and I was answering another one. And the meeting finished, and I never understood very much about

what happened, until several years later I understood that misunderstanding and disenchantment, because, actually, these women realized that we had no notion of the specific problems of women. They asked us on this specific situation and we talked to her about another one, about workers, about socialism, I don't know...

Isabel's narration describes her political conversion from the socialist party to 'feminism'. This transformation happens practically and metaphorically through a forced trip, where she would be alone with her baby son in a strange country, with a very different language. Far from Chile, for the first time she will allow herself to question her past life, at the same time that she will start a new one, in a very different context. In her story, the first thing that would get her attention, in relation to politics, was the different types of social movements that she found, and their relative autonomy from parties, a completely different situation to Chile, where political parties were practically the only way to exercise politics 'seriously'. Suddenly she starts perceiving that the internal dynamic of leftwing parties, particularly in the Chilean Socialist party where she used to be a militant, was authoritarian and 'machista' in character. The peculiarity of this discovery is that this occurred in a moment in which for the first time she was alone, trying to survive and to resolve quotidian problems such as where to live, how to find a job, and how to deal with motherhood. As in her own words "I made myself a feminist in Germany, and I did so from the more traditional roles, because I went out to the exile alone with my son, then I had to do everything by myself...", then there is a new appreciation by Isabel of the daily activities that she never considered to be important before. Indeed, she realized that in Chile, while she had the experience of being a political leader, her style in the exercise of power was very 'masculine', even 'machista', as she expresses, "I was pretty machista myself in my view on women... I though women talked only unimportant things, that they were not interested in politics".

Thus, there are at least three aspects in Isabel's story that I want to emphasize. The first is related to the fact that in her story, besides the German context, it is through her development as a 'single mother' that she

starts, on one hand, valuing the 'traditional women duty' as a mother, but on the other, she also starts politicising this condition, her 'private life'.

The second aspect is how she describes her political participation as a political leader, because in Chile she never felt excluded or discriminated in any way by her male partners, but she realises that this situation was "because in some way I shared the space of power with men", since she did not question the established order, or the way in which the power was exercised, in the same way as the rest of her male companions. Like them, she also never considered the job of other women militants to be significant. As she explains, "because inside the party, most women did completely secondary jobs, or better said, jobs that were considered to be less important, related to the organization and not properly political, from taking care of the coffee to getting and cleaning the meeting rooms". In other words, the sexual division of labour operated inside her party without any conflict, and by extension also in the way of understanding politics, in a dichotomized mode, were 'proper politics' related to leadership, decision making on the party's actions, and so on, but not to things related to the 'organization', as Isabel points out. Then, it can be assumed that in her leader position, from a very young age, she was always participating in 'proper political activities' and not in those other minor and less important activities, which most women militant did, until she travelled to Germany. Thus, the naturalization of the sexual roles and the sexual division of labour marked the political performance of men and women of this time.

The third point is a consequence of the previous one. As a matter of fact, women were not considered to be important in their jobs inside the party, and they were also excluded, or at least not encouraged to develop other aspects of militancy, as for instance in having more access to make decisions on party strategies, or to assume more leading positions. As militants, the majority of women were basically excluded. Isabel was an exception in a way, because she was a kind of leader before her militancy. From a very young age at her primary school, and later in the university she was recognized as a public leader, with strong support from her student

friends. She also took an active participation in the university's student union and from this public position was recruited by the Socialist Party. She did not develop the 'leadership quality' as a consequence of her militancy; she gained social recognitions as a leader before. Thus Isabel's story opens the question to whether it was the reason why she was recruited, because it was convenient to the party.

It was during her stay in Germany, being far from her usual identity referents, where she was forced to question things that were givens before, so in this sense her story is about a reconfiguration of herself, especially of her political identity. She lived outside of Chile for about twelve years. Very soon, after her husband met her in exile, they divorced, she never lived with another partner again, and she changed her militancy in the socialist party, for a feminist collective until now.

Mmm... and this transformation that you experienced is also related to a change of life, in personal terms

In my case it is absolutely so, because before everything was outside in the social thing, but in exile I discovered a sort of process of individualization, which did not mean letting aside the social processes, but to consider that my space was important too, that my development was important, my relationships with a couple... because really all of that I didn't know, I only had social development in the collective things, well because in that time all that implied a concern for the individual thing was considered to be bourgeois deformations, because you couldn't imagine a different thing... in fact, the first time I went on a kind of vacation because they lent me a little house, I went with a friend from the MIR and she was almost expelled, because they said that it was very selfish and bourgeois to have gone to that house without advising our respective parties to share it with the others... I mean... And I also suffered them looking at me in an ugly way, because in fact I was one of the first to rescue and defend the idea of having vacations... now the issue was very complicated because it crossed the issue of guilt, because sure, us exiled having a holiday, and the rest of the companions who had stayed were fighting, they were imprisoned or being tortured and sure, I went and came on holiday... that was very complicated... it wasn't easy...now I was not thinking about it much, I just lived it, almost as a necessity and as a rebellion towards all of that authoritarian thing about the control of the party... Now I think that that also mixes in part with our catholic culture of punishing yourself all day, the thing about the suffering of the penitence and of avoiding pleasure especially for women, and I think that that thing is very strong.

In her narration she recognises that part of the reason why she gave up her militancy in the socialist party, was because of the internal divisions that this party was suffering, and also because she had access to information about the political procedure in the East of Europe that she did not know before. However, the most important motive was a process that she calls 'individualization', a sort of making consciousness of her as an individuality, which gave her a new dimension about the importance of her personal life, as for instance on having a partner, taking a holiday, and so on. This process would provide a new point of view on her past militancy's style, which she now finds repressive, authoritarian and patriarchal, pleasure being the focus of control, particularly for women. Thus, her struggle about having holidays becomes both a defence of a personal right and a political issue, since it will question the party internal establishment and procedures.

Once again, appearing in this story is the moral rigidity of some leftwing parties that during that time focused their collective and internal cohesion by disciplining their members in a very authoritarian way, ignoring the everyday life complexities of each militant, and controlling several aspects that were normally considered 'private'. As in the case of Ana, Isabel qualifies this control not only as the result of the parties' rigidity, considering "all that implied a concern for the individual thing was considered to be bourgeois deformations", she actively mentions the Catholic elements in our culture that privilege feelings of suffering and guiltiness over pleasure, particularly when this pleasure refers to women.

Nevertheless, Isabel's narration keeps the gender paradox, since her rebellion is associated with a kind of discovery of a 'womanhood' related to 'personal issues', 'individual development' and 'everyday life problems', of which she became aware thanks to the help of her German women friends. In this way the dichotomy between the 'private sphere' -the space considered to be naturally female- and the 'public sphere' as a masculine space, is maintained. Isabel's story goes from a 'masculine way' of performing politics, represented by her militancy in the Socialist Party, to a 'feminine way', expressed in her adherence to 'feminism'. Here the

masculine way is related to the context of the 1960s and the 1970s, when traditional gender roles were in place inside of political activities. Women like Isabel, who assumed leadership positions were an exception. Isabel felt that she was an exception.

Internally, the political parties understood women militancies as support, and gender conflicts as matters that could wait, or that would be resolved once the new society was constructed. Contrarily, the 'feminine way' relates to the process of awareness that she experiences while exiled, with respect to the sexist ways in which Chilean leftwing parties exercised politics. In this way, as I showed in the previous chapter, this critique elaborated by women during the 1980s became massive and organised.

Despite the fact that she continued to feel part of the leftwing side, she rejects any militancy and she prefers to focus on looking at solutions for the different ways in which the subjugation of women takes place.

In Kirkwood's view, the problem is basically that in the "popular, progressive and revolutionary parties" (1990: 51) they assume the claim of 'political, economic and class' vindications which, in effect, gave account of the greater part of the social problems of the time, but forgot or left aside other types of exploitations and discriminations. On the other hand, it was assumed that the beneficiary subject of those vindications was one internally undifferentiated. Thus, unavoidably, the popular subject, the worker, the exploited one, or even the citizen is naturally masculine, regardless of whether it was mentioned or not. According to Kirkwood, sexual discrimination "will appear covered up, postponed as secondary or, in occasions, directly neglected" (1990: 51). Therefore many women, in particular leftwing militants as in the case of Isabel, are going to live between the paradox of accepting "the predominant cultural idea on [the problem of] the feminine as a secondary contradiction" (1990: 51) and consequently to subordinate their demands to others more general and "important", or, as with Isabel, the option will be to change the frontline of struggle and to change militancy.

Feelings of politics as being a male activity can be found on the rightwing side too, as for example in the UDI's women militants. However, at least in appearance, it was lived without too much contradiction, since gender differences were accepted as natural, thus it was normal that these differences were expressed in politics as well.

Let us consider the case of Heidi, a woman in her 50's who is a militant of the UDI party, the youngest daughter of one of the members of the military officer who was in the government during the military dictatorship. She, for instance, recognises the absence of women in power positions inside the party, but she thinks that this is just a consequence of natural 'gender differences'. She also accepts participating as a candidate in a election knowing that she will lose.

Just recently there were representative elections, I didn't have the least interest in being a representative candidate, because in reality my work as a militant in the UDI, it was much more social and behind the scenes without showing the face, the job of a worker ant which had much more to do with my character, it suited me a lot, besides it was lovely to me and I liked that job... but at the same time, it was also my turn to work with the team upstairs, because I did the legal advice, and they got together every Monday, about eight of them, and I left feeling full of their spirit, because they were a great group of people, worried about doing things right, interested in how their work benefited the party, not their individual images... well, one day they called me and asked me to be a candidate for deputy in *Cerro Navia*, they told me that it was one of the hardest districts, because the possibilities of wining were minimum, but they asked me anyway because of course it was necessary to offer a candidate, then it was like a favour, because no one wanted to go for that district because everyone knew that it was a waste of time... but since I had been working with that group of people, and observing the way they gave, the effort, the dedication... then therefore I accepted and... and... and I gave myself completely, I was, as I told you, a year in there, especially the last seven months of campaign, ... that was a really very heavy thing, because we started at 9, 10 in the morning when we went from house to house introducing myself, and sure in some of them they spat at you, in others they invited you in, in others they offer you cake, in others they don't open the door, in others they tell you "go back to *Las Condes*", in others they tell you "and you, blond, blue eyes girl, what are you doing here, in this '*población*', go and have a laugh on your grandma... you understand?, it wasn't easy. Besides, we had to go to *Centros de Madres*, Neighbours associations, Centres for child protection, and then you were exposed to all kind of questions, comments... and well, one responded in the best possible

way... and I think that I did all of that and that I did it with the strength that I did it with and I faced the situation because I had seen that group and because of all of what I had heard about Jaime Guzmán, on how he gave himself up...

mmm... and you did the campaign despite knowing you were not going to win?

Yes, sure, I did it like a favour; I did it for the party... Now the loss was terrible anyway, for me it was very hard because I got much more votes than we initially thought we could get, and besides we went for it a hundred percent... At the beginning it was terrible, because I am very shy... I remember once, I had been in this for a week or so, and a man told me 'I want to know your opinion on having a divorce law'; well, I said I think this and that... and then he said 'good, you have given me very good reasons not to vote for you' and I remember that it felt like a punch in the face, because one was not prepared to receive such a sort of comment so hard,... because I don't know,... I thought 'what have I done to this poor man?'... nothing, we only had different ideas, but 'why be so rude?' a rudeness you could not imagine because I don't know, you rang the door bell and a woman almost threatened you with a stick, yelling 'go away to your neighbourhood in Las Condes', 'go to hell...'; then it is like ... I mean, what is my guilt on this?... now finally when one sees the difficulties for people... I mean I have never thought that money makes happiness, but obviously helps and when you see people who live under conditions that are really very hard, one can understand that every once in a while they react that way, so hard with you, and in the end you start thinking 'oh, what a pity', it is understandable... in the beginning they made me feel very bad, but then, it is perfectly understandable...

It is relatively easy to argue and show Heidi as an example of the political utilization that some parties make of their militant women. She explicitly asks to participate in a campaign for a representative seat that no other militant wanted to take because it's considered a 'waste of time'. The party directive group knew beforehand that it was practically impossible to win in the district that she was asking to participate in, nevertheless they needed somebody to represent the UDI, they needed to show their presence no matter the result. That's how Heidi's participation becomes a sacrificial act, an effort destined to fail, because the person that was going to represent the party had to be someone who on one hand didn't have much ambition in their political career, and on the other, someone who the party didn't consider a key piece, evidently shown by higher regarded militants who were competing in districts where they thought they could win. The position in which she is put, and in

which she accepts being, is ambivalent. On one hand, a woman competing in the representative elections makes the UDI appear progressive, and besides, the district where she competes is one of the poorest in Santiago, so the feminine image can be used in a maternal way, as more sensitive to adversity. Nevertheless, on the other hand, they put 'her' a 'woman' in a place in the political game where she knows she is going to lose. The message from the party for her is 'we need you to sacrifice yourself for the good of everyone, for the good of the party, and therefore the political importance you put into this act'. The party's use of Heidi is obvious, but she knows it, she accepts it, she is an accomplice, as she says "I did it like a favour; I did it for the party..."

So, she wasn't only an object, she accepted the challenge, religiously in a certain sense as she expressed "I gave myself completely". Independently of the result forecast, she actively participated and in doing so she had experiences that she never imagined, and despite her tendency to naturalise the gender differences and hence the political competition of men and women, these experiences will make her doubt, until eventually recognising that there are women in leadership positions that can even do it better than some men.

The religious or confessional dimension of her campaign is given, not only by the sacrificial act, but also by the house to house strategy of trying to convince the people to vote for her. In doing this she exposed herself to all sorts of reactions, where she was verbally mistreated many times, not only for being part of the UDI, but also for her image, white, blonde, blue eyes, features personifying someone of upper class, a kind of inverted racism reaction given that indigenous features are much more associated with the lower classes. Nevertheless she continues, she stays in the fight until the end, she incorporates her strategies of co-opting other activist organisations, and the rejection doesn't intimidate her. She finds hidden strengths that she didn't know she had and which in a certain sense transform her, and the origin of that strength is owed, on one hand, to her perception of the party's founding group which she has seen work close up and whose members she

admires deeply; and evidently by the image of Jaime Guzmán, enlightened, special, and a model to imitate.

Here it is important to highlight how the figure of Jaime Guzmán operates inside the party, especially within the female militancy. Because, it is particularly, the mystical and religious aspect that his image contains which is most redeemed by Heidi and Virginia. This facet of Guzman helps them to take control of themselves in a place where the 'spirit of sacrifice' is a fundamental value and even a superior one, therefore the force to work for the party comes from there. And so, on building their militancy from this almost religious support it also feminizes their militancy, since that same value is usually associated with the feminine.

Her condition of being a woman of high class and Catholic is going to help her face the campaign because it puts her in a place of moral superiority the same as Rosita. Besides being shy and being mistreated on repeated occasions, she realises, she understands, she puts herself through mistreatment, because in one sense that is the cost of being in a privileged place. She can't lose composure, she can't return the aggression, she has to understand and hold back, like a good mother with her children. When she recounts the situation she describes as 'a punch', Heidi says 'what have I done to this poor man?'..., that's to say even though it hurts her, it bothers her, it angers her, she also tries to brush off the attack, converting the aggressor into a 'poor man', someone for whom it is better to feel pity. Regardless of her effectively suffering verbal aggression and rejection, on many occasions she chooses to generalise and convert all types of resistance to her campaign into a result of the 'precariousness of the people', 'of poverty', of 'the conditions in which they live', denying herself all types of ill feeling with the people that she faces. So, that very 'feminine' and 'Catholic' understanding and compassionate attitude that she adopts is going to take away the political dimension of conflict of which she is part of, because she refuses to accept and recognise that those who argue with her are also political adversaries.

But also, these same 'attributes' are going to help her, not only to support, but also to strengthen her campaign. She is even going to discover, gradually, that at least at a political campaign level she can make the most the most of her 'feminine' condition.

Do you think that there was a difference in all of this process because you were a woman?

Campaigning can be easier for a woman, because you obviously use all kinds of tools, tools that for instance men cannot manage, besides they are things that people tell you, for instance they told me "look, you've got to be dressed the same way every day, to show a style, so people can identify you from afar, recognize you by your clothes..." Besides, I think that women have a thing, I don't know,... sometimes it turns out more attractive, or warmer,... so men on one hand pay attention to the blonde, with that there is nothing we can do,... and to women, look... it's just that I am a woman of hugs and things like that and that comes from my soul, because I get tender when I see people having real bad times, then I come and I hug them very hard, and that's something a man can't do because people may think that he is trying to get something, but instead a woman's hug in that context is more maternal. Yes, and also women are kind of more notorious, we also have the fame of being more daring, I don't know to what point men could be so. I don't know, I suppose that both men and women can take political advantage of their qualities... Now I believe that carrying out political campaigns is easier for women, now it's a different thing once you are inside the system, because clearly politics at a directive level is still very masculine... Anyway I think it is normal because men and women are different and have different attributes...

It is very interesting in her story to observe how she associates the manipulation of her corporal and affective image to the feminine, and how in turn she decides to utilise them as advantages for her political campaign. On recognising that it is easier for a woman to manipulate her public image through the use of clothes, it would seem that for her the problem of clothing is evidently feminine, when in theory, the same recommendation that was given to her could be given to a male candidate. Yet more natural appears the valuation she makes of her sexual image, given by her white and blonde condition, with respect to which she tells us that it catches the attention of the men and that in relation to that 'there is nothing you can do', that's the way it is almost by nature. And so, the conclusion is like the title of the movie 'Gentlemen prefer blondes'. On the other hand, it would seem that it is more complex for men to manipulate or exploit the sexual dimension of their

image; it could even be dangerous and counterproductive. So, if the sexualised dimension of her 'blonde' condition helps her to capture votes in the masculine sector, or at least so that they give her some level of attention, the affective dimension will help her to capture feminine votes. She describes herself as affectively demonstrative, she likes to hug and touch the people, particularly the people who are suffering, and those gestures are authentic because 'they come from her soul' and certainly they are more typically feminine, therefore in that way women can identify themselves with these typically maternal gestures. Whereas, in the case of a man, those physical, affectionate and empathetic gestures run the risk of being misinterpreted because one may think that 'he is trying to get something'. This phrase – a little enigmatic – encloses a basic idea: if a man has those gestures, they suspect him, because they are not typical of the masculine, and if they do them, then one may think that he is doing it for self-interest, they aren't authentic gestures, he is using gestures that don't belong to him and that he does it because 'he wants something'. In that wanting something, it could have multiple contents. From the point of view of a political campaign, the masculine subject that Heidi imagines evidently wants – the same as her – to get voters, but in an 'incorrect' way. Finally, another great advantage of being a woman in a campaign, according to Heidi, lies in the fact that women are much more dedicated when they decide to participate politically, that's to say, they give themselves up entirely, just as she did despite knowing beforehand that she was going to lose. But that advantage that seems to help women work better in a political campaign, paradoxically doesn't necessarily make them win, and worse still, just as Heidi recognises, it doesn't convert them into leaders inside the parties.

In Catholic codes, a sacrifice doesn't expect reward, it's a free gesture, and for her militancy and politics has to do with that, as well as a 'spirit of service' for it and when she is asked if she felt a little used she responds:

I'm telling you, no... or rather, there are many ways to help, and you are not going to kick up a fuss because I did this and so now I'm waiting for the party to give me something in return, because at the bottom of it all the only thing that that attitude shows is that you are in the party for personal benefit, and not to help, you know? When you

go to help, you're not going to demand things, you dedicate yourself to the task and that's it.

The political militancy of Heidi that today has her as personal secretary to one of the highest leaders of the party, does not put a strain on the established patriarchal order; doing this was not one of her objectives either. The strategy that she chooses is not to follow the masculine parameters either, as if that was the only permitted way, as we have seen in the case of other accounts. Rather she chooses to make use of her feminine condition, politically exploit the difference, and effectively, despite losing, she obtains more votes than the UDI calculated that she would be able to receive in the said district. Nevertheless, this fact doesn't stand her any better in the party, on the contrary she disappears from the public sphere given the exhaustion that the campaign provoked. She returns to her 'worker ant' job which was what she liked to do before her candidature. But, in her story, Heidi can't avoid expressing that "politics at directive level is still very masculine...", the little word 'still' is significant, it holds a certain nostalgia for her, possibly because it could eventually mean that she occupies a public post, and a promise of a future that could be different for militant women. What the word 'still' hides is the tension that Heidi has, between understanding the political activity femininely as 'public service' and 'sacrifice', and understanding it in its 'masculine' aspect in relation to power and the exercise of it.

To summarise, as we have seen in the case of Isabel and Heidi, feminine political participation as active militants inside of a political party can turn out difficult. And in these accounts is clearly shown a kind of disorientation, in relation to a game, in which one remains exempt from participating in the making of the rules, a game that someone else made, in this case a masculine subject. In both stories it is possible to perceive a sensation that the militancy and the political parties in the last analysis are masculine territory. And so the only possibility of staying in it is to accept using those codes.

According to the academic Ana Pizarro, women in Latin America have established different strategies to be able to appropriate themselves and express themselves in public. These strategies can basically organise themselves into four categories: identification and de-contextualisation; accompaniment; displacement and, finally, masking. The first refers to the use of public space from the symbolic reaffirmation that women make of the cultural discourse from which, usually, they are addressed. The paradigmatic example of this would be the Mothers of the May Plaza, but also the already mentioned case of the Saucepans in Chile, where the feminine and private symbolic universe changes context, from the house to the street. According to Pizarro, this fluctuation between identification and at the same time de-contextualisation of the same thing, permits the movements or women's groups to gain access to public spaces, "without appearing to invade the other speech [traditional politician], to which culturally it is granting them access to" (1994:200). In a certain way it is what Heidi does, to reaffirm her 'feminine' condition, culturally built from more traditional social sectors and from there to elaborate her political campaign. The strategies of accompaniment, on the other hand, according to Pizarro, relate themselves to reinforcing the already established political battles in public, in the little "spaces that they leave each other" (1994: 202). In this case the feminine action favours and supports that of fathers, brothers, husband or sons. It doesn't have its own agenda and neither does it subvert feminine subordination, rather it reproduces it in a public space. An example seen in this chapter is Rosita's case, whose militancy upholds her in the help that she wants to offer her son inside the party.

With respect to the displacement strategies, they refer to the creation of public spaces comparable with or extending to the home, or to the feminine cultural dimension and that eventually they can put pressure on the same assumptions that uphold these organisations (1994: 202). This would be the case of many of the female associations or groups that emerged in the 1980s in Chile against the dictatorship, from organisations like the Soup Kitchens, or Buying Together, where the everyday tasks of women such as cooking or buying food, on being transferred to the public arena, acquire a

social dimension, demonstrating the economic injustices, and therefore they clearly acquire a political dimension. The same happens with organisations like 'Women For Life', 'Women For Democracy', 'Women For Peace' etc., that even though they elaborate a discussion from their feminine 'maternal' condition, this becomes more radical and focuses on the demand for the end of the dictatorship.

The last strategy that Pizarro recognises is masking which in a certain sense implicates practising political activity 'like the men'. That's to say, to accept that the correct way of acting in politics is already established beforehand and that if one wants to participate in it, without being discriminated or stigmatised, then one has to work in it with the hegemonic codes which are masculine. In the context of this chapter, the clearest examples of this strategy would be the cases of Cristina and Isabel (the latter in her first period as a militant in the socialist party). Because in a certain sense the interpretation that they give is that politics is one - because public matters have no sex or gender to which one must attach to.

In spite of the fact that women militancy in political parties has increased, citizenship continues to be a space mainly inhabited by men. The exemplary militants who are constructed as mythical and heroic figures are male, as it is the case of Miguel and Jaime. Thus, certain political practices are inspired and modelled, both in the leftwing and the rightwing, by following these figures as articulating axes that connect the old political militancy of the 1960s and the 1970s with present militancy. However, they do so in relation to a historical memory which is more ritualistic than practical.

Effectively, from the 1980s on, along with social mobilisations against the military dictatorship that produce new political practices, the return to the traditional models by political parties is supported by the strength of the diverse anti dictatorship movements. However, these models began to show their weaknesses during the 1990s. In this context, the influence of feminism as a social movement, articulated across diverse women organisations – some of them openly feminist but also other instances of organisation that

were not– allowed for a criticism on the indifference, particularly from leftwing parties, with respect to the condition of double exploitation of several women resulting from sexual division of labour, as exemplified in Isabel’s story.

In this way, an expanding critique to the parties as hegemonic instances of political participation spread not only across women’s movements, but also towards ethnic groups with particular demands. The ‘nature’ of what was considered as properly ‘political’ was changing, being displaced towards beyond class conflicts, by linking exploitation and productive processes to the realms of culture, daily life, sexuality, etc. (Ciriza; 2003)

Yet the re-configuration of militancy was also conditioned by the neoliberal economic model imposed by the military dictatorship. Under such model, many of the vindications by new political subjects became a matter subject to the laws of the market. Alternatively, as in the case of women social organisations, they were settled inside of the state, under the SERNAM.¹¹⁸ In this re-configuration of political activism, memory as recognition of the difference, on one hand, and as fragmentation on the other -‘memory as rupture’ (Stern; 2009)-, has played a decisive role. This is particularly clear in the case of leftwing militants, who have not been able to construct, socially and collectively, a story that provides with historical meaning to their present and future, hence leaving present political practices adrift subject to market forces, in a place where differences coexist but do not dialogue.

¹¹⁸ Servicio Nacional de la Mujer (National Service for Women).

CHAPTER VI: THE PROBLEMATIC HOMOSEXUALS

At the start of Chapter IV we looked at how, according to Carole Pateman, through the metaphor of the social contract, women are trapped in the paradox of being included and excluded from political practice at the same time. There are two reasons for this: one has to do with individual liberty, which contractual relations presuppose, and which according to Pateman is a fiction. In reality the contract always generates “relationships of domination and subordination” (1995: 18), because it operates as already legitimizing the exploitation that exists, or more to the point it, produces legal conditions and the possibility of that exploitation and exclusion. When women enter the agreement they are already subordinated to the patriarchal order. The second mechanism that is responsible for the paradox is the naturalization of the public/private sphere dichotomy. Making feminine subordination consist of associating the production of its subjectivity with private life, “it is part of civil society, but from public life” (195: 22). In summary, for Pateman the social contract is also a sexual contract because women are wives and mothers.

However, this sexual contract that includes women in the public sphere as auxiliaries also shapes social life in general, through the institution of marriage. That is why this type of link, as a way of ordering bourgeois society, as a way of organizing work social division, including procreation, upbringing and care of the children in so many future citizens, presupposes the heterosexual character of the basic relationships between men and women. That assumption, supported in diverse discussions about human nature, works not only normatively, but also it is obligatory (Rich; 2001), that's to say it's the only legitimate and acceptable sexual practice.

In this sense political practice not only has a masculine character but a heterosexual one as well. It not only has that character, but it also cooperates to reproduce it. According to Michel Foucault, part of the process through which we convert ourselves into characters is related to mechanisms or discourses about discipline and control, principally corporal, that shape us.

From this perspective, and in the context of this thesis, political parties as examples of socialization are also examples of discipline. And until now we have seen how these mechanisms operate, in the case of the ‘masculine’ and the ‘feminine’, now we will see by observing how the parties, mainly on the left (given the chosen stories) in this case, also discipline the bodies/sexes of its militants.

This section contains three parts; the first, **‘Better in the closet’** examines the story of Mario, who chooses to hide his homosexuality as a way of surviving in a very ‘heterosexual masculine’ environment; the second, **‘The party’s whore becomes a lesbian’**, analyses Tatiana’s experience as a divorced and lesbian, militant communist; finally, in the last part, **‘Subverting politics from masculine and heterosexual shape’**, I consider two public figures of political activists who have in one way or another placed tension on the naturalization and implicit heteronormativity of the parties of the left.

Better in the Closet. Passing for Militant, Passing for Heterosexual

At the time of the military coup, Mario was six, the youngest of five in a family that lived comfortably in the south. His father worked in the country’s most important sugar company. Although his father was not an active member of any political party, he supported the Popular Unity government and was a labor union leader. In fact, at the time of the military coup, Mario’s father was in Cuba taking a class to improve his trade skills. When news of the situation reached him, Mario’s father decided not to return to Chile. The military had made lists of people asked to appear before the new authorities, primarily political leaders and party members associated with Popular Unity, and Mario’s father was on the list.¹¹⁹

However, at the end of September, Mario’s second oldest sister became seriously ill and was hospitalized. Tragically, his sister died as a result of medical negligence. This situation convinced Mario’s father to come to Chile

¹¹⁹ Through the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (known as the Rettig Report), it is now known that most of the people on these lists who voluntarily appeared before the authorities were “disappeared”, and remain so today.

clandestinely, so he could be with his family and attend his daughter's funeral. Once he had entered the country, he decided to appear before the authorities, who arrested him and sent him to a concentration camp.

From that moment Mario's life changed radically.

I only have images, quite cinematic... I have images of waiting... of me walking through the neighborhood... a neighborhood filled with houses, one after another, and me walking through it... and beginning to register the people's reaction toward us, people who were our friends before, with whom we would talk and get together, only now they'd stopped talking to us. We went around knocking on doors, looking for the friends we used to play with, but people would say 'no, they're not here.' Then a kind of really intense witch-hunt started, and my mother and father's closest friends were gone, and didn't come back...

This feeling of abandonment is an important part of Mario's story, because in some way it taught him that given certain circumstances, people are capable of ignoring you, abandoning you and excluding you, making you feel like an outcast. He couldn't play with his neighborhood friends anymore and his family was forced to move to Santiago, where Mario's mother had relatives who could support them. Mario's mother, who prior to the coup was a homemaker, was now forced to work outside the home. Needless to say, the family's economic situation deteriorated severely.

Mario has the following memory of the last time he saw his father, prior to his release four years later:

I was out of my mind with fear, really out of my mind with fear, because on top of everything I wasn't sure why my father was in prison, I wasn't sure if he was innocent, I was all mixed up... and then I get there, where my father was digging a well,... and a soldier asks me what I was doing there and I tell him that I came to see if the pool was full... then he asks me, Do you want to talk to your father? Do you want to see him? ... then the soldier helps my father climb out of the pit, my father was covered with dirt, and I was there a minute with him, I didn't talk, I greeted him, I was so afraid that I couldn't say a word and then I ran all the way home... I feel like I was really ashamed, ashamed of having a father in prison... that's the thing about little towns in this country, the importance of protecting your image... it's very intense....

Fear, shame, and exclusion were experiences Mario confronted from his earliest childhood. They shaped how he reacted to being gay, inasmuch as they made 'the closet' seem like a comfortable, protected and safe place. Somehow, Mario knew his father was punished and that the punishment was very severe. It was so severe that his life changed radically, which caused him great fear. He knew his father hadn't exactly done anything wrong or illegal, but was incarcerated for his political ideas; yet, the fact that his father was imprisoned still embarrassed him. This shame was reinforced by the exclusion his family was forced to endure. Their friends disappeared, no one would speak to them, everyone knew about their situation, and they could no longer keep up appearances, because as Mario said, "that's the thing about little towns in this country, the importance of protecting your image... it's very intense...".

The manner in which Mario tells his story is odd, since to some extent we have all experienced the need to keep up appearances or "protect our image" regarding our lives. However, how could Mario's father "protect his image" with respect to his political ideas and support of Popular Unity? He was a union leader, he had travelled to Cuba twice, he participated in demonstrations, and apparently everyone knew about his political activities. How could he "protect his image" in that context?

In a child's eyes, something that used to be a normal part of daily life evidently had turned into something 'bad' and 'not allowed' overnight. Mario knew that some of his father's friends had been able to pass unnoticed, were not imprisoned and had remained quiet and hidden in their homes. As a result they had not been punished, and their lives had not changed significantly.

Mario's father was freed in 1977, when Mario was ten years old.

He was not emotionally right when he came back; nothing was really ever right again. He never talked about what happened during that time, or whether they tortured him, we don't talk about that, actually, we don't talk about much of anything... When my father returned, he tried to work doing anything he could, he put all his energy into work,

but everything turned out wrong. And it was my mother who held the family together. Now, I believe he tried to make a connection with me, but... I think I cut ties with my father unconsciously, I didn't talk to him, ever again, I stopped talking to him... My brothers and sisters, who were already older, were always talking about how great life was before, how kind, fun and warm my father was, but I couldn't remember, because I was so young. But my father didn't re-establish that connection with my siblings, either...

What happened?

There started to be problems, as though family life was cut off; for example, no one remembered birthdays. And all our conversations as a family, at dinnertime, for example, started to focus on money, finances. Saturdays and Sundays were workdays, there were no more Christmases... like that... basically it was like we all learned to work, to deny anything emotional and replace it with work. Do you know what I mean? Because my father and my mother ended up selling in the outdoor market... so 80% of our family matters had to do with what we could sell, where to sell, where the sales were, where the cheapest places were ... and so basically, no one talked about what happened, or what we were feeling... And in one way or another it's related to this whole phase of me discovering my homosexuality, and the whole thing... nobody talked... I mean we had lived through these really intense experiences as a family and we never talked about it, nobody ever said anything...

In the section on family we saw that for many of the interviewees, the military coup was a breaking point in their lives, after which “nothing was really ever right again.” In Mario's case, he experienced in silence. His father returned and didn't say anything. No one knew what happened to him over those four years, no one told him what had happened in the family over those four years while he was gone. Apparently, according to Mario's story, the father attempted to establish a connection with his children, but he was not successful. He is implicitly and symbolically punished by the rest of the family. This is more evident for the older children, who retain the memory of how their father used to be. In this way, the man returns, but he is never able to recover completely his symbolic position as ‘the father’: “I think I cut ties with my father unconsciously, I didn't talk to him, ever again, I stopped talking to him...”. He has lost his position as the father in many ways, as he also cannot regain his role as provider. The mother has taken charge, and although he attempts to regain that role once he returns, “everything turns out wrong”. As a result, the whole family begins to concentrate on meeting

their basic material needs. Everyone works, including the children, selling various items in Santiago's assorted outdoor markets.

Everything revolves around the family's finances and work, and as Mario remembers, there is no longer space for emotion. In some sense, the family has incorporated or recreated the public/private dichotomy at its core. As such, when they are together, they speak only about their economic survival, the activities through which the family feeds itself; this is the family's public side. Each family member's emotional, sentimental, subjective, and even whimsical aspects remain private, encapsulated in each person. Any opportunity for a family member to open up is suspended. Group rituals stop, birthdays are not celebrated, even Christmas passes without fanfare, and as Mario says, "Basically, no one talked about what happened, or what we each were feeling....".

From another, more theoretical perspective, it could be said that the lack of emotional interaction which became a pattern in the family's dynamics was also a way to protect the father and the group. The collective fear of talking, of naming the pain or the anger, keeps the family connected and focused on survival. What cannot be named? What is the fear of saying what one feels? The father does not speak, but no one questions him, either; perhaps there are too many emotions, emotions that potentially could destabilize the father's masculinity, particularly given the assumption that emotional expression is more a feminine characteristic. Put simpler, 'men don't cry' – especially not fathers. How can the patriarchal structure be preserved if the father becomes a victim?

Did you feel that you couldn't talk about what was happening to you?

For all those years I'd had to keep quiet about my father having been imprisoned, that he was a political prisoner, in school, for example, none of my classmates knew... but I also had to keep quiet about the fact that when I wasn't in school, I was working, that I worked on Saturdays and Sundays...although later, it was OK to talk about that, because since I was working, I was one of the kids who went around with more cash in my pocket...so really, realizing I was homosexual was just another thing to keep quiet.... Now, the problem wasn't so

much at school, because in my class there were other students who were gay, and everybody knew it, ...because they were queens...so one way or another you didn't feel alone...you weren't the only one in the world...but I didn't want to be part of their group, because I didn't want to be a queen. So sure, my connection was with the more intellectual kids, with the leftist intellectuals, the ones who were active in some party on the left, so I acted, I don't know... I passed as straight, and no one knew I was gay. Even now, not many people know, ... many of my friends don't even know....

And at home?

If we didn't talk about other issues, we definitely didn't talk about that... at one point there was a huge mess over a letter my sister found... I know my brothers and sisters talked about it, but when it came up I denied everything, absolutely... I didn't know how my parents might react, I was worried about my mother, who worked all day, who was like the rock sustaining the family... sometimes she had crises that would land her in bed for six days, and I also thought something might happen to her....

Would it be right to say that, even today, you prefer for no one to know that you're gay?

Look, they're two things... I think evidently it has to do with an emotional issue, which is that I love people like me, and I believe that saying I'm homosexual will cause people not to like you all of sudden, period, and the bottom line is I try to avoid that. That explanation is really fundamental... it has to do with survival. But I also believe there's no reason for me to say it, because it's part of my private life, and there's no reason for my private life to be public. I need to talk about my private life with two or three people in the world, period... I don't need to talk to my mother, or my siblings... no one knows, I've never come out of the closet, I'm fine there... What for?

As regards this part of the interview, I would like to concentrate on three aspects: first, discussing the strategy of keeping quiet as a way to avoid conflict; second, reflecting on the manner in which Mario tells the story of disguising his homosexuality through political activity; and finally, analyzing his posture toward homosexuality as something intimate and private.

Keeping quiet and not telling as a survival strategy, adequate or not, was something quite common for victims, as in the case of Mario's father. This is the position of the mental health organization *ILAS* (Latin American Institute of Mental Health and Human Rights), which since 1978 has worked on the rehabilitation of people who suffered imprisonment, torture and exile.

According to these professionals, the inability to talk about what happened is related to two aspects of existence. One has to do with the traumatic dimension of the experience, in which the trauma is related to the inability to name or give significance to the pain or terror the experience caused; the other has to do with the public silencing the dictatorship, by intervening in the media and systematically denying the acts of violence. Both aspects would lead the victims to choose not to speak, and the result of reorganizing their lives around silence is that “the trauma remains encapsulated, and life appears to continue with complete normalcy”. (Becker & Lira 1998: 50)

In Mario’s case, we could say that since childhood, he has learned that in certain circumstances people are capable of no longer talking or socializing with you, a lesson which must figure prominently in his concern that people can ‘stop liking you’. That is something he experienced in his own life when his father was imprisoned, which is why keeping quiet is a way to avoid “causing people not to like you all of sudden”. Yet, it is also a way to avoid pain; his father keeps quiet when he returns. Does he keep the suffering inside? Is he unable to name it? Does he want to shield the family from more pain? All these things at the same time? Mario does not want people to stop liking him, but neither does he want to destabilize the family’s precarious balance. In this, he imitates his father’s behavior, and possibly, like his father, his mother concerns him in particular.¹²⁰ Therefore, it can be affirmed that there is a metonymic relation between the father’s ‘original and traumatic’ silence and the displaced silence Mario incorporates as a life strategy.

In certain contexts, like that of a boys’ school, to appear masculine, to appear virile, is of the utmost importance, as that concept embodies not only the sexual dimension of masculinity, but also certain values, such as bravery, fortitude, strength, prominence, leadership, nobility, etc. (Reyero; 1996: 45). As we have seen, one example of this is the case of Miguel

¹²⁰ With respect to those subjects who are outside heteronormativity, Eve Kosofsky sustains that “even in the individual sphere it is noteworthy how few people, including those that are openly gay, are not deliberately in the close with respect to someone who is personally, economically, or institutionally important to them.” (1998:92)

Enrriquez' position as a hero who embodies the values of his party. However, those values are also associated with good performance in public, and particularly in politics.¹²¹ As such, "aggressiveness, discipline, calculation, self-dependence" (1996: 45), are desirable behavior for success in politics. Therefore, a good activist must have these characteristics to be considered as such. Evidently, these characteristics and values, which embody virility as a feature of masculinity, are constructed not only in contrast to feminine attributes, but also in terms of a 'heterosexual virility.' In other words 'hegemonic masculinity', which functions as a desirable role model for all male subjects, is fundamentally heterosexual (Rubin, 1987; Connell, 1995; Kimmel, 1997; among other). Therefore, according to Connell:

In the dynamics of hegemony in contemporary Western masculinity, the relation between the heterosexual and homosexual men is central, carrying a heavy symbolic weight. For many people, homosexuality is a negation of masculinity, and homosexual men must be effeminate (2005: 154).

Which is why Mario, while relieved that there are other gay kids at school and in his class, he preferred to camouflage himself among the 'leftist intellectuals', or among those "who were active in some party on the left". He didn't want to be a 'queen', or a 'feminized' gay, nor did he want to be recognized as gay. He didn't want to deviate from the model of hegemonic masculinity, which he associated with the kids on the 'left', since by getting together with them he "passed for heterosexual". Hence, for Mario, to be notoriously intellectual and politically active was to possess attributes of a hegemonic masculinity that he desired for himself. According to Reyer, it was the learned movement "which associated virility and heroism with public duties" (1996: 55), understanding the exercise of power as associated with reason and control over emotions. "Virility is constructed, then, as something grave and serious, constant and inapposite to the changeable

¹²¹ Hence, for Reyer, "In the neoclassic aesthetic the image of the warrior is associated with the virtues of submission, patriotism, stoic suffering and heroism, which, from then on, are inseparably linked with the male personality." (1996: 55) This is equally applicable to other aspects such as self-control and directing thought on action, rather than reflection. Margaret Walters, referring to the construction of the masculine in the 19th century, posits: "Masculinity is a metaphor for each rational or revolutionary public thought; energy and virtue are concentrated in the male." (1978: 213)

feminine character” (1996: 55). In Mario’s case, this opposition arises in relation to the boys identified as ‘queens’, where the ‘queen’ (*‘loca’* in Spanish, meaning mad woman) implicitly expresses scorn for emotional volatility, typically ‘feminine’.

Feminizing homosexuality illustrates how femininity effectively operates as subordinate to masculinity, at least in the public sphere. For effeminate is derogatory insofar as it implies the loss of virility, which is also the loss of all the values that enable the efficient, proper and successful use of public space. However, it also illustrates the manner in which masculinity is constructed, which is through the negation of anything resembling femininity. According to Kimmel:

Whatever the variations by race, class, age, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, being a man means ‘not being like women’. This notion of anti-femininity lies at the heart of contemporary and historical conceptions of manhood, so that masculinity is defined more by what one is not rather than whom one is. (in Whitehead & Barrett; 2006:272)

Strangely now, Mario’s story falters, because by disguising his homosexuality in ‘the intellectuality of the left’ or ‘political activity’, he is in some sense using his father’s public identity. That identity is being associated in one way or another with the Popular Unity government or having been a political prisoner. In the context of the dictatorship, that undoubtedly meant submitting himself to a new ‘hegemonic and dominant masculinity’: that of the military.

The ‘militarized masculinity’ that erupted with the military coup culminated in paroxysm in the context of political imprisonment and torture. The doctrine of national security introduced a new ideological axis within the army, reinforcing our culture’s pre-existent construction of gender and placing it at the center of the strategies deployed to displace class conflict, which was presumed to be overcome with the military coup. As such, the mechanism to neutralize class consisted of disciplining the enemy from the standpoint of gender. In the case of women, the subjugation was achieved by punishing

spurious femininity, or the “Marxist whore”, to make space for the only permitted feminine image: that of mother and wife, the fundamental pillar of the Fatherland, its moral reserve. For men, in contrast, the punishment was executed by means of feminization, which signified the stripping away of masculinity, in the figure of the ‘fag’, ‘all Marxists are fags’¹²². As a political prisoner, Mario’s father also must be one, and he returns home in that condition.

We do not know what happened to Mario’s father during his captivity in the concentration camp. However, we have the testimony of Hernán Valdés, first published in 1974 in Spain under the title, *Tejas Verdes: Diario de un Campo de Concentración en Chile* (Green Tiles. Diary of a Concentration Camp in Chile), telling his experience of two months in captivity, the author put in print one of the first and most vivid testimonies of political imprisonment in Chile.

More than an hour has passed, possibly, and for quite some time no shouting has been heard. The more I recall the sunny day that exists in the real world, the more vulnerable I become to the cold of this place and the shadows that disrupt my consciousness... Someone is coming. They open the door and throw a hood over my head that covers my face [...] Another shot of electricity. The guys laugh. It is not exactly pain that the electricity generates; more like an internal jolt, raw, that leaves the bones exposed.

-So you’re a fag

-No, sir.

-What do you mean, no. It’s written here that you’re a fag

It is another time. I do not get the chance to ask where it is written. This time the electric shock knocks my feet out from under me and I fall onto a cement floor. With kicks, they force me to get up immediately. I do not know how I manage it. Another, calmer voice:

-So you say you’re a fag.

-No, I have been married twice.

-[...]

-And she left you because you’re a fag?

-[...]

-Tell the truth, asshole. She left you because you’re a faggot.

¹²² This idea is further developed in an unpublished text called “Refuge from oppression: Gender, class, and the Chilean military in the 20th century”, Montalva and Raposo, presented at the conference organized by Diego Portales University in 2008, to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the ‘Communist Manifesto.’

This excerpt only describes the beginning of one of the many interrogations to which the majority of political prisoners in Chile were submitted. Today this information is institutionalized, thanks to the Report of the National Commission on Political Prison and Torture. We cannot know whether Mario's father was submitted to something similar, but what is certain is that the word 'fag' or 'faggot' became a qualifier for all men who were in any way activists, political militants or simply sympathizers of Popular Unity. And that, along with the application of multiple and various forms of corporal technology, operated to subjugate the 'enemies of the fatherland', to make them feel their weakness and inferiority. Why 'fag'? Yet at the same time, why is it so important to deny the accusation in the context of torture? In his account Valdés describes many occasions when detainees are called 'fags' and relates how they object despite the risk of still more punishment for having responded; as if their lives were at stake in that word.

The panic Marxism provokes in the elite and the political right-wing is homologous to the panic caused by homosexuality, which was extreme in military institutions. Therefore, symbolically, it is utterly paradoxical that Mario disguised himself in the role of a leftist activist, a role that the Chilean military painted, and physically marked in the bodies of the activists, as that of the 'fag'. Thus, as Hernán Valdés repeatedly asserted that 'he is not a fag', one wonders how many times during his four years in prison Mario's father had to shout that he wasn't one? And each time Mario passed as heterosexual in the group of intellectuals and leftist activists, he made the decision to take refuge in that same cry.

If we think that homophobia and misogyny function efficiently as forms of discipline and over the bodies of many, we must admit that part of that efficiency results from the fact that homophobia and misogyny are homogeneously distributed across all social and political sectors. In other words, they are symbolic paradigms to which everyone, at least at that time, prescribed. Valdés gives us an example of this in his narrative:

The soldiers arrive very late, dragging the 'peugeot'¹²³ and they dish out beans with soup again. They appear quite drunk and they make jokes with innuendos that we do not know how to interpret. We don't know if we can relax or if they are provoking us. We laugh guardedly.
-Are there any fags here?
-Everyone here is married, my soldier- says Ramón, taking it as a joke- I have fourteen grandchildren
-And none of them turned fag on you, pops?
Ramón is offended and says that 'fags' do not come from the common people, but are found among the rich. (1996:79)

This masculine and homophobic game that transcends the relationship between jailers and prisoners only makes sense because they all share the same conventions. Furthermore, it is certainly one of the most effective means to establish the clear distinction between subordinators and subordinates, as well as to create a collective identity, such as the 'brotherhood of military jailers' the 'brotherhood of prisoners' or even, as Ramón posits, 'the brotherhood of the common people', of 'the working class'.

In fact, in the 1980s, the clandestine regrouping of the political parties became apparent and the beginning of protests against Pinochet in some sense breathed life into the masculinity of the left and that of the 'brotherhood of the common people'. The figures of Che, Allende and Miguel Henríquez appeared on the public stage as true heroes, around whom partisan cohesion grew stronger. In this way, Mario's instinct was correct: hegemonic masculinity gradually had shifted toward the left, particularly among young people and within the universities, and as a result, his 'disguise'¹²⁴ partially worked.

Returning to the core argument posited up to this point, which is that Mario used political activity as part of the closet where he hid his homosexuality, we have to wonder: Why must he necessarily come out of the closet? This question is implicit in his argument. If sexuality is part of each person's private life, why must he publicly declare his sexual preferences? Or, in

¹²³ Popular car's marks.

¹²⁴ I use the word disguise, as Mario himself expressed his intention to 'pass for heterosexual'.

Mario's words: "There's no reason for my private life to be public". In the same logic, for Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick the idea of coming out of the closet implicitly presumes at least two things. First, that it is possible to distinguish clearly between homosexual and heterosexual people. And second, it presumes that coming out of the closet is just a matter of willpower, and not a social and cultural construction, where sometimes people are trapped (1998). In addition, to publicly declaring yourself as homosexual, in some ways it confirms and reproduces the gender binarism of "heteronormativity" (Warner; 1991) or "compulsory heterosexuality" (Rich; 1980). This binarism was installed in the 19th century under the paradigm of modernity (Foucault; 1991). Hence, Mario perceives that if he comes out of the closet, he will become confined to a term he does not wish.

Why did you decide to become active in the YC (Young Communists)?

Because they invited me....

Did no other party invite you?

Well, yes, one time people from MIR invited me, but I had the idea that you had to be really extreme and really committed... I had known of people who were always on the run and having a terrible time, I didn't feel I was capable of living that way... Moreover, there was the issue that I was finishing high school, and I wanted to study theater.... It's true that in high school I got together with the intellectuals of the left and was a really good student, and mainly, they were all going to study sociology, law, literature or things like that, things in the social sciences. Well in the beginning I wanted journalism, but later I changed my mind... now even so, being a big activist on the left and studying theatre wasn't so obvious... because the theatre has a whimsical element that activism doesn't have, well, at that time it was hard... but in theatre they also teach you how to look from the outside and observe... observe how people work, and basically everything can be like a show, political activism a little bit too, right? So I was an activist, but it wasn't something really committed, I think that gradually my political concerns became channeled into the theatre...

In his narrative Mario suggests that he joined the 'young communists' almost by accident, simply because they invited him, but soon his argument follows another course. They had asked him previously to join MIR, but as he explains, "I had the idea that you had to be really extreme and really committed... I had known of people who were always on the run and having a terrible time, I didn't feel I was capable of living that way...". He shares

that he didn't feel capable of living that way, that he couldn't meet the needs of an activism that appeared almost 'heroic'. He chooses the communist party, which, while more normative with respect to its members' 'moral' conduct, as we saw in José's case, the pressure to be the model activist was less, as the party was not created to be a vanguard of combat. Moreover, it was a party with many members, where it was easier to pass unnoticed if one so desired.

Nonetheless, Mario's story diverts quickly from the topic of politics to that of which course of study to choose. Up until this point it had not been difficult for him to maintain a consistent balance among 'political activist of the left', 'intellectual', 'good student'¹²⁵ and 'heterosexual', but a conflict arises when he decides to go to college. Most of his social group is going to study subjects like "sociology, law, literature or things like that...", in other words, serious programs, of a 'high intellectual level'. When Mario has to list his three alternatives on the forms to enter college¹²⁶, he writes journalism, theatre and law. He is selected for all three, but ultimately chooses theatre, against his parents' wishes; they find out much later that their son's classes correlate to that program. In a certain sense, Mario decides to stop "protecting his image"; he gives himself permission to differ from the 'hegemonic masculinity', and in as much as his "political concerns became channeled into the theatre...". Thus political activism starts to be expressed in other way, different to militancy. But at the same time, insofar as the theatre allows him to go on without having to define his sexuality publicly, activism as militancy ceased to be 'the closet'.

When you were active in the Y, was it a problem to be gay?

No, because no one knew....

Did the discrimination against other gays affect you?

No, because basically I don't have struggles... as far as civil rights struggles with respect to homosexuality, I would never consider going to a march, for example... because in the end discrimination against

¹²⁵ Recall the idea of 'intellectual masculinity' in (Steinberg, D; Epstein, D. & Johnson, R.; 1997).

¹²⁶ In Chile, students must choose their course of study at the time they apply to college. Students are then selected to enter various programs based on their scores on the college entrance exam.

gay people makes me just as angry as discrimination based on race, class, or anything else, so it doesn't interest me, I don't go... and also I have an issue with it... I don't like gay politics, I don't like them...

Why?

Because at times they bore me, I find them cheap, superficial, uninteresting, they don't fulfill me, there's nothing there that interests me, there's none of the civil rights issues that those groups that really motivate me propose, they even sometimes act only to exclude others, because for example, in the field of the theatre I've noticed that there are actually gay mafias, and the truth is, it embarrasses me...

Unlike Tatiana, a case we will see in a later chapter, Mario is not interested in politicizing his sexual preference. This preference is completely consistent with not wanting to 'come out of the closet': Why politicize, placing in the public sphere, something that he wants to keep in the private realm? For him each sphere is clearly distinguishable, and it is important that they remain so, because that makes his silence possible. We have seen that this distinction has been criticized by many feminists, in particular the author I have been analyzing, Carole Pateman.

Thus, through his choice to keep his gayness in the private realm, Mario affirms the desire to protect the position of 'hegemonic masculinity.' He finds gay politics "cheap, superficial, uninteresting." This reminds us of the fear it caused him in high school to be considered a 'queen'. Nonetheless, the position he develops is more 'universal'. In other words, gay politics can convert those people into true 'gay mafias', a situation which "embarrasses" him. Furthermore, discrimination in general troubles him, homophobia being merely one type. But this is where his argument falters, because by recognizing that homophobia is a type of discrimination, Mario implicitly is accepting that, regardless of what he would like, homosexuality has a public dimension of a repressive nature.

Moreover, he declares that discrimination makes him angry, "based on race, class, or anything else", yet he "would never consider going to a march" for gay people. It is fitting to wonder if he would go to a march against racism. Why don't the civil rights struggles of the gay movement motivate him? In

his words “they don’t fulfill me, there’s nothing there that interests me”. What is it these struggles lack?

According to Connell “the gender order itself is the site of relation of dominance and subordination, struggles for hegemony, and practices of resistance” (2005). In this sense we should add that this order is related to others, in which class, for example, holds great relevance. In Mario’s particular case, we must recall that, although his father worked in a factory, he was a highly qualified worker and the family’s social and economic status was higher than that of a typical worker. Living in a well off neighborhood, the children went to private schools, and they definitely had no economic problems. With the coup this changed radically; not only were they forced to move to another city, but they also ended up living in a poor, marginalized neighborhood of Santiago. Although some relatives helped them economically, the mother had to begin working, as did the children. The children were forced to attend public schools and suffered the discrimination of being ‘different’. They came from another city, but also from another socioeconomic status. This latter point is important, as it may be another reason why Mario did not want to come out of ‘the closet’. Being ‘gay’ is not the same as being a ‘fag’, as the latter term denotes not only the feminization of homosexuality, but also economic insecurity and class (a point we will address in the last section of this chapter).

Thus, there is an initial distancing of the ‘hegemonic masculinity’, generated by the loss of economic status. This is problematic for Mario, given that he also hides the fact that he works with his parents on the weekend, until he realizes that he “was one of the kids who went around with more cash”, which gives him a certain status among his classmates. Having more money than the other boys certainly ‘masculinized’ him and was something he enjoyed. Mario, as Fanon posits in *Black Skins, White Masks* (1952), desires power and the advantages that ‘hegemonic masculinity’ offers. And at the same time, consistent with Connell, he denies who he is and resists “coming out of the closet” because he knows it “actually means coming in to an existing gay milieu” (2005). That means he would have to assume a

public identity that evidently exposes him and makes him vulnerable, given that we live in a homophobic society. Hence, Connell asserts: “the cultural meanings of masculinity are (generally) part of the package. In this sense, most gays are ‘very straight’”. (2005: 156)

However, it would be unjust to reduce Mario’s political activism to a sort of camouflage of his sexual options. Actually, Mario, in a similar way to Isabel, had a problem with political militancy as a form of disciplining, and rejected this aspect in any militancy, even gay militancy. He rejects the fact that one has to be ‘a sort of person’ in a very fixed way. That is why he found theatre far more interesting to express himself and his political ascriptions

When I started to study theatre it was all of this social effervescence around, against Pinochet, and I felt that studying theatre was a struggling tool against dictatorship. It was very rare to find a right-wing actor. I felt theatre gave more cohesion to people than such and that political party. It was like ‘everyone against Pinochet’... I felt theatre was a trench, that it was a much more powerful weapon against the prevailing culture... or well, perhaps I felt much more comfortable in that trench, I felt that from there I could propose, say, do things, which in the end were left aside from the political negotiations. And it was so for me, at least until democracy was recovered.

In this way, we may conclude that Mario’s camouflage is also a resistant strategy, a way of not wanting to be trapped into a sole category. Therefore theatre, and in particular the possibilities of creating different characters, suits him well, allow him to express in different ways and to feel more free from any type of labels and stigmatizations.

The ‘Party’s Whore’ Becomes a Lesbian

We have already mentioned that the women’s movements, including the diverse feminine groups, achieved their major public visibility in the 1980s. Coming together against the dictatorship¹²⁷, they converted themselves into one of the collective protagonists of the era. But, with the establishment of

¹²⁷ In general, social movements had a leading role in the public scene, given that the ‘normal’ channels of political expression like political parties, syndicate movements, and trade unions were prohibited or reduced to their minimal expression. In this sense the first to take to the public sphere were the women’s organisations. See Muñoz, 1987; Chuchryck, 1991; Valdés & Weinstein, 1993.

democracy many of them disappeared or became invisible. According to the authors Ríos, Godoy and Guerrero, the re-establishment of the democratic regime paradoxically reduced “the opportunities for participation and mobilization of the actors of civil society in the public sphere, the same way as their capacity to represent their interests without intermediation of the state and political parties” (2003: 31). The situation described was accentuated more in the case of women’s movements that included diverse feminine groups in their configuration. For diverse authors (Pisano, 1990; Ríos, Godoy & Guerrero; 2003) in the case of women’s movements, its disappearance from the public sphere is related to the institutionalization of ‘the subject of women and gender’ in the creation of SENAME. An institution created in 1991, by the first ‘Coalition Government’, to promote equal opportunities between men and women. For many feminists and more specifically the groups that demanded the tying together of sexual liberation, this “feminism of reason” (Pisano, 1990: 16) subordinated itself in the final analysis to the ‘coalitionist’ patriarchal order. So for Margarita Pisano

The practices of this feminism are marked by the negotiation with the system, looking for fairness with men but not changing the deep structures of the system. Its speech is built from the language of social sciences and the practices of political parties. (Pisano, 1990:16)

The first lesbian movements that appear in the public sphere were associated with feminism, as is the emblematic case of the Ayuquélén collective, formed in 1983. These groups that we could call ‘more radical’ were from the beginning unwilling to participate in the rearticulating of the left-wing parties. Muñoz affirms

In spite of the specific Chilean reality, the development of feminism in this country comes up against the same problems as in the rest of the world. At this actual Chilean political juncture, defined by the fight against the dictatorship, what should be the feminine option? To participate in the reconstruction of supporters and to look for a political reference point or strengthen your development as a social and autonomous movement? (1987: 23).

In this way the problem of how to reconcile feminists’ demands, principally those related to sexual vindications, from the right to abortion to the fight

against homophobia, is going to be a constant in the women's movements. Ríos, Godoy and Guererro define the conflict in terms of the feminist versus the politicians (2003). We saw in the case of Isabel, how this conflict takes place internally and how she finally opts for feminist militancy. Next we are going to take up the story of Tatiana again, who we analyzed in the chapter related to family. In this case, the conflict between lesbian feminism and political militancy is experienced with tension but from inside the political militancy, in the communist party. It is necessary to clarify that part of the account that is transcribed next refers to the present, clearly in the light that this experience would have been unthinkable in the 80s.

Are you openly recognized as a lesbian inside the party?

Yes and no, because I try to be vague inside the party. It's something complicated... I would say that there are many militants... there are many leaders who understand it and who accept it politically, and there are many others who are bothered by it, because being vague is very bothersome. Because it also has to do with this control... about what you are. Because if I know what you are, I can control you, and if I don't know I can't control you. That's why I'm vague. "What do you want me to be?, Do you want me to be a whore? So, I'm a whore. Do you want me to be a lesbian? So, I'm a lesbian. Now let's talk about what we have to talk about".

How are you a whore? why whore?

Because apart from not recognizing me publicly as a lesbian or anything else, I know that informally I have been the whore of the party, since I separated, to be, the lesbian of the party.... Look... you realize between attitudes and other things that you hear directly. For example the *Fiesta de los Abrazos* (Hugs Party), a place where you hear a million things, because they don't realize you are listening when they are talking behind your back. There are also colleagues who know it is better to discredit than to argue correctly, it's more effective. I'm not generalizing but it happens. And the subject about lesbians has been continuous... and I too provoke a little of that, I dye my hair green, blue, and until recently I used miniskirts and low-cut tops before I was fat ... I have no problems with that... it's pretty bold... it's not for an old woman of 50 so of course... they say "she has to be a whore", "I don't know how her husband puts up with it".

Is that because your look doesn't correspond with that of a militant communist?

Of course, a communist activist can tolerate it, but to a communist from the Central Committee, it's not acceptable. Even that was pretty complicated for the Central Committee... I heard of it afterwards, well... they know a lot of things. My incorporation into the Central Committee was very much discussed, just because I was getting a

separation at that moment, my partner had been a member of the Central Committee and he was also offered the position. And a lot of people understood that it was him or me, because he was the serious comrade, he wasn't rebellious or mischievous like me. And when my incorporation to the Central Committee happened, you had to establish...we proposed to create an area of gender as a unit of sexual minority, nobody understood what the hell it was... until today... and they call me when they talk of women-related problems... but so that you can see that above all it was the women that strongly opposed me being in charge of women, and nobody could bring themselves to say it was because I was a lesbian. But the subject comes out informally in these dinners and rowdy parties that the groups have. Another important moment was when the judge who had her children taken away happened. There weren't many mothers and fathers who wanted to give interviews about their children, so I went out. And that was heavily criticized as well, in fact there was a discussion inside the party about me. Nobody called me to discuss that because besides... everyone thinks it is a political posture but also everyone thinks "she's a lesbian", "how can she think of doing that to her children", "how can she appears in the media...?"

The first point that I would like to touch on is the problem of how Tatiana sees herself named or pointed out by her militant comrades in the party. I refer to named in the sense that Judith Butler does, that's to say the cast out place (on being named) from where a dynamic identification is produced, constructed, conflictive and mobile identity (2002). She tells how she has been identified by some of her comrades as 'the whore of the party' since she separated and afterwards, in this last period, as 'the lesbian of the party', where 'the party' is the mark of intelligibility from where the normal and abnormal or abject is built. So, implicitly, for Tatiana 'the party' is a place where one operates naturally with the same codes of a patriarchal and homophobic society. This shouldn't perplex us if we think that political parties are involved and are part of our western culture, which operates with the said codes.

Nevertheless, it doesn't stop having a certain ironic dimension that especially the parties of the left, possessors of speeches that talk of liberation, equality and justice, in the end operate like places of discipline and the reproduction of oppressive practices the same as which they want to abolish. Until now the majority of the narrations in some way illustrate the parties as places

where gender differences reproduce themselves and become naturalized in many ways. Evidently, they aren't only that, and Tatiana's story shows how that tension is present, a tension which taken on board politically may eventually bear fruit, because it could set up new problems from inside the parties, just as Tatiana set them up in hers.

'Whore' and lesbian are not equivalent terms; one could think that whore has a more negative connotation, given that in our country the said practice is not only penalized, but morally and symbolically connotes a 'bad woman', a woman of little honor. The word lesbian, on the other hand, could simply be understood to denote a sexual preference, in the worst case a psychological or pathological disorder. Nevertheless, in the context that Tatiana is using it, it is something worse; her unruly conduct has gone from a little to a lot. If she was already a whore, now she has fallen even further down, now she is a lesbian. So, heterosexuality appears like the constituent norm of the party. This makes the most sense if one thinks that the basic Chilean communist party structural networks depend directly on the understood family in monogamous and heterosexual terms.

If in the right-wing parties the family is of vital importance, just as we saw in the case of Rosita, it isn't any less in the Communist Party, where the image of the working family, just like Luís Emilio Recabarren imagines, it is the basic structure through which the party and its militants are produced (1976). Even though the image of the working family doesn't sustain itself in the sacrament of the Catholic bourgeois marriage, it's equally a product of the discipline carried out by the modernizing waves that influenced the majority of the social and political sectors at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th¹²⁸. It is in this period in which the processes of industrialization, proletarianisation and migration from countryside to city, that the 'lower people' (Salazar; 1985) will be prosecuted to formalize their affective and sexual relationships under the model of the 'heterosexual and

¹²⁸ According to the historian Gabriel Salazar, sentimental or affective relationships that men and women of the lower people establish, before this date, are of a very diverse nature, particularly those from the countryside. The author describes them as associative relationships, which are much freer, mobile and of a mutual collaboration (1985).

monogamous family'. In such a speech will be echoes of Marxist parties, because in the end this relationship considers itself simply like the institutionalization, or the cultural and social expression of something given previously, the 'natural' relationship between male and female of all species including humans.

For a woman, it is not a small thing to belong to the Central Committee of the party: Tatiana comes from a communist family, in that sense she is a historical militant, with a very active and committed presence. Therefore, at the time that she is proposed to occupy a post in the central committee, the evaluation that the party members make of her as a militant is positive. Nevertheless, at the same time, she is separating from her partner who will soon be her ex-partner and that is evidently a problem. Facing up to each other, according to her account, he appears to be the "serious" respectable militant, and her "the rebel", "the mischievous one", and then 'the good militant' apparently stops being so good.

The theme of rebelliousness is not new in her story; from the beginning she has been a little rebellious, something that she attributes to her parents, because they never had a submissive position with respect to the orders from the interior of the party. As she says in another moment during the interview "they never took any notice of the control of the party officials" or things of that kind. So, from this perspective, for Tatiana, whore and lesbian also mean rebel and mischief-maker; at least she sees it like that, and the understood rebelliousness in those last codes is something that she does by utilizing her body and her appearance. Low-cut tops, miniskirt, dyed hair and a defiant attitude come to destabilize the established order. In a certain sense, with her staging she takes care of the rumors, she confirms them, she shows evidence of them, she occupies the place they have designated her and she does it provocatively. Or said in another way, these ways of naming her, which hurt her because they have an insulting character, have also permitted her to occupy a private place inside the party, from where she can talk, fight, and lastly, politically exist (Butler 2002).

Now, even though Tatiana starts saying that she uses the strategy of indifference, that is avoiding them categorizing her and therefore avoiding completely taking charge of the term lesbian, it is because “if I know what you are I can control you, and if I don’t know I can’t control you. That’s why I am indifferent. What do you want me to be? Do you want me to be a whore? So, I am a whore. Do you want me to be a lesbian? So, I am a lesbian. Now let’s talk about what we have to talk about.”. So, it isn’t her that labels her, it is others who put names on her and in doing so they provide her with a place of enunciation, from where she can talk about what really interests her.

One could suspect that the labels whore and lesbian cover up an internal struggle. Inside the party both words refer to morally reprehensible sexual practices. On taking charge of them, Tatiana isn’t only posing a problem of sexual vindications. Once she establishes that she can be both things, it is necessary to move into another phase that is ‘to talk about what we have to talk about’. I maintain that Tatiana uses these ‘scandalous adjectives’ to make herself visible, to get attention and to be heard, and in the last analysis to subvert the patriarchal order inside the party. In this sense, her vindicating fight is also feminist.

Nevertheless, despite her intentions to not define herself, she is still trapped within these denominations. On being accepted into the Central Committee, she will be pigeonholed into the “gender area”, an instance according to Tatiana that “nobody understood what crap it was... until today”. That’s to say an area that is not a priority inside the party, but more like a space where all gender problems fall. So the subject turns around on itself, in at least two senses. Firstly because it puts stress on the category of ‘gender’, because in it they are going to mix the issues of “sexual minorities” and “problems related to women”, and secondly, when the rest of the Central Committee members identify her as “in charge of the gender issues”, they may implicitly go about excluding her from other issues.

Regarding the first problem, Tatiana faces up to the fact that it is exactly those militant ‘women’ who don’t want her representing them, because she is

supposedly a lesbian. However, if as Monique Wittig affirms, effectively “lesbians are not women” (1992; 57) because the said subjects only make sense in interchange systems and heterosexual thought, then the resistance that Tatiana generates in some of the militant women is correct. It is not acceptable that a lesbian represents women inside the party. So, Tatiana’s strategy of talking from the places of “the whore and the lesbian” as places of feminine rebelliousness, in a certain sense fails, because now they are the same heterosexual militant women who call her to order, something that she didn’t expect. This intensifies even more when she appears in the press defending Judge Atala¹²⁹ whose children’s tuition was taken away because of her sexual orientation. On presenting herself publicly as a lesbian and mother at the same time, to support the judge, Tatiana challenges the gender structures, of which the party is part of, to the maximum. And now, apart from her doubtful morality and her homosexuality, one can add the condition of ‘bad mother’ to the list. “How can she think of doing that to her children?”, “How is it possible that she appears in the media?”...

Failure is a hard word to describe Tatiana not achieving her goal; nevertheless she comes to grips with the fact when she finally resigns from the Central Committee, as we will see next.

And why are you resigning from the Central Committee?

Ah, these are more intimate questions... but yes, it has to do with this, they have to do with... I have... I have always said that I can answer for my opinions and maybe until the point where I am wrong...in any case, if I was wrong, I can ask for forgiveness. But I cannot answer for things that I know are bad. Yes, because the party is... the party is sacred, and we are all the party. And I owe something to the militancy of the party, I owe it to be honest, so, these things about differences of method that I was telling you, they are associated with particular people... and I can’t fight against them, but neither am I going to unite with them.

In some way you are telling me that you are a minority inside the Central Committee, and you can’t do anything being there...

¹²⁹ In May 2004, the Supreme Court decided take away the custody of Judge Karen Atala’s three daughters, considering that the public character of homosexuality made the children’s lives vulnerable. This case produced public debate and provoked many lesbian movements to take over public spaces. In fact, the same Judge and her partner were responsible for the origin of a new organisation called ‘The other families’.

Well, yes, I am such a minority that I am one, one crazy woman... Now, I'm not leaving the party, only the Central Committee... because I really don't feel I have a contribution to give there. On the other hand, I can serve again in my cell, I can continue to work on the subject of women, on the subject of sexual minorities... but I have no reason to continue with this madness...because besides it is emotionally exhausting to feel that you are losing the fights all the time...whereas I feel that we as a gender in the party have made a really good contribution, and as a group of women also. We have had contact with regional comrades who work on the subject... for example, feminism, which had been frowned upon in the party, like a deviation to the right, a little snobby. Then when we go to the feminist congress and later we put it on the party's page, and it appears in *El Siglo* as an achievement... I think that it has been a contribution so that other comrades identify with themselves and understand that they are really not so alone.

Why is feminism associated with the right inside the party?

Not with the right, but with bourgeois deviations... in general feminism is very badly thought of even inside the women's movement... because they are not the same. The left-wing parties in Latin America and the world haven't managed to connect the movements... let's see, the movements of the left and the Communist party in particular have found it difficult to connect the new emerging historical groups, that are not "working class"... they have found it difficult to connect them as strategic allies, not even tactical. I think we have this nonsense that anything that sidetracks us from this thing of class is a deviation. Recently with the subject of the social forums I think that the left is starting to make a revision of the new historical group, it has to become a reality... because they talk about it a lot but... all of them, the indigenous movement, the ecological movement, but the women no. And that has to do with the patriarchal system. Even in the parties of the left we are absolutely patriarchal.

Even though Tatiana is chosen to be a member of the Central Committee, she quickly realizes that this doesn't exactly mean an achievement, not in personal terms nor with respect to setting out, from the directive table, the issues that interest her. On the contrary, she realizes that she is lonelier than ever, and besides it is exhausting, "an emotional exhaustion feeling that you lose the fights all the time". If in some moment she thought that being in a place where the party's decisions and internal policies emanated from, she was going to be able to influence and seriously affect the gender issues, she was quickly disappointed. This experience confirms in some way that she is not there for that, she is not there to lay out issues and for the rest of the committee to incorporate her into the discussions, analysis and decisions of

the tasks of the political party. On the contrary, it seems like she is there to take care of 'those problems', issues of gender that nobody clearly understands because the rest of the committee members are not interested in them and they don't want to take care of them. In this sense, more than representing women or sexual minorities in the party she is there to contain these second order problems; she is being used as a pretense, as an empty gesture, so it can be said that effectively women and sexual minorities have representation inside the party, but not so that this representation interferes with, opinions on or modifies dynamics that were already settled beforehand. That is why these "differences of method" that she talks about, associated with certain people inside the committee, oblige her to resign from it. It could be said that she leaves the power space - the central Committee's masculine space - to go and work in the task space, the most feminine space of the real work. She leaves the space where she feels co-opted and alone, to return to one where she feels that she can make small achievements, but above all to confirm that she is not the only one. As she says, when she speaks about the gender contributions, "I think it has been a contribution so that other comrades identify with themselves and understand that they are really not so alone".

More than failure, we can talk of shifting, inside Tatiana's political priorities. It is possible to think that she has changed the order of her political objectives; in the beginning, when she said "What do you want me to be? Do you want me to be a whore? So I am a whore. Do you want me to be a lesbian? So I am a lesbian, now let's talk about what we have to talk about". Where, presumably, what has to be talked about are serious things, important things: the guidelines of the political party, the necessities of the party, etc., implied understood politics in men codes. But once she is put in charge of gender issues, in one sense something that she feared would happen, she is limited to this issue and she is alone inside the committee, that's to say, controlled. Suddenly she decides to resign, she doesn't want to continue being "a crazy woman" inside the committee anymore. But perhaps also, she doesn't want to "talk about what we have to talk about" anymore, maybe now what she wants to talk about is precisely under what

criteria, inside the party, is she a whore? Why is being a lesbian inside the party problematic? What does being a militant woman inside the party mean? Why aren't these issues relevant for the central committee? Maybe Tatiana, from her grass roots job, much more actively taking on her work in the gender area, has chosen to develop another militancy within her militancy. To work from inside her party, the issues to which 'the party' resists. Certainly, to stop being "a crazy woman" and to know that she is not "so alone".

Her choice is interesting, because unlike Isabel, whose political priorities are shifting towards feminism abandoning her militancy inside the socialist party, Tatiana doesn't perceive it the same way. Despite having experienced difficulty and resistance with respect to her new battle cries – feminism and sexual minorities – she has no intention of leaving the party, because for her "the party is sacred and the party is all of us". She feels that, despite everything, she has the right to continue being a militant there. If we remember Tatiana's story in the previous chapter, about how she starts to be a militant in the party, we can understand that for her communist militancy is a way of being. And a way of being, like any other, has nuances, conflicts, and contradictions. In this sense, more than abandoning a space that in conclusion is a mode of life for her, rather she stays to transform it although through small gestures, and it is so that other militants know that internally, in the party, there are also differences, but that that doesn't mean that they cannot continue working together.

The cases of Mario and Tatiana clearly illustrate at least two perspectives in which the political parties, do not consider gender relations and sexual identities as part of their tasks or their thinking (in this case, the left-wing parties). This mainly has to do with political practice and militancy as such, there is a total lack of recognition by militant men and heterosexuals that the said practice is modeled from an already sexualized and genderised posture. The naturalization and normalization of the 'masculine-heterosexual', as the correct form to operate as a militant in the world, transforms into the only form of political exercise. This hasn't only been the experience of Isabel,

Mario and Tatiana, it's also possible to find it in the case of Alexandra Kolontai in the 20s, where in her memoirs she describes how persistently – for the good of the party – she postpones one after another of her concerns about how they should face up to gender relations in the Soviet Union. Or, without going too far, the already-cited testimonies in the course of this thesis of the three MIR militants, Arina Ojeda, Cristina Chacaltana and Soledad Aránguiz, taken from the text *Women in Red and Black* (2006). They all systematically experience and demonstrate that the gender differences are not small problems, nor of second order, but rather they are closely related to political militancy.

On a secondary level, more theoretical and closer to Butler's complaints against Marxism as an analytical tool (2000), is the insistence in explaining human exploitation that is produced inside the late capitalist system coordinates, only from the category of class or only as pure economic exploitation. In this sense, the discussion between Butler and Fraser (2000) is not overcome at all because it is necessary to realize and to explore the existence of other mechanisms of subordination and subjection, as for instance the specificity of sexual or ethnic oppressions, and consequently create activism to resist and combat this type of injustice. But, at the same time it is necessary, as Butler points out, to understand how different forms of exploitation are always intersecting and influencing each other, especially in individual and everyday lives, as I discuss below and in the next section.

The point is difficult, because it is not only about claiming recognition for minorities and different subjectivities. The complexity of late capitalism in its post Fordist version, transnational and with high levels of technology at its disposal is prepared to accept these differences through the neo-liberal democracies. Fraser gives an account of this, and so it has been established at least in Chile. In the logic of the market we could all be, at least in theory, equal and different at the same time, as consumers. Thus, "a system of flexible dominance does not need to homogenize to dominate" (Pérez 2008: 48). However, in practice late capitalism continues to exclude, to exploit and to oppress people through different mechanisms, including for

instance ethnicity and gender. The Mapuche as ethnic group may incorporate themselves to democracy, but only provided that they modernize, accept that they are Chilean citizens, and that their ancestral lands no longer belong to them. Women may participate, even become president, but only if they submit themselves to the political logics already imposed, and that their particular demands, such as publicly discussing laws on abortion are postponed in favor of the nation's welfare.

In this sense, it is necessary to think of political activism on two front lines: from the daily and local oppression of which each individual or the group feels a victim; but also from a more universal perspective, since capitalism as productive system, in its modernizing version, affects humanity as a whole. Thus, in the following section, I will be interested in exploring the political activism of two public characters who, in my opinion, intend to express these distinct dimensions that struggle against oppression and for social transformation must contain.

Subverting Politics from its Masculine and Heterosexual Shape

Perhaps one of the most interesting debates about how to rethink Marxism as political expression today, considering cultural variables such as gender, ethnicity, age, sexual preferences and so on, was undertaken by Nancy Fraser and Judith Butler. Summarizing, as Fraser points out, the dispute can be understood between different positions about the legacy of Marxism until today, the viability of a socialist feminism, different perceptions about poststructuralist theories and their contribution, and in the last instance divergences about capitalism's nature itself. (2000)¹³⁰. Obviously, these positions also have political consequences, or at least different styles of political praxis.

On one hand Butler complains about misunderstanding theoretical, political and analytical interest to study the culture as a "reduction of Marxism to

¹³⁰ The debate between Fraser and Butler took place in the *New Left Review*, the version used here corresponds to the Spanish version of this publication. *New Left Review*, 2000, Number 2, pp 109- 136.

Cultural Studies” (2000; 109) that it supposes it has to as a consequence abandon questions related to equity and redistribution. But she also criticizes the contempt of some traditional Marxists for new social movements, that have been considered responsible for producing a kind of ‘cultural politics’ described as fragmentary, identitarian, local and relativistic, very functional to the modus operandi of the late capitalism system. Butler, evidently does not agree with these accusations and attributes them conservative tendencies inside of Marxism, that consider with disdain as “merely cultural”, any kind of politics that does not explicitly oppose universal, economical and social injustice. From this position and her own political activism she asks “Why a movement interested in criticizing and transforming the way in which sexuality is socially regulated, can not be understood as central to the function of the political economy?” (Butler; 2000: 115)

Butler’s criticism is specifically directed to Nancy Fraser’s book *Justice Interruptus*, where the author theoretically considers basically two types of injustices, one provoked by unequal ways of resource distributions, and another caused by lack of recognition (as a different and legitimate subject and speaker); in both cases the injustice will be equally unfair and grave. Perhaps both authors could agree, though with different emphasis, on the impossibility of reducing diverse types of subordinations and injustice to one category.

I explore here the Butler – Fraser debates, because they are a good illustration of what happened, especially in left militancy, when other kinds of categories, besides class, took their place as other forms of subordination, as for example the genderised division of labor, or sexual choices that are not heterosexual. Those are Isabel, Mario and Tatiana’s experiences; all their stories seem to arrive at dissimilar sorts of solutions, probably full of contradictions, some happier than others, but all of them explain how difficult it is to reconcile militancy when different ways of oppression are articulated to them. Isabel preferred opting for a feminist political identification; Mario decided to hide his ‘homosexual condition’ in order to perform the correct

‘masculine, heterosexual, left militancy’; and Tatiana’s choice was to put on the table her gender and sexual discrimination and injustice from inside of her party, but to reject leadership positions.

In this last part and as a conclusion to my discussion of activists’ gender dilemmas, I would like to present two examples that in my opinion help to deconstruct ‘the traditional masculine heterosexual left militant’, and that potentially provide new ways to exercise politics. These examples are not part of my interviews; both are public faces in Chile, very well known in different contexts, but related to human rights struggles, transgender politics and left-wing ascriptions. In this sense they represent a very peculiar reconfigured type of militancy, very problematic, contradictory sometimes, too individualistic for some, but very committed. One case is Pedro Lemebel, well known as a writer because of his work as an essayist, chronicler, and novelist, but also during the dictatorship he was an art activist, loyal and consistent to the struggle against Pinochet. The other case is Victor Hugo Robles, journalist and better known as “El Che Guevara de los Gays” (The Gays’ Che Guevara). Both also identify themselves with working class backgrounds, with strong identification in their neighborhood, where they still live.

Pedro Lemebel is now a well-known ‘queer’ writer. However, despite the ‘queer’ label, he is also a political activist against any kind of authoritarianism. He became a public figure in 1986, during the military period, in a political meeting where he read his famous manifesto ‘Hablo por mi diferencia’ (I am talking from my difference), that is a direct criticism of moralist and homophobic tendencies inside of the left parties. Here I reproduce pieces of this manifesto

... Worse than the dictatorship	Peor que la dictadura
Because the dictatorship will pass	Porque la dictadura pasa
And democracy will come	Y viene la democracia
And socialism after that,	Y detracito el socialismo
And then?	¿Y entonces?

What will you do with us
comrade?...
...Won't there be a queer in some
corner
Unbalancing the future of your new
man?
Are you going to allow us to embroider
birds in the flags of the free patria?
I leave for you the gun
With cold blood
And it is not fear
Because the fear in me is passing
Out of stopping knives
in the sexual basements were I
was
And don't feel attacked
If I talk to you about these things...

...Even if you hate me later
For corrupting your revolutionary
moral
Are you scared of life becoming
homosexualised?
And I'm not talking about putting it in
and taking it out
And taking it out and putting it in, only
I'm talking about tenderness comrade
You don't know
How hard it is finding love
In these conditions
You don't know
How it is to bear this leprosy
People keep their distance
People understand and say:
He is queer but writes well
He is queer but he's a good friend

¿Qué harán con nosotros
compañero?.....
...¿No habrá un maricón en alguna
esquina
desequilibrando el futuro de su
hombre nuevo?
¿Van a dejarnos bordar de pájaros
las banderas de la patria libre?
El fusil se lo dejo a usted
Que tiene la sangre fría
Y no es miedo
El miedo se me fue pasando
De atajar cuchillos
En los sótanos sexuales donde
anduve
Y no se sienta agredido
Si le hablo de estas cosas...

...Aunque después me odie
Por corromper su moral
revolucionaria
¿Tiene miedo que se homosexualice
la vida?
Y no hablo de meterlo
y sacarlo
Y sacarlo y meterlo solamente
Hablo de ternura compañero
Usted no sabe
Cómo cuesta encontrar el amor
En estas condiciones
Usted no sabe
Qué es cargar con esta lepra
La gente guarda las distancias
La gente comprende y dice:
Es marica pero escribe bien
Es marica pero es buen amigo

He is cool
I accept the world
Without asking it to be cool...

I did not receive my manliness from the party
Because they rejected me with laughs
Many times
I learned my manliness while participating
In the hard struggle of these years
And they laugh about my 'queer voice'
Shouting: it's going to fall, it's going to fall
And although you shout like a man
You haven't managed to make it go.

My manliness was the gag
Not going to the stadium
And I didn't fight for
Colo Colo ¹³¹
Football is another hidden homosexuality
Like boxing, politics and wine
My manliness was to ignore the laughs
Eating anger in order not to kill everybody

My manliness waits patient
The big men will become old
Because at this time of the game
The left-wing compromises its flaccid ass
In the parliament
My manliness was difficult,

Super-buena onda
Yo acepto al mundo
Sin pedirle esa buena onda....

Mi hombría no la recibí del partido
Porque me rechazaron con risitas
Muchas veces
Mi hombría la aprendí participando
En la dura de estos años
Y se rieron de mi voz amariconada
Gritando: Y va a caer, y va a caer
Y aunque usted grita como hombre
No ha conseguido que se vaya

Mi hombría fue la mordaza
No fue ir al estadio
Y tampoco me agarré a combos por el Colo Colo
El fútbol es otra homosexualidad tapada
Como el box, la política y el vino
Mi hombría fue morderme las burlas
Comer rabia para no matar a todo el mundo

Mi hombría espera paciente
Que los machos se hagan viejos
Porque a esta altura del partido
La izquierda tranza su culo lacio
En el parlamento
Mi hombría fue difícil

¹³¹ The most popular football team in Chile

That's why I'm not getting on this train
Without knowing where it's going.
I'm not going to change, because of
Marxism
That rejected me so many times.
I don't need to change
I'm more subversive than you
I'm not going to change only
Because the poorest and the rich,
Give that bone to another dog.
Nor will I change
because capitalism is unjust
In New York 'queers' kiss
in the streets
But I leave that part to you
Since you are so interested
That the revolution doesn't become
completely rot
Leave this message to you
And it is not for me
I'm old
Let your utopia be for
new generations
There are so many children who will be
born
With a broken wing
And I want them to fly comrade
That your revolution
Gives them a piece of red sky
For them to fly.¹³²

Por eso a este tren no me subo
Sin saber dónde va
Yo no voy a cambiar por el
marxismo
Que me rechazó tantas veces
No necesito cambiar
Soy más subversivo que usted
No voy a cambiar solamente
Porque los pobres y los ricos
A otro perro con ese hueso
Tampoco voy a cambiar
porque el capitalismo es injusto
En Nueva York los maricas se besan
en la calle
Pero esa parte se la dejo a usted
Que tanto le interesa
Que la revolución no se pudra del
todo
A usted le doy este mensaje
Y no es por mí
Yo estoy viejo
Que su utopía que sea para las
generaciones futuras
Hay tantos niños que van a
nacer
Con una alita rota
Y yo quiero que vuelen compañero
Que su revolución
les dé un pedazo de cielo rojo
Para que puedan volar.

Pedro is at least twenty years older than Victor Hugo, so in this sense he has experienced more intolerance and rejection from our revolutionary left-wing side parties of this time. Therefore, his manifesto shows direct and clear

¹³² My own translation. Lemebel's text was taken from Sutherland, 2001: 35-39.

denial of his subjectivity from inside Chilean left parties; he emphasizes also that the problem is not just between 'the poorest and richest'. It is not as simple as that, because he suffered discrimination not only because he is homosexual, but also because he was a working class homosexual with Mapuche ethnic roots and he was discriminated not only by the militaries, and the right-wing side, but also from those he felt politically identified with. Then, when he calls himself the insulting word 'marica' (queer) in order to connote his triple subordinated conditions, which is different to the most accepted Anglicized and politically correct word 'gay', he is politicizing his entire life (Butler; 1997).

Besides the fact that he exposes where the Chilean Marxism's conservatism is located very well, one of the things that I found really subversive in the text, is not only that he claims to define himself with the word 'marica', also he claims the right to identify himself with a sort of masculinity that escapes from the military model or the revolutionary model. For instance when he says "My manliness was gag... was ignoring the laughs...waits patiently" and so on, he is talking about another kind of masculinity which is less related with 'showing off' and closer to the pain of being constantly discriminated, but at the same time, it made him become stronger and provided him with tools to survive. Thus, claiming from his homosexuality a sort of non-hegemonic masculinity he becomes very subversive in the sense that he rejects the typical homophobic and misogynistic feminization of homosexuality¹³³ from the left and the right-wing. In addition he refuses to accept Pinochet's genderised regime, that not only divides the country between 'the good Chilean and bad Chilean', 'humans and humanoids', 'patriots and traitors' and so on, but also between 'Chilean female citizens and Chilean male citizens' as the only possible gender categories. In coming out of the closet in a scandalous manner, Pedro Lemebel challenges the military's order.

¹³³ As Connell assert "Hence, from the point of view of hegemonic masculinity, gayness is easily assimilated to femininity" (1995: 78)



From an activism point of view, he was able to create his own way to fight against different kinds of injustice, for instance he changes his first surname Mardones for his mother's surname Lemebel in a sort of rebellion against a father who never forgave him because of his 'condition', but also and symbolically against our whole patriarchal culture represented in the patronymic. During the last dictatorship's years he created, along with Francisco Casas, the art and political collective 'Las Yeguas del Apocalipsis' (The Apocalypses' Mares¹³⁴). They were just two people, however, and from their out-of-the-closet homosexuality, they were able to confront Pinochet's 'masculine military regime'. Their actions were irreverent and subversive, because they were unexpected and completely unusual at this time, for instance when they went inside of 'Pedagógico University' (in this time universities were controlled by military) riding a horse completely naked, denouncing the military control and conservatism inside universities, where young homosexual men were condemned to study careers in dance or theater, where they were tolerated, but excluded from sociology or history.

As a parody and performance Lemebel's political actions were effective, at least in denouncing the multiplicity of subjugations that before were invisible, as the relation between the dictatorship, the rhetoric about nation, and the compulsory control over citizen's sexuality. They were effective also in showing how class as a political category is not enough to describe the complex dimensions of subjugation in some people.

¹³⁴ In Chile mare also has different meanings as old bag, whore, slag, stupid, rough, coarse, among others.

Already in democracy, another political figure came to join Pedro Lemebel: Víctor Hugo Robles, who became a public personage in 1997 during the 'transition to democracy'. He participated in different public demonstrations using long hair, with a beret very similar to the one that immortalized Che Guevara, perhaps the only difference was the star in the beret, the Argentinean guerillero's star was an insignia, Victor's one was a starfish. He also used a furious red lipstick, earrings and a very silky and colorful shirt. His first appearance was on September 11th of 1997, in the traditional march to the General Cemetery in memory of people who died during the dictatorship. It was very symbolic because indubitably he got the public's attention, particularly from the 'old Communist Party's militants' when he gave their leader (at this time a woman, Gladys Marin) a tricolor band, a typical symbol that the Republican President wears when he/she assumes power. This 'tribute' was in recognition of her candidature, as representative of the 'no concertacionista' left-wing side. This gesture or performance, as Victor tells in his 'blog page', caused distrust among the old hierarchy of the Communist Party. They thought that they were in the presence of 'Sodom and Gomorra', or that they were in the presence of concrete evidence of the party's decomposition¹³⁵, clearly alluding ironically to homophobic and the conservative moral fever of the party¹³⁶.

¹³⁵ Part of Victor testimony can be found in his blog page. <http://elchedelosgays.blogspot.com/>, and also in an interview published in MUMS (Sexual Minorities United Movement) page web <http://www.mums.cl/sitio/contenidos/entrevistas/28sep06.htm>

¹³⁶ Another example of this Communist party's conservatism was the Teitelboim affair, that blew up in the press during 2005, when Claudio Teitelboim, perhaps the most important well-known Chilean scientist, declared publicly that he just realised, after 57 years, that Volodia Teitelboim, one of the most influent Communist Party's historical leader, was not his father. Claudio, who changed his surname to his biological father Alvaro Bunster, expressed that he grew up in this 'historical lie' whose reason was to protect the image of the communist leader. Actually his accusation is not baseless, since the secret was a big one, his mother Raquel Weitzman, lawyer, poet, and also a member of the Communist party had an extramarital affair with Alvaro Bunster, however she did not break up the marriage and the baby was passed as Teitelboim's son. Raquel without question was punished and marginalised from the party, and separated from her son when he was ten years old, because she had another affair, but this time the marriage split. She never did anything against the party; she just accepted the punishment probably because she felt guilty. Without doubt it was a 'historical lie' made up in another time; however it blew up in this one.



After this first public appearance, he did others in 1997, for instance on the inauguration of the 17th version of 'Santiago International Book Convention', which is a social event that brings together the most important intellectuals of the nation. There he went up to the podium, when the national song was sung by the audience and started to dance a 'Cueca' (the national dance) and shouting slogans against Pinochet (it should be remembered that Pinochet was Republican Senator at this time, a few months before he was arrested in London). Very soon he was taken out from 'Mapocho Cultural Centre' (where the event took place) by bodyguards, and arrested. The event was covered extensively, because as an important social event, a large part of the audience was journalists from different newspapers and tabloids. After that, he was frequently seen in different kinds of social demonstrations for example, on March 8, the International Women's Day; May 1 International workers' day, and so on. However, he also became an important activist of the Chilean homosexual and transgender movement, particularly after his documentary called 'El Che de los Gays' directed by Arturo Alvarez, winning the first place in the second International Festival of Gay/Lesbian and Transsexual Cinema in Bilbao Spain. This documentary, of about 35 minutes, creates a narrative of Victor Hugo's life that describes how he became a political activist, and how he gave life to 'El Che de los Gays'.

What I really want to rescue from this personage is his particular way of becoming an activist. On one hand, he seems very independent, autonomous, and even lonely; however on the other hand, participating in different kinds of political struggles, and producing a strong social recognition of himself, from people of different political organizations, to appearing as being part of different social manifestation without an 'identitarian militancy' in any one of them, participating in the paradox of belonging to all of them and at the same time to none of them, he disrupts the traditional political order. Thus, he/she describes him/herself politically "mariquita anarca y comunista" (little pansy, anarchist and communist), playing with definitions that are always unstable. In this sense Victor represents a new way of implementing politics, very different from the Chilean left-wing militancy of the 1970's and 1980's.

It is important to explain in what sense I sympathize with these examples, because it is not my aim to place them as a model to follow, or as 'exemplary militancy'. They are interesting to me because they clearly show how different forms of subordination are implicated in a life of a subject, collective or individual. Thus, it seems impossible to identify a unique essential subjugation, over others; showing then, the difficulty of creating political actions around identitarian imperatives¹³⁷. Pedro and Victor Hugo's experiences put in question the traditional form of activism, particularly on the left-wing. Politically, they are interesting to me because they show the viability of exercising politics from a located, particular and partial existence, but at the same time struggling with universal injustice and subordination of any kind.

In this sense it is quite similar to what Fanon explained in *Black Skin, White Masks* in relation to blackness, on one hand there is not a black identity

¹³⁷ From deconstructive point of view, identitarian movements do not confront "the signifiers system" (Mérida Jimenez; 2002: 160) that produces political oppressions, as for instance 'women', 'gay', 'lesbian', 'elder' or, in Chilean context, 'Mapuche'. On the contrary they create political resistance from these identitarian categories, helping to reaffirm them without subverting the exclusion system that produce them. Thus, political and social organization should be flexible since identity is not a fixed category; it is fluid, complex and contradictory.

independent of subordination, so looking for a black essential identity in order to create a unity struggle does not make sense. It has to be struggle against racist subordination, because that is the face through which he is oppressed, but this face can change, it can be because you are woman, homosexual, child, working class, or all of them together and at the same time. Thus, as he says in the conclusion of *Black Skin, White Masks*,

There are in every part of the world men who search.

I am not a prisoner of history. I should not seek there for the meaning of my destiny.

I should constantly remind myself that the real *leap* consists in introduction invention into existence.

In the world through which I travel, I am endlessly creating myself. (1952)

In some way Pedro Lemebel's and Víctor Robles' political existence shows this conflict because both struggled against Pinochet's dictatorship, both felt sympathy for left-wing projects, despite the fact that they felt constantly excluded and discriminated because of their homosexual and class 'condition'. Thus their political praxis is unique because of their particular life of discrimination and subordination, but at the same time their claims are for recognition, justice and equal distribution in a universal way, and for the right to feel and to be human beings.

Exercising politics in this performative way, Lemebel and Robles propose a kind of activism more focused on specific actions than in politically fixed definitions. In this sense these expressions are related to the Butler- Fraser debate, and in more general terms with the discussion about identity politics. Joshua Gamson's text *Must Identity Movements Self-Destruct? A Queer Dilemma*, seeks to explore a possible answer to this problem that exceeds the margins of 'queer theory or transgender politics'. In his article, he shows how structuring political actions through identity claims, and, on the other hand, deconstructing- reconstructing fixed collective identities are two different strategies. Both of them, in some contexts, can be useful and truthful, while in other contexts none of them may be completely sustainable (Mérida Jimenez; 2002: 142).

Thus, Gamson argues that in an elaborate public collective identity, many social movements have obtained their objectives in both, because of their efficiency in creating good ways of resistance, and also in achieving their objectives, particularly in respect of their civil rights. On the other hand, these public collective identities also used to homogenize internal differences in a coercive manner in place of

common cohesion, causing exactly the same consequences that at the beginning they wanted to combat -such as exclusion, intolerance and even subordination-, as some of our militant's memories show.

In light of the stories collected in this chapter, it can be said that militant's experiences before the 90's, used to be coercive, flagellant and full of imperatives that people could not cope with, so causing a lot of pain. However, this charge as an absolute conclusion is unfair. From a historical perspective, and also through the narratives presented here, these 'modern' ways of militancy have shaped the political face of the western-world, for good or bad. And being part of the every day life of some people, this militancy has shaped their dreams and their hopes of a better world. However in addition, it must be asserted that their political practices provided solutions for some people's problems, while creating much trouble for others.

CONCLUSION

This research began by questioning the motives that led people to political activism and to participate with commitment during a time of political effervescence, and how they currently represent these past experiences in their own narratives. These questions are based on the recent history of Chile, in which the military coup d'état and consequent dictatorship left a traumatic scare.

The project was aimed at exploring the experience of political militancy, as the official versions on the recent past of Chile have omitted or hidden certain stories of subjects who participated in that period actively. The official history focuses on human rights violations by State agents during Pinochet's dictatorship. It was useful and necessary for the recovery of democracy, particularly when the perpetrators systematically denied their actions. It was important to demonstrate these facts, insisting on their truthfulness and that they were not only isolated events of abuses but a policy of extermination and of terror against a group in the population.

However, during the twenty years of the *Concertación* Government, the official history was slowly transformed into an official approach towards national reconciliation. The State offered victims rewards and ultimately the application of justice, when possible; the State's efforts were aimed at helping overcome the traumatic past and favor a national reconciliation, which would allow for the collective imagination of a perfect community moving forwards towards a promising future. This future would be clearly sponsored by the effective and efficient installation of the neoliberal economic model.

The official discourse also brought along consequences that could be described from different points of view. First, by focusing all of the opinions that condemn the coup d'état and the military dictatorships on the victims, the State "displaced any discussion from social violence to the subjective description of each individual's experience" (Peris Blanes; 2008: 372); more

importantly, any discussion or questioning of the social-political effects is excluded – transforming the victims ‘just victims’, without a story and context; their political identities, projects, their efforts and actions, their battles, successes and failures were omitted. Thus, political militancy as a collective and individual experience was left out of the official history.

Another important consequence of this point: by installing the logic of ‘the victims’ and therefore the logic of defeat as a hegemonic form for the memory of the period, the historical understanding of the recent past is not only locked but it is impossible to consider a possible activism in the present day, which some of the interviewees expressed this reality as a sad legacy of a past that ‘may be’ devoid of the above elements.

In this sense, of the most basic contributions of this work has been to rescue, through the gathering of life stories, the experience of militant activists who participated in the turbulent politics from the late 1960s to the 1990s. The main reason for this rescue was to recover, using the voice of the same militants, the sense and everyday practice that guided the activism of that period, not only from the voices of the ‘defeated’ but also from the victorious, because behind the violence employed by the Pinochetista Government, there was a part of the society that supported him.

Based on the individual experiences gathered, this work also recognizes how political militancy changed from the historical processes that broke out passionately from the 1960s onwards. Examples of this are the strength and importance that the activism in the Agricultural Reform, with the processes of unionism and popular promotion, with the political radicalization in the period of the UP, with the closing of all of the political system as a consequence of the coup, with the political persecution and the practice of human rights violation employed by the State. This work has also provided elements for the understanding of subjective reconstruction processes of the militant past and the re-configuration of the political participation within the new neoliberal logic.

Thus, the narrations analyzed in this project are an exemplar representation of the ambivalence and conflicts of political commitments in Chile before the 1990s. A first example is how, in the narratives, militancy is constructed as an experience, which is often far from being the result of rational, reflective, and free choices, as one might have previously thought. Conversely, it seems that political militancy was rather related to subjective, emotional, familiar and even romantic matters, or either to specific practices of everyday life, which may have resulted in identifications with special people, or personal alliances and loyalties.

As suggested in Chapter 3, political activism and identity are largely related to the family histories of each of the activists. For example, regarding family, political militancy is passed from one generation to the next. In the case of the right-wing militancy experiences that we analyzed here, this transfer is deeply naturalized. The mechanisms for this naturalization are diverse; they relate to place, nest, lineage, blood, as elements that mark class and therefore political options. In this sense the examined case of Margarita is remarkable, because she justifies her right-wing political commitment as related to all of the abovementioned factors, and particularly to her father's surname and his aristocratic blood. She also mentions traditions based on a romantic past, where 'the order of things has always been that way'; in this sense, it is not a voluntary choice – or 'her fault' – to be part of the 'aristocracy' and therefore to be part of the ruling class, that she also associates to the right-wing. The arguments of her story to construct her class identity do not differ from the testimonies in Stabili (1996), in which upper class women also associate political militancy to their 'natural' condition of privileged status; feeling that 'they' were the constructors of the nation, where family relations are the bases of class status and political power.

The hyperbolizing of female roles, and particularly of maternity, is another important element that helps modelling political activism in right-wing women as a 'natural thing'. Its relevance is revealed in several forms; importantly, because marriage and maternity were, and actually still are, considered 'the

ways' to construct social webs in Chile, and to reproduce social classes. In addition, family as structure is a national model. Rosita's case illustrates this point very well. She is very proud of her role as a mother who keeps her family united, despite political differences between her children. She attributed this unity to the way she and her husband raised their children. She understands that as an upper class woman the political dimension of her mother role is to keep the family together. And women can do that because, according to Rosita, maternity gives them a kind of 'natural moral superiority'.

Inherited militancy was revealed in the stories of left-wing militants too, especially of the Communist Party. However, its appearance was very different than in right-wing stories, because although families played a fundamental role in the political socialization of their members (grandparents, parents, children, grandchildren, etc.), political practices relied on the concrete and effective history of the family, which is transmitted in the practice of everyday life. Here place of birth or blood doesn't determine militancy, but rather it is the choices, in the past, by significant members of the family, that refreshes generation to generation. Tatiana's narration exemplifies this case well. Her political activism is also part of the identity of her family, which she defines as a 'Communist family'. She cannot think of an alternative to militancy, because at some extent that would imply the loss of her more basic group of reference.

For our interviewees, the influence of family-political values is also related with a type of 'class consciousness' expressed in the family history passed from one generation to the next, where there is a shared passed, for activists from the left and the right. According to Maurice Halbwachs (1992), social classes transmit their traditions through the prestige and merits of each family, which in turn are translated into concrete practices, such as political activism. In these cases, both political activism and the family unit work as groups of reference that overlap and feed each other. While they tend to represent a social class, there are also exceptions, Virginia being the example – recognizing she and her family belong to the working class; regardless they 'always' have identified themselves with the right. They

recognize values in the right-wing that make sense within their family structure: patriotism, order, and work as the foundations of social progress. On the other end, we have the case of Erika, who like many adolescents at the end of the 1960's and 1970's identified with revolutionary movements, the fall of imperialism and the accession of a historical subject, a 'new' man, a man uncontaminated by the bourgeois morality.

However, not all of the stories of activism begin with as a family tradition; there are also histories of activism that start with problems, the cases of Verónica and José fall into this category. In these cases, political activism is a new reference point that goes against the family group. This conflict may conflict may mean rebellion or permanent confrontation with the rest of the members of the family (for example, José and his father), or may even imply a permanent and painful separation (e.g. Verónica and her brother). While these stories of family conflict are particular in nature, they are also part of a general separation, or breaking; the coup, as a breaking of the political institution – the family / nation – also represents a breaking of the 'national experience' as an 'imaginary' community, becoming a 'fractured' community. The coup breaks Chile in two, so deeply that it is difficult for the protagonists of the time not to be separated into one of the two sides: those who supported the coup or those who lived through it as the worst catastrophe in Chilean history.

Following Stern's nomenclature (2009), Rosita, Virginia, Margarita and Heidi expressed this fracture as 'memory as a salvation', while the others expressed it as 'memory as a rupture'. The 1960s and 1970s were a periods of radical transformation in many senses – changes in agricultural production and owning land, the transition from a traditional, conservative, social order to a liberation of customs and massive irruption of political activity provoking a growing fear in the Chilean right-wing. This fear became a reality and was accentuated with Allende's arrival to power, resulting in a desire for military intervention to 'save' the country (family / nation) from the destruction caused by 'foreign' ideologies (Marxism), which are completely foreign from the Chilean idiosyncrasies and culture. From this point of view, the coup was

lived and is still remembered, at least by a section of Chile, as an instance of salvation.

The case is different for activists from the left, who see the 1960s and 1970s as a historical period full of possibilities for radical change. Inspired by the Cuban Revolution, it was a period where the political left-wing had a chance at playing an active role in the creation of a new society. The cup was a rupture, a fracture and ultimately meant defeat. This process is reflected in the stories of Tatiana, Tamara and Soledad, all of whom are from left-wing activist families; for these three, political activism and family life were practically the same. The fight for a better world was part of everyday life; they believed it was possible to create a better future. For the left, the coup was a breaking of a process, followed by political persecution and a systematic violation of their rights as human beings, annihilation and finally, defeat.

However, post-coup, in the cases of the stories of left-wing militants, where violence and repression affected the family as a whole, or significantly damaged one of its members, political commitment turns into a way of resistance. That is to say, militancy becomes a way to recover what has been brutally deprived, a daily family life that operated as identity referent to virtually organise the entire interviewee's life. The damages and effects that political repression caused in the lives of some of my interviewees are immense and complex. In Veronica's case, for instance, even though she wasn't tortured, she symbolically characterizes in her narration 'the loss' of everything, the loss of the most basic referent that makes sense for the life of someone. She cut off any relation with part of her family of origin because of her romantic and political choice. Literally, the coup crossed and divided her loved ones in two sides, and without too many alternatives she made her choice. Then she went into exile, losing her 'home' in the larger meaning of the word, in the sense of being in a new place without her friends and relatives; without the places that she used to frequent, ever from childhood; without her usual classes at the university, with the sensation that she was violently removed from a place and a situation that she was enjoying. And

finally, her divorce that she directly associated to the coup, and that caused her a pain that she is not able to confront.

Families as groups, as collective bodies, were also victims, because when political repression murdered, tortured, imprisoned or forced to flee one or more of their members, the entire family group suffered. Even this pain is transferred from one generation to the next. In this sense, these stories are 'unfinished businesses', because as seen in the cases of Veronica, Tamara and Soledad, all of them in different ways, they continue to construct their life stories through their pains. I suggest here that, symbolically, their suffering is also located in Chilean people, marking their relationships with politics – even nowadays – traumatically.

An exception regarding the inheritance of militancy is the MIR's militant. Being a movement instead of a party, intended as a vanguard of combatants, the requirements as militants were to detach and opt out of family or affective relationships that could interfere with the combative activity. Being also a political movement that at least in its origins was linked to subjects of the enlightened bourgeoisie, the act of separation from the family meant cutting with any 'bourgeois deviation', which may prevent the formation of the 'revolutionary subject' or 'new man'. Thus, cutting family ties was fundamental in order to be able to perform as an efficient militant-combatant. On the other hand, the narratives collected here from MIR's activists are not less gloomy in some parts, because as a political group they also have a strong collective identity, where 'being a Mirista' was a way of being; many of them also lost some friends, and some, such as Cristina and Erika, their lovers. Thus, Cristina, Erika or Danilo live their life as defeated militants, not just because as they were defeated in a military sense, but also because their dreams, their project of a different world were confined to impossibility.

As I have shown in the Fourth Chapter, political militancy was a different experience for female activists; however, this difference is based on their stories as awareness process, facilitated by the different historical contexts that each of the interviewees lived through. Making the consciousness of

any possible differences given gender in the practice of politics during the 1960s or 1970s, of little importance. For female activists from the left, the priority of social change was based on class struggle, and therefore in the identification with 'the workers', gender conflicts were subject to this struggle; in other words, the revolutionary subjectivity didn't allow for the manifestation of other types of conflicts that were not class, which is why gender conflicts are constructed retrospectively from the 1980s.

The political movement against Pinochet's dictatorship that emerged towards the ends of the 1980s was marked by the emergence of several other movements that tried to change the repressive environment. Among these was the active presence, openly in public, of multiple female organizations. While these organizations worked together at the beginning for economic survival, or in order to condemn Pinochet's regime for violations of human rights, organizations identifying themselves as feminists emerged. The latter type of organizations highlighted the need to restore democracy beyond the dictatorship – democracy is seen by these groups as a liberation of all types of authoritarianism, including the subordination of women. Therefore, the fight against the dictatorship also was also a fight against the oppression of women.

The stories and memories, especially those of activists from the left, are consequently confined to these processes, which is why activists like Isabel or Ana are able to remember that there were gender differences in the 1960s and 1970s, leading to women carrying secondary roles, with few opportunities for roles of leadership, in their respective political parties. The rise of the "feminist" of the 1980's, as described by Isabel's political history, was also very related with the experience of exile, showing many female activists the feminist movements of the United States or Europe.

This transformation of political activism of women from the left towards more feminist movements would be accompanied by a shift in the ways the previous period was remembered. The 'new' feminist subjectivity of the activists, allows for a critical point of view of the political parties, seeing them

as spaces where masculine dominance operated (and continues to operate). This is important because it exemplifies the difficulty of the parties from the left to offer alternatives to meet the demands for recognition, which no longer was related to a class, but to gender and ethnic relations.

The changes in Chile during the 1960s and early 1970's, which exacerbated social conflicts and political antagonism, would promote women's need to be seen in the public – this is confirmed by Margarita, Rosita, and Virginia's stories. From a traditional, national and conservative-catholic ideology, women from the right organized under the fear of losing their privileges and way of life. In these memories of activism, political activism, especially in the period when they organize against Salvador Allende's government, arise as a reaction to the adversity. In this sense, the activism that these women construct from their memories is not based on a political project, which they believe in or they promote, which is the case of women from the left. Rosita and Margarita describe their activism, as a sort of obligation, as there 'was no other choice', if they didn't act the country was doomed. Women had to do something to stop this disaster. Their stories also describe the social chaos that they perceived from their every-day memories, where their rights were ignored or were publicly assaulted, leaving them afraid and angry. In this context they decide to take to the street. However, these arguments conflict with Virginia's story, because as she explains, it wasn't only about the 'the speech about shortages' (Power; 2009) which moved women from the right, but political rejection of the socialist project. It is a defense to their class privileges, which for Virginia are expressed by the interests of her patterns.

Likewise, not only fear but anger explain why these women, up to today, have no problem recognizing that they actively called the armed forces to rule and they do not feel remorse or responsibility for the violations of human rights.

The Pinochet speech, was clear and systematic regarding the woman's role in the national reconstruction, helping to naturalizing and identifying the

political roll of women with the traditional roles as mothers and women, pillars of the family and the nation. So, for right-wing women, the gender problem appears without a so troubled appearance, because militancy develops from traditional female roles already established. However, in the case of Heidi, who represents a younger generation, the topic of gender topics is uncertain. The need for the leadership roles for women is recognized in the party, but at the same time the differences and the different roles that women and men performed within the party.

From the stories of the right-wing, such as Rostia, Virginia and Heidi, we can see how without being feminists, they manipulated their traditional roles as women in different ways, from maternity, a supposed moral superiority, fragility and goodness attributed to “womanliness”, even their physical appearance to obtain their political objectives. Therefore, these activists would not fight for gender claims within their respective parties; they would use possible advantages within the roles the party assigned them.

The heterogeneous feminism of the 1980s brought women from the left to consider the question of female emancipation and criticize their political parties for the lack of acceptance of these claims. For the right, Pinochet’s discourse displaced women efficiently in the concepts of female traditions, assigning them the active role of rebuilders of the nation. Certainly both discourses coexist even today, although in many instances they have become one; especially in the period of transition to democracy, when women’s issues were institutionalized with the creation of “SERNAMI” (*Servicio Nacional de la Mujer – National Service for Women*), which promotes equality among rights between men and women. Regardless of the undeniable contributions of this organization, mainly in the legislative area, this institution has helped cement the figure of the women – mother, worker – that needs to be protected by the State, instead of promoting independence and the ability to exercise citizenship.

Earlier, I proposed that the quintessential public activity, the army of citizens and political activism have been automatically associated with the every-day

life of men. Through the voices of left-wing activists, Chapter 5 illustrated how this activism has been forged.

The most significant changes regarding political activism in the 1960s was the increase in the number of voters through the political party system. This intensification of activism was based on growing expectations regarding the real possibility of a deep social change that slowly changed and radicalized political action left-wing parties. In this sense, the figure of the militant is almost merged with the figure of the 'revolution', understood as the exemplarily activist, which has no gender; the ideal revolutionary is the absolute identification with the party's cause, cancelling any other subjective dimension – including sex / gender. However, this figure is a man, in the same sense that the French Revolution configured the citizen explicitly excluding women from the political army; because both in practice and in the party's speech, the desirable militant is certainly an adult male.

Thus, political practice operated as another instance in which hegemonic masculinities were disciplined. Even though this objective was not achieved in every case, all requirements of the party towards building exemplary militants pointed towards this priority. To achieve this, images that captured the desired and expected characteristics in an activist were highlighted. In the case of the Latin American left-wing, the figure of Che Guevarra is crucial and in the case of Chile, a Creole version embodiment of Miguel Enríquez, both of whom were mythical male builders that are set as the "example", at the same time unreachable. This is so because, in the end, disciplining operates very much like military institutions – direction and leadership roles are occupied mainly by men. The construction of 'myths', 'heroes' and references is completely masculine; subjects who do not fit this model are marginalized, excluded or ignored, as the case for José's and Danilo's, which clearly shows how these activists lived their political lives personally in relation to these embodied mythical characters and idealized personages. This is very similar for activists of the right-sided UDI with the figure of Jaime Guzmán, who is considered as the martyr that embodies all of the values of the party; here we can also observe how power is executed differently,

articulated through various forms of masculinity. Indeed, Guzmán is far from actually being a combatant – being of an intelligent politician, socially committed, a respectable Catholic. His masculinity would commonly be feminized by the traditional left, in my opinion highlights he is a sort of example of male division of labour within the ruling class.

Regarding the last paragraph, the differences in class and construction of masculine operates within each party. If we consider the case of José for example, a good portion of his political activism is related with the strong identification that he has established with the ‘working-class’ men. However, for Danilo in his condition as subordinate class, he cannot think about holding leadership positions which are usually exercised within his party by men from the enlightened middle-class, regardless of his capabilities for the position. Thus the articulation of class, political militancy and gender in the memories of the interviewees complex and dynamic. While they identify with models associated with hegemonic masculinity, they also feel displaced, implying identification with male figures for each of the life stories and every day habits of each of the interviewees.

Another interesting element is related with a moral discipline that affected male and female activists from the left during the 1960s and 1970s. José’ story represents this sort of conservative, puritan, attitudes, that many parties imposed on their members. Repressing any type of individualism or frivolities, personal and romantic life of the activist, and especially revolutionary, was part of the training processing. Here the image of a perfect political reference point was closer to an ascetic, austere figure, and a figure without any personal enjoyment. However, with the new movements starting in the 1980s, this would change, as this asceticism was chauvinistic and homophobic, and would begin to be

Chapter 6 more directly illustrates how political activism is also an instance for disciplining sexuality, since the perfect revolutionary militant is not only a masculine subject, but also heterosexual. In this sense, political militancy models and reproduces traditional and binary stereotyping of gender and

sexuality; and when they escape from these established models, they generate homophobia or the invisibilisation of subjectivities other than those desirable and permitted by 'the party', especially during the 1960s and 1970s. Thus, political militancy models the gender and sex of their militants. In summary, the stories collected in this research illustrate how political militancy, mainly left-wing militancy, becomes coercive and oppressive, becoming a mechanism as repressive as the one it intended to combat, as the case of Mario and Tatiana show.

However, Chapter 6 also shows how this tendency changed towards the end of the 1980's up to the present. This change is the result, largely because of feminist movements such as those in favor of sexual minorities which have criticized the lack of support from traditional left-wing parties. This has resulted in a challenge to think of different political practices to incorporate the different dimensions of the historical subjects, such as those exemplified by Pedro Lemebel and Victor Hugo Robles.

In general terms, this research confirms how political militancy in traditional left-wing parties, or those which were conceived within 'modern' codes, no longer account for the complexity of current conflicts, neglecting to represent the subjects which they were supposed to represent. 'Working-class', 'exploited', 'communists', 'socialists' or '*miristas*', they are all subjects who are now also many other things. Subjects who are identified with multiple aspects of their existence, whose identity is not reduced to a sole category, subjects who in the context of late capitalism, and in the case of Chile in the context of the neo-liberalism established by the dictatorship, are also exploited and excluded in several ways. It is therefore indispensable to question and think of other forms of political instances that re-articulate both, specific and local demands, with universal demand (universal demands, referring to the possibility of coexisting as human beings).

This research also has shown that, up until 1973, political practices, social movements and the social web were supported by high and effervescent citizen participation, and that in the blink of an eye these activities were outlawed by decree, affecting all the levels of life of the citizens who

inhabited this country. The new military order removed this active citizenship that was being experienced as never before in the history of Chile, and installed two strategies. The first: fact-based and real violence against thousands of people – repression, imprisonment, torture and death; the second, through the covert violence of inequality and exclusion, caused by the establishment of a neoliberal model as the only 'modern' way of social organization. This model was not only based on violence and horror, but also on the effective eradication of other possible social models of organization, promoted from the various political parties (right-wing and otherwise) existing up until 1973.

In this sense, militancy stories efficiently give account of this breakdown; even the stories of right-wing militants, although in the context of a different assessment. Like Lechner (2002), I found that for left-wing and right-wing militants, the act of remembering the past, in the codes of experiences of political militancy, leads them to a sort of longing for the past. In the case of left-wing activists, the past was the end of the UP Government. On the other hand, for right-wing militants there was nostalgia for a pre-UP past. Thus, past was irremediably gone in both cases, and a way of being was lost – a loss of social traditions, a loss of every-day collective and associative relations. Thus, according to Lechner, it is not strange that people search "in the past family habits images of friendly coexistence, just the opposite to the recent past" (2002: 80).

However, and in parallel, stories also give account of a heterogeneous, contradictory Chile. September 11, 1973 was the culmination of a conflict between two very different national projects, representing different, conflicting, social sectors. But this confrontation was not symmetrical, as the defeated project represented social sectors that had consistently been marginalized and excluded from the construction of Chile as a 'civilized' and 'modern' country. Thus, the narratives, as memories, are loaded with the drama corresponding to a confrontation of this nature, illustrated in the stories as a divided and broken 'Chileanhood'. In general, it can be said that the majority of the stories are sad, melancholic; the past is strongly linked to

the present in a ghostly way, in other words – an unresolved past and bleak future.

The official history, which is being imposed on Chilean citizens, narrates facts without considering subjects, their projects and dreams, their daily life dynamics as driving forces of political participation. As we examined the stories of Cristina, Erika, Isabel, and Danilo, among others, the significance of these factors became apparent. Official history intends to homologate every pain, avoiding showing individual differences and conflicts. Moreover, its purpose seems to be the legitimating of all versions, without discussion, without negotiation, confrontation, leaving no space for mourning.

Thus, memories of activism are fundamental to reactivate the relationship between past and present lives or Chile, that is abruptly ended by the coup and the following construction of an official memory that fails to establish a connection between the way of life that was and the way of life today, that fails to establish sense or connections to rebuild and give hope to new political practices. The official memory has invaded in the individual memory and silenced what happened to each person, especially the victims, but hasn't allowed us to remember what happened to political and social subjects.

En social and economic terms, the neoliberal economic model was placed over the destruction of most of the social networks, work legislations and unions, among other social gains that were achieved through the political activists during the 1960s and 1970s. It is necessary to recover the memory of these structural and connect them with present political projects. At the same time, they must be recovered so as to look at the activism of the 1960s and 1970s critically, to move beyond a melancholy and idealized viewpoint.

Chilean activism in the 1980s and onwards is expressed through new social movements and political practices; these movements have received criticism, especially left-wing activism from previous decades. Expressions and demands by new social subjects can also be seen; who also wanted and still

want to be part of the social claims and political struggles for a better world, appealing to the recognition of the individual as a legitimate political space that cannot be eliminated by collective subjectivity, both must coexist. This is the result of many of the stories told throughout this research.

Finally, I would like to add that this thesis opens the possibility for new research projects that are certainly necessary to deepen the understanding of the problems set forth. For example, to study the memory of the left-wing political activism and relate the following questions with the political identity with every-day life: What are the traditions of today? How is it currently organized? How have the needs of new social sections been incorporated? What happened to the more radical groups that considered violence as a legitimate tool?

Another question that was raised in this research that deserves to be analyzed in greater depth is the right-wing activism so as to understand how it has changed over the last few decades, and how the construction of masculinities has evolved within this political sector.

Finally, one of the issues that have been completely unexplored in this work and that also require future research is how political activism was represented and is represented today, the gender and ethnic identities. In the last few decades, one of the most important social players that has emerged, through the different social movements and organizations are the members of the Mapuche indigenous people. These movements have also strived for political recognition as a ethnic minority, demand a restoration of their ancestral lands and have undertaken a process of historical reconstruction, where it is absolutely relevant to question the historical relationships that these individuals have had with political parties and the governments, particularly those from the decade of the 1960s who posposed to democratize the country.

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ANNEX: Quoted passages of interviews in Spanish

1. Interview passages included in Chapter III

1.1 Tatiana

a) pp. 146 - 147

...cómo llegaste a militar, a participar políticamente...

Bueno, yo vengo de una familia... te contaba... comunista... comunistas pampinos... padre comunista, tíos comunistas... en el tiempo de la UP... yo era jota en el tiempo de la Unidad Popular y... y nadie le preguntaba a uno en la familia... de repente llegaba... mi papá sobre todo... y solía decía, "mijita tiene reunión de base el sábado", entonces habíamos entrado a la base del partido,...eso era todo. Pero además no era una cuestión que uno dijera, "no, no quiero ir"... nosotros vivíamos en el local del partido, en las fiestas del partido... vivíamos escudando a mi mamá... la vida de mi mamá giró en torno... desde sus 14 años giró en torno al partido.

¿Ellos eran dirigentes?

No, fijaté. Pero militantes... militantes desde pequeños. Mi papá cuenta que cuando ellos vivían en la pampa mi abuelo era dirigente, y por supuesto que pasaba despedido de cada oficina. Entonces, al final los que mantenían la casa eran mi papá y mi abuela. Mi abuela hacía "gallitos". No sé si te acuerdas de unos dulces que eran como unas paletitas...

Sí, por supuesto, del colegio.

b) pp. 147- 148

Bueno, mi abuela hacía "gallitos", y mi papá trabajaba en los ranchos de la pampa. Limpiaba los ranchos y la comida que sobraba la llevaba para la casa... y lo que ellos nos transmitieron... fue como... no el lado negativo de eso, no el lado del hambre, de la miseria sino de las cosas entretenidas que pasaban. Por ejemplo, mi papá no cachó un día por qué un día un señor que vino de afuera le regaló un lustrín, porque era el hijo del compañero Rojas. Y en el lustrín le metían cosas, y mi papá iba de una oficina a otra lustrando y sacaban y metía papeles. Mi papá siempre cuenta eso de una manera muy rica. La solidaridad de los viejos cuando a mi abuelo lo despedían... Mi mamá... por otro lado... no tiene familia de militancia, excepto por su abuelo, ella se crió con su abuelo y se murió cuando ella tenía 14 años. Y ella creció escuchando a su abuelo que decía "esta será mi semilla". Él andaba para todos lados con esta niñita, era muy linda, fina... y ella, cuando muere el abuelo, busca el local del partido... en La Legua... mi mamá era una niña de guantes de seda. Y llega a La Legua con guantes de seda, sombrero... regia, estupenda... ella cuenta siempre estas cosas que eran como... como... de ganancias de la vida, no era una vida complicada... yo siento que toda sus enseñanzas fueron como de ganancias de la vida. Cuándo a mi mamá se le preguntaba [...]

c) p. 150

Cuándo a mi mamá se le preguntaba por qué era comunista, ella decía que porque creía en un mundo mejor, que los niños iban a ser felices... esas cosas de la vida cotidiana... nada sobre marxismo, ni de... gran academia,

ni nada. Y nosotros se lo creíamos... Cuando nos preguntaban por qué no hacíamos clases de religión... nosotros decíamos que porque nosotros creíamos que Dios no existía... y porque 'mi mamá lo dijo'. Y mi mamá, jamás en la vida nos tocó un pelo, y jamás permitió que alguien nos tocara. No somos ni niños maltratados ni nada, o sea, no le creíamos por miedo ni nada. Le teníamos respeto... mi mamá nos pegaba una mirada y nosotros salíamos del comedor, porque no se comía con los grandes... pero era una buena vida... yo creo que mi mamá tenía como la mística, y mi papá tenía el orden, él se preocupaba de nosotros... salía con nosotros los domingos... nos llevaba a vender el diario, El Siglo... íbamos a todas las marchas, nos sabíamos todas las canciones... había mucha mística... bonito vivía yo...

1.2 Margarita

a) pp. 153 - 154

Y tu relación con las ideas de derecha... de donde proviene?

De siempre. Yo nací escuchando y viendo... y en contacto con historias sobre la derecha... mi abuelo fue senador de la república. Joaquín Díaz Garcés. No el escritor...Y por el lado de mi familia paterna vengo de la familia Montt, de los caballeros que fueron presidentes, que tampoco eran muy de derecha, eran más bien conservadores... y siempre he sido de derecha y nunca voy a dejar de serlo...te voy a decir algo.... La cuna va adentro... yo puedo usar un bluejean ordinario y voy a ser yo siempre. Yo entro a un restaurante y los mozos se van a fijar en mí... es una cuestión de genes, no puedo pasar desapercibida... tú sabes que hay mucha gente que solo es apariencias, pero... hablando así, onda historiador... no tienen cuna. Uno nace con esa cuestión. Y yo no digo que soy de la aristocracia, yo digo que soy de la ranciocracia, porque ya más rancia esa huevá... no debería ser así...y lo peor es que yo lo tengo por los dos lados, por el lado materno y por el lado paterno hay personas que han estado en la historia... los tres presidentes Montt...Y por el lado de mi mamá están los Villagra, del conquistador Francisco Villagra, que llegó a Concepción...entonces el mayor orgullo que yo tengo, por el lado Montt, es que los Montt no llegaron con Pedro de Valdivia, como la familia Fuenzalida... la familia de mi ex marido, que eran todos bandoleros... la familia Montt no, ellos venían de una farmacia de un pueblo pequeño de España, ellos primero llegaron a Perú.

b) p. 156

Porque lo único que teníamos... mi familia... eran las ganas de vivir, y yo, mi apellido, que he tratado de venderlo y no he podido.

¿Por qué dices eso?

Porque no me sirve de nada mi apellido si no me da plata. A mi mamá le dije un día, ¡voy a vender el apellido!

c) p. 157

¿Qué piensas sobre la imagen que tienen las derechas, como mucha educación pero también muy conservadoras?

Soy feminista... sí, soy feminista, o sea... soy... soy mujer, pero a mí las feministas no me gustan porque son pasadas para la punta. Para qué

queremos presidenta mujer, sigamos con los hombres, la imagen del tipo buen mozo da gusto. Te digo, yo no soy partidario de Lagos pero da gusto verlo bien vestido, con un Armani, una camisa bonita...

¿Pero de la Bachelet te molesta que sea de izquierda o que sea mujer?
Que sea de izquierda. Y que sea mujer. No sé, la encuentro doble.

Ya, pero eso es por sus ideas, no porque es mujer.
Por sus ideas la encuentro doble. No la veo pegándole un grito a un secretario. Veo que ellos pueden hacer con ella lo que quieran.

¿Eso te asusta?
Eso me asusta. En cambio Lagos se rodio de gente buena y gente mala, pero cuando el golpea la mesa, él lo hace bien.

d) p. 159

¿A su familia los expropiaron?

Sí señora, y en la época de Eduardo Frei, siendo Bernardo Leyton mi padrino. El fundo de Bernardo Leyton no lo expropiaron, el fundo de mi familia sí. Cuando salió la primera ley de reforma agraria uno de los primeros fundos que expropiaron fue el de nosotros, estando Bernardo Leyton de ministro del interior, y siendo mi padrino, porque casi se casa con mi mamá. Que horrible habríamos salido.

Ah, y se acuerda de lo que pasó...

Total y absolutamente. A mi tío lo echaron, con la maleta así, nada más... la casa que por herencia iba a ser mía... nos echaron, yo sólo saqué la montura... ahí quedo la capilla de la iglesia... y quedó toda mi ropa, todo... quedó todo allá. Desgraciadamente no hicieron nada bueno con las cosas. La casa era un asco, subían los huasos con las espuelas rompiendo... sacaban los excusados y los tiraban para abajo... se empezó a producir un odio... siendo que de esas tierras se habían ganado todos los premios de IANSA por la remolacha, eran los mejores productores de remolacha y de leche. A los fundos malos no los tocaron, a los fundos buenos sí.

¿Esa expropiación a quién fue entregada?

A los inquilinos. Pero pregunta que hicieron con las tierras. Nada. Absolutamente nada. Están botadas. Ahora yo lo sentí más por los viejos, ver salir a los viejos llorando... ustedes no lo vieron. Yo lo viví, yo los vi... llorando, con las maletas... gente mayor, gente... de 70 u 80 años... y murieron todos acá botados como unos rotos. Fue violento. Y yo quedé en la ruina, jajá [risa]. Sí porque no pude recuperar nada. Pero no importa, es lo de menos, quizás la casa... la habría regalado, no sé. Pero... fue para ná. Si yo te quito algo a la fuerza, es para dárselo a alguien que realmente lo necesita, y que lo va a trabajar, y lo va a hacer cundir, no para dejar las tierras botadas, o las casas botadas... y eso es real, hay muchos casos... después fueron recuperadas o compradas, a mala, a la buena, no sé. Pero en esa época quedó todo botado, todo tirado, nadie hacía nada...

1.3 José

a) p. 158

Ahí hay algo en la idiosincrasia, en la cosmovisión del chileno que hace que eso sea así. Tú dices, aquí en este país la gente es Frei Ruiz-Tagle, Aylwin Azócar, es Allende Gossens, es Frei Montalvo, pero aquí no hay Lagos Escobar, y cuando llega un Lagos Escobar tú dices, ah, este huevón es Lagos Escobar pero no es como uno, arrogante, prepotente, estudió en Estados Unidos, inmediatamente tú lo pones en otra posición, y ya no eres tú, te emocionas cuando él dice que es ex-alumno del Instituto Nacional, soy hijo de clase media chilena, hijo de una profesora, puta, se te caen las lágrimas, pero cuando está en el poder, tú dices, no poh, este huevón no puede ser igual que yo, porque, cómo mandunguea como mandunguea.

1.4 Verónica

a) p. 166

Y ahí conociste a tu marido en el norte...

En Arica, él era antofagastino... mi marido era un fogoso socialista, un fogoso revolucionario... muy interesante el hombre, y me llevó por el camino este... y así cayó en la cárcel y yo tuve que venirme con él...el 76 lo saqué de la cárcel, yo lo saqué de la cárcel porque... yo era muy inocente, muy naif, lo que se llama naif, porque me fui a meter a la Diego Portales a hablar con los milicos y... yo no sabía en el peligro en que estaba... pero igualmente me atreví... Lo saqué, a través de amigos por aquí, amigos por allá... y gente que tiene redes por aquí y redes por allá... y nos venimos, directamente de Inglaterra...

b) p.166

¿Intentaste volver?

Jamás he querido volver... nunca he querido volver. ¿Sabes por qué nunca he querido volver? Te voy a decir sinceramente... porque cuando tú pierdes tus amigos, tu familia y tus redes... para que vas a volver... yo perdí todo, todo... Aquí tampoco me relaciono con chilenos, yo me he movido, he salido del núcleo de los chilenos, me salí totalmente, me salí. Y me salí cuando me divorcié más que todo, porque cuando me divorcié dije, "se terminó mi misión con Chile", la terminé totalmente. Cuando me divorcié de él para mí Chile desapareció, fue una decisión de sobrevivencia... volver atrás a los chilenos, a los Derechos Humanos. Volví un poco a estar con los chilenos cuando Pinochet estuvo preso acá, ahí recién como que de repente fui pero no... yo me retiré de los chilenos totalmente...

c) p.167

El hombre chileno es lo más pollerudo que hay, llegó a acá y perdió a su madre, y no sabía qué hacer sin su madre, porque la mujer chilena aquí salió a buscar dinero, trabajo, y ellos empezaron a lamentarse... con todos los traumas de la cárcel y del exilio... porque no tenían a su madre... y empezaron a mirar inglesas que estaban por ahí... mientras la mujer estaba trabajando.

d) p. 169

...yo me retiré de los chilenos totalmente...

¿Por qué?

Como te decía, el golpe de Estado te transformó, como que... no sé poh... como que te cortaran la cabeza. Y de repente empiezas a ver a la gente de otra forma, las que eran amigas tuyas ya no eran amigas tuyas, y la gente en que tú podías confiar estaban en contra tuyo, porque fue tanto el terror... que la gente desconfió de sus hermanos, de sus primos, de su papá, de su hijo...

Te pasó eso...

A todo el mundo. El padre tenía que desconfiar del hijo y el hijo del padre, los hermanos entre hermanos...

Mmmm... pero, a ti te pasó eso...

Mi hermano era militar, mi hermana era comunista, y mi hermano amenazaba a mi hermana, entonces... Pinochet tuvo éxito en crear odio entre las familias, en crear odio entre hijos y padres. O sea, es una cosa espantosa... hubo madres que al hijo se lo llevaron preso y lo patearon y lo torturaron, y dijo, "bueno, se lo tiene merecido por estar metiéndose en cosas", esas frases se escuchaban... madres contra hijos... fue una cosa muy espantosa... y fue espantosa porque Chile no lo había sufrido antes...

e) p. 170

Porque andábamos en las calles gritando, andábamos felices, teníamos la gloria de que nosotros estábamos haciendo algo fantástico, los pobres estaban tomando leche, estaban comiendo carne... hacíamos colas, claro, porque la gente... acaparaba y guardaba, y los ladrones... pero... éramos sumamente jóvenes, y... la música... por ejemplo, estaban los Quilapayun, estaba el Inti Illimani, estaban todo ese fervor, era un carnaval, era un verdadero carnaval para nosotros, pero mezclado con esas cosas lindas porque tú sabes que estás haciendo algo bueno, no pasándola bien nomás, y confiando en que tu líder iba a salir adelante, y que tu líder fantástico, que era Salvador Allende, nos estaba llevando por el buen camino, y justo antes del golpe... no, después del golpe vinieron a dar la película esa Jesucristo Superestrella, donde Jesucristo mira así con una cara de pena a su pueblo que estaba bailando en un carnaval, cuando todos los romanos estaban alrededor... ahí dije yo, así somos nosotros, nosotros estábamos felices, estábamos construyendo una nueva sociedad... y pum, desapareció, oscuro... entonces, fueron tres años bonitos, fueron tres años muy lindos...

f) pp. 172 - 174

mmm... que catete soy, pero insisto en tu caso particular, tú con tus hermanos, o con tu familia ¿cómo fue todo esto?...

Es que... antes del golpe era saludable... que existieran diferencias... mi hermano mayor era militar, y por otro existía yo que creía en los socialistas, era saludable, era un diálogo saludable en una democracia. Entonces... tú no anticipas que esa persona que estaba frente a ti y son tu familia, mañana iban a ser un enemigo que te quería matar, porque eso no se te pasa por la mente... acabamos de hacer esta democracia, él es un militar y tiene que proteger el país, y nosotros íbamos a hacer el cambio... entonces el diálogo era saludable... "Ah, comunista de porquería" me decía en broma, "ah, tú momio de porquería" le decía yo, o sea... eso es saludable en toda democracia, además que es jocosos a veces, pero después del 73...

... eso cambia las cosas...

Es siniestro, cambió siniestramente... lo que era un chiste el día anterior, lo que fue un chiste el domingo, el lunes se transformó en siniestro, porque el golpe militar fue el lunes 11, o el martes 11, no me acuerdo bien... el martes 11. Entonces, el cambio fue siniestro, porque ni siquiera fue gradual... porque, claro antes del golpe, los de 'Patria y Libertad' se peleaban con los 'miristas' y se tiraban piedras y misiles, pero luego si se iban a una fiesta y se encontraban los patria y los miristas bailaban juntos. Yo había visto miristas y patria y libertad abrazados en la universidad, haciéndose chistes, porque era un diálogo fraterno, pero después se agarran a puñetes como se agarran dos futbolistas de distinto bando, pero después del juego se van a tomar un vino... así era, claro que... te digo que también había verdaderas mochas, las mochas existían, no era que no existieran, pero pasado eso tú veías a tu hermano en la casa, y te reías con él... y era "flaquita, vamos al cine juntos", o, "vamos a tomarnos un café", porque es tu hermano ¿no?... o yo era profesora que sabían que era socialista y tenía alumnos míos que eran de patria y libertad, y me decían, "señorita, que se ve bien hoy día...", "ya, silencio", porque era muy joven y eran casi de mi misma edad, entonces... y los de patria y libertad eran chiquillos bien lindos también... que estaban ahí en mi clase... entonces era normal de que un chiquillo de patria y libertad, sabiendo yo que era del frente nacionalista y que yo era socialista... estuviéramos en el mismo lugar tranquilos... y yo era su profesora, y él me admiraba, él respondía, él era correcto, y no venía a insultar a la profesora porque era socialista o era UP... era coqueto, y si había fiesta en la universidad bailaba con él... ¿me entiendes?... así era de una manera el día lunes, y el martes ese niño se transformó en mi enemigo... a ese niño no pude ni siquiera decirle cuál era mi nombre, poco menos, porque yo no sabía si estaba metido en alguna cosa siniestra...

Entonces, tampoco puedes tomar café con tu hermano...

Nunca más... hasta ahora. Estamos totalmente divorciados... Yo me retiré, o sea, yo lo quiero a él, y yo estoy segura de que él me quiere a mí, pero yo me retiré, yo no quiero hablar con él, yo no quiero verlo, porque... (largo silencio) yo sé en qué anduvo..., pero no quiero saber en lo que anduvo... es decir yo no quiero ni siquiera enfrentarme a la realidad de que anduvo en algo... hasta ese nivel... Tengo otro hermano, que no es militar, vive en Estados Unidos... me adora... pero tampoco se me olvida que él es de derecha y yo soy de izquierda, y a él tampoco se le olvida... y me echa tallas, y me molesta, y me molesta... y cuando yo voy le digo... "mira Tomás, yo vengo a acá a verte, y quiero pasarlo bien contigo así que no me hables de política porque no lo soporto", entonces empieza la pelea, y esa pelea fue la misma engendrada por el golpe de Estado, ese fue un odio que ha engendrado... genialmente, fíjate que si tú piensas en los símbolos, poco antes del golpe de Estado había un reclamen en la radio, o en la televisión... de la gente de derecha, que se llamaba junte rabia, junte rabia, porque ellos querían que las personas se pusiera cada vez más rabiosas, cada vez más rabiosas, cada vez más rabiosas, y que todo explotara, y así pasó, se juntó rabia.

1.5 Tamara

a) pp. 178 - 180

Mis papás cayeron presos el año 74, por ahí por junio o julio... mataron a uno de mis cuñados...(largo silencio)

...¿lo mataron?

...Si... yo creo que lo que más me dolió durante mucho tiempo fue la muerte de mi cuñado. Incluso cuando lo encontraron ahora en los 90, cuando encontraron a la gente de Pisagua...(largo silencio)

...entonces él también fue un desaparecido...

Si... pero yo siempre pensé que lo iba a encontrar... en el 76 mi papá salió de la cárcel y nos fuimos a... se les ocurrió la brillante idea de irse al exilio y entonces partieron todos para allá.

¿Tú también?

Yo también... me llevaron obligada... Yo no quería ir... Yo no quería ir porque yo tenía una vida aquí. Yo tenía una vida, yo estaba en la universidad...yo estaba en el partido, y nadie me preguntó si yo quería ir... y viví un año ahí, enojada con el mundo, con todo el mundo. Y me vine... trabajé para juntar plata para el pasaje y me vine sola...

...Sola?

Si, sola, el resto de la familia se quedo afuera por unos años más. Bueno, dos de mis hermanas se quedaron allá hasta los 90's. Se casaron...eran jóvenes... una que era más joven que yo se casó dos veces... En realidad mi hermana mayor nunca se fue y cuando nos fuimos yo me quería quedar, pero... mi papá me llevó porque... mi hermana no quiso tenerme en su casa... yo volví porque yo quería vivir aquí... además, en el partido hubo toda esta cosa de quiénes se iban, quiénes no se iban, y lo que se iban eran traidores... y una de alguna manera estaba metida en eso. Excepto hoy día, que uno está más vieja, más madura, que uno encuentra súper poco razonable esta disputa que hay entre los que estuvieron fuera y los que estuvieron dentro..., y "ustedes que estuvieron afuera (ganaron tanta) plata y tuvieron todas las posibilidades..." Yo creo que esa es una disputa que nos desgasta, y que es porque no hemos (llorado) nuestras penas. Yo hice una reunión con mis hermanos, hermanas, mis papás, mis primos, sobrinos, todos... para socializar esto. Hay quedó una embarrá más o menos, en el buen sentido de la palabra porque era un poco lo que queríamos lograr... una de mis hermanas dice... que estuvo en la cárcel y fue violada, y que cayó con su guagüita de menos de un año... ella planteaba que se había arrepentido de no haber hablado... y nosotros... desde mi mamá para abajo casi se nos cayó el pelo... ahora, es posible que ella tenga derecho a eso.

Ella cree que si hubiera hablado no la habrían violado o torturado...

Claro. Es su mirada, es su dolor. Dónde está diferencia, o qué es lo que yo le discuto a ella, es que ella no es la única que ha sufrido. Tengo otra hermana que también fue violada y torturada, que perdió su guagua, su embarazo... (Llora por largo tiempo, apago la grabadora, le doy agua y la abrazo).

¿Estas segura de que quieres continuar?

Si, es que estoy un poquito débil en estos días...No había contado así esta historia a nadie antes... ellas eran mis hermanas mayores... pero los otros también sufrieron un montón. Todos sufrimos. Esa es la historia. Yo tengo tres hermanos más jóvenes. Una es mi hermana menor, que es psicóloga... a ella la despertaron con una metralleta. Yo tenía 15 y ella 14. Y a mi hermano... el que sigue, lo pusieron en un auto con una metralleta y lo obligaron a decir dónde vivía... [llanto]...puedes imaginar lo que es para un

niño vivir con esa culpa...Yo creo que uno no puede hablar de quiénes sufrieron más en este país...Yo encuentro a mis hermanas super valerosas. Y es esa valentía la que nos mantiene juntos como familia y lo que me mantiene firme en mis convicciones...

Tú sobreviviste...

No, No quiero decir que sobreviví o que mi familia sobrevivió, no yo quiero vivir,.... vivir juntos, sobrevivir al dolor juntos... mi militancia tiene que ver con eso también...porque eso es lo que somos una familia comunista... No quiero ser un ejemplo... siempre me ponen de ejemplo...

¿Quién?

Todos. Mi madre, mis hermanas... porque yo me quedé aquí, sola, seguí militando.. y es un peso grande, ser ejemplo es un gran peso. Mira no me gusta ni hacerme la víctima ni la superhéroe... yo pasé lo que pasó mucha gente de este país, hambre, miseria, estudié como pude, hice lo que pude...

1.6 Soledad

a) p.195

... mira, provengo de una familia con una disposición hacia lo social, eh, de mucha entrega, ya. Un papá, una mamá militantes, hermanos militantes, entonces eh, eso obviamente que acompañó en algún minuto las decisiones, en términos del compromiso que yo he ido tomando. Eh, un hermano que está dentro de la lista de los ejecutados políticos,... aunque no es la manera en la cual me gusta recordarlo, precisamente porque no lo encuentro una víctima. Manuel era en el momento de su muerte, miembro del Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez, y el tomó esa opción, y dentro de esa opción, en un momento determinado, decidió enfrentarse hasta la muerte,..., por tanto no lo considero una víctima necesariamente, sino que una persona que entendió que esa era la manera de ser consecuente con lo que estaba luchando, obviamente que en el contexto de esos años, a esas condiciones, yo lo veo de esa manera. También padres presos políticos. Mi padre estuvo siete años encarcelado, y mi madre un par de semanas, digamos, los dos pasaron por las cárceles en el momento de la dictadura militar...

b) pp. 196 - 197

¿Qué recuerdos tienes de esa época?

...yo tenía seis años el 73. Antes de eso recuerdo que siempre participaba de las marchas y mítines políticos, actividades en cuanto plaza había, manifestaciones al hombro del papá. Mi papá era funcionario del diario El Siglo, y también militante del Partido Comunista, entonces nosotros íbamos a todas partes con él, a todas partes. Mis hermanos chicos, más chicos que yo, usaban incluso una boina con la típica estrella del Che Guevara, o sea así, en esa onda así ...super comprometidos con la Unidad Popular. Luego, para el 11 de Septiembre del 73, recuerdo haber sentido miedo, miedo porque no entendía muy bien lo que estaba pasando, tenía seis años, sentía que en mi casa todos corrían de un lado para otro, y que mi papá se sacó su barba rápidamente, se cortó el pelo el mismo, en la casa, y tomó un arma que tenía guardada, y salió. Entonces yo recuerdo que a mí eso me causó mucho miedo. Luego mi mamá nos preparó para salir y cruzamos toda la población para ir a donde vivía mi abuela, eso deben haber sido por lo

menos dos horas de camino me imagino, dos horas de camino entre tanto se escuchaban algunos sonidos fuertes de bombardeos, y..., de temor en las calles, porque yo lo que me acuerdo es de apretar fuertemente la mano de mi madre y, y, seguir caminando, porque era yo la que tenía que apoyar más. Mis hermanos eran un año menor que yo y dos años menor que yo. Entonces sentirme así, en esa idea, que tenía que hacerle caso a mi mamá y de que tenía que caminar rápido... eh eh... esos años continuaron así, viendo al papá muy esporádicamente. Nosotros permanecemos durante varios meses en la casa de la abuela, no fuimos más al colegio, eh, y en momentos en que volvimos alguna vez al departamento un fin de semana por ejemplo, era para ver a mi papá, que aparecía en algún minuto y luego se iba como rápidamente. ...Mmh, por lo menos, eh, yo hasta ese momento sólo sentía temor, digamos, y esto lo entiendo ahora, ...era un miedo muy grande, porque después uno va tratando de..., de, de que los recuerdos te vayan dando más idea de lo que pasó en ese tiempo....Yo diría que esos seis, siete años posteriores al golpe, fueron super duros, super, super duros, porque nosotros andábamos permanentemente arrancando, cambiándonos de lugar de vivienda, eh, veíamos muy poco a mi papá, eh, incluso salíamos fuera de Santiago..., no sé po' yo tenía, ocho, nueve años de edad, así de chica digamos. Recuerdo también de esos tiempos, llegadas de mis tíos que habían estado detenidos en Tres Alamos, que llegaban a mi casa dos, tres días y de ahí salían al exilio, dos tíos en ese caso, por lo tanto, con esto quiero un poco reflejar que en realidad yo crecí en medio del temor. Hoy día como adulta puedo re-significar eso en el sentido de lo difícil que debe haber sido, de lo difícil que fue tener esa niñez. Siempre pensando en que podían llegar. Recuerdo una vez, mira, mi papá vendió dulces en algún minuto fuera del colegio, cuando estaban haciendo los hoyos del metro. Y recuerdo que en un momento llegaron a buscarlo, los que me imagino serían hoy día, o sea, serían en ese tiempo, disculpa, la DINA, y salió corriendo por los hoyos del metro. Otro momento, fue una vez que, también, lo siguieron en pleno centro de Santiago, y yo estaba sola con él, y el me dejó encargada en un kiosco de diarios (*llanto...*), me fueron a buscar muchas horas, casi al anochecer, (*llora...*) chucha, no me acordaba hace cualquier tiempo de esto (*se toma unos segundo*). Mi papá se encargó que me fuera a buscar horas después, muchas horas después. Después de vivir así, digamos, esas cosas que ahora (*continúa sollozando*) uno ve lo fuerte que fueron. Fíjate que por muchos años, las mantuve sin contarlas a nadie, se habían ido como pa' otra parte así, ni siquiera las recordaba, estaban bloqueadas. Con el tiempo fui recordando detalles así, como ese. Y eh, las cosas se vinieron a tranquilizar muchos años después ah, imagínate de todas las que se libró mi papá, debe haberse librado realmente de muchas cosas, porque por ahí, por el año 78 el decide irse para el sur de Chile. Estuvimos en Punta Arenas cuatro años, nos recuperamos allá...

c) p. 199

¿Se fueron todos para allá?

Mi papá se fue primero. Luego lo siguió mi mamá, y luego lo seguimos nosotros. Vivimos cuatro años en Punta Arenas. Nos recuperamos de la desnutrición infantil con la cual llegamos allá, eso fue a los diez, diez, once años. Entre nueve, diez y once años. El 81... Ahí yo creí que siempre vivimos fuera de... de la actividad política. Durante esos años, yo estaba segura de que nosotros éramos una familia super normal, que se dedicó sólo a superar esas tristezas, a encontrarse como familia. Y años después me enteré, que en realidad mi papá nunca dejó de militar y de hacer cosas

allá también. Después volvimos a Santiago, desde Punta Arenas, como a principios del 82, volvimos. Y ahí, ya nosotros estábamos un poco más grandes. Y ahí empezó la actividad política de los más chicos (*ríe un poco*).

¿De los hermanos?

Si, mía primero, y después de mis hermanos. Yo estaba en primero medio, sí, debe haber sido el 82 porque yo estaba en primero medio. Y ahí empezó, yo ingresé a la Jota, y después de que estaba adentro le conté a mi papá...Hasta que la Jota, ya se quedó chica, y empezaron las otras alternativas,(silencio)... eh, nosotros los tres hermanos estuvimos en el Frente, y ahí empiezan como cosas más fuertes, de las que obviamente no hablaré nunca, digamos...¿te sigo contando de la familia?

d) pp. 204 - 205

...¿te sigo contando de la familia?

Si, si tu quieres...

En el 84 cae detenido mi papá, en un enfrentamiento con carabineros. Queda muy mal herido y se va preso. Nosotros tenemos que salir de allí porque la casa es allanada y lo único que querían era agarrarnos a nosotros. Así que tuvimos que salir fuera de Santiago, y estar hartas veces afuera. Volvemos el 85 al departamento, con la mamá. A quedarnos, a vivir, a tratar de vivir solos, sin el papá porque esa era una tremenda cosa, estar sin el papá. Y la vida sigue absolutamente en compromiso, ahí, peleando, cada centímetro, tratando de hacer el máximo daño posible a la dictadura. Y entendiendo también que en eso, estaba la posibilidad de que mi papá saliera de la cárcel. Porque, nosotros pensábamos que se iba a quedar para siempre ahí... Ahora al frente nos vamos los tres, en distintos momentos, pero nos vamos los tres hermanos. Yo estuve más tiempo en la Jota, porque igual tenía más responsabilidades, entonces permanecí más, pero llegó un momento en que estábamos los tres metidos en la misma. Y es ahí donde mi hermano, el año 86, muere en una, en una,... acción del Frente, (*largo silencio*)... Yo creo que ahí vino un remezón super fuerte en la familia. Fue como, como un qué está pasando, como un corte,... antes, antes yo creo que realmente antes de eso, incluso con la detención de mi papá, y la detención de mi mamá el año 85, pensábamos en esto como un crecimiento, en este ser de adolescente, dieciocho años, diecinueve años, nos sentíamos un poco inmunes a, a la muerte, por ejemplo. Yo creo que eso con la muerte de mi hermano viene a ser un gran remezón, yo no pude vivir la muerte de mi hermano acá, yo estaba fuera de Chile, y recién vuelvo a finales del año 87. Yo viví un duelo muy, muy difícil, porque no estuve y no pude estar acompañando a mi mamá, a mi hermano. Mi papá tampoco pudo porque estaba preso y tampoco le permitieron asistir en esos momentos (silencio) Así que eso costó hartito, eso fue,... eso fue fuerte. Además porque la familia no se volvió a juntar, completamente, hasta el año 91.

¿Hasta que salió tu papá?

Claro, y llegó mi hermano de afuera. Porque mi hermano estuvo en el funeral y enseguida sale. Sale de Chile, entonces, nos volvemos a reencontrar los cuatro, el año 91. O sea, nunca estuvimos los cuatro en el momento en que mi hermano muere. Entonces esa cosa fue como super fuerte, o sea. Es la experiencia más fuerte que yo he vivido en mi vida, digamos, en términos no solamente de, de, de, de esa, de lo que hace esa muerte cuando se lleva a alguien que tu tienes tan incorporado, digamos, a

su presencia, a tu vida digamos, sino que además de eso, el hecho de que la familia andaba separada, andaba dispersa, y con ninguna posibilidad de reencontrarse, la impotencia que genera el estar kilómetros fuera, y no poder volver a darle un abrazo a tus viejos. Eso ha sido un camino bien doloroso, que, que, que yo creo que mi papá no ha podido aprender a vivir con eso. No ha aprendido a vivir con ese dolor tan fuerte, y hoy día, gran parte de las dificultades que el tiene, son producto de esa pena enorme que el no fue capaz de ser aminorada por nada (*silencio*). Ahí hemos tratado de seguir cada uno en lo suyo aportando, porque en realidad con mi mamá nos hemos quedado como militantes, como participantes activas, de mover las cosas, unas veces con reparos, con enojos, con desencuentros con nuestra gente, pero mi hermano, y mi papi, han optado por hacer sus vidas al margen de la actividad política, y yo creo que eso, además de no ayudarlos en nada, no les ha permitido, avanzar en superar y aprender a vivir con ese dolor... pero bueno igual estamos juntos y yo creo que eso puede cambiar...

2. Interview passages included in Chapter IV

2.1 Margarita

a) pp. 215 - 216

¿Y participó en actividades de mujeres en las calles?

En el Sol y también en la marcha de los cacerolazos. Ahí también me pegaron ahora que me acuerdo. Los pacos nos persiguieron con las lumas... claro... ahí había de todo, había gente de la democracia cristiana, muchas, señoras muy elegantes y gente de derecha de todas las clases sociales. Mira, no hablemos de derecha sino de personas que no querían que siguiera Allende porque Allende nos estaba llevando a la ruina. Si hubiera sido como Lagos no habría pasado nada. No hablemos de Aylwin porque dejó puras cagás... perdón... no dejó el país en buen nivel. En cambio, Pinochet dejó la deuda externa cancelada y entró toda la gente que ahora está en el gobierno y tratan tan mal a Pinochet... y yo a Pinochet, haga lo que haga, hizo lo que hizo, yo siempre le voy a dar las gracias. Siempre voy a ser una mujer agradecida, porque si no se hubiera puesto los pantalones, habríamos terminado... te digo que mal, este país habría terminado mal. Porque si ya había odio en esa época, imagínate si hubiera seguido el mismo cuento y el mismo cuento, habría sido peor.

¿Tú crees que las mujeres jugaron un papel importante?

Indudable, indudablemente. Mientras los hombres estaban en sus oficinas cagados de susto, nosotros estábamos revolviendo el gallinero en el supermercado para poder tener más comida, porque las JAP no nos daba comida, y como te digo, era gente muy emperifollada... y la mujer empezó a sublevar al marido, sobre todo las mujeres de los uniformados... yo me acuerdo haber estado con la señora de un ... ex presidente de la república, poniéndole granos de maíz a los milicos en el hospital militar.

¿Granos de maíz? ¿Por qué?

Porque eran gallinas.

¿Gallinas?

Cobardes, cobardes...

Nunca había escuchado sobre Sol antes..qué era?

Un grupo de mujeres que hacíamos cosas porque las cosas en este país andaban muy mal...participábamos con el Poder Femenino...

¿Por qué SOL?

Solidaridad, Orden y Libertad

¿Y los hombres no participaban?

¡No! ¡Nada! ¿No te digo que ellos estaban en sus oficinas y nosotros estábamos hueveando? Y era como una forma de pirámide así, entonces, a la dos de arriba se le ocurría alguna lesera y empezaban todas a llamarse por teléfono...Me acuerdo de haber ido a la casa de una señora muy high en Vitacura, ella demócratacristiana, y el marido, que fue ministro de Frei... la reunión era hasta las diez porque después de la diez llegaba el marido. Está clarito, ¿no?

¿Se negaban a participar, o...?

No, no pescaban. Claro, después empezó la chimuchina y vieron que salíamos... al principio éramos pocas las locas que andábamos sueltas, y se empezaron a plegar más y más, habían nanas, empleadas domésticas que nos seguían, "señora, cuando hay una reunión, avíseme", empleadas domésticas, gente humilde, y la gente cree que en la derecha son toda gente rica, pero no, mentira, hay gente humilde también. Yo me acuerdo para las cacerolas haber estado con dos nanas cuidándolas... claro, preferí que me pegaran a mí y no a ellas, cuando se me tiraron los pacos encima y la gente del MIR encima. Y todas esas cuestiones se hacían en las casas de estas mujeres, y como te digo, una de ellas fue señora de un presidente de la república.

2.2 Rosita

a) pp. 221 - 223

¿Como se fue involucrando en política?

Durante la Unidad Popular mi hijo mayor estaba en la Universidad y mi esposo trabajaba en un banco. Durante esos años una de mis hijas se casó... y todo fue muy traumático para todos, porque el gobierno de la Unidad Popular intervino el banco, entonces mi marido tuvo que dejar el país he irse a Argentina a trabajar a una organización financiera, o algo así, y él viajaba todo los fines de semana para estar con nosotros, y yo me quedaba el resto de la semana sola con mis niños, entonces mi hijo mayor estaba haciendo la práctica profesional en la CORFO... El no era un tipo de izquierda, pero él estaba con la UP, y mi tercer hijo, él era joven, el paliaba con los estudiantes contra el gobierno... entonces dentro de mi casa yo tenía las dos fuerzas... pero entre ellos, ellos nunca pelearon, porque ellos eran muy cercanos entre ellos... pero ambos eran cabeza dura...entonces te puedes imaginar lo mucho que sufrí con esta situación y con mi esposo lejos en Argentina. Especialmente yo sufría con el más joven, porque él no era violento, pero...pero siempre estaba en peligro...ellos buscaban a ese hijo mío... entonces yo creo que ese fue mi primer contacto con la política...

¿Y qué pasa?

Tuvimos que pedirle a los militares que hicieran algo...sabías por ejemplo que mi esposo me traía desde fuera del país, pasta de dientes, papel confort, aceite,... de todo, porque aquí en Chile no podías encontrar nada... entonces había una gran desorganización, algo muy malo... entonces todos nosotros estuvimos de cuerdo en que los militares tenían que salir y poner orden... Porque tu te puedes imaginar haciendo una larga, larga cola para comprar medio litro de aceite, y cuando te llegaba tu turno alguien te decía 'ok' se acabó... váyanse... entonces tu simplemente llorabas... porque no tenías comida... entonces nos sentíamos inseguros, no sólo nosotros, en el barrio, con otras mujeres pusimos campanas en la puerta, en caso que le fuera a ocurrir algo a alguna de nosotras, podíamos hacer sonar la campana... en otra ocasión, por ejemplo, mi hijo mayor que se había ido a vivir a La Florida, estaba enfermo, y yo fui a verlo con mi hermana en auto, y dos tipos jóvenes nos pararon y tuvimos que bajarnos del auto y estar un buen rato con las manos en alto, y nos dijeron '¿Qué mierda andan haciendo aquí viejas momias?... entonces ¿por qué? ¿Por qué? Nosotras no habíamos hecho nada... por qué... no lo sé...

¿Por qué las llamaron 'viejas momias'?

No lo sé... talvez porque nosotras íbamos en auto... yo creo que fue una cuestión de clase... porque la gente estaba completamente alzada... en realidad no sé que andaban buscando... Fue horrible especialmente porque estaba sin mi esposo... los trabajadores estaban muy alzados... por ejemplo mi jardinero, que trabajaba en mi casa hacia más de treinta años... me dijo un día 'no se preocupe señora Rosita, porque esta casa donde usted vive va ha ser mía... y yo no la voy a echar, usted se puede quedar aquí, yo le voy a dejar una pieza [largo silencio]... ves... eso pasaba porque la esta pobre gente le mentían, le prometían cosas [la UP]... yo recuerdo que el gobierno le dio a los más pobres unas tarjetas, no me acuerdo como se llamaban, eran para conseguir comida...mantequilla, carne, cosas así... y mi jardinero me daba la mitad de su ración...entonces el era bueno... el me decía 'no se preocupe, yo pedí que me dieran esta casa'. Porque ellos le preguntaban a la gente donde quería vivir... como los engañaban... ¿por qué? ¿Por qué ellos hicieron eso?

¿Qué paso con su jardinero después de la UP?

El continuó trabajando conmigo hasta que murió. Yo lo enterré e incluso a veces todavía veo a su esposa. Yo los ayude a comprarse una casa después del pronunciamiento militar. Entonces la gente que estaba con Allende era porque estaban engañados, ellos prometían y prometían... entonces la gente se alzó... pero después se dieron cuenta de que solo eran promesas... Todos queríamos que Chile volviera hacer lo que era, porque esos tres años fueron un desastre, un caos... no quiero recordar...

2.3 Virginia

a) pp. 227 – 228

¿Cómo fue que se involucró en política?

Yo nací en una familia de derecha, todos, mis tías, mis tíos, mi sobrinas y sobrinos todos ellos eran de derecha... entonces yo crecí con eso... por ejemplo, para nosotros Jorge Alessandri era como mi abuelo, entonces... yo participé en 'Patria y Libertad'...por el país... por todas esas cosas que el país estaba sufriendo... porque nosotros no podíamos hablar, no podíamos decir 'esta es mi voz, escuchenme'... tengo que decir que yo he sido muy valiente, porque yo trabaje en una empresa por 17 años y yo llegué a trabajar ahí cuando yo tenía 16 años, y ahí habíamos solo tres que éramos de derecha, entonces te puedes imaginar lo duro que fue. Durante la UP cuando el resto de los trabajadores salió a la calle a apoyar a Allende, yo me quede en la fábrica con mi jefe, defendiendo lo que era nuestro... Porque ahí siempre tuve un buen trabajo, porque el patrón siempre nos protegió, el siempre se preocupó de mantenernos con un trabajo... entonces cuando Pinochet tomo el poder uno de mis compañeros me dijo 'Virginia estamos cagados', yo lo miré y le dije 'No, no ganamos'... yo siempre los enfrenté, yo fui siempre muy valiente,... mi padre me enseñó a luchar por lo que yo quería y por mis ideales... entonces a mi no me gusta esa gente que por ejemplo dice 'yo he cambiado, ahora yo estoy aquí, no estoy más allá', 'ahora no me gusta esto', cosas así... porque las personas con convicción no cambian,... mi convicción es con los valores de la derecha... siempre... porque yo nunca voy a cambiar...

¿Podrías describir esos valores?

Tranquilidad,... tranquilidad, orden, oportunidades, ser una mejor persona, una mejor esposa, una mejor mujer, ser responsable, también un montón de oportunidades, porque para mi la derecha siempre ha representado la prosperidad... entonces ellos siempre me molestaban y me preguntaban dónde estaba mi fundo, mis tierras... porque la gente piensa que sólo la gente rica es de derecha... y eso no es cierto... porque yo vengo de la derecha y mi tierra no es más grande que ésta sala... entonces para mi la militancia se relaciona con el trabajo social, ayudar a la gente, resolver problemas concretos,...por ejemplo yo trabajé en la campaña de este alcalde, aquí en 'Estación Central', y yo tengo una fotografía grande de él en mi oficina... él es mi alcalde, yo soy una persona de confianza para él. También trabajo en una junta de vecinos y también con ancianos... en el periodo de la UP, yo arrendaba una pequeña pieza en una casa vieja en la Estación Central, y en toda la casa yo era la única que era de derecha, y cuando la JAP dio entregó las tarjetas para conseguir comida, ellos no me dieron una a mi... ¿por qué, ¿por qué? Porque en su opinión ¿yo no tenía derecho a comer?... pero nunca pasé hambre y siempre encontré una forma de tener comida... nunca me di por vencida, nunca me sentí asustada, incluso mi casa estaba marcada. Muchas veces me dijeron que me iban a matar, que yo estaba en la lista negra que ellos tenían, pero nunca me asusté porque mi hijo estaba con mi mamá, entonces les dije, bueno, si ustedes quieren matarme háganlo, pero yo no voy a cambiar... imagínate, hoy yo tengo 62 años, una mujer vieja, y todavía me levanto a las seis de la mañana, me ducho y voy a trabajar, aún tengo energías y nunca he estado asustada...

¿Qué representa la UP para usted?

Sin duda no los valores chilenos. Esa gente siempre trabajó para ellos, para sus propios intereses, no para el de todos los chilenos... resentimiento, resentimiento social, porque yo también he sido pobre, pero he vivido mi pobreza con dignidad. Tú puedes estar mejor si trabajas más duro. No necesitas ver cuánto más ganan las otras personas, porque no es su culpa. O tú asumes tu pobreza o siempre vas a vivir con resentimientos que les vas a pasar a tus hijos y nietos. Un día yo estaba en una concentración y alguien me gritó vieja momia, y yo le dije si, gracias, yo estoy muy orgullosa por eso. Yo dije eso porque eso hace la diferencia entre esta gente maleducada y yo, porque yo pensaba que la mayoría de los chilenos querían vivir en paz, en tranquilidad, con dignidad, en los lugares donde tenían oportunidad de vivir... fue toda esa basura sobre la lucha de clases en donde empezó este holocausto. No me gusta esa historia, no me gusta esa historia para mis hijos. Yo no quiero más bombas, no quiero más peleas, no más rabia, no más interrupciones en nuestros trabajos por esta o aquella reunión, porque si tú decías que no ellos podían echarse... entonces eso era agotador para todos, entonces... ¿qué lucha de clases? Yo estaba harta de toda esa mierda, yo sólo quería cuidar a mi familia, trabajar en paz, vivir en paz, comprar normalmente... ¿puedes imaginarte por ejemplo que si tú querías comprar por ejemplo comida con una de estas famosas tarjetas que te daba la JAP pero tú no podías decidir, por ejemplo, si en tu familia habían cinco personas y tú querías comprar un pollo, ellos podían decirte no, un pollo entero es mucho, la mitad es suficiente. ¿Puedes imaginar? ¿por qué?, ¿por qué ellos tenían que decidir por nosotros? Eso no está bien, si tú trabajas duro para darle a tu familia lo mejor que tú puedes es tu derecho comprar lo que tú quieras, porque tú te ganaste ese dinero y es para tu gente. Entonces ¿ves? por qué alguien tiene que decirte qué es lo

que tienes que comer y cuánto. Esas cosas eran las que me volvían loca, una aberración... eso no es libertad, no es un país libre... Entonces yo estaba enojada, no asustada, estaba muy enojada. Es verdad que nosotros llamamos a los militares, nosotros lo hicimos, por supuesto que lo hicimos.

2.4 Cristina

a) pp. 234 – 235

... ellos se juntaban... de hecho tenían un grupo que se llamaba Angela Davis, y ese grupo organizaba diversas actividades para los niños...y nosotros éramos los niños. Yo tenía alrededor de siete u ocho años y ellos nos organizaban actividades como... actividades recreativas, de juegos, de regalos para la Navidad, y nosotros acompañarlos mucho a los trabajos voluntarios dentro del sector... de limpiar calles, de pintar árboles... entonces el vínculo con ellos para mí fue bastante importante de verlos actuar, de participar con ellos en las reuniones... y yo siendo niña. ...[...] y yo me acuerdo haber tenido cierta afinidad con... especialmente con las chiquillas. Como cierta cercanía, como cariño, me querían mucho... así como la chiquitita del grupo, me decían “venga para acá cariñito”, yo me sentaba en sus piernas y disfrutaba mucho de las cosas que ellos hacían. Entonces me da la impresión de que el primer vínculo que yo tengo como con el tema político tiene que ver con una organización con sentido más de comunidad y eso cambia brutalmente y drásticamente con... el 11 de setiembre del 73, porque muchos de los participaban en ese grupo fueron detenidos, otros muertos y otros desaparecidos, entonces... fue brutal, recuerdo que los lugares fueron allanados, las casas...

Mmm si...

Después cuando me convertí en adolescente de 14 o 15 años mas o menos, fuí poniendo atención a las noticias, de lo que ocurría... Supe que ciertos grupos hacían cosas, los llamaban terroristas... bueno primero eran los extremistas, que no era un término tan violento, pero que para quiénes nos sentíamos distintos, cómo que reflejaba una cierto reconocimiento, o sea como que estaba bien puesto el nombre (risas). Siempre tuve la sensación además, que las cosas mientras fuesen catalogadas de la manera más negativa, para mí se hacían más positivas, más aceptadas, más posibles, o sea, que adquirirían más sentido. Tampoco nunca creí mucho... y eso sin mayores conocimientos, nunca nunca tuve afinidad con el discurso oficial. Nunca creí esto de la bondad, ... ni del bien común para todo. En aquella época yo recuerdo especialmente los talleres del CEMA Chile, por ejemplo. En mi población sí se instaló CEMA y habían mujeres que participaban, y era un discurso de la familia, de lo que hermosa que es, de la familia como la cosa más maravillosa y protectora e... intocable en términos de valores... y eso contrastaba absolutamente con la realidad o sea, tu veías familias que también eran agresivas, que golpeaban, que trataba mal, que tenían sus conflictos, que no era una familia que quisiese mucho a los hijos tampoco... entonces era absolutamente opuesto. Así todo lo que apareciera como valorado por los milicos, en términos negativos, indicaba para mí algo positivo, lo contrario que ellos valoraban. Y fue en ese mismo contexto que... yo me acuerdo de haber visto en el diario por ejemplo, ... acciones hechas por el MIR, y yo haber preguntado a mí mamá y ella haberse quedado sin respuesta, así como ella tampoco juzgando ni tampoco descalificando ese tipo de... de actuar.

¿Haberle preguntado qué...?

Haberle preguntado directamente, o sea, “mamá mira”, de haberle mostrado el diario y haber visto es tipo de titulares, que llegaban a impresionar, como... “triple asalto a banco realizado por el MIR”, o sea era una cosa como impresionante, heroica... o sea, tres bancos a la vez, entonces, mi mamá... tampoco muy categórica en términos de querer reprobar eso. Y por otra parte, mi mamá muy recelosa de cierto sector de mujeres, a pesar de ser una mujer bastante... o sea pobladora y todo, ella tenía bien claro digamos que eso de la familia era mentira, y a pesar de que en algún momento participó en el CEMA fue para ver que alternativas de sobrevivencia ofrecía... o para ver si podía desarrollar alguna actividad que le permitiera generar algún tipo de recursos... coser por ejemplo... que en esa época eran los cursos que impartía CEMA,... me acuerdo haber visto a mi mamá participar, pero ella no creyéndose el discurso, ni haciéndose parte mucho de lo que era ese discurso.

b) pp. 237 - 238

Empecé a trabajar desde la comunidad cristiana, en colonias urbanas con niños y comencé a conectarme con estados de pobreza bastantes extremos... el drama de los campamentos... y en realidad era bastante duro, para ellos y para nosotros. Sortear, por ejemplo, las horas de hambre... y recuerdo el barro y mucho frío y los cabros chicos sin zapatos y todas esas cosas bien tristes, yo las viví ahí con ellos, y eso como que alimentaba mucho más las ganas de querer rebelarnos, porque era eso en el fondo. Pero también recuerdo esa época como súper bonita para mí, porque era trabajar con niños, los niños llegaban a mi casa... y yo salía todos los fines de semana, todos los sábados estábamos en el campamento, porque al comienzo las colonias urbanas fueron concebidas sólo como dos semanas de trabajo dentro de las vacaciones, pero la ONG en la que yo participaba sintió la necesidad de extender ese periodo. Entonces creó unos talleres de recreación infantil, entonces a estos talleres iban todos los fines de semanas un grupo de cabros chicos y adolescentes, y trabajábamos con los niños apoyándolos en sus tareas del colegio, entonces nos dividíamos los niños, porque eran muchos niños, yo tenía a mi cargo, el de los más chiquititos, el de los 7 años y trabajaba con ellos sus tareas Pintábamos, les enseñaba a sumar, , a leer, y mi grupito era mi grupito, mis niños eran mis niños o sea, todos los sábados nos veíamos, entonces yo empecé a establecer vínculos afectivos tremendamente importantes con ellos, yo era la tía, la tía Valentina, “tía hagamos esto” o “tía podemos juguemos”, y jugábamos mucho, entonces era apoyarlos en el colegio, pero además jugar y por las noches, en días de protesta los niños ayudaban a los tíos a organizar la protesta, ellos también participaban de esas cosas. Bueno, un día, como más o menos el 84, 85 ese campamento, lo sacan, los milicos lo erradican, llegan y desperdigan a todos por todos lados, lugares extremos, lugares súper lejanos, y nunca más nos vemos... Eso fue un golpe... el segundo golpe. Por lo menos para mí terrible, porque nunca más veo a mis niños, imagínate un año vinculados con ellos, fue súper doloroso, porque igual yo tengo un vínculo con los cabros chicos súper fuerte, súper fuerte... eso me da mucha pena. (llora un momento) ... Yo viví eso como un gran segundo golpe, un golpe donde más dolía... Yo creo que los cabros chicos me marcaron, mucho, porque llegaban con sus hermanitos más chicos y nosotros teníamos la posibilidad además de darles una leche y un pan con queso, para ellos era... puta... feliz, imagínate,... y luego se los llevan, los separan y no puedo verlos nunca más... entonces fue... como el minuto en

que ya... no había más que hacer, o sea, quedaba sólo la militancia, sólo una militancia bastante más radical, no una militancia para negociar en los términos actuales, sino una... mucho más decidida, mucho más... Porque en esa época, en general, el grupo que participábamos con los niños en las colonias, todos fuimos derivando a las militancias políticas, todos, y todos a la vez además, súper radicalizados, o sea, no había puntos intermedios, y de verdad no habían, era gente que estaba principalmente en el MIR y... comunistas... Así que en realidad después que ya no es posible continuar con el trabajo con los niños, decido dedicarme cien por ciento a la militancia.

c) pp. 239 - 240

De lo otro que yo me acuerdo, que también influyó al militar en el MIR, de la forma en que lo hice, se relaciona con los juegos de mi infancia, donde no se diferenciaban mucho los juegos de niños o de niñas. O sea, entre querer jugar a los pistoleros, que era uno de los juegos recurrentes, o jugar a las bolitas, de querer tener un trompo, de andar encaramado en los techos, en las rejas, de andar a pata pelada en la calle, jugar con agua, todos eran juegos en los cuales no había diferencia entre hombres y mujeres. Sobre todo después de la hora de la 'once' salíamos todos a la calle y jugábamos a lo que fuera... mucho juego de pelota, los hombres se sumaban al juego de saltar y nos enseñaban a jugar a la payaya, con piedras, que era un juego como súper entretenido... entonces como que eso también me permitió a mí no hacer mucha distinciones de lo que era el juego femenino y el juego masculino, no fue por lo menos mi experiencia. Y por otro lado, yo también con mucha destreza física, o sea, para todo, muy pelusota, muy arriesgada, eh... muy loca en términos así de no tener una restricción para jugar con ellos. Entonces, después claro ya no era un juego, pero me sentía como una igual.

¿Te acuerdas la primera vez que tomaste un arma?

sí, fue terrible... no sé si el concepto de terrible grafica lo que sentí, pero es curioso porque es como una especie de atracción, de atracción fuerte y... como mucha importancia... uno se siente importante... eh... también sentir que entrabas a un momento de igualdad de condiciones con los milicos, o sea... porque cuando ellos atacaban, te atacaban con armas y entonces ahora tu sentías que tú ibas a atacar e ibas a atacar con armas, para mí era eso.

d) pp. 242 - 243

De todas las cosas que hice y en las cuales participé no me arrepiento porque yo estaba convencida de que el enfrentamiento armado era la única solución a lo que estábamos viviendo. Pero eso sí, me da vergüenza recordar cuando estuve presa y me encontré con muchas mujeres, presas políticas igual que yo, en algún minuto fuimos como 52, y yo creo que nadie era tan mala como yo, en el sentido de hacer tantas huevadas.

Mala?... como mala?

En el sentido de hacer huevadas, de poner bombas. Haber puesto bombas en este país... yo recuerdo haber puesto... no sé cuantas... volando torres de alta tensión, volando líneas de tren, me debo haber volado más de dos kilómetros de línea de tren (risa) y vamos poniendo bombas, de andar hueveando, de andar con fierro, de andar con subametralladora, y tantas veces...

2.4 Erika

a) pp. 244 – 246

¿Como fue que te decidiste a pasar a militar clandestinamente?

No lo sé realmente, yo creo que Juan Carlos me ayudó a definirme finalmente, pero la inquietud venía de antes... además nosotros nos habíamos formado mucho en toda la cosa social, yo creo que había un proyecto de vida juntos que ahí terminó de elaborarse e influyó en esta decisión de... de militar más activamente, que era un compromiso en realidad, porque yo nunca quise militar... y en esa decisión yo creo que fue decidir mi compañero, nuestro proyecto de vida juntos, si no, a lo mejor hubiera seguido ayudando o haciendo cosas así... entonces pasamos juntos a la clandestinidad...

...y ¿Alguna vez te lo cuestionaste?

Sí, cuando me dijeron “tú te vas a la estructura militar, entonces yo dije “yo no soy capaz de matar a nadie”, yo me acuerdo que dije eso, entonces lo conversé con Juan Carlos, le dije “sabes yo no creo que sirva, porque yo no puedo andar con una arma y andar haciendo asaltos”, no sé... pero bueno entonces el me dijo que se suponía que yo era de apoyo, que yo no iba a ser la mujer metralleta ni mucho menos, que yo era de apoyo, era de sanidad, tenía que hacer una estructura de sanidad, o sea, yo iba a salvar vidas en el fondo... , eso como que me tranquilizó, porque yo no me veía con un arma matando a un paco, eso me producía una contradicción interna. Al final hice ambas cosas, salve vidas, pero también participé en ataques...quizás lo peor fue que mi compañero cae mucho antes de que yo cayera presa en un enfrentamiento. El cayó en el 79 y yo duré unos años más en la clandestinidad, y ahí un tiempo después yo tuve otro compañero, y cuando matan a mi segundo compañero, ahí yo caigo presa, en ese evento...Es raro, pero yo te puedo decir que Juan Carlos es el amor de mi vida, el más importante, junto con el que tengo ahora, tuve otras relaciones importantes pero no tan fuertes como con Juan Carlos... me acuerdo de ir caminando [después de la muerte de su pareja] al punto acordado para recibir mis ordenes,... y pensaba “a dónde cresta voy así”, y era que no podía llorar, no podía llegar llorando al lugar, llorando no, no corresponde a un militante,... no sé si yo me lo exigía o había una cosa tácita, no sé. Y después, con la segunda pérdida, la de mi segundo compañero, ahí caigo en la cárcel y fui muy acogida por mis compañeras, y yo creo que eso me ayudó mucho a pasar por el duelo. Yo lloraba y lloraba, y lloraba... era un llanto acumulado...

¿Acumulado...?

Por las muertes... por la muerte de Juan Carlos. En esa época yo encontraba que las relaciones burguesas eran últimas, las encontraba terribles, como la típica cuestión burguesa de hacer cuestiones escondidas... yo no tenía ningún problema en no casarme, y la cuestión de los hijos... yo no me atreví nunca a tener hijos, yo no me atreví nunca a tener hijos mientras estuviera militando en esas condiciones...Yo me cuidé y después, cuando quise tener no pude, pero en ese tiempo yo me cuidé, no me atrevía a tener hijos, porque yo me imaginé que de tener un hijo iba a tener que regresar a la casa de mi mamá, porque no me imaginaba con una guagua en la clandestinidad.

¿Y esta decisión, no fue dolorosa?

Yo nunca sentí la necesidad imperiosa de tener hijos, hasta cuando me embarqué ahora último. Vicente [su actual pareja] me plantea la cuestión de tener hijos, y yo dije, "sí, ya, podría ser", y cuando empezamos el proyecto ahí yo me empecé a entusiasmar, y bueno, me embarqué varias veces y todas fueron perdidas, y qué sé yo, fue como súper triste, pero... pero quizás por el hecho de no tener hijos... ya como que ni siquiera era una cosa... no sé... Ha sido difícil... pero también ha sido un descubrimiento que me ha costado como diez años, o sea... o encontrar que es súper importante la relación de pareja, porque antes la relación de pareja era instrumental al proyecto, aunque estuvieras enamorada hasta las patas... si el día de mañana tu compañero te decía, "ya, sabes qué, nos tenemos que separar porque el partido me dice que me tengo ir a China, y tú no puedes ir a China", puta, yo lo sufriré, pero bueno... se suponía que la relación de pareja no era lo que centraba tu vida... Y de repente, en este último tiempo asumí que sí, que quiero que mi pareja sea una de las cosas... quizá la más importante de mi vida, y eso le da un contenido distinto... de aceptar que yo lo quiero así, y que no es malo que yo lo quiera así, y que no es pequeño burgués o que me van a criticar, sino que yo lo asumo así, y lo quiero así, y tengo que... no sé, como que yo empezar a llenarme de estos contenidos que antes eran los contenidos que estaban mal vistos por la imposición moral partidaria. O sea, tienes que hacerte una nueva moral, una cosa valórica tuya... ahora es mía, con todos los defectos que tenga.

b) p. 248

Y fue una cosa súper linda porque él no estaba enojado con su padre, así como... "el huevón que me abandonó", porque él no conoció a su papá, pero él no tiene ese sentimiento... yo creo que también ahí uno va completando estos duelos... se parece cualquier cantidad a él, él era igual como cuando yo conocí a Juan Carlos, era una cosa tan rara... pero súper lindo... fue súper hermoso encontrarme con él, se llama Andrés... Ahora siento como que lo tengo otra vez... o sea, igual yo estoy enamorada de mi actual pareja, pero...

...Que fuerte experiencia ¿no?

¿Encontrarse con su hijo? Sí... pero hermoso.

3. Interview passages included in Chapter V

3.1 Danilo

a) p. 260 - 262

Entonces tú, gradualmente, te fuiste involucrando a través de tu hermano...

Bueno, en algún momento a mí me propusieron para ser parte de la Dirección Nacional del partido y yo acepté en el entendido que era por una urgencia, yo pensé "yo estoy aquí prestado, porque no había otra". Yo fui a la dirección nacional no porque haya sido un cuadro que se destacó en todos los frentes políticos militares... yo tenía mi experiencia de trabajo más bien político de masas y en el desbande del partido me cooptaron, y por eso llegué ahí, no porque ¡había sido un cuadro...! Pero después, yo con humildad, dije, "no, en realidad hay otros compañeros que tienen mayor capacidad, que están en mejores condiciones que yo para ser miembros de la dirección nacional". Y entonces ahí se eligieron a nueve personas, y yo no...yo no estuve entre ellas no quise... no sé quizás me equivoque en no aceptar...

Mmm ¿por que dices que te equivocaste?....

Porque, yo debería haber aceptado. No sé si habría cambiado mucho... no habría cambiado mucho el desenlace, pero... en realidad uno debería... yo... ahí... en realidad no dimensioné la importancia de esto que te estaba diciendo de que la política no es pura racionalidad, es afecto también, es ... cómo decirte... complicidad... que no alude solamente a una cuestión racional, ¿me entiendes? No es puro cálculo. Y yo en ese momento actué con cálculo. Yo dije, "aquí hay otros más viejos, que tienen mayor experiencia, que son mejores cuadros", "esos son cuadros"...y yo rechacé estar cuando quizás habría hecho un muy buen aporte... quizás las cosas habrían sido distintas

¿Por qué no te sentías un cuadro?

No sé, bueno básicamente porque no tenía una preparación en todos los aspectos, yo había desarrollado un trabajo de masas y político, pero no tenía la instrucción militar.

¿Tú no te considerabas un cuadro o el resto no te considerabas uno?

Ambas cosas... yo creo, ser un cuadro era parte de la cultura mirista también... Aunque, en estricto rigor, mira como son las cuestiones como anecdóticas, yo, hasta... para serte honesto yo no me sentía cuadro. La primera vez que me hizo como un clic, fue cuando uno de estos cuadros históricos me dijo, "pero si tú eres un cuadro del partido...". "¿Yo soy un cuadro del partido?", me quedaba pensando, "yo no soy un cuadro, yo soy un militante, yo no soy un cuadro...". Te lo digo porque, en realidad, a lo mejor había... yo creo que era parte de mi generación porque para nosotros había una referencia del cuadro... esos tremendos cuadros que habían habido en el MIR antes de nosotros. ¿Quién iba a ponerse al lado de... no pongamos a Miguel, pero de cualquier otro, de los que habían muerto...?

¿No era eso sobre valorar lo militar?

No, no, no. Yo, por lo menos... con las personas con que me tocó trabajar, y me alegro mucho de haber trabajado con esas personas, no lo creían así... bueno excepto algunos, pero era la minoría... que... sobre-valoraban lo

militar, y que consideraban central lo militar y todo ese tipo de cosas... O sea, era una parte integrante de la formación, era consustancial a la política, a la estrategia, etcétera, etcétera, pero no era excluyente, lo militar no era lo central. Tampoco... digamos... pensaba que era todo pura política. O sea, podrían haber tareas centrales que eran políticas, pero eso no significaba descuidar, preparar o pensar cómo ir desarrollando lo estratégico en términos militares, aunque no haya significado hacer guerrillas, pero sí ir construyendo una política militar. Y lo sigo pensando. Independientemente de que no siga creyendo en el leninismo y que en términos de mis fundamentos esté mucho más abierto, que me haya abierto de cabeza, yo creo que desde el punto de vista del poder el tema militar es central. Eso no significa que la conclusión sea que haya que hacer guerrillas, o grupos operativos, pero lo militar está presente porque es parte del poder, y hay que plantearse.

¿Mmm...Y esa parte militar era la que te faltaba para considerarte un verdadero cuadro?

Si, esa parte me faltaba, la otra la experiencia política la tenía, pero la militar me faltaba... y la propuesta del MIR implicaba ambas...sí...

3.2 Ana

a) p. 264

Yo creo que los miristas eran muy machistas. Yo creo que ellos... lo que pasa es que el discurso de la reivindicación femenina no estaba dentro del MIR. Era un grupo de vanguardia política, se decía, pero dentro de lo político los problemas de género no se consideraban. Las compañeras eran buenas militantes pero eran minas, esa era la impresión que me daba cuando hablaban ellos. Había una especie de superioridad masculina. Incluso más, yo creo que... yo creo que cuando empezó la pelea más dura Miguel quiso proteger a mi hermana y la hizo volver a Concepción, o sea, llevarla a la casa de los padres, ¿no?, un poco. Volverla al seno materno para ellos hacer la revolución. Con la Inés fue lo mismo, la hermana de él. Yo siento que, después mucho después... cuando él anduvo con la Carmen... ellos asumieron otra cosa, de permitir a sus compañeras ir junto a ellos pero... al comienzo la idea fue refugiarlas, alejarlas del peligro... "nosotros vamos a jugar a los bandidos, ustedes se quedan en la casa, protegidas".

b) pp. 268 - 269

En el fondo les transmitía cosas muy puritanas, porque... yo encuentro que la formación que tuvimos en el MIR era muy puritana, era de un puritanismo espantoso.

¿De adónde venía eso?, tú crees...

Bueno, vivíamos un mundo pre-neoliberal, primero. Yo creo que hay como una... un fundamento chileno, de la cultura chilena... que era muy sobria. Luego, yo creo que la dirigencia del MIR tenía mucho que ver con los masones. Miguel era de familia masónica, y don Edgardo y todos ellos eran de un rigor brutal. La Universidad de Concepción era masónica. Esto del dinero y del consumo... no existía. Yo no me acuerdo... seguramente muchos lo hacían, pero yo no me acuerdo que fuera bien visto fumar

marihuana por ejemplo... ¡Y eso que estábamos en los años 60, todo el mundo fumaba marihuana!. Eso no era de militante. No era bien visto que las chicas se acostaran así... fácilmente, a pesar de que estábamos en la era de la píldora. El MIR era muy riguroso en eso, muy riguroso. Yo encuentro que había una falta del sentido del placer brutal, que tiene que ver mucho con la cultura chilena. La cultura chilena es una cultura que le cuesta mucho el sentido del placer. Y lo siento así después de haber vivido muchos años en el Caribe, en donde los revolucionarios o intelectuales también saben bailar... Por eso te insisto, la formación del MIR era rigurosa, muy rigurosa. Muy terrible, muy así... había que ser un cuadro perfecto, o sea, era la perfección.

c) p. 285

Tengo la impresión que Miguel es una figura muy importante para el MIR...

Muy importante y emblemática. Porque el periodo de Miguel marcó al MIR de una determinada manera, después... empezó otra cosa. Cuando muere Miguel empiezan a cambiar las cosas. Él le daba una conducción muy fuerte... era muy líder, muy líder. Y te digo que para bien y para mal, porque siendo tan líder tampoco tenía mucho tiempo para ocuparse de las cosas de la vida cotidianas ni de los afectos.

3.3 José

a) pp. 269 - 271

Mira, esto viene de bien atrás, yo te voy a contar a grandes rasgos... mis situación infantil... yo vivía en un lugar... por acá cerca... mi papá era un muchacho joven, que se casó también joven... él trabajaba... él era un buscavida no más... la casa de nosotros, el departamento... era en rigor un taller. Él compraba máquinas de escribir y las arreglaba, y yo era su ayudante. Yo era el goma de él, realmente estaba para todo. Entonces, yo tuve una conciencia de trabajador desde muy chico...

¿... máquinas de escribir?

Sí, él arreglaba máquinas de escribir. Las compraba, las pintaba, las reconstruía, y las vendía después. Yo lo acompañaba a él a todas partes, entonces... suponte, en ese tiempo (se conocía) el molino San Cristóbal, la fundición Libertad, cuestiones donde fabricaban alimentos para aves... miles de lugares donde yo iba con él, como ayudante. Entonces tuve una relación con el mundo de los trabajadores de muy chico... y yo era trabajador además,... tuve el contacto con el interior de las fábricas. Era maravilloso eso. Claro, porque estaba mirando todo lo que era el trabajo, cómo cargaban la harina, cómo se hacía todo. Sin saber una gota de marxismo realmente estaba muy metido en la... bueno, mi papá no era de izquierda, para nada, al contrario, él actuaba como si fuera parte de los ricos. Como era rubio... es rubio, digamos, entonces, miraba a los otros como rotos. Siempre hablaba de los rotos, "los rotos...". Parece que él empezó... porque parece que el padre de él murió joven, entonces quedaron en mala situación... bueno, el asunto es que... desde chico yo me fui metiendo en la idea esta, porque... yo trataba de saber una cosa, qué era el mundo, qué era... qué era la noche.

¿...la noche?

Si, la vida nocturna... me gustaba más estar fuera de la casa y curiosear, porque además yo era rebelde, era rebelde porque mi papá era como para ser rebelde. Era un tipo muy muy violento.

¿Te pegaba?

Uh... a todos. A mi mamá, a mí... me sacaba la cresta... bueno, ahí... yo creo que ahí yo fui formando una conciencia social... como de clase. Yo me sentía pobre. Ahora, después, he mirado fotos y no... no tenía cara de pobre. No sé por qué me sentía pobre (*ríe*). Mi papá era arribista, tenía auto. Lo más importante era él y su auto. Tenía auto y nosotros con los zapatos rotos... (*ríe*). Yo me fui haciendo de izquierda solo, por la necesidad, digamos. A pesar de que tenía mezcolanza cristiana... tenía un primo cristiano... pero yo no le creía nada porque... se las daba de cristiano pero era un gallo que no le importaba nada de nadie. Pero a mí no, a mí me importaban los otros... buscaba amigos... y era amigo... me gustaba saber la vida de los otros... después me fui a vivir allá a Carrascal, y después... estuvimos dos años ahí y mi papá se consiguió una casa en Las Condes. No sé cómo lo logró pero nos fuimos a Las Condes. Pero ahí era un mundo totalmente distinto. Los tipos de Las Condes eran egoístas, individualistas, escondían los cigarrillos, levantaban las minas, mientras que los de Carrascal eran amigos, éramos súper unidos, éramos como una banda, andábamos abrazados así... íbamos a los restaurantes a escuchar en los butlitzer los últimos rocanroles y todo, Little Richard... además, yo cimarreaba mucho oye... iba al teatro Toesca... esa era una cuestión fabulosa, quedaba en Huérfanos con Teatinos. Todos los estudiantes iban, a las 11 empezaba la función... me acuerdo que ahí yo vi todo el realismo italiano, el neo-realismo... vi toda la nueva ola, habré visto películas... vi, por ejemplo, (Retos Múltiples), unas 20 veces. Pero lo curioso es que entrábamos, había una niña al lado... éramos hombres y mujeres, entre 14, 15 y 16 años, nos tomábamos la mano y empezábamos con los atraques, empezaban los besos sin conocernos ni nada...

¡...muy liberales...!

Liberal total... y antes de que la película terminara la niña pescaba el bolsón y se iba. Todo era en el anonimato. ¿Increíble?...Increíble. Era como un vicio ir para allá y ponerse a besar así... pero después no sabías quién era quién...Buenos tiempos. Otros tiempos que me acuerdo... unas tremendas guerras a peñascazos. Aquí en el cerro Santa Lucía, grupos de muchachos cimarreros de otros liceos se agarraban a peñascazos con nosotros, a patadas, era una violencia que... yo decía... cómo pelear a peñascazos, te rompes la cabeza... pero así nos íbamos haciendo hombres... igual a mi me costó, yo era violento también, por lo de mi papá supongo... al principio yo era tonto, pero después me fui haciendo fuerte a puñetes.

b) pp. 274 - 275

¿...Y que era el grupo América?

Ese fue un grupo que formamos cuando fui a la universidad, amigos, puros hombres, gallos que eran buenos pa'l hueveo, talleres, irónicos...Nos juntábamos en casas, éramos como 30, y tomábamos mucho, inventábamos poemas, y nos reíamos... Ahí, también empezaron los viajes a dedo, eso sí que fue fabuloso. Más o menos, como en esos mismos años, empezaron los viajes al norte. Era espectacular, realmente, porque ya en la

conciencia se me había formado... y bueno ahí estaba la clase obrera, Recabarren, las salitreras... Recorrimos todo Chile así, una cantidad de veces... a dedo, en camiones... tengo el recuerdo de estar en el desierto en la noche... fue una felicidad increíble... Imagínate estábamos entre el 64 y el 70, ahí se fue gestando lo que iba a ser la UP... además que la potencia de la izquierda obrera era muy grande, habían cuestiones estructuradas así... yo me acuerdo que llegué a una pensión en que me decían, "sí, hay piezas, pero con dos camas", y eso quería decir que iba a dormir otro ahí. Una vez me tocó un obrero viejo, y empezamos a conversar una noche, con una botella de vino, en la oscuridad. Y me empezó a contar todas las cosas... en fin... porque además de recorrer era conversar, conversar con este, con el otro, con el viejito... y yo caminaba y escribía, como me sentía poeta... veía imágenes como... ropas colgando... Chuquicamata... y pasaba, ponte tú, 10 días caminando...

¿mmm... y es en esa época que entras a militar?

Sí, no me acuerdo mucho como fue exactamente, pero sí que yo quería ser parte del movimiento popular, estar con los trabajadores, donde estaban los obreros, así que me metí al partido comunista... porque yo me había topado con gente del MIR... pero yo tenía una cuestión con el MIR que no me gustaba... en Filosofía, por ejemplo, eran puros pijes, como puros pijes... rebeldes sociales, rebeldes. Entonces, eran mijitos ricos y mijitas ricas, y todo... Era como una volada, como una volada así... "ay, que choro el Che, y todo eso", pero yo me consideraba... o sea, yo tenía orgullo de haber vivido las cosas... de tener las manos con trabajo. Yo miraba como estos huevones no entendían... También ahí como que se dividió el grupo América, porque algunos se fueron a militar al MIR y otros a la 'Jota'..."

c) pp. 276 - 277

¿mmm y no te costo acostumbrarte a militar? ...digo como te defines como un joven rebelde...?

Sí claro, me costó mucho, muchísimo y por eso nunca fui considerado como un militante serio... en realidad choqué al tiro... choqué porque a mí no me gustaba... y tampoco... obedecía a la cuestión del partido... por ejemplo cunado yo escuchaba "el partido dijo"... yo decía "¿quién será el partido?... como que hubiera alguien...", era como una iglesia. Y después me di cuenta de que no había democracia alguna dentro del partido, ninguna. Era una democracia muy rara... por eso yo prefería trabajar con la gente, con los pobladores, los trabajadores... Sí, porque era otra cosa. Yo los respetaba y los quería, y todo. No eran como estos otros burgueses... porque yo a estos cabros los encontraba pequeños burgueses también. C... C..., por ejemplo, uf, asqueroso pequeño burgués, ego. S..., que era muy buen dirigente y todo pero... un pequeño burgués... gallos que confundían su individualidad, su ego, con lo de dirigente. Pero no eran dirigentes, eran pequeños dictadores... entonces no... yo no estaba en esa... yo me juntaba con otra gente no con los que se las daban de 'dirigentes... A mí me gustaba vagabundear por ahí con los trabajadores, y me iba tomar chicha con ellos,... me acuerdo... entonces, el cabro que estaba por encima de mí en ese tiempo,... me dijo, "compañero, lo han visto que va a tomar chicha por ahí", "sí" le dije yo "...y qué,... yo hago lo que yo quiero"... además él se juntaba con pitucas, minas ricas,... así que nunca... me junté con él... Pero era así, en el pedagógico nos miraban a nosotros como (una escoria) porque éramos tomadores, hueveamos, íbamos a putas...

¿Un buen militante no podía ir de putas?...¿por qué?

¡No! ¿Estás loca?, ¡no!... eso estaba en los estatutos del partido...donde hablaba de los problemas de una vida licenciosa... por ejemplo... llegó una cabra preciosa a allá y un cabro parece que se acostó con ella, y lo llamaron al tiro para llamarle la atención...solo porque tuvo sexo...y me acuerdo que él le tomaba el pelo al interrogador y le decía, "compañero, ella es la que me sacó los pantalones", y ellos le decían "¡compañero, no venga a bromear a aquí!". Al final lo castigaron, pero duró poco... Había distintas formas de castigo si no cumplías, amonestación, suspensión de la militancia incluso expulsión. El cargo era esto, mira. "Compañero, una compañera nueva... usted no puede actuar como un burgués, usted no puede tratar de pinchar con ella, usted tiene que enseñarle, educarla". Bueno, en el MIR también era así. Un amigo de ahora, era jefe de no sé dónde por ahí, se puso a pololear con una campesina y se fue a vivir con ella, y lo echaron al tiro.

3.4 Heidi

a) p. 288

Jaime era una persona de tan altos principios que piensa tu que con el discurso que el estaba dando ante el senado contra la amnistía o indulto de los terroristas, él sabía perfectamente que eso le iba a costar la vida, y a pesar de eso lo hizo igual. Y efectivamente a la semana de dar su discurso lo asesinaron...lo que yo supe es que él incluso se dio cuenta de que estaban los asesinos afuera, pero consideró...para que veas tú lo que era él, consideró que era absolutamente ridículo llamar a la policía para que lo fueran a buscar y lo sacaran con guardaespaldas y todo... y no lo hizo por una cosa de humildad, porque considero feo hacer todo un escándalo frente a sus alumnos y colegas, y prefirió salir así desprotegido siendo que él ya había visto a los sujetos que lo estaban esperando... O sea él era un hombre que literalmente dio su vida por sus principios, católicos y políticos...

3.5 Virginia

a) pp. 289 - 290

Yo partí trabajando en la UDI, desde el comienzo, y lo que me marcó fue haber conocido a Jaime Guzmán...

¿por qué?

Porque Jaime Guzmán significa para mi todo, y su muerte fue una perdida muy grande. A parte de ser un líder político insuperable, era un apóstol, un apóstol con una humanidad insuperable e increíble, cristalino hasta decir basta, era un hombre espectacular...por ejemplo de repente el iba en su auto y veía a un señor con los zapatos rotos, él paraba el auto, se sacaba sus zapatos y los regalaba y llegaba a su casa sin zapatos, si... porque era así, de repente un chaleco, una chaqueta, si veía a alguien con frío, él se la sacaba en la calle la daba y llegaba a su casa sin nada, ese hombre era increíble, un apóstol, cristiano cien por ciento. Jaime era increíble, insuperable, irremplazable, porque el formó la UDI, el agrupó a la gente con el objetivo de servir a la sociedad, sin hacer diferencias porque para él los necesitados eran los necesitados, y si había que tenderle la mano a alguien

el la tendía sin importar quien fuera, incluso independientemente del color político o la religión, él no hacia preguntas, él servía no más, no como la gente de izquierda que siempre ayuda sólo a los suyos. Por eso yo creo que para los que conocimos a Jaime fue un gran ejemplo, un gran, gran ejemplo que se ha traducido en una forma de ser de la UDI, esta especie de vocación de servicio.

3.6 Isabel

a) pp. 299 - 301

Una vez en el exilio ¿sigues militando?

Sólo un tiempo corto, luego me margino...

¿Por qué?

Haber...mmm, yo creo que por tres razones, primero después del golpe hay una división muy grande dentro del partido socialista y eso me afecta mucho, segundo para mi se fue haciendo poco claro que sentido tenía militar estando tan lejos...mmm y tercero me influyó fuertemente los procesos sociales que habían en Alemania... por ejemplo los movimientos antinucleares, ecologistas, de apoyo a Latinoamérica y África,... en general todos estos movimientos se me hacen muy interesantes porque hacen una dura crítica a los partidos, críticas en el sentido de la falta de participación y horizontalidad en las formas de funcionar, también críticas respecto a como se desarrollaron los procesos en los países comunistas del Este, que de eso yo antes no sabía, no había tenido acceso a la información,... y bueno además entre las cosas que más me marcaron fueron los movimientos de mujeres. Entonces todos estos movimientos me hacen reflexionar y el partido se vuelve menos atractivo, porque me voy haciendo parte de esas críticas y entonces el estilo de militancia que yo había experimentado se me vuelve autoritario... Y entonces me voy haciendo cada vez mas militante de estos movimientos, por ejemplo yo trabajé bastante en el Movimiento de apoyo a Nicaragua y El Salvador y en grupos de mujeres... y ahí...eee... me hago feminista...

¿Feminista...?

Si, porque antes de llegar a Alemania yo no percibía ninguna diferencia de género dentro del partido o respecto de la militancia, pero después si que lo noto, porque empiezo a identificar las formas de marginación, cuestiones sexistas... pero mira, sabes lo que pasa, es que cuando una es dirigente mujer como cuando yo lo fui en Concepción a finales de los 60's, yo era muy requerida y posiblemente por eso yo no me sentía discriminada, porque de alguna manera compartía el espacio de poder con los hombres y yo no me daba cuenta de la discriminación, al contrario yo te diría que yo misma era bastante machista en mi mirada hacia las mujeres... encontraba que las mujeres hablaban puras leseras, que no tenían interés por lo político... no en Chile yo no me daba cuenta... yo me doy cuenta de la discriminación una vez que llego a Alemania...por ejemplo yo me doy cuenta que estas cercanía que tenía con los hombres del partido antes, tenían que ver con una cercanía al poder, porque yo era una de las pocas mujeres dirigentes... porque al interior del partido, la mayoría de las mujeres hacían labores completamente secundarias, o mejor dicho que se consideraban poco importantes cosas relacionadas con la organización y no las propiamente políticas, desde encargarse de los cafés hasta conseguirse las salas y

limpiarlas. En el fondo toda las cosas que de alguna manera era la prolongación de los roles sociales, entonces la parte del poder quedaba afuera... también recuerdo cosas bastante sexistas como la construcción de las mujeres como objeto, de mirarlas así como cosas... Ahora yo me hago feminista en Alemania, y lo hago desde los roles más tradicionales, porque yo salgo al exilio sola con mi hijo, entonces yo tenía que hacer todo sola... y cuando llega mi pareja que había estado presa en Chile, él casi no había estado con nuestro hijo, prácticamente no se conocían,... y en ese proceso él como que se quedo de observante y yo seguí haciendo todas las cosas, y yo sentía que a mi me molestaba eso, pero no sabía como plantearlo... y de repente mis amigas alemanas me hacían preguntas, que al principio yo no entendía mucho, pero que luego me hacían reflexionar y de apoco fui entendiendo... mira yo nunca me voy a olvidar de una situación en que a una compañera que era del MIR y a mi nos invitan a una reunión con mujeres alemanas, lo tengo muy gravado porque fue con traducción, y nos hacen preguntas como personales, de que hacíamos en nuestra vida cotidiana, cosas así, y yo estaba súper desconcertada, no entendía porque nos hacían ese tipo de preguntas. Después nos preguntan por los roles en la cultura Chilena, por las cosas que hacían las mujeres, las cosa que hacían los hombres, si había discriminación, cómo se había dado eso en la UP, etc.... Y yo respondía súper relajada como era, pero al mismo tiempo yo veía un cierto desencanto en sus ojos, aunque no entendía por qué, en realidad era como si ellas preguntaran una cosa y yo les respondía otra... y terminó la reunión y nunca entendí mucho que había pasado, hasta después de muchos años logro entender este desencuentro y desencanto, porque en el fondo estas mujeres se daban cuenta que nosotras no teníamos ninguna noción de los problemas específicos de las mujeres. Ellas nos preguntaban sobre esa situación específica y nosotros le hablábamos de otra, de los trabajadores del socialismo, no sé...

b) p. 303

Mmm Y esta transformación que vas experimentando se relaciona también con un cambio en tu vida, en términos personales

En mi caso es absolutamente así, porque antes todo estaba afuera en lo social, pero en el exilio yo descubro una suerte de proceso de individuación, lo que no significaba dejar de lado los procesos sociales, pero sí también considerar que mi espacio era importante, mi desarrollo era importante, mis relaciones con una pareja... porque de verdad todo eso yo no lo conocía, yo sólo tenía un desarrollo en lo social en lo colectivo, bueno porque además en ese tiempo todo lo que implicara una preocupación por lo individual era considerado como deformaciones burguesas, porque no cabía en la cabeza otra cosa...de hecho la primera vez que salí como de vacaciones porque me prestaron una casita, salí con una amiga 'mirista' y a ella casi la expulsaron, porque dijeron que era el colmo de lo egoísta y burguesas habernos ido a ocupar esa casa sin haberle avisado a nuestros respectivos partidos para haberla compartido con los demás...o sea... Y yo también sufrí que me miraran muy feo, porque de echo fui una de las primeras en rescatar y defender la idea de tomar vacaciones... ahora el tema era muy complicado porque se cruzaba con el tema de la culpa, porque claro nosotros exiliados tomando vacaciones, y el resto de los compañeros que se habían quedado estaban luchando, estaban detenidos o siendo torturados y claro yo venía y me iba de vacaciones... eso era muy complicado... no era fácil... ahora yo mas que pensarlo mucho, lo vivía no más, casi como una necesidad y como una rebeldía a toda esta cosa autoritaria del control del partido... ahora

también creo que se mezcla en parte con nuestra cultura católica de estar azotándose todo el día, la cosa del sufrimiento de la penitencia y de evitar el placer especialmente el de las mujeres y yo creo que esa cosa es muy fuerte.

3.7 Heidi

a) pp. 306- 307

Hace poco hubo elecciones, yo no tenía el menor interés en ser candidata porque en realidad mi trabajo de militante en la UDI era mucho más social y detrás de el escenario, sin mostrar la cara, en el trabajo de hormiga que tenía mucho más que ver con mi carácter, me acomodaba, además me encantaba y me agradaba el trabajo...pero al mismo tiempo, era mi turno para trabajar con el equipo de arriba, porque yo hacía la asesoría legal, y ellos se juntaban cada lunes, como 8 de ellos, y yo me quedaba sintiéndome llena de su espíritu, porque eran un gran grupo de personas, preocupados de hacer las cosas bien, interesados en cómo su trabajo beneficiaba al partido, no a sus imágenes individuales... Bueno, un día me llaman y me piden que vaya como candidata a diputado por Cerro Navia, me dicen que es uno de los distritos más difíciles, porque las posibilidades de ganar eran mínimas, pero igual se me pide porque claro había que presentar candidato, entonces era como un favor, porque nadie quería ir por ese distrito porque todos sabían que era perder el tiempo...pero como yo había estado trabajando con este grupo de gente, y observado la forma en que se entregaban, el esfuerzo, la dedicación...entonces por eso yo acepté y... y... y me entregué completamente estuve, como te digo, un año ahí, especialmente los últimos siete meses de campaña, ...que fue una cosa realmente bien dura, porque comenzábamos a las 9, 10 de la mañana en que íbamos de casa en casa presentándome y claro en algunas te tiraban escupo, en otras te hacen pasar, en otras te regalan queque, en otras no te abren la puerta, en otras te dicen ándate a 'Las Condes', en otra casa te dicen 'y tú rubia de ojos azules, que bienes hacer aquí, a esta población, anda a reírte de tu abuela... ¿entiendes?, no era fácil. Además había que ir a Centros de Madres, Juntas de Vecinos, Centros de Menores y entonces estabas todo el tiempo expuesto a todo tipo de preguntas, comentarios... y bueno uno respondía de la mejor forma posible.... Y yo creo que yo hice todo eso o mejor dicho la fuerza con la que yo enfrenté esta situación, tiene que ver con como yo había visto trabajar a este grupo y todo lo que yo había escuchado sobre Jaime Guzmán, sobre como el se entregaba...

mmm... ¿ y tú hiciste la campaña a pesar de que sabías que no ibas a ganar? ¿No te sentiste utilizada?

No, no me sentí utilizada. Yo lo hice como un favor, lo hice por el partido... Ahora igual la derrota fue terrible, para mi fue muy duro porque igual obtuve muchos más votos de los que pensamos que podía obtener y además me la jugué cien por ciento... Al comienzo era terrible porque soy muy tímida... recuerdo que una vez, yo había estado en esto como una semana más o menos, y un hombre me dijo 'quiero saber su opinión sobre tener una ley de divorcio'; bien le dije que pensaba esto y aquello... y entonces el dijo 'bien usted me ha dado una muy buena razón para no votar por usted', yo recuerdo que sentí como una bofetada en la cara, porque una no esta preparada para recibir comentarios tan fuertes,... porque yo no sé... yo pensaba 'qué le he hecho yo a este pobre hombre'...nada, sólo tenemos

diferentes ideas pero ¿por qué ser tan grosero? Un nivel de grosería que no te puedes imaginar, porque yo no sé... tu tocabas el timbre y una mujer casi que te amenazaba con un palo, gritándote 'ándate a tu barrio a Las Condes, ándate a la cresta'; entonces es como... o sea... ¿cuál es mi culpa en esto?... ahora cuando finalmente uno ve las dificultades de la gente... quiero decir yo nunca pensé que el dinero hace la felicidad, pero obviamente ayuda y cuando tú vez gente que vive bajo tales condiciones, eso es muy duro, entonces uno puede entender que de repente reaccionen de esa manera, muy duro para ti, y al final comienzas a pensar 'bueno que pena, es comprensible'... al principio me hacían sentir muy mal, pero bueno, era completamente comprensible...

b) p. 310

¿Crees que hay o hubo alguna diferencia en todo este proceso por el hecho de ser mujer?

Hacer campaña para una mujer puede ser más fácil, porque obviamente tu utilizas todo tipo de herramientas, herramientas que por ejemplo los hombres no pueden manejar, además son cosas que a uno se las dicen por ejemplo me decían 'mira tu tienes que ir todos los días vestida de una misma manera, de forma que la gente te ubique desde lejos y te reconozca por los colores de tu ropa... Además yo creo que la mujer tiene una cosa, no sé,.. a ratos resulta más atractiva, o también tiene más calidez,... entonces por un lado a los hombres les llamaba la atención la rubia... frente a eso obviamente no hay vuelta que darle,... y a las mujeres fíjate...es que yo soy una mujer como muy de abrazo y me sale del alma, porque me enternezco cuando veo gente que esta realmente pasándolo mal, entonces yo venía y les daba un abrazo bien apretado, y eso es algo que un hombre tampoco puede hacer, porque puede pasar que algunas personas piensen que se esta tirando al dulce o algo así, en cambio el abrazo de una mujer en ese contexto, es más maternal. Si, además la mujer como que es más llamativa, también tiene fama de ser super jugada, yo no sé hasta que punto los hombres lo son tanto. No sé, supongo que tanto las mujeres y los hombres pueden sacar provecho político de sus cualidades... Ahora yo creo que hacer campaña política es más fácil para una mujer, ahora otra cosa es una vez que estas adentro del sistema, porque claramente la política a nivel de la dirigencia sigue siendo muy masculino... en todo caso pienso que es muy normal porque hombres y mujeres son diferentes y tienen diferentes atributos...

c) pp. 311 - 312

...te insisto, no...o sea hay muchas formas de ayudar, y uno no va estar haciendo escándalo porque yo hice esto y entonces ahora espero que el partido me entregue esto otro, porque en el fondo esa actitud lo único que demuestra es que uno esta en el partido para su beneficio personal, y no para ayudar ¿me entiendes? Cuando uno va a ayudar uno no va a estar exigiendo, uno se entrega y punto

4. Interview passages included in Chapter VI

4.1 Mario

a) p. 318

Sólo tengo imágenes, así muy cinematográficas...tengo imágenes de esperar...como de yo caminando por la población... además de una población que eran casas y casas, una tras otra, y yo caminando por ahí... empezando a cachar recién la reacción de la gente con nosotros, gente con la que antes éramos amigos, hablábamos y se juntaban con nosotros, nos dejó de hablar. Íbamos a golpear las casas buscando los amigos con los cuales siempre jugábamos y decían 'no, no está'. Entonces empieza como una caza de brujas súper fuerte, o sea los grandes amigos de mi mamá y mi papá, no estuvieron, no estaban...

b) p. 318

Iba cagado de miedo, cagadísimo de miedo, porque además yo no tenía claro porqué mi papá estaba preso, no tenía claro si era inocente, tenía un enredo en la cabeza...y yo llego allá, donde mi papá estaba cavando un pozo,...entonces un milico me pregunta que estaba haciendo allá y yo le digo que venía a ver si la piscina estaba llena... entonces él me pregunta ¿quieres hablar con tu papá? ¿quieres verlo? ...entonces el milico ayuda a salir del pozo a mi papá, mi papá estaba lleno de tierra, y ahí estuve un minuto con él, no hablé, lo saludé, yo estaba cagado de miedo por eso te digo que no hablé nada y después me fui a la casa corriendo... yo tengo la sensación de haber tenido mucha vergüenza, de vergüenza de haber tenido un papá preso... eso tienen los pueblos chicos en este país, esa cosa importante de cuidar la imagen...es muy fuerte eso...

c) pp. 319 - 320

En términos afectivos el no volvió bien, nada en realidad volvió a estar bien. Nunca contó lo que paso en ese tiempo, tampoco si lo torturaron, no hablamos de eso, en realidad no hablamos de casi nada... Cuando mi papá vuelve, trata de trabajar en cualquier cosa, pone toda su energía en eso, pero todo le resulta mal. Y la que la que sostenía a la familia era mi mamá. Ahora, yo creo que él trata de establecer vínculos conmigo, pero... yo creo que yo rompí con mi padre inconcientemente, yo no hablé con mi padre, nunca más, dejé de hablar con él... mis hermanos que eran más grandes, siempre hablaban de lo genial que era la vida antes, de lo simpático, entretenido y calido que era mi papá, pero yo no me acordaba porque era muy chico, pero tampoco se restablece ese vinculo con mis hermanos...

Mmm y qué pasa?

...Empiezan a haber problemas, como que la vida familiar se corta, por ejemplo nadie se acuerda de los cumpleaños y casi todas las conversaciones familiares, a la hora de la comida por ejemplo, empiezan a girar en torno al dinero, a lo económico, se trabaja sábados, domingos, ya no hay más navidades...así... en el fondo como que todos aprendimos a trabajar y a negar todo lo emocional por el trabajo ¿me entiendes?...Porque al final mi papá y mi mamá van a vender en la feria...entonces el 80 % de los temas se van a relacionar con qué cosas se pueden vender, dónde vender, dónde hay ofertas, dónde es más barato... y bueno en el fondo nadie habla de lo que le pasaba, de lo que cada uno sentía... Y tiene que ver con, de alguna u otra forma con toda esta etapa de mi descubrimiento

homosexual, y todo el cuento... nadie hablaba... o sea habíamos vivido cosas súper fuertes como familia y nunca lo conversamos, nunca nadie dijo nada...

d) pp. 321 - 322

Sentías que no podías hablar de lo que te pasaba a ti...

Durante todos los años había tenido que callar que mi papá había estado preso, que era un preso político, en el colegio por ejemplo, ningún compañero sabía... pero también callar que cuando yo no estaba en el colegio estaba trabajando, que trabajaba los sábados y los domingos... aunque después eso estaba bien decirlo, porque como trabajaba, yo era de los que andaba con más plata en el bolsillo... entonces en realidad el descubrir que era homosexual era otra cosa que callar, nada más... Ahora, el problema no era tanto en el colegio porque en mi curso habían otros compañeros que eran gay y todo el mundo lo sabía,...porque eran locas... entonces de alguna u otra forma no te sentías solo... no eras el único en el mundo... Ahora yo no quería ser del grupo de ellos, porque yo no quería ser loca. Entonces claro, mi vínculo era con los más intelectuales, con los intelectuales de izquierda, con los que militaban en algún partido de izquierda, entonces pasaba no sé... pasaba por heterosexual y nadie sabía que yo era gay. Ni ahora, mucha gente lo sabe,... muchos amigos no lo saben...

Y en tu casa?

Si tampoco hablábamos de otros temas, menos de éste... en algún minuto quedo la cagada con una carta que encontró mi hermana... yo sé que mis hermanos lo conversaron, pero llegado el momento yo lo negué todo, absolutamente... yo no sabía como podían reaccionar mis papás, me preocupaba mi mamá, que trabajaba todo el día, que era como la que sostenía a la familia... ella a veces tenía crisis que la dejaban en cama por seis días, y yo siempre pensaba que le podía pasar algo...

¿Puedo decir, que en general, incluso hoy, prefieres que no se sepa que eres gay?

Mira, son dos cosas... creo que evidentemente tiene que ver con un cuento afectivo de que me encanta que me quieran, y entonces creo que decir que soy homosexual es motivo para que de repente la gente no te quiera y punto, y en el fondo yo trato de evitar eso. Esa es una explicación como súper básica,... así como de sobrevivencia. Pero también creo que no tengo por qué decirlo, porque eso es parte de mi intimidad, y mi intimidad no tiene por qué ser pública. Yo necesito hablar de mi intimidad con dos o tres personas en el mundo y punto... No necesito hablar con mi mamá, ni con mis hermanos... nadie lo sabe, nunca he salido del closet, estoy bien ahí... ¿para qué?...

e) p. 329

Y por qué decidiste militar en las J C (juventudes comunistas)?

Porque me invitaron...

Mmm no te invitaron de otro partido?

Bueno, si una vez me invitaron gente del MIR, pero yo tenía la imagen de que había que ser super fuerte y super consecuente... Yo había sabido de gente que estaba siempre arrancando y que lo pasaban pésimo, yo sentía

que no era capaz de vivir así... Además, estaba el tema de que estaba terminando el colegio y yo quería estudiar teatro... Claro yo en el colegio me juntaba con los intelectuales de izquierda y era super buen alumno, y en el fondo, todos iban a estudiar sociología, derecho, literatura o cosas así,... cosas con ciencias sociales. Bueno yo al principio quería periodismo, pero después me arrepentí... ahora igual ser un super militante de izquierda y estudiar teatro no era así como obvio... porque igual el teatro tiene algo lúdico, que la militancia no tiene, bueno en esa época era difícil... pero en teatro también te enseñan como a mirar desde fuera y observar... observar cómo la gente funciona y en el fondo todo puede ser como un espectáculo, la militancia un poco también ¿no? Entonces yo militaba, pero tampoco era una cosa así muy comprometida, yo creo que paulatinamente mis inquietudes políticas se fueron canalizando en el teatro...

f) pp. 330 - 331

Y cuando militabas en la J, ¿había problema con ser gay?

No, porque nadie sabía...

Y la discriminación a otros gays... ¿te afectaba?...

No, porque en el fondo yo no tengo luchas... así como reivindicaciones sociales respecto a la homosexualidad, no me plantearía nunca ir a una marcha, por ejemplo... porque a la larga la discriminación gay me produce tanta rabia como la discriminación racial, de clase, o de cualquier otro tipo, entonces no me interesa, no voy... bueno ahí además tengo una cuestión... no me gustan las políticas gay, no me gustan...

¿Por qué?

Porque de repente me chorean, las encuentro rascas, superficiales, poco interesantes, no me llenan, no hay nada allí que me interese, no hay nada de las reivindicaciones que plantean estos grupos que realmente me motive, incluso a veces sirve sólo para excluir a otros porque por ejemplo en el ambiente del teatro me doy cuenta de que existen hasta mafias gay, y de verdad que me dan vergüenza...

g) p. 333

Cuando comencé a estudiar teatro estaba toda la efervescencia contra Pinochet, y yo sentía que estudiar teatro era una herramienta de lucha contra la dictadura. Era muy raro encontrar un actor de derecha. Yo sentía que el teatro cohesionaba mucho más a la gente que tal o cual partido político... era como 'todos juntos contra Pinochet'... yo sentía que el teatro era una trinchera mucho más poderosa contra la cultura imperante...o bueno yo quizás me sentía mucho más cómodo en esa trinchera, yo sentía que desde ahí uno podía proponer, decir, hacer cosas... que a la larga en las negociaciones políticas quedaban fuera... y así fue para mi al menos hasta que se recobró la democracia

4.2 Tatiana

a) pp. 335- 336

¿Tú dentro del partido eres reconocida públicamente como lesbiana?

Si y no, porque yo adentro del partido trato de ser indefinida. Es algo complicado... yo diría que hay muchos militantes... hay muchos dirigentes

que lo entienden y lo asumen políticamente, y hay muchos otros a los que les molesta, porque es muy molesto ser indefinido. Porque tiene que ver con este control también... de qué es lo que eres. Porque si yo sé lo que eres te controlo, y si no lo sé no te puedo controlar. Por eso yo soy indefinida. "¿Qué quieres tú que sea?, ¿quieres que sea puta?, sí, soy puta, ¿quieres que sea lesbiana?, sí, soy lesbiana, ahora conversemos lo que hay que conversar". No...

¿mmm cómo puta, por qué puta?

Porque a pesar de no reconocirme públicamente como lesbiana u otra cosa, yo sé que informalmente pasé de ser la puta del partido, desde que me separé; a ser, la lesbiana del partido... Mira... uno se da cuenta entre actitudes y otras cosas que tú escuchas directamente. Por ejemplo la Fiesta de los Abrazos, un lugar donde tú escuchas un millón de cosas, porque no se dan cuenta que tú estás escuchando mientras te están pelando. Hay compañeros que también saben que es mejor descalificar que discutir correctamente, es más efectivo. No estoy generalizando pero se da. Y el tema de las lesbianas ha sido bien recurrente... y yo también provoqué un poco eso, me pinto el pelo verde, azul, y hasta hace poco que no estaba tan gorda usaba minifalda y escotes grandes... tengo cero complicaciones con eso, entonces... eso es bastante atrevido... no corresponden a una vieja de 50 años entonces claro...dicen "esta tiene que ser puta", "no sé como el marido la aguantaba".

¿eso es porque tu 'apariencia' no corresponde a una militante comunista?

Claro, a una comunista de base se le puede tolerar, pero a una comunista del Comité Central, eso sí que no. Eso incluso fue bastante complicado para el Comité Central... yo me enteré después bueno... un montón de cosas se saben. Fue bastante discutida mi incorporación al comité central, justamente porque fue en el momento en que yo me estaba separando, mi compañero había sido miembro del Comité Central y también estaba propuesto. Y mucha gente entendió que era él o yo, porque él era un compañero serio, no era rebelde ni díscolo como yo. Y cuando sucede mi incorporación en el Comité Central, había que definir... nosotros como equipo de minorías sexuales propusimos crear el área de género, que nadie entendía qué mierda era... hasta el día de hoy... y cuando hablan de problemas relacionados con mujeres me llaman a mí... pero para que veas son sobre todo mujeres las que se opusieron tenazmente a que yo fuera la encargada de mujeres, y nadie se atrevió a decir que era porque yo era lesbiana. Pero informalmente en estas comidas y tomateras que los grupos tienen ahí sí sale el tema. Otro momento importante fue cuando sucede el caso de la jueza a la que le quitaron las hijas. No había muchas madres y padres que quisieron dar entrevistas por sus hijos, y salí yo. Y eso fue bastante criticado también, de hecho hubo una discusión adentro del partido al margen de mí. Nadie me llamó para discutir eso, para preguntarme por qué había salido en la prensa defendiendo a estas mujeres y hablando de mi caso... porque además... todo el mundo intuye que es una postura política, es decir que yo hago eso intencional y conscientemente. Ahora, también todo el mundo estaba con esta cuestión y comentaban por detrás de que "es lesbiana", y "cómo se le ocurre hacerle eso a sus hijos", "cómo es posible que ella salga en los medios de comunicación..." y cosas de ese tipo

b) pp. 340 - 341

¿Y por qué estás renunciando al Comité Central?

Ah, esas son cuestiones más internas... pero si, tiene que ver con esto, tienen que ver con que... yo tengo... yo siempre he dicho que puedo responder por mis opiniones y puede que hasta me equivoque... por último, si me equivoqué, puedo pedir disculpas. Pero yo no puedo responder por cosas que sé que están mal. Si, porque el partido es... el partido es sagrado, y el partido somos todos. Y yo le debo algo a la militancia al partido, le debo ser honesta, entonces, estas cosas de diferencias de métodos que yo te decía, son cosas asociadas a personas en particular... y yo no puedo luchar contra ellas, pero tampoco me voy a unir a ellas.

De alguna manera me estás diciendo que eres minoría dentro del Comité Central, y que no puedes hacer nada estando ahí...

Bueno, sí, soy tan minoría que soy una, una sola loca... Ahora, no estoy dejando el partido, es sólo el comité central... porque no siento que tenga un aporte que dar ahí de verdad. En cambio, puedo volver a militar en mi célula, puedo seguir trabajando en el tema de mujeres, en el tema de las minorías sexuales... pero no tengo para que continuar haciendo el loco... porque además es un desgaste emocional sentir que pierdes las peleas todas las veces... en cambio yo siento que en el partido nosotros como área de género hemos hecho un súper buen aporte, y como área de mujeres también. Nosotros hemos tenido contacto con compañeras de regiones que trabajan el tema... por ejemplo, el feminismo, que en el partido había sido así como mal visto, como una desviación media de derecha, medio cuica. Entonces cuando nosotros vamos al congreso feminista y luego lo ponemos en la página del partido, y lo ponemos en El Siglo como un logro... yo creo que ha sido un aporte para que otras compañeras se identifiquen y que cachén que de verdad no están tan solas.

¿Por qué dentro del partido el feminismo es asociado a la 'derecha'?

No con la derecha, sino más bien con una desviación pequeño-burguesas... en general es muy mal visto el feminismo, incluso dentro del movimiento de mujeres... porque no son lo mismo. Los partidos de izquierda en América Latina y el mundo no han logrado asociar los movimientos... a ver, a los movimientos de izquierda y al Partido Comunista en particular les ha costado asociar los nuevos sujetos históricos emergentes, que no son "clase obrera"... les ha costado asociarlos como aliados estratégicos, ni siquiera tácticos. Creo que tenemos esta chatura de que cualquier cosa que nos desvíe de esto que es clase, es como desviación. Recién con el tema de los foros sociales yo creo que empieza a hacerse en la izquierda una revisión del nuevo sujeto histórico, que se hace carne... porque se habla mucho pero... son todos, el movimiento indigenista, el movimiento ecológico, pero las mujeres no. Y eso tiene que ver con el sistema patriarcal. Hasta en los partidos de izquierda somos absolutamente patriarcales.