ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: THE DEMOCRATIC SELF: GENDER, MEMORY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS UNDER THE AUGUSTO PINOCHET DICTATORSHIP AND TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY IN CHILE, 1973-2010

Brandi A. Townsend, Doctor of Philosophy, 2015

Dissertation Directed by: Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt
Department of History

The Democratic Self asks how ideas about gender shaped the ways that Chileans reconstructed the affective, social, and political bonds the Augusto Pinochet dictatorship (1973-1990) sought to destroy. It intervenes in debates about the degree to which right-wing military regimes in Latin America eroded social ties during the Cold War. Torture targeted gendered and sexual identities and compelled victims to re-assess their roles as men, women, militants, husbands, wives, sons, daughters, mothers, and fathers. This dissertation argues that to reconnect the individual to collective struggles for democracy, survivors and their allies drew on longstanding, heteronormative gender ideologies within the left. Those ideologies gradually changed over the course of the dictatorship, and in turn, influenced memories during

the subsequent transition to democracy (1990-2010). The dissertation draws on government and non-governmental documents and oral interviews with survivors, their families, and human rights workers.

Between 1978 and 1990, mental health professionals working within human rights organizations provided psychological therapy to approximately 32,000-42,000 Chileans to help them work through their traumatic experiences as part of a collective project to repair the social connections that state violence ripped apart. These professionals translated psychoanalytic concepts of "the self" into the language of pre-1973 frameworks of citizenship grounded in the heterosexual, male-headed nuclear family. By the mid-1980s, Chile's feminist movement changed the terms of the debate by showing how gendered forms of everyday violence that pre-dated the dictatorship shaped political violence under the dictatorship, as well as the opposition's response. Slowly, mental health professionals began to change how they deployed ideas about gender when helping survivors and their families talk about state violence.

However, the narratives of violence that emerged with the end of the dictatorship in 1990 and that were enshrined in three separate truth commissions (1990, 2004, and 2010) only partially reflected that transformation. The democratic governments' attempts to heal Chile's painful past and move forward did not always recognize, much less dislodge, entrenched ideas that privileged men's experiences of political militancy. This dissertation shows how Chileans grappled with their memories of state violence, which were refracted through gendered discourses in the human rights movement.

THE DEMOCRATIC SELF: GENDER, MEMORY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS UNDER THE AUGUSTO PINOCHET DICTATORSHIP AND TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY IN CHILE, 1973-2010

by

Brandi Ann Townsend

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2015

Advisory Committee:

Professor Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt, Chair
Professor Arthur Eckstein
Professor Laurie Frederick Meer
Professor Mary Kay Vaughan
Professor Daryle Williams

For my parents, Kay and Branson Townsend.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Working on a dissertation that is largely about the relationship between the individual and the collective has made me more appreciative of the many people who have supported me intellectually, financially, logistically, and emotionally through this process. All strengths in the following pages are indebted to them. All shortcomings are my own.

I have been fortunate to receive funds from my department and outside institutions to finance this project. I would like to thank the Fulbright Institute for International Education, the Conference on Latin American History, the Latin American Studies Center at the University of Maryland, and the University of Maryland History Department for making my research in Chile possible.

My advisor, Karin Rosemblatt, has worked tirelessly since the day I arrived at UMD to help me take a general interest and shape it into what I hope is an important intervention in the scholarship. She took me on knowing that I wanted to study a heavy subject that I am sure many others would have hesitated to guide me through. Karin read countless drafts of grant applications and chapters, put me in touch with her Chilean friends and colleagues, and formed an independent study course to provide me with the theoretical foundation of this project. She took time out of many weekends for me. She has played a fundamental role in molding this dissertation.

The insights of my committee members, Mary Kay Vaughan, Daryle Williams, Laurie Frederick, and David Sartorius have also been invaluable to me. I have been privileged to work with brilliant scholars who not only produce incredible

work, but also genuinely care about shaping their students into colleagues. David, who was unable to attend the defense for reasons beyond his control, deserves his due thanks as a committee member, since he read drafts of chapters, as well as the whole dissertation, and provided me with pointed comments for expanding my analysis and sharpening my writing. Art Eckstein graciously filled in at the last minute for the defense and provided helpful comments for the project's potential impact for U.S. history. Laurie Frederick's course on storytelling influenced my thinking in many ways and introduced me to new frameworks for interpreting my oral histories. Daryle Williams read grant applications, put me in touch with wonderful researchers in Brazil, and sent me information about resources and research opportunities as I developed my work. Mary Kay Vaughan's dedication to my success while busy advising a cohort of bright new Mexicanists has meant so much to me. Her comments have helped me reflect upon this work's place within the larger panorama of Latin American gender history. Mary Kay, as well as Karin, have been role models for me as women academics and feminist scholars who have made tremendous contributions to the field.

Several others at UMD and elsewhere have contributed greatly to getting this project to the finish line. Scholars outside of UMD have offered me valuable comments and timely encouragement: Steve Stern, Alison Bruey, Heidi Tinsman, Cristina Scheibe Wolff, and Margaret Power. My professors in the History departments at Murray State University and the University of New Mexico nourished my love of history and primed me for doctoral study. My professors in the Modern Languages Department at Murray State University, especially León Bodevín, trained

me in Spanish and, along with the Murray State Honors Program, encouraged me to study abroad—an experience that built up my courage to do long-term research in another country. At UMD, Katarina Keane was a wonderful mentor to me. My unwavering appreciation also goes to Jodi Hall, Jenn Sanchez, and Paula Barriga, who kept the History Department and LASC running, and whose unyielding assistance and patience have been vital to my success.

I owe a great debt to the people in Chile who helped this *gringa* pull her project together and adjust to living and researching far from home. Claudio Barrientos has been an invaluable "second advisor," colleague, and friend. He sponsored me for the Fulbright, read drafts, introduced me to other Chilean researchers, pointed me to document collections, and has graciously participated in conference panels. He lent an ear to me over many a coffee at the Café del Ópera. Hillary Hiner provided me with helpful feedback and coordinated stellar conference panels in which I was honored to participate. Olga Grau also sponsored me for the Fulbright, invited me to symposiums at the Universidad de Chile, and was always ready and willing to offer her support in any way possible. The archivists and librarians at the Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Fundación de Ayuda Social de las Iglesias Cristianas (FASIC), CODEPU, CINTRAS, Biblioteca Nacional, and Archivo Siglo XX were incredibly helpful and patient. The Museo de la Memoria y Derechos Humanos in Santiago provided me with digital copies of many files, and most importantly, introduced me to many former political prisoners who agreed to do interviews with me.

I owe my greatest debt to the people who shared their stories with me. Speaking about personal experiences of violence and repression is unimaginably difficult, but these women and men spoke candidly with me. They invited me into their homes and places of work, talked with me for hours, and introduced me to friends who would also talk to me. The second half of the dissertation would not have happened without them. And by far, speaking with these wonderful folks was the most educative and rewarding part of this project.

Talented graduate students have stimulated my thinking and offered useful comments on this project at various stages, in addition to their friendship and support. Jesse Zarley, Sarah Walsh, Joshua Walker, Shawn Moura, Adolfo Polo, Enrique Rivera, and Reid Gustafson have formed part of an extraordinary cohort in Latin American history at the University of Maryland. Derek Leininger, a valued friend and colleague in U.S. history, also gave me useful comments. I also found his ruminations on Foucault, social justice, and "authentic American moments" both entertaining and inspiring. Additionally, I thank my Latin Americanist colleagues from the University of New Mexico and elsewhere who have offered me feedback, friendship, and support: Katie McIntyre, Rebecca Ellis, Scott Crago, Lucinda Grinnell, and Javier Puente. My Fulbright sisters Jennifer Lerner, Emily Rigdon, Megan Sheehan, Lily Seidman, and Rachel Koh were also immensely supportive while I conducted research in Chile.

Jesse Zarley and Katie Schultz have become some of my best friends, and I will cherish the memories of our shared time in Chile and the U.S. Jesse read various drafts, attended conference presentations, and talked through the research with me on

countless occasions. I was also grateful to spend a few months in Chile with Sarah Walsh. Her advice and friendship helped me get through the first months of my research, and she remains a treasured friend and colleague. Of course, I would not have survived the first three years of graduate school without Joshua Bearden and Steph Hinnershitz, who kept me laughing and continue to do so from a distance. Steph also read grant applications and early chapter drafts. Josh's southern hospitality made me feel like I was never too far from home. I am also fortunate to count as friends some extraordinary women: Caitlin Haynes, Lindy Cummings, Rachel Walker, and Ashley Towle. They have encouraged me and understood both my frustrations and victories in ways that perhaps only other women graduate students could. I have thoroughly enjoyed both our high-brow-and not-so-high-brow conversations, which have helped me push through the final years of the program.

I owe a special thanks to my friends in Chile, whose love and support made Chile feel like home. Since I first came to Chile in 2008, Eduardo Soto and Paola Muñoz opened their home to me, took me traveling all over Chile, and treated me like family. Mauro Carreño has been a dear friend for several years. A psychologist, he also discussed my project with me on several occasions and offered me his brilliant insights. Cristóbal "Punto" Cisternas has been an amazing friend and companion over the past three years and kept me grounded through the ups and downs of research and writing. I've also thoroughly enjoyed his stories of growing up in 1980s and 1990s Chile.

And most importantly, I thank the family into which I was born. My sister, Valerie Haynes, and my nieces, Kayley and Madelyn, patiently endured my

ramblings about Chile, history, and academia. My cousin, Dixie James, who is like a sister to me, always kept me up to date with what was going on at home, and she always let me vent about whatever was bothering me at the moment. My parents, Branson and Kay Townsend, never let me think for one second that I could not achieve this goal. They have put years of emotional and financial support into ensuring that this dissertation saw the light of day. I could never fully express my love and gratitude to them for helping me tell this story.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

On September 11, 1973, a military coup overthrew the democratically elected Marxist government of Salvador Allende in Chile. Over the course of the seventeen years of Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship, secret police, military officers, and hired civilians tortured thousands of leftist militants. The regime sought to break down individuals, force information from them, and shatter their connections to comrades and family members. Torture targeted gendered and sexual identities and compelled victims[1] to re-assess their roles as men, women, militants, husbands, wives, sons, daughters, mothers, and fathers. Official truth commission reports certified approximately 38,000 cases of torture and political imprisonment and 9,000 cases of forced disappearance, execution, and torture that led to death.[2]

---

[1]By using the term, "victim," I do not mean to diminish the agency of these actors, but rather signal the fact that they were victims of human rights violations. I use the term broadly, to include political prisoners, the disappeared, and executed, as well as family members who were not imprisoned, but also suffered the effects of state violence and repression. Somewhat interchangeably, I use terms like "survivor" and "family member," according to the context and which term clarifies or emphasizes the main point. I also try to use the term "family member" in a historical sense—how the historical actors involved conceived of it. By doing this, I do not seek to promote heterosexist notions of the male-headed nuclear family. Chapters four and five discuss cases in which mental health professionals offered alternative definitions of family.

[2] These figures are from the democratic state's latest official report in 2011, which re-opened the original 1990 National Truth and Reconciliation Commission (commonly known as the Rettig Commission) and 2004 National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture (commonly known as the Valech Commission). See Comisión Asesora Presidencial para la Calificación de Detenidos Desaparecidos, Ejecutados Políticos y Víctimas de Prisión Política y Tortura, *Informe de la Comisión Presidencial Asesora para la Calificación de Detenidos Desaparecidos, Ejecutados Políticos y Víctimas de Prisión Política y Tortura,* Santiago, February 5, 2010, http://www.indh.cl/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Informe2011.pdf, Accessed March 19, 2015. The restrictions for inclusion in the Valech Report, as well as factors such as the inability or unwillingness to speak before the commissions, suggest that this a conservative estimate. Thousands of people who were not tortured in officially recognized torture facilities or prisons were not eligible for inclusion in the Valech Report. Based on his interviews with survivors and human rights experts involved in the truth commissions, as well as additional primary and secondary sources, Steve J. Stern has found a more realistic, yet still conservative, estimate of 150,000-200,000 cases of torture and detention. Additionally, as many as 200,000-400,000 Chileans went into exile during the dictatorship. For an excellent discussion, see Steve J. Stern, *Reckoning with Pinochet: The Memory Question in Democratic Chile, 1989-2006* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 390-393, fn 3.

In response to state violence, church and community leaders formed human rights organizations to provide legal and financial assistance to the families of political prisoners, the disappeared, and executed, as well as political prisoners and former political prisoners. They referred the people who came through their doors to trusted mental health professionals. In the late 1970s, these human rights organizations realized—largely due to mental health professionals' insistence—that they needed to provide mental health care as part of their institutions' standard services. Between 1978 and the end of the dictatorship in 1990, mental health professionals working within human rights organizations provided psychological therapy to approximately 32,000-42,000 working-and middle class Chileans who had been victims of human rights violations.[3] The goal of therapy was for individuals to work through their traumatic experiences as part of a collective project to repair the social connections that state violence ripped apart.

The Democratic Self asks how ideas about gender shaped the ways that Chileans reconstructed the affective, social, and political bonds the dictatorship sought to destroy. It argues that to reconnect the individual to collective struggles for democracy that had organized political culture, survivors and their allies drew on longstanding, heteronormative gender ideologies within the left. Those ideologies gradually changed

[3] Coordinadora de Equipos de Salud Mental, "Colaboración en last areas de reparación de los daños a la salud y la salud mental en las personas afectadas por la represión política y la violación de los derechos humanos del periodo dictatorial," Santiago, May 10, 1990, Biblioteca CINTRAS. At least 1200 were children in Santiago, and another 1200 in the provinces, according to the statistics from an organization dedicated to providing psychological and medical treatment only to children and minors. But the other organizations produced many studies on children's mental health, since the late 1970s—almost ten years before the Protection of Children from Harm in States of Emergency (Protección de la Infancia del Daño en Estados de Emergencia, PIDEE) was founded. Unfortunately, I found no statistics to demonstrate disaggregate the ages, genders, and socioeconomic backgrounds of patients over the course of the dictatorship. This is probably in part due to the fact that many organizations only very recently organized their files, so some documents could be lost or not catalogued. I also could not view the private clinical files to create my own statistics. Some reports and publications indicated the number of patients an organization treated that year, and sometimes they differentiated between men and women, but not often.

over the course of the dictatorship in response to the upheaval of state violence and neoliberal economic reforms in private and public life. Furthermore, in the mid-1980s, feminists became more publicly visible and challenged interpretations of the gendered social order. In turn, during the transition to democracy, gendered ideas about the individual's relationship to the collective influenced survivors' memories of the dictatorship.

To help their patients reconnect to collective struggles for democracy, mental health professionals translated the technical, psychoanalytic language of "the self" into the language of the individual to the collective that undergirded twentieth-century political culture. I take the terms "self" and "reconstruction of the self" from the papers of Chilean mental health professionals who worked within human rights organizations founded in the late 1970s and 1980s. These professionals referred to *la reconstrucción del sí mismo, el sí mismo traumatizado* (the traumatized self)*, el yo,* or the English term, "self." The *reconstrucción de la sujetividad* (reconstruction of subjectivity) also appeared frequently in mental health professionals' writings.[4] In general, those ideas drew on psychoanalytic concepts that emphasized coming to terms with a traumatic event that the patient could not narrate and that caused psychological and physical responses in daily life that he or she could not explain. Recovering from psychical trauma and reconstructing the self entailed gaining awareness of the event, elaborating a narrative, and forming an understanding of the trauma's effects on one's past and present behaviors

[4] In a personal interview in May 2013, prominent sociologist Elizabeth Lira, who worked in the mental health program at the Foundation of Social Aid of the Christian Churches (Fundación de Ayuda Social de las Iglesias Cristianas, FASIC) since it inception and later founded the Insituto Latinoamericano de Salud Mental y Derechos Humanos in 1988, stated that these terms refer to the same process of reconstructing the self.

and situations.[5] I ask what the self and its reconstruction meant for Chileans affected by state terror and the mental health professionals who provided them assistance as the dictatorship committed human rights atrocities, and as the subsequent civilian governments (1990-2010) grappled with reckoning and social reconciliation.

At first, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, and other mental health professionals working within these interdisciplinary teams sought to reconstruct the self by tapping into pre-1973 gendered frameworks of health and citizenship grounded in the heterosexual, male-headed nuclear family. These frameworks had provided the basis for the consolidation of the welfare state from the 1930s-1950s, seeking to rationalize of the domestic sphere and tame the negative effects of capitalism on the family. Subsequent state programs in the 1960s and 1970s emphasized gender mutualism between husbands and wives, but did not successfully upend men's domination over women in the home and in society.[6] Mental health professionals drew on these pre-existing ideas to bring order and discipline back to the domestic sphere in an effort to help reconstruct not only

---

[5] On the development of various theories of psychoanalysis and trauma, see Ruth Leys, *Trauma: A Genealogy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010); Cathy Caruth, ed. *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).

[6] On the male-headed nuclear family, see Mary Kay Vaughan, "Introduction: Pancho Villa, the Daughters of Mary, and the Modern Woman. Gender in the Long Mexican Revolution." In *Sex in Revolution: Gender, Politics, and Power in Modern Mexico*, edited by Jocelyn Olcott, Mary K. Vaughan, and Gabriela Cano (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 22-35; Mary Kay Vaughan, "Modernizing Patriarchy: State Policies, Rural Households, and Women in Mexico, 1930-1940," in *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America*, edited by Elizabeth Dore and Maxine Molyneux (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 194-214; Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt, *Gendered Compromises;* Thomas Miller Klubock, *Contested Communities: Class, Gender, and Politics in Chile's El Teniente Copper Mine, 1904-1950* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998); Barbara Weinstein, *For Social Peace in Brazil: Industrialists and the Remaking of the Working Class in São Paulo, 1920-1964* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press). On gender mutualism in the 1960s and 1970s, see Heidi Tinsman, *Partners in Conflict: The Politics of Gender, Sexuality, and Labor in the Chilean Agrarian Reform, 1950-1973* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002); Mario Garcés, *Tomando su sitio. El movimiento de pobladores de Santiago, 1957-1970* (Santiago: LOM, 2002).

individuals and families, but the sectors of Chilean society that had been most severely affected by the disorder of a violent, right-wing, neoliberal regime.

By the mid-1980s, Chile's feminist movement changed the terms of the debate by showing how gendered forms of everyday violence that predated the dictatorship shaped political violence under the dictatorship, as well as the opposition's response. Feminism gave women a language for talking about political, sexual, and domestic violence and discrimination, and victimization generally, while embracing their own agency. Slowly, mental health professionals began to change how they deployed ideas about gender when helping survivors and their families talk about state violence.

However, the narratives of violence that emerged with the end of the dictatorship in 1990 and that were enshrined in three separate truth commissions (1990, 2004, and 2010) only partially reflected that transformation. The democratic governments' procedures, such as the truth commissions, that represented attempts to heal Chile's painful past and move forward, did not always recognize, much less dislodge, entrenched ideas that privileged men's experiences of political militancy. This dissertation shows how Chileans grappled with the prolonged legacies of state violence in their personal lives long after the end of the dictatorship. It explores how their memories were refracted through gendered discourses in the human rights movement.

Exploring mental health reveals how gender and sexuality worked as scaffolds for reconstructing the self and its connection to human rights. As Lynn Hunt has noted, historically constructed, Western concepts of human rights have hinged upon the idea that the individual is a unique and autonomous being. The psychical was central to

creating that sense of individuality.[7] But human rights have also required individuals to develop empathy for others and realize that as humans, they share similar experiences and deserve equal rights. Hunt contends that the failure of individuals to cultivate that empathy completely has resulted in inequalities in various historical contexts.[8] This framing allows me to see how gender, as Joan Scott defined it, operated as a "culturally and historically specific attempt to fix meaning..." to "...the problem of sexual difference."[9] Attempting to solve the dilemma of sexual difference by referring to ostensibly fixed meanings of men and women's roles led to the failure to cultivate empathy and the inability to fully address gender inequality within struggles for human rights and democracy in Chile.

By looking at how the reconstruction of the self was intricately tied to greater historical processes, I complicate the views of contemporary participants and subsequent scholars who have suggested that the rise of neoliberal individualism undermined collective struggles. That scholarship argues that through systematic violence, the dictatorship broke down the social and familial bonds and political loyalties that united the opposition. Neoliberal reforms, in Chile and in other countries in the Americas, eroded social ties and transformed once socially minded Chileans into self-centered, individualistic consumers. Scholars, as well as contemporaries, have projected this presumed change onto a chronology of "before and after Pinochet."[10] But feminist

---

[7] I use the term "psychical," to refer to the general discourse related to the psyche, or the mind. I use the term, "psychological" when drawing from the discipline of psychology.

[8] Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007), 15-35.

[9] Joan W. Scott, *The Fantasy of Feminist History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 5.

scholarship has shown that ideas about gender, sexuality, and their connection to political and social equality fit uneasily within this historical periodization.[11] *The Democratic Self* builds on that insight by demonstrating that for mental health professionals, feminists, and the survivors of state violence and family members with whom they interacted, individualism did not preclude the collective. In fact, these actors found new ways of configuring politics despite the regime's attempts to quash collective participation through the destruction of individual subjectivities. The recovery of the individual and his or her ability to cope with the daily realities of neoliberalism and the memories of violence was, according to mental health professionals and feminists, essential to reclaiming Chile for democracy and human rights for the individuals within it.

The Destruction and Reconstruction of the Self

The dictatorship continued to torture and disappear people in its war on Marxism, but it also exercised power more subtly by advocating a neoliberal transformation of the home. Indeed, the regime saw protecting the male-headed nuclear family as integral to legitimizing its claim of protecting the nation from Marxism. The left had long contended that the instability of capitalism threatened the family and society and needed to be

---

[10] For example, see Tomás Moulián, *El consumo me consume* (Santiago: LOM, 1998); Tomás Moulián, *Chile actual. Anatomía de un mito* (Santaigo: LOM, 2002); Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 1-18, 169-198; Peter Winn, "The Pinochet Era," in Peter Winn, ed., *Victims of the Chilean Miracle: Workers and Neoliberalism in the Pinochet Era, 1973-2002* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2004), 14-71.

[11] Julieta Kirkwood, a pioneer Chilean feminist, offered a periodization for Chilean women's history in *Ser política en Chile. Las feministas y los partidos* (Santiago: FLACSO, 1986), 73-115. While important works of women's history have tackled this question in various contexts, recent scholarship on Chile and Latin America has begun to critique overarching masculine narratives of the transition from welfare states to neoliberal regimes. See: Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt, "Welfare States and Neoliberal Regimes, and International Political Economy: Gender Politics of Latin America in Global Context," *Journal of Women's History* 25 (4): 149-162; Heidi Tinsman, *Buying into the Regime: Grapes and Consumption in Chile and the United States during the Cold War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).

restrained by welfare. Pinochet and the junta, however, argued that Marxism was morally perverse, and its emphasis on class struggle endangered the family, and thereby the nation. Drawing on declassified regime documents, I show how gendered notions informed debates about the junta and Pinochet's role in eradicating Marxism, both inside and outside the home.

The regime sought to destroy prisoners' senses of self through torture, but also through less direct means, such as effectively removing men from their traditional roles as primary breadwinners. Tensions between husbands and wives were exacerbated not just by the upheaval of state violence, but also by the devastating effects Pinochet's neoliberal reforms had on middle-and working-class Chileans. In the late 1970s, the Pinochet regime began implementing neoliberal reforms to curtail the programs of the welfare state, reverse the economic structure of import-substitution-industrialization, and thrust Chile into a free-market economy. [12] These reforms included drastically cutting tariffs, re-privatizing nationalized industries, privatizing health care, social security, and education. The regime also violently repressed labor unions. After a devastating economic crash in 1982, thousands faced extreme economic dislocation and poverty. Former political prisoners faced the further hardship of being blacklisted from work and gaining employment with a history of imprisonment.[13] Mental health professionals attempted to help men regain their senses of themselves as breadwinners and political actors. But many women also found a new sense of autonomy as they began to work

---

[12] Contrary to the argument that Pinochet and the Chicago Boys instituted "shock therapy" neoliberalism, Heidi Tinsman has convincingly argued that the regime accelerated neoliberal policies that had long been practiced in Chile. See Heidi Tinsman, *Buying into the Regime: Grapes and Consumption in Cold War Latin American and the United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 25-64.

[13]Peter Winn, "The Pinochet Era," in *Victims of the Chilean Miracle: Workers and Neoliberalism in Pinochet's Chile, 1973-2002* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 32-33.

outside the home and become active in community soup kitchens and human rights and women's organizations—despite the regime's designs to maintain men's authority over women in the home and in society.[14]

The human rights movement that arose in the 1970s joined the efforts of church leaders and groups of family members of the disappeared. The regime was hesitant to attack overtly Chile's most traditional institutions, the church and the family. Early human rights organizations, such as the Vicariate of Solidarity and the Social Aid Foundation of the Christian Churches (FASIC), were based in the church, political parties but lay people soon joined the human rights effort. In the 1980s, members of political parties from the center to revolutionary left created their own human rights organizations to enjoin the political parties, and society as a whole, to take up the work of human rights. Chile had one of the most dynamic human rights movements in cold war Latin America, when right-wing military regimes overthrew left wing and Marxist governments and tortured and killed hundreds of thousands of perceived enemies throughout the regions.[15]

While there are no comprehensive statistics about mental health clients' gender and class backgrounds, mental health papers featured case studies of a broad cross-section of middle-and working-class Chileans, including union leaders, workers, housewives, teachers, university students, professionals, and children and minors under the age of eighteen. Women were largely responsible for convincing husbands and male relatives who had been imprisoned, tortured, and/or internally exiled to seek treatment.

---

[14]Heidi Tinsman has explored these changing gender roles with her study of women fruit workers in rural Chile. See *Buying into the Regime: Grapes and Consumption in Cold War Chile and the United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).

[15] Elizabeth Hutchison and Patricio Orellana, *El movimiento de derechos humanos en Chile, 1973-1990* (Santiago: Centro de Estudios Políticos Latinoamericanos Simón Bolívar, 1991), 14-16; Edward L. Cleary, *The Struggle for Human Rights in Latin America* (Westport, Conn." Praeger, 1997).

Mothers, and sometimes fathers, brought in their children, who suffered psychologically due the to chaos violence had inflicted upon the family.

The feminist movement's foundational philosophy—the personal is political—was connected to mental health professionals' ideas about reconstructing the individual self to collective struggles for democracy. Feminism shaped mental health professionals' notions of speaking about violence, especially sexual torture. Therapists and survivors viewed the sharing of one's personal testimony of violence in public as part of reconstructing the private self, as well as a political practice connected to struggles for human rights and democracy. With the return to democracy, those personal testimonies would become part of debates over truth, justice, and reparations in Chile's truth commissions, as well as broader contestations over memory. The notion that one's individual story had a place in a collective narrative of violence was fundamental to encouraging survivors to speak publicly about their experiences. But as I suggest later in the dissertation, gender shaped how survivors figured *where* their stories fit into a broader history of the dictatorship, even if they believed *that* their stories counted in some way. Gender also shaped how the democratic state recognized individual memories of violence as part of collective memory.

During the transition to democracy, mental health professionals worked with survivors and family members as they, and Chilean society as a whole, wrestled with memories of state violence that occurred in the past but could not be forgotten. Mental health professionals also urged the new government to punish regime agents and leaders and provide comprehensive mental health care to torture survivors, their families, families of the disappeared and executed, and communities and portions of the population

largely affected by state violence and economic devastation, such as the poblaciones (urban shantytowns) and areas were mass graves were found. The incoming government was headed by the Concertación for the Parties for Democracy, which was a coalition of left and center-left parties. Their 1989 presidential candidate, Christian Democrat Patricio Aylwin, won the presidency and ushered in the transition to democracy, but Pinochet still held a great deal of power as head of the armed forces. Aylwin's government, and later, the government of Ricardo Lagos (also a Concertación candidate) sponsored two truth commissions to investigate the dictatorship's human rights violations. The first, the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission (or as it is popularly known, the Rettig Commission, for its chair, Raúl Rettig), investigated cases of political execution, disappearance, and torture that led to death. Because of the precarious political climate with Pinochet and the army looming in the shadows, as well as legal and logistical difficulties, torture and political imprisonment that did not result in death were not investigated at that time. The commission certified 2,296 cases of death and disappearance in 1990-91. But Pinochet and regime agents were protected from prosecution by a 1978 law that granted amnesty to anyone who perpetrated crimes related to political violence.[16]

Thirteen years later, in 2003, Lagos instituted the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture (popularly known as the Valech Commission, for its chair, Bishop Sergio Valech), which certified 28,459 cases of political imprisonment at its conclusion in 2004.[17] In 2010, the government of Michelle Bachelet re-opened the Valech

[16] Comisión Nacional de la Verdad y Reconciliación, Chile, *Informe de la Comisión Nacional de la Verdad y Reconciliación,* http://www.ddhh.gov.cl/ddhh_rettig.html, Accessed January 24, 2015.

and Rettig Commissions to receive documentation of new cases, adding thirty cases of disappeared and executed persons and 9,795 cases of tortured and political imprisonment. In the first Valech report, 23,856 (87.5 percent) cases of torture and political imprisonment corresponded to men and 3,399 (12.5 percent) to women. In the second Valech report, 1,580 (16 percent) cases corresponded to women and 8,215 (84 percent) to men. [18]

Cases of political imprisonment and torture, however, did not include those that occurred outside officially recognized torture centers and prisons, which disqualified thousands of people, especially peasants, indigenous people, and the urban poor, who were tortured and held captive in their homes and communities.[19] Due to the gendered construction of political participation, it is likely that more women were victims of human rights violations than qualified for the Valech report, since the dictatorship tended to see men as more active political threats and in need of arrest. Women, especially wives and relatives of militants, were probably tortured in their homes and communities and not always taken to torture centers or public prisons.

During the transition, mental health professionals from human rights NGOs advised the government on how to implement a comprehensive mental health program

---

[17] Comision Nacional sobre Prisión Política y Tortura, Chile, *Informe de la Comisión Nacional sobre Prisión Política y Tortura,* 81. The commission originally counted 27, 255 cases, but considered an additional 1,201 cases in 2004-2005. See Comisión Presidencial Asesora para la Calificación de Detenidos Desaparecidos, Ejecutados Políticos y Víctimas de Prisión Política y Tortura, *Informe de la Comisión Presidencial Asesora para la Calificación de Detenidos Desaparecidos, Ejecutados Políticos y Víctimas de Prisión Política y Tortura,* 6, http://www.indh.cl/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Informe2011.pdf, Accessed January 26, 2015.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Claudio Javier Barrientos, "Crafting Indigenous Oral Histories: Social Scientists and NGOs in the Production of Oral Archives and Sources in Chile, 1990-2011," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, January 4, 2015, New York.

for former political prisoners and family members of the disappeared and executed.[20] The government instituted reparations that included monetary compensation, medical and mental health care, and scholarships for children and grandchildren of victims. But the state, trying to close the door on the past, did not always consider the complex ways in which psychical pain accumulated and remained ever present in both individuals and society as a whole. As Chilean society wrestled with the legacies of violence, what happened to survivors of torture who did not remember traumatic experiences that occurred several years before? Survivors of sexual torture in particular confronted unbearable memories they had repressed, and then faced having those memories managed by the transitional state, which sought to bring order and closure to the past.

Contemporary oral interviews, as well as the intimate work that mental health professionals and their patients engaged in during the transition, suggest that former political prisoners and human rights workers drew on memories of the pre-Pinochet era and the dictatorship to find a sense of purpose in activities such as paid work, community activism, and participation in human rights and public memory projects. Approximately thirty oral interviews I conducted show that survivors constructed their narratives of the dictatorship by tapping into the changing notions of gender and human rights explored in this dissertation. My reading reveals that former political prisoners and human rights workers mobilized—and continue to mobilize—those memories to construct a sense of self connected to the collective.

[20] *Informe de la Comisión Asesora*, 1-2.

From Welfare States to Neoliberal Regimes: Gender in Cold War Latin America

Scholars have debated the degree to which the violence of right-wing military regimes, and especially for Chile's case, the neoliberal reforms the regimes implemented in the wake of violence, broke down the social bonds and political militancy that connected the individual to the collective under popular democratic governments. The literature on Chile has established a chronology that firmly divides Chilean history into before and after the 1973 coup. That historical narrative mourns the loss of worker militancy grounded in a close relationship between unions and the state, as well as leftist party politics that connected individuals to collective participation, both which reached their apex under Salvador Allende's Popular Unity government. While workers and leftist political militants fought the downfall of this system during the dictatorship, they were no match for the regime's violence. Nor were they a match for the Concertación, which was forced to work with Pinochet and the right due to constitutional restrictions. According to this literature, the Concertación decided to negotiate the transition and also instituted new policies that furthered the neoliberal reforms the Pinochet regime put in place. The fall of the Berlin Wall, which coincided with the transition to democracy, further dashed leftists' hopes for another chance to work toward a Socialist utopia during the transition to democracy.[21]

---

[21] Tomás Moulián, *Chile actual;* Tomás Moulián: *El consumo me consume;* Raúl González Meyer, "Reflexiones sobre el consume: Más allá de lo privado y más aca que la condena," *Revista de Economí y Trabajo,* no. 11 (2001): 207-34; Peter Winn, ed. *Victims of the Chilean Miracle: Workers and Neoliberalism in the Pinochet Era, 1973-2002* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004). The essays by Heidi Tinsman, and Joel Stillerman in the Winn volume are notable exceptions. This literature has been has been expanded upon during the fortieth anniversary of the coup in 2013. See: Cristina Moryano Barahona, ed. *A 40 años del golpe de estado en Chile* (Santiago: USACH, 2013).The scholarship has also been expanded upon to analyze the relationship between state violence and neoliberalism in Chile and other Latin American countries. See, for example, Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre*; Greg Grandin and

Those are important arguments that speak to the severity of systematic violence in Latin America during the cold war, the role of U.S. intervention, the effects of neoliberalism, and unfulfilled dreams for a socialist utopia. For numerous Chileans, the coup signified a rupture from the past, especially from the popular democratic past that emphasized the relationship between the individual and the social. However, a feminist analysis diversifies this narrative. Feminist scholars have long argued that the historical narratives and periodizations we come to accept as standard are largely based on men's experiences. This dissertation engages feminist analysis to consider the continuities, as well as the changes, between the welfare state and neoliberal regimes, even as state violence shattered the worlds of leftists. Feminist analysis can also help us see how Chileans affected by state violence selectively drew on and revamped the ideas and values of the pre-1973 past not always to lament the dictatorship, the transition, or the present, but also as a way to continue working for the collective and imagine a better future for succeeding generations. At the same time, however, they also recreated the hierarchies of the past.

To that end, this dissertation brings scholarship on gender and the welfare state in Latin America into conversation with research on gender in the region during the late Cold War. Exploring the dialogue between mental health professionals working within the human rights movement and militants and families from various class backgrounds and political parties provides fertile ground for such a study. A well-established literature has shown that popular-democratic governments in twentieth-century Latin America tapped into pre-existing notions of patriarchy to forge alliances between the elite and

---

Gilbert Joseph, ed., *A Century of Revolution: Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Violence in Latin America's Long Cold War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010).

working classes, thereby consolidating welfare states and implementing modernization projects.[22] These programs also gave rise to a new group of welfare professionals who, on the one hand, advocated for the working classes and sincerely believed in their mission to uplift the poor. This dissertation asks how workers, political militants, and middle-class professionals that sought mental health services drew on ingrained notions of gender and discipline to make sense of experiences of violence.

By also asking how those ideas about gender changed in the aftermath of state violence, *The Democratic Self* also extends scholarship on gender and sexuality in leftist revolutionary movements in late Cold War Latin America. This important work tends to focus on dynamics within leftist political parties and movements. Scholars have revealed sexism and homophobia within the revolutionary left, student movements, and the Socialist and Communist parties.[23] Recent work has also highlighted the conceptions about Marxism, youth culture, gender, and sexuality that military regimes drew on when

---

[22] Vaughan, "Modernizing Patriarchy," 194-214; Rosemblatt, *Gendered Compromises;* Illanes, *Cuerpo y sangre de la política;* Weinstein, *For Social Peace in Brazil;* Klubock, *Contested Communities;* Tinsman, *Partners in Conflict.*

[23]On sexism, see Tamara Vidarruzázga Aránguiz, *Mujeres en rojo y negro: Reconstrucción de lamemoria de tres mujeres miristas, 1971-1990* (Concepción: Escaparate Edicione, 2006); Julie Shayne, *The Revolution Question: Feminisms in Chile, El Salvador, and Cuba* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004); Karen Kampwirth, *Women and Guerilla Movements: Nicaragua, El Salvador, Chiapas, Cuba* (University Park: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002); Victoria Langland, "Birth Control Pills and Molotov Cocktails: Reading Sex and Revolution in 1968 Brazil," in *In from the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War*, edited by Joseph M. Gilbert and Daniela Spenser, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 308-349; Joana María Pedro and Cristina Scheibe Wolff, and Ana Maria Veiga, ed. *Resistências, gênero e feminismos contra as ditaduras no Cone Sul* (Ilha de Santa Catarina: Editora Mulheres, 2011). On homophobia, see Patrick Barr-Melej, 2006. "Siloismo and the Self in Allende's Chile: Youth, "Total Revolution," and the Roots of the Humanist Movement". *The Hispanic American Historical Review.* 86, no. 4 (2006), 747; Brenda Elsey, *Citizens and Sportsmen: Fútbol and Politics in Twentieth-Century Chile* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012), 207-242; James N. Green, "Who is the Macho Who Wants to Kill Me?": Male Homosexuality, Revolutionary Masculinity, and the Brazilian Armed Struggle of the 1960s and '70s," Hispanic American Historical Review, v. 92, no. 3 (August 2012): 437-69.

they enacted violence against the left.[24] For instance, we have important studies on the construction heroic revolutionary masculinity stemming from the romantic figure of Ernesto "Che" Guevara.[25] Studies on gender and human rights have underscored how ideas about gender changed thanks to feminist movements, as well as women who became human rights activists when military regimes disappeared their relatives.[26] But we know little about how human rights movements were shaped by notions of the heterosexual, male-headed nuclear family that brought the middle and working classes together in shared notions of citizenship just one generation before.

The Democratic Self thus draws connections between leftist militants and human rights workers over shared, and sometimes conflicting, ideas about gender. Sometimes, human rights workers and entire organizations were affiliated with leftist political parties. But the dialogue between human rights workers and militants from various parties and

---

[24] Victoria Langland, *Speaking of Flowers: Students Movements and the Making and Remembering of 1968 in Military Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013); Valeria Manzano, *The Age of Youth in Argentina: Culture, Politics, and Sexuality from Perón to Videla* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

[25] See especially Florencia Mallon, "*Barbudos,* Warriors, and *Rotos*: The MIR, Masculinity, and Power in the Chilean Agrarian Reform, 1965-74," in *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America,* edited by Matthew C. Gutmann, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 179-215; Lessie Jo Frazier and Deborah Cohen, "Mexico '68: Masculinity in the Prison, and 'Women' in the Streets" *Hispanic American Historical Review* 83, no. 4 (November 2003): 617-660.

[26] Some representative literature includes Lynn Stephen, *Women and Social Movements in Latin America: Power from Below* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997); Jane S. Jaquette, ed. *The Women's Movement in Latin America: Feminism and the Transition to Democracy* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989); Teresa Valdés, *De lo social a lo político. La acción de las mujeres lationoamericanas* (Santiago: LOM, 2000); Marjorie Agosín and Monica Bruno, ed. *Surviving beyond Fear: Women, Children and Human Rights in Latin America* (Fredonia, NY: White Pine, 1993); Temma Kaplan, *Taking Back the Streets: Women, Youth, and Direct Democracy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004). On women and human rights organizations dedicated to finding missing family members, see Marguerite Gúzman Bouvard, *Revoutionizing Motherhood: The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1994); Hernán Vidal, *Dar la vida por la vida. La Agrupación Chilena de familiares de detenidos desaparecidos* (Minneapolis: Study for the Institute of Ideologies and Literatures, 1982).

backgrounds, as well as with their families, provides a rich picture of Chileans trying to understand situations that challenged their gendered and sexual subjectivities, such as the male militant who wrestled with interpreting sexual violence; the housewife who, when her husband was imprisoned, worked outside the home for the first time and gained a sense of autonomy; or the woman who balanced political militancy with raising children while her *compañero* dedicated all his time to political struggle.

Engaging with scholarship on Chile's women's movement allows me to underscore the significance of feminism for how women came to terms with violence under Pinochet and how feminist ideas became incorporated into larger conversations about the self and human rights. Scholarship has shown that women's organizations played a central role in resisting the dictatorship, reconstructing civil society, and pushing for social and political change that shaped Chile's transition to democracy. Feminist scholars and activists have also indicated that the "human" in human rights was gendered male.[27] I connect these insights to literature on human rights that has argued that rather than being static and universal, the concept of human rights has shaped by local groups that challenge and reconfigure its meaning in specific contexts.[28] This allows me to show how feminism influenced memories of political violence by changing the terms of the debate about human rights.

---

[27] See especially Charlotte Bunch, "Women's Rights as Human Rights: Toward a Re-Vision of Human Rights" *Human Rights Quarterly* (Nov. 1990): 486-498; Sally Engle Merry, *Human Rights and Gender Violence: Translating International Law into Local Justice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 36-71, 134-178; Riane Eisler, "Human Rights: Toward an Integrated Theory for Action" *Human Rights Quarterly* (Aug. 1987): 287-308.

[28]Stern J. Stern and Scott Straus, "Introduction. Embracing Pardox: Human Rights in the Global Age," in *The Human Rights Paradox: Universality and its Discontents* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014).

Transitioning to Democracy and Remembering State Violence

Chile has been the subject of a recent upsurge of scholarship on historical memory of the dictatorship.[29] The production of such scholarship has often formed part of the struggle between remembering and forgetting during the transition to democracy. The democratic state, scholars argue, attempted to move beyond the painful past in the interest of social reconciliation and the consolidation of a national state. Human rights groups and individuals, however, continued to fight for truth and justice and argued that the regime's violence could not and should not be forgotten.[30] Yet, little scholarship has engaged with gender and memory. Important works have provided invaluable insights on interpretations of gender in the truth and reconciliation reports, revolutionary left movements, and sexual torture.[31] Few, however, have examined the ways in which

---

[29] Representative works include Steve J. Stern, *Remembering Pinochet's Chile: On the Eve of London, 1998* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2004); Steve J. Stern, *Battling for Hearts and Minds: Memory Struggles in Pinochet's Chile, 1973-1988* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); Steve J. Stern, *Reckoning with Pinochet: The Memory Question in Democratic Chile, 1989-2006* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); Mario Garcés and Myriam Olguín Tenorio. ed., *Memoria para un nuevo siglo: Chile, miradas a la segunda mitad del siglo XX*. (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2000); Mario Garcés, and Sebastián Leiva, *El Golpe De La Legua: Los Caminos De La Historia Y La Memoria* (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2005); Nelly Richard, Alan West, Theodore Quester, and Jean Franco, ed, *Cultural residues: Chile in Transition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004); Cath Collins, Katherine Hite, and Alfredo Joignant Rondón,*The Politics of Memory in Chile: From Pinochet to Bachelet*. (Boulder: First Forum Press, 2013); Alexander Wilde, "Irruptions of Memory: Expressive Politics in Chile's Transition to Democracy," *Journal of Latin American Studies.* 31, no. 2 (1999), 473-500; Nelly Richard, *Políticas y estéticas de la memoria*. Providencia, Santiago: Editorial Cuarto Propio, 2000; Raquel Olea and Olga Grau. *Volver a La Memoria* (Santiago, Chile: LOM Ediciones, 2001); Macarena Gómez-Barris, *Where Memory Dwells: Culture and State Violence in Chile* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); Florencia E. Mallon, *Courage Tastes of Blood: The Mapuche Community of Nicolás Ailío and the Chilean State, 1906-2001* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), Claudio Javier Barrientos, "Emblems and Narratives of the Past: The Cultural Cosntruction of Memories and Violence in Peasant Communities of Southern Chile, 1970-2000." PhD Diss. (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 2003); Lessie Jo Frazier, *Salt in the Sand: Memory and the Nation-State in Chile, 1890 to the present* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).

[30] See especially Gómez-Barris, *Where Memory Dwells*; Stern, *Reckoning with Pinochet*; Richard, et. al., *Cultural Residues.*

[31] Hillary Hiner, "Voces soterradas, violencias ignoradas: Discurso, violencia política y género en los Informes Rettig y Valech," *Latin American Research Review* 4 (Nov. 2009): 50-74.

Chileans have drawn on historical notions of gender to engage in self-making through memory work. Where other scholars have indicated that, during the transition, Chileans faced the task of living with the prolonged memories of violence, I argue that gender was central to how they managed those memories and spoke about them.

The scholarly literature on trauma, oral history, and anthropology has shown how people draw on memories from different points in time when constructing narratives. The past is not always linear, but more akin to overlapping layers of experiences. Scholarly literature on trauma has argued that people who have suffered psychic trauma do not have complete, unmediated access to the traumatic events, because they were unable to fully witness them. Traumatized people carry an intransigent memory of violence within them, but they do not have complete access to that memory.[32]Yet, as Alessandro Portelli argues, no memory, violent or nonviolent, is fully accessible, nor is any memory free from the confines of language. When people re-tell the past, their memories are shaped and modified by the years of historical change that have taken place since the events, the current context of their lives, and, as I show, the greater social discourse in which gender, sexuality, violence, and politics are intertwined.[33]

We also have little research on memory and the forms of masculinity that took center stage during the transition to democracy when the era of heroic revolutionary masculinity came to an end. Chile was not like other Latin American countries, in which regimes ended with discredited militaries and humiliated dictators. Scholarship on

---

[32]See Ruth Leys, *Trauma: A Genealogy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000); Cathy Caruth, ed., *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).

[33] Alessandro Portelli, *The Battle of Valle Giulia: Oral History and the Art of Dialogue* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), 143.

Argentina, for example, has noted the left's symbolic reclaiming of women's bodies from military regimes.[34] Similarly, in her study of post-Partition India, Veena Das argued that by mediating truth, the state truth commission imposed a masculine order on the rumor of violence.[35] I see this concept at work in Chile post-Pinochet. Research on the transition, as well as research on memory during the transition, has underscored the Concertación's emphasis on calculated reason, order, and following the letter of the law. It has also indicated the Concertación's insistence on shutting the door to the past, while human rights groups pushed against that narrative of closure, especially when regime agents remained protected by the 1978 law.[36] This dissertation explores the idea that the Concertación imposing a disciplined, masculine order upon the memory of violence during the transition.

I also draw on Veena Das's concept of "remaking" or "re-inhabiting the world," which highlights how individuals and communities have found ways to live with the memory of violence as something that is folded into everyday life, rather than something that can be expunged to the outside world and disarticulated from the self. This "descent into the ordinary," of finding solace in communities, the family, and the institutions of the everyday does not signal a lack of agency, but an exercise of it.[37] This is particularly

---

[34]Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's "Dirty War"* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).

[35] Veena Das, *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 18-38.

[36] Excellent studies have underscored the ways in which human rights groups and individuals challenged the democratic state's narrative of the past through modes such as demonstrations, vigils, art, memorials, film, and parks and museums that educate the public about the dictatorship and human rights. See Gómez-Barris, *Where Memory Dwells;* Richard, et. al., *Cultural Residues.*

[37] Veena Das, *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 1-11.

important to consider for studying societies like Chile, where violence was not completely reckoned with on an official level, and victims must continue to live in the places where violence was enacted. Chileans walk down the same streets where people were kidnapped and murdered by the state, and pass by several buildings that were formerly clandestine torture centers, hidden in broad daylight. Many still live in the homes and neighborhoods that were raided by police. They live with the possibility of crossing paths with their torturers in public.[38] As Clara Han has brilliantly shown, the urban poor continue to live with the not only the memories of physical torture, but also the consequences of neoliberalism.[39] Despite the lingering horror, people around the globe, including Chileans, find ways to re-make their worlds.

This means we must look beyond the bounds of the state and consider what people living with the memory of violence do and have done to exercise agency elsewhere. In the chapters that follow, I look at both how victims of human rights violations negotiated memories of violence both with the state and beyond it, in the realm of the everyday. Das posed the problem eloquently, "Thus, how does one not simply articulate loss through a dramatic gesture of defiance but learn to inhabit the world, or inhabit it *again*. . . .?"[40] I show that while gendered notions of the individual and collective perhaps waned in terms of party militancy and state-collective relations, many former militants reformulated those ideas and connected them to their work, community

---

[38] Marguerite Feitlowitz discusses this issue for Argentina. See: *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Terror* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

[39] Han, *Life in Debt.*

[40] Veena Das, "Violence, Knowledge, and Subjectivity," in *Violence and Subjectivity,* Veena Das, et. al (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 208.

activism, and the act of telling their stories to provide future generations with a foundation of historical memory and human rights knowledge.

Methods and Sources

A general inquiry into the historical processes that shaped gendered memories of state violence, and how Chileans not only spoke about those experiences but also rebuilt their lives in their aftermath, drove the initial phases of this project. As such, I took an approach that combined archival and ethnographic methods. I have found the insights of other disciplines, particularly anthropology, indispensible. Archival research in human rights organizations pointed me to the importance of mental health therapy and feminism for helping survivors and their families make sense of their experiences and speak about them publicly.

My findings draw on mainly on declassified regime documents, the publications and papers of mental health professionals, and the papers of feminist organizations and works of individual feminist activists. I also interviewed approximately thirty former political prisoners, family members, human rights workers, and feminists in four regions of Chile. I read these sources alongside human rights organizations' publications, regional and national newspapers and periodicals, the democratic government's truth commission reports, and other testimonial literature and government documents.

Twenty-seven oral interviews I conducted gave me insight into how Chileans who experienced state violence deployed ideas about gender to make sense of what happened to them. I conducted these interviews in four regions of Chile: Santiago (the capital) the extreme north, the island of Chiloé in the south, and Valparaíso (about 200 kilometers

from Santiago, but a city highly affected by the dictatorship). I purposefully focused on regions, since many of the current literature draws on Santiago-based experiences. My archival sources were limited to the capital: Although some human rights organizations had branches in the regions, most mental health publications and papers drew from Santiago cases. It is likely that documentation from regional centers did not survive or has not been catalogued.

Most of my interviews were with middle-class, professional men and women. They had experienced varying degrees of violence and repression. I interviewed roughly as many women as men, and most of them were in college or had just begun working at the time of the coup. Some I interviewed were younger and were teenagers in 1973. While I attempted to acquire more interviews from working-class Chileans, I was largely dependent upon the generosity of my contacts through the Museum of Memory and Human Rights. The museum provided me with contact information for some of the former political prisoners who had been interviewed for the One Hundred Interviews Project. Based on their interview transcripts, I chose people from distinct genders, socioeconomic backgrounds, experiences under the dictatorship, and regions. Only some of them returned my messages, and they gladly put me in touch with others to interview. Using this "snowball effect" allowed me to establish a certain level of trust with interviewees, as opposed to cold calling or approaching potential interviewees in public. But it also limited my subject pool to those with whom I could establish some sort of previous connection. Most of those people were middle class. But this focus also raised interesting questions about the rise of middle-class professionalism and memory with the return to democracy. Group interviews among friends sometimes also created spaces for

people to talk more openly about difficult subjects. Group interviews also revealed how narratives between friends could sometimes clash.

Many of the people I interviewed used psychoanalytic terms like "trauma," or told stories about their process of psychological recovery through mental health care. Rather than focus on those connections, I follow the throughline of how ideas about gender influenced the ways in which Chileans conceived of the relationship between the individual and the collective evident in both therapy and memory. Despite the fading of the relationship between the individual and collective on a mass, political scale that occurred during the transition to democracy, my oral histories show that Chileans deployed changing ideas about gender to tell their own stories of surviving violence and reconnecting to the collective through community activism, work, childrearing, and leaving a legacy of human rights for future generations. The oral histories thus add texture to the story of how Chileans continued to reconstruct their selfhoods and imagine the connection between the individual and the collective years after the dictatorship ended and the experience of violence had passed. They also demonstrate how complex the very act of speaking about state violence was and continues to be for Chileans.

Chapter Summaries

This dissertation is divided into two parts. The first half traces the reconstruction of the self during the dictatorship, when mental health professionals and their patients were faced with addressing the immediate, critical effects of violence. The second half focuses on the end of the dictatorship and the transition to the democracy, when Chileans

wrestled with long-term memories of violence, and psychical pain had accumulated in both individuals and the collective Chilean psyche.

Chapter one examines how, while establishing a new state based on National Security Doctrine, the Pinochet regime engaged with ideas about gender that had been shaped over the course of the twentieth century. Exploring this topic in its totality would require an entire monograph. This aim of this chapter, is to provide a backdrop for understanding the history of gender that the regime tapped into both to legitimize itself as an appropriate defense against Marxism and, as later chapters show, to break down individual political subjectivities and social bonds through violence.

Chapter two explores the creation of teams of mental health professionals within the human rights organizations that appeared in Chile in response to the dictatorship's violence. It shows how mental health professionals' methods for helping their patients reconstruct the self and denounce state violence focused on the recuperation of leftist men's agency. The chapter focuses on some of the most difficult experiences survivors voiced: sexual torture. Looking at cases of sexual torture of both men and women, the chapter demonstrates how conversations about sexual torture and reconstructing the self were framed to restore heroic revolutionary masculinity and leftist men's control over both women's bodies and their own. This, professionals argued, would return Chile to the "civilized" society it was before the "deviant" violence of the Pinochet regime.

The third chapter shows how mental health professionals focused on reconstructing the self by tapping into the notions of social citizenship grounded in the male-headed nuclear family. Professionals aimed to help men restore their senses of themselves as breadwinners and women as *compañeras* (men's companions whose

political agency derived from their supposedly natural roles as mothers and their relationships with men). But those roles were also changing as political repression and economic upheaval left many men unable to find work and thrust many women into the breadwinner position. The chapter also explores professionals' and parents' concerns for the effects of these changing family dynamics on the mental health of their children, who were both the dictatorship's most innocent victims and the heirs to the democracy their parents were fighting for. These concerns drew on longstanding critiques of capitalism's insidious effects on the family. Damaged children were the embodiment of those social ills.

Chapter four shows how, in the mid-to-late 1980s, feminism began to influence how mental health professionals conceived of selfhood, and especially how they conceptualized women's militancy in terms of political agency. Feminists challenged the idea of women as compañeras and drew attention to the long history of men's domination over women in private and public. They traced the ways in which the dictatorship's militarization of society exacerbated those conditions. They also confronted the sexism in the left and insisted that there would be no true democracy without women's rights. The chapter outlines the basic philosophies and events leading to the formation of the feminist movement in Chile as it congealed in opposition to Pinochet. It shows how mental health professionals drew on feminist writings and principles to re-conceive ideas about reconstructing the self in terms of women militants' resilience, gender inequality in the family, and sexism within the opposition.

After a brief general introduction to the second half of the dissertation, I move to chapter five. Events such as the 1988 plebiscite, the opening of the truth commissions in

1990 and 2004, and general uncertainty of the transition to democracy caused many people who had been affected by state violence and repression to re-experience symptoms of psychological pain and seek treatment or remember, for the first time, their experiences of torture from years before. In this chapter, I ask how thinking about gender and what professionals called "chronic pain" can help us understand, to an extent, why people chose to speak about violence or remain silent. I explore both the inadvertent and insidious ways in which the state erased some experiences from official memory.

These questions set the stage for chapters six and seven, which focus on oral interviews I conducted with former political prisoners and human rights workers. Through the story of Arturo, an attorney who worked for the regional branch of the democratic government in 1990, chapter six explores notions of middle-class masculinity constructed through memories of the exercise of expertise and reason, as compared to acts of violence, heroism, and sacrifice. It navigates the tension between the reliance on reason and order that guided middle-class professionals like Arturo and the Concertción during the uncertain the transition to democracy, and the disorderliness of death and memory that defied that sense of rationality.

The seventh and final chapter offers a feminist analysis of a conversation between three women—Sylvia, Alicia, and Oriana—who were imprisoned together in the 1970s. The chapter explores lessons Alicia and Sylvia offered about maintaining bodily autonomy in the face of not only dictatorship, but also patriarchal power as it changed over time. Their narratives of strength and perseverance collided with Oriana's memories of sexual torture and struggles with recovering sexual intimacy. Oriana's narrative, though not one of a "rebel" transgressing gender norms, still reveals the relationship

between the individual, the body, sexuality, and collective violence. The chapter connects the women's narratives to themes discussed earlier in the dissertation, such as the regime's policies that tightened control over women's bodies, gender inequality within the opposition, feminist analyses of patriarchal power, and the moral dilemma of "*delatando*" or "squealing" under torture. It shows how the women created narratives that portrayed a personal sense of autonomy and argued for collective gender equality and human rights.

Chapter 1

"The Best Weapon against Communism": The Family, National Security, and the Gender Order under Pinochet

> The concept of the family as the fundamental core of Christian society is compatible with the junta's Declaration of Principles. Many are categorizing that declaration as rhetorical. In reality, it is not rhetorical, and here it should be consecrated. In my opinion, as said Mr. Guzmán, it is the best weapon against Communism and the best demonstration that the state considers Communism an essentially perverse concept.—Admiral José Toribio Merino, 1976.[1]

Admiral José Merino, the member of the military junta representing the Navy, made this proclamation during a secret meeting of the junta in 1976. He, General Augusto Pinochet, General Gustavo Leigh, and aides and constitutional advisors had gathered to discuss the language of the new constitution, which was eventually ratified in 1980. Voicing a view grounded in classical liberalism, Leigh opposed a tenet of the constitution draft that stated that the family was the base of the nation and would be protected by the state. While he did not disagree with the principle of the family as central to Chilean society, Leigh contended that it was inappropriate to add an explicit statement about the family in the constitution. He argued that instead, the notion of the family as the nation's foundation should inform the constitutional acts implicitly. The other junta members agreed that the family—the heterosexual, male-headed nuclear

[1] "El concepto de la familia como núcleo fundamental de la sociedad Cristiana está de acuerdo con la declaración de principios de la junta. Mucha está catalogando esa declaración como declamatoria. En realidad, no es declamatoria y aquí debe tener su consagración. En mi opinión, como dice el Señor Guzmán, es la mayor arma contra el comunismo y la mayor demostracion (sic) de que el Estado considera al comunismo como concepto esencialmente perverso. República de Chile, Junta del Gobierno, Acta No. 280-A, 3 de septiempre, 1976, Biblioteca Nacional del Congreso, http://historiapolitica.bcn.cl/historia_legislativa/visorPdf?id=10221.3/34505#f=3,p=1,t=280, Accessed January 27, 2015. All translations mine unless otherwise noted.

family—was a key weapon against Marxism. Merino, echoing the sentiments of primary constitutional advisor Jaime Guzmán, tied Marxism and sexual deviancy together by contending Marxism was "an essentially perverse concept."[2] Merino reminded Leigh that the statement aligned with the junta's 1974 "Declaration of Principles," which stated its intent to return Chile to Christian morals.[3] The constitution, he maintained, would solidify those principles.

As an answer to supposed perversion of Marxism, the regime promoted a concept of the neoliberal self as a whole self. Ideas about gender, family in relation to the self undergirded that notion. The state' role was to foster the conditions for citizens to develop their full potential as productive contributors to the economic and social life of the nation, and that would take place through the family. The state should not, however, intervene too much or too directly, for that would weaken individuals psychologically and hamper their growth and participation as full family members and citizens. In sum, the junta sought to construct a narrative that it would restore Chile to a longstanding democratic tradition grounded in the law and liberal notions of rights. Marxism was key threat against that narrative, and ideas about gender and the heterosexual, male-headed nuclear family framed debates about how to contend with Marxism.

Gender mattered to the regime, and not in an implicit or peripheral sense. Declassified minutes of the meetings of the junta reveal that ideas about the male-headed nuclear family and the gender roles one played as part of that unit informed the junta's debates about how it should define itself, the role Pinochet played as self-proclaimed

---

[2] Ibid.

[3] Renato Cristi, *El pensamiento político de Jaime Guzmán: una biografía intellectual* (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2011), 51.

president of the nation, and what course the regime should take in eradicating Marxism inside the home and out. But the centrality of the male-headed nuclear family to state building and notions of rights was hardly new. This chapter will trace the major trends in gender and state consolidation through the twentieth century in Chile, and then explore how the Pinochet regime reconfigured those concepts—which Marxism supposedly endangered—to establish its own legitimacy as a protector of the nation, the family, and liberal notions of rights.

Gender and State Consolidation in Twentieth-Century Chile

A well-established literature has shown that populist states in twentieth-century Latin America were built on negotiation and compromise, and that states looked to pre-existing gender ideologies to secure support from key constituencies, such as working class men and women.[4] Early in the twentieth century, several Latin American states, including Chile, pulled production and industries inward and relied less on imports (a system called import-substitution-industrialization, or ISI) to bolster their national economies and give Latin American states a chance to "catch up" with the rest of the world. Taylorism and Fordism also became popularized as models of factory work, and the Fordist family model of a male-headed nuclear family gained resonance as the model of the working-class family.[5] Women, no longer working purely in the home as part of

[4] Mary Kay Vaughan, "Modernizing Patriarchy: State Policies, Rural Households, and Women in Mexico, 1930-1940," in *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America*, edited by Elizabeth Dore and Maxine Molyneux (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 194-214; Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt, *Gendered Compromises: Political Cultures and the State in Chile, 1920-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000)*;* Thomas Miller Klubock, *Contested Communities: Class, Gender, and Politics in Chile's El Teniente Copper Mine, 1904-1950* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998); Barbara Weinstein, *For Social Peace in Brazil: Industrialists and the Remaking of the Working Class in São Paulo, 1920-1964* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

the rural putting-out system, began to populate the shop floors of urban factories. Male trade unionists feared working-class women's exposure to sexual danger and susceptibility to prostitution, as the work of Elizabeth Hutchison has shown for Chile.[6] In the mid-1920s and 1930s, Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay changed their civil codes to allow women to gain more control over their own earnings and the assets they brought to marriage, and to permit women to acquire work without their husbands' permission.

In the 1920s, social reformers mapped the health of the nation onto the bodies of poor women, especially those with children. Karin Rosemblatt demonstrates how ideas about honor, dating from the colonial period and rearticulated through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, were interwoven with discourses on race and sexuality and became the basis of the rising biopolitical state in Chile. Under the popular front coalition headed by Pedro Aguirre Cerda in the 1930s, social reformers sought to revitalize urban workers —whom, reformers believed, should not live in squalor and overpopulated homes or produce sickly children--through hygiene programs in order to improve the health and strength of the national body. This focus on outward conditions resonated with Neo-Lamarackian ideas about the environment's role in shaping race.[7] Reformers perceived single mothers as the main impediment to improving children's health. Single mothers, furthermore, signified sexual promiscuity and a lack of honor, and their children

---

[5] Barbara Weinstein, *For Social Peace in Brazil: Industrialists and the Remaking of the Working Class in São Paulo, 1920-1964* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press); Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt, "Welfare States, Neoliberal Regimes, and International Political Economy: Gender Politics of Latin America in Global Context," *Journal of Women's History* 25:4 (2013): 149-162.

[6]Elizabeth Quay Hutchison, *Labors Appropriate to their Sex*: *Gender, Labor, and Politics in Urban Chile* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).

[7]Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt, "Sexuality and Biopower in Chile and Latin America," *Political Power and Social Theory* 15 (2002): 229-262; See also Nancy Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Nation, and Gender in Latin America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

were undeniable signs of illegitimacy and thereby the degeneration of the *raza chilena*. By focusing on preventing women from engaging in prostitution and keeping them economically dependent on male family members, state policies fed into working-class men's fears that associated women's waged work with sexual danger.[8]

Under the Chilean popular fronts, the state drew the working classes—a crucial element of class struggle—into its reformist project by achieving common ground through reinforcing the male-headed nuclear family. The state advocated for a working-wage that provided working-class, married men enough income to support their families. To receive benefits, however, the state required men to refrain from behaviors elites associated with working-class men, such as beating their wives, over-indulging in alcohol, and spending their money only on themselves. Working-class women accessed citizenship by dialoguing with state agents, such as social workers (a new profession for women) regarding welfare benefits, keeping a hygienic home, and being thrifty consumers and exemplary wives and mothers.[9]

In 1964, the center-left Christian democratic government of Eduardo Frei began a comprehensive agrarian reform program that redistributed large parcels of land owned by the wealthy to smaller parcels for small landowners and peasants. Allende's Popular Unity government further stimulated the reform as part of its overall goal of achieving socialism through democratic means. As Heidi Tinsman has shown, reconfiguring gender relations was crucial element of reform, which was the most comprehensive land

---

[8]Ibid., 243-259.

[9] Rosemblatt, *Gendered Compromises*, 1-26; Thomas Miller Klubock, *Contested Communities: Class, Gender, and Politics in Chile's El Teniente Copper Mine, 1904-1950* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998); María Angélica Illanes, *Cuerpo y sangre de la política. La construcción histórica de las visitadoras sociales, Chile, 1887-1940* (Santiago: LOM, 2006).

redistribution in Latin America accomplished through nonviolent means. The governments succeeded in dismantling the patriarchal order of landowner-peasant, and to an extent, programs fostered greater collaboration between husbands and wives to ensure the success of small farms. They maintained the basic structure of the male-headed nuclear family, however, by providing credits and land titles to men. Both the Christian Democrat and Popular Unity governments focused on transforming peasant men from peons to managers of their own farms and households, as well as political actors. But stressing cooperation between husbands and wives also allowed many women to stake their own claims within the home and become more politically active in their communities.[10]

Frei's government also began family planning programs that, on the one hand, promoted the government's official line on gender mutualism and provided women (including rural women and urban working class women) greater control over planning their pregnancies. But on the other hand, as Jadwiga Pieper has shown, population control signified modernization and development in line with a North American "civilizing" mission to control populations in underdeveloped countries. Doctors and physicians from the U.S. and Chile led the charge, and the Chilean government received funds from the United States government and private investors to fund birth control clinics. For Allende, however, population control signified U.S. imperialism. He limited the use of foreign grants to fund birth control and focused on national funding.[11]

---

[10] Heidi Tinsman, *Parnters in Conflict: The Politics of Gender, Sexuality, and Labor in the Chilean Agrarian Reform, 1950-1973* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 1-19.

[11] Jadwiga Pieper Mooney, *The Politics of Motherhood: Maternity and Women's Rights in Twentieth-Century Chile* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), 71-133.

While opening women's access to birth control, women's needs were secondary to the Frei and Allende governments. That is not to say that they were ignored. But as scholars of birth control elsewhere in the Americas have argued, with development of the contraceptive pill and other methods, scientists, doctors, reformers, and governments often used women's bodies—especially the bodies of poor women and women of color—to solve greater social problems of poverty and overpopulation. During the cold war, the U.S. was particularly concerned about preventing overpopulation in the hemisphere, because they saw population increase and poverty as fuel for the growth of communism. Women's bodies were the spaces upon which imperial, class, and racial politics were enacted. But women actively sought contraceptives as a means to gain some control over their bodies and their choice to bear children.[12] Frei, drawing on the cold war discourse of population control, turned family planning into a patriotic duty: Married women could become the nation's saviors by using contraceptives and controlling the population and thereby alleviating poverty and hunger. Under the UP, birth control became part of a discourse of U.S. imperialism, but also part of mothers' rights in the larger panorama of the peaceful road to socialism.

The UP parliament maintained that a strong nuclear family was the foundation of a society free from the vicissitudes of capitalism. In 1973, it created the Ministry of the Family, charged with providing the financing and infrastructure necessary to support families. Goals included making strides toward achieving increased rights for women, reform of children's homes, and care for the elderly. In a 1971 parliament meeting,

---

[12] See, for example, Dorothy Roberts, *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty* (New York, Vintage, 1998), 56-150, and Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 1-21, 109-142.

legislators emphasized their concerns about children's welfare. They discussed prostitution, alcoholism, and delinquency – all fates of children who grew up in state homes. Senator Luís Gustavino proclaimed that in a capitalistic society, any uncertain turn of events would set in motion a whirlwind of disaster for the nuclear family. Capitalism was a constant anathema to a harmonious and secure family life. In a special session of Congress in 1972, he argued that they, "Marxists, are convinced that consolidating the nuclear family is the only possibility that can bring about the construction of a new society that ends the essential foundation that characterizes and constitutes capitalism."[13] Protecting the nuclear family was essential to consolidating a socialist society, free from the socioeconomic inequalities and precariousness that capitalism wrought upon society, and especially the working classes and the poor. The parliament did recognize the need to aid families that did not fit into that framework, particularly women-headed households. Members compared households led by single mothers, sisters caring for their nieces and nephews, and grandmothers raising their grandchildren to matriarchal households in the Caribbean. But it was clear that while the UP intended to provide aid and programs for women-led households, it privileged the male-headed nuclear family.[14]

The Ministry of the Family implemented a large-scale pilot program that included opening public laundries, day care, and kitchens, to lift the burden of household work

[13] Gustavino: "Y es efectivo que nosotros, marxistas, estamos convencidos que no es sino la posibilidad de consolidar ese núcleo familiar el que pueda traer la construcción de una nueva sociedad en que se termine con la base fundamental que caracteriza y constituye el capitalismo." República de Chile, Cámara de Diputados, Legislatura Extraordinaria, Sesión 23, December 1, 1971. Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional,http://historiapolitica.bcn.cl/historia_legislativa/visorPdf?id=10221.3/18882#f=2,p=1,t=ministerio de la familia, Accessed January 26, 2015.

[14] Ibid. The Cámara de Diputados and the Senate discussed the creation of the Ministry of the Family in numerous sessions between 1971 and 1973.

from women. The government planned to open credit lines for families to purchase household items, provide industrial training for women, facilitating women's ability to do factory work from home, and subsidizing a half day shift. All of these measures intended to "facilitate women's ability to work without completely disregarding her obligations as a mother [and] all the necessary legal modifications to give married women their full civil abilities."[15] As scholars have argued, while the UP made strides toward eliminating inequalities between men and women, its notion of the Chilean woman as "mother, citizen and worker," implied that women as political actors were defined by men—the citizen-workers who would lead the revolution.[16] Allende held men responsible for teaching their wives, girlfriends, and daughters about the politics of the revolution, and he praised women for their capacity for self-sacrifice and their upstanding morals—traits they could teach their husbands.[17]

Indeed, Allende indicated men and women's unique contributions, which, deployed together, would make a successful revolution..[18] He highlighted these contrasts in his last speech, which he delivered on September 11, 1973, as the armed forces attacked La Moneda presidential palace and Allende prepared for his death. He addressed Chilean men—the protagonists in creating the Socialist utopia that was on the brink of destruction—and women, their faithful companions whose emotional support made that project possible:

---

[15] UP, 1971:2, quoted in Teresa Valdés, *Centros de Madres, 1973-1989. Sólo discaplinamiento?* (Santiago: FLACSO, 1989), 24. Translation mine.

[16] Mensaje Presidencial 21/5/1973:9, quoted in Valdés, *Centros de Madres,* 26. Translation mine.

[17] Tinsman, *Partners in Conflict,* 209-246.

[18] Ibid. See also: Sandra McGee Deutch, "Gender and Sociopolitical Change in Latin America," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 71:2 (May 1991): 292-304.

> I address myself above all the modest woman of our land, to the peasant woman who believed in us, the working woman who worked harder, to the mother who knew of our concern for her children. I address myself to the patriotic professionals of our land, to those professionals who were working against the sedition carried out by the professional, class-ridden schools that defend the advantages capitalist society gives them.
>
> I address myself to the youth, to those who sang, who gave their joy and spirit to the struggle. I address myself to the Chilean man: to the worker, the peasant, the intellectual, to those who will be persecuted by the fascism that has been present in our country for many hours now. Those terrorists who have been blowing up bridges, cutting railway lines, destroying oil and gas pipelines—in the face of the silence of those who have had the obligation to raise their voices—history will judge them.[19]

Allende's haunting speech foretold the persecution that thousands would face under Augusto Pinochet's military dictatorship. He appealed to the gendered senses of self that Chileans had crafted. Allende identified "the man of Chile" as "the worker, the farmer, the intellectual." He noted professionals' ardent work crafting a just society through professional and civic associations. The middle-class professional, like Allende himself, had worked over the course of the twentieth century to ally the middle-and working- classes for the project of socialism, a dream Allende observed was on its way toward obliteration. The imagery of the destruction of bridges, railroad tracks, and oil and gas pipelines resonated with the impending obliteration of workers, who were the backbone of Marxism. Implying that women's political agency complemented men's

[19] This translation found in "Salvador Allende: Last Word Transmitted by Radio Magallanes, September 11, 1973," in *Chile: The Other September 11: An Anthology of Reflections on the Coup* (New York: Ocean Press, 2006), 10-11. Original audio of the speech can be found at the website of the Chilean National Library's digital history project: http://www.memoriachilena.cl/602/w3-article-82594.html, Accessed 26 January, 2015.

uniquely and equally, rather than operating as its own independent and important force. Allende thanked the "modest woman," who always had faith in "us," which may have meant the Popular Unity government or the male-dominated political institutions and workforce as a whole. He inferred a recognition of the double duty that women, particularly peasant and working-class women, performed as mothers and laborers, and appealed to their political agency as mothers who engaged with the state's programs for children. Many women were more politically active, and the state attempted to lift their double burden and encourage collaboration between husbands and wives. But women as political subjects were still largely defined by their relation to men and within a system that conceived of citizenship as masculine, even if that conception were inadvertent.[20]

Feminists within the UP advocated for women's emancipation or liberation, which Virginia Vidal defined as "not being superior to men, but equal in their responsibilities and rights."[21] Vidal's book, *Women's Emancipation*, was published by the UP press, Quimantú, and followed the story of Doña María, a working-class housewife charged with all the household tasks in addition to raising her children. She learned about gendered double standards that women faced, especially working-class and rural women, and the social expectations that women become mothers and sacrifice education, working, sexual gratification, and control over their own bodies. She also learned about the history of feminism in Chile. Vidal advocated the use of the contraceptive pill in order for women to take charge of planning their pregnancies and avoiding dangerous abortions. She also noted that as long as it remained illegal, poor

[20] In addition to Tinsman and Valdés, see Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 77-115.

[21] Virginia Vidal, *La emancipación de la mujer* (Santiago: Quimantú, 1972), 5.

women would continue to die from attempted abortions. The book included a photograph from a women's march for abortion rights in the U.S. Vidal discussed the sexuality of proletarian women and men, revealing that 68 percent of women were frigid and 50 percent of men had some form of sexual dysfunction. She cited reports from doctors and scientists who warned that, "Psychical participation is fundamental, because it can block the sexual impulse," and "[w]omen's liberation and sexual liberation are linked to another revolution, that of society as a whole."[22] She connected that analysis to Friedrich Engles, who argued that production and reproduction drove the course of history. Vidal concluded, "Work and sex are the decisive factors of History."[23] She tied women's sexual liberation to the UP's approach to women's emancipation: It would occur along with the social liberation of Marxism.

Young people around the world, as part of a countercultural movement in the 1960s and 1970s, rebelled against established social norms and hierarchies. Some young people organized into political groups: the humanist Siloists (named for their Argentine founder), as well radical leftist groups like the MIR, departed from the gender and sexual politics of the Popular Unity, and often clashed politically with the Old Left. Siloists embraced the sexual freedom and drug use that flew in the face of the old guard's discipline and order. This younger generation of leftist militants questioned some of the old guard's gender norms, in addition to challenging their approach to politics. At the same time, this younger generation of militants was sexist in its own way.[24]

---

[22] Quoted in Vidal, 52.

[23] Vidal, 52.

[24] Patrick Barr-Melej, "Siloismo and the Self in Allende's Chile" Youth, 'Total Revolution,' and the Roots of the Humanist Movement," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 86:4 (2006): 747-784. For

Psychiatrists and anthropologists expressed concern for university students' drug use and disheveled appearance. The 1970-1971 edition of the *Journal of Psychiatry,* published by the University of Chile, featured research that compared the attitudes and behaviors of university students and high school students from the working class community of Puente Alto. The study, conducted by students and supervised by their professors as part of a joint seminar in psychiatry and anthropology, concluded that male university students' fashion consisted of "dirtiness, maximum disorder of dress, or if not, then still that air that old clothes give off, either by natural causes or artificial means."[25] The high school students, however, kept a short haircut and did not appear unkempt. Drugs, however, appeared to be a problem for high school students, because they lacked other forms of entertainment in their neighborhoods. Some students, however, spoke about a feeling of bodily liberation that came from marijuana use: They described sensations of feeling light, heavy, drunk, dizzy, present in the moment, or laughing a lot.[26] Eric Zolov has argued that we can think about cultural aspects of the New Left, such as forms of dress and drug use, as forms of rebellion like we think of political militancy. Adopting a disheveled appearance and smoking marijuana, even if not directly

---

more on the 1960s, counterculture, and politics in Chile, see Brenda Elsey, *Citizens and Sportsmen: Fútbol and Politics in Twentieth-Century Chile* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012), 207-241. On cultural approaches to studying the Old and New Left in Latin America, see Eric Zolov, "Expanding our Conceptual Horizons: The Shift from and Old to a New Left in Latin America," *A Contra corriente*: *A Journal on Social History and Literature in Latin America* 5:2 (Winter 2008): 47-73, http://www.ncsu.edu/acontracorriente/winter_08/documents/Zolov.pdf, Accessed January 26, 2015.

[25] "Manuel Quintana and Mario Varela, "El Quehacer docente y la investigación psiquiátrica," in *Revista de psiquiatría clínica* IX-X, (1970-1971): 122.

[26] Ibid., 126-127.

connected to a political ideology, were ways of rebelling against traditional forms of authority and hierarchy.[27]

Florencia Mallon has shown that the MIR built an image of revolutionary masculinity that drew from both romantic images of Che Guevara and the emerging "hippie" movement of the 1960s. These aesthetics, especially Guevara's *barbudo* (a bearded, long-haired, self-sacrificing "warrior-victim") challenged bourgeois lifestyles, as well as gendered practices and images from the working classes, Socialist and Communist parties, and the left in general. The MIR leadership's challenges to notions about working-class men's moral and familial responsibility, Mallon posits, may have discouraged some who built their political and social agency around adherence to party discipline and values to embrace the MIR's more radical principles, such as the use of arms to achieve a Marxist state. Those aesthetics, which congealed the image of the *mirista* and invoked the aura of Marxist Cuba, also signaled an imminent threat for the regime. The body of the *barbudo* represented a danger to national security, and the regime sought to break it down.[28]

Throughout the twentieth century, Chilean governing elites drew the working classes into citizenship through shared the shared idea that the male-headed nuclear family was the foundation of society, and the state had a responsibility to mitigate the

---

[27] Eric Zolov, "Expanding our Conceptual Horizons: The Shift from an Old to a New Left in Latin America," *A Contra corriente: Una revista de historia social y literature de América Latina* 5:2 (Winter 2008): 47-73.

[28] Florencia Mallon, "*Barbudos,* Warriors, and *Rotos*: The MIR, Masculinity, and Power in the Chilean Agrarian Reform, 1965-74. In *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America,* edited by Matthew C. Gutmann, 179-215. On youth, sexuality, and the body in the revolutionary left elsewhere in Latin America, see: Valeria Manzano, *The Age of Youth in Argentina: Culture, Politics, and Sexuality from Perón to Videla* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2014), Victoria Langland, "Birth Control Pills and Molotov Cocktails: Reading Sex and Revolution in 1968 Brazil," in *In from the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 308-350.

effects of capitalism on the family. Youth involved in the countercultural movement of the 1960s and 1970s rebelled against those traditional notions of hierarchy, discipline, and adherence to authority, but reproduced ideas about gender inequality.

Saving Chile and Fostering the Neoliberal Self

After 1973, the junta drew on prior notions of gender while constructing the constitution. The regime equated the Marxist left with counterculture and sought to restore social order, at the center of which was the male-headed nuclear family. The junta justified the military's intervention into civilian life, paradoxically, drawing on older notions of liberal rights and creating notions of neoliberal selfhood. Longstanding notions of gender and the male-headed nuclear family helped the interventionism of National Security Doctrine and the laissez-faire ideology of neoliberalism fit together, if uncomfortably.

The junta contended that the welfare state had weakened Chileans' capacity for self-sufficiency. The members, along with constitutional advisors, claimed they would restore order to Chile based on legalism and constitutionalism that had made it exceptional within Latin America.[29] After the military government in the 1930s, the Chilean military subordinated itself to civilian politics. Generals like René Schneider, who would be assassinated in the weeks preceding the coup, established that standard with their ardent constitutionalism and insistence on refraining from civilian affairs. According to Pamela Constable and Arturo Valenzuela, at the same time, many civilians

[29] See: República de Chile, Junta del Gobierno, Acta No. 280-A, 3 de septiembre, 1976, Biblioteca Nacional del Congreso, http://historiapolitica.bcn.cl/historia_legislativa/visorPdf?id=10221.3/34505#f=3,p=1,t=280, Accessed January 27, 2015.

also considered the armed forces "as a fallback for slow or rebellious sons—a necessary but subservient institution manned by brutish, intellectually inferior beings."[30] Pinochet, like most military officers and the rank and file, considered the constant debate and compromise that characterized civilian politics as pompous and unproductive. After World War II, however, the influence of National Security Doctrine and anti-Communist sentiment crept into the minds of some young officers, including Pinochet.[31]

While Pinochet, the junta members, and their supporters, followed the new Doctrine of National Security, which politicized the military and called for greater military intervention into civilian affairs, the motivation to restore a constitutional tradition and return Chile back to civilian authority also sprang from historical military ideologies—even if those were often in tension with National Security Doctrine.[32] The doctrine's main principle hinged upon the military's duty to intervene in civilian politics if the threat of communism became imminent. Gradually, factions of the Chilean military became politicized, including those that had previously adhered to the standard of refraining from politics and civilian matters, either due to lack of interest, respect for the constitution, or both. When the Communist party was outlawed in 1948, Pinochet was stationed at the Pisagua concentration camp, where many party members were imprisoned. There, and during his assignment at a coal mine preventing a strike, Pinochet decided that communism was a threat to the social order, and that communists may have

---

[30] Pamela Constable and Arturo Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies: Chile Under Pinochet* (New York, Norton, 1993), 42.

[31] Ibid., 43-44.

[32] On the U.S. and National Security Doctrine in Latin America, see: Lars Schoultz, *Natonal Security and United States Policy toward Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); Paul W. Zagorski, *Democracy vs. National Security: Civil-Military Relations in Latin America* (Boulder: Lynne Reiner Publishers, 1992).

seemed disciplined and well-intentioned, but they incited hatred among the middle and working classes. He solidified these ideas as a student and instructor at the War Academy from 1949-1952. Indeed, in many of the junta meetings, he charged communism and "class struggle" with fomenting chaos, violence, and bitterness among the classes.[33]

The junta did not seize power with an economic plan to counter Marxism. That came later, after the "Chicago Boys" convinced Pinochet in 1975 to adopt an accelerated form of neoliberalism that would thrust Chile into the free market. Between 1956 and 1961, approximately 150 conservative Chilean students associated with *gremialismo* (a political movement that opposed the left and center and advocated for guilds to mediate between individuals and the state) traveled to the University of Chicago on U.S. government-sponsored fellowships and adopted Milton Friedman and Arnold Harberger's neoliberal principles. These included the idea that the free market was the cornerstone of a solid economy, that economic events could be understood rationally, and that the reasoning applied to understanding economics could be applied to other facets of society. Many conservatives and businessmen in Chile and Latin America who detested Marxism did not embrace free market economics. Rather, they believed that tariffs and other protectionist policies helped Latin America catch up with the rest of the developed world, and they were wary of stripping those protections away. The Chicago Boys battled with Christian Democrats and businessmen who advocated a gradual reversal of Allende's economic policies. Pinochet and the junta followed a gradual approach through 1974, but after a visit from Milton Friedman in 1975 and a debate among his economic advisors, the Chicago Boys' drastic approach to the free market won Pinochet over. Friedman and

---

[33] Constable and Valenzuela, 43-44.

the Chicago Boys sold Pinochet a vision of rapid modernization, which appealed to Pinochet's ego and desire to distinguish Chile among Latin American countries and the rest of the Western world.[34]

The narrative constructed in the 1980 constitution that promoted Chile as a modern, orderly, liberal nation in opposition to a chaotic nation plagued by Marxism reflects this vision. The notion that Marxism fostered disorder, whereas neoliberalism, expressed in terms of individualism, promoted order, provided the conceptual framework. In a secret meeting in 1976 (the same year Pinochet began implementing neoliberal reforms), Pinochet, the junta, and the constitutional committee debated some of the major tenets of the constitution. They deliberated the language they would use to express their ideas about the relationship between the individual, the state, and society. The first two acts of the constitution clearly named the armed forces as the head of government, charged with fomenting national unity (which they argued the UP had destroyed) and providing space for all citizens to enact their natural rights.

That space, however, was within the limits of an "authoritarian democracy," necessary for preventing the chaos of "social antagonisms." The junta and constitutional committee debated the use of the term, "*bien común,"* or common good, which the constitution claimed the state should promote. Jaime Guzmán, the principal author of the constitution, indicated that they should be careful to express this concept in such a way that it did not come across as "totalitarian collectivism," that was, to Pinochet's

---

[34]Constable and Valenzuela, 166-172; Peter Winn, "The Pinochet Years," in *Victims of the Chilean Miracle: Workers and Neoliberalism in the Pinochet Era, 1973-2002* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 25-29. See also: Juan Gabriel Valdés, *Pinochet's Economists: The Chicago School in Chile* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Carlos Huneeus, *El regimen de Pinochet* (Santiago: Sudamericana, 2001); Eduardo Silva, *The State and Capital in Chile: Business Elites, Technocrats, and Market Economics* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996).

constitutional and political advisor Guzmán, communism. Rather, the common good to which Guzmán claimed to refer, and which was written into the constitution, was framed by liberal individualism. He also claimed that the state had the obligation to protect the security of individuals, which linked directly to national security. He lamented that many had tried to discredit that policy as totalitarian. Renato Cristi has posited that Guzmán understood authority not as power vested in one person, but in a series of acts. Authority was, for him, necessary to guide the individual and society (which he conceived of as individuals in relation to each other) toward the common good, to which humans were not naturally inclined. But as Cristi argued, it is difficult to envision the authority that Guzmán proposed without a person behind the actions.[35]

The junta and constitutional committee discussed liberal notions of the rights-bearing self as they laid out the acts of the constitution. They spoke in terms of the development and protection of the "*ser*," or "being," as well as the difference between the concepts of the individual and the person. This was Guzmán's doctrine, which appeared in the 1974 "Declaration of the Principles of the Junta." As a metaphysical concept, the ser transcends both society and state: neither can exist without human beings (*seres humanos*). The rights of man, therefore, come before the state. Guzmán's philosophy was reflected in the he fourth act of the constitution, which stated that, based on Christian humanist ideas about man and society, the ser was "endowed with a spiritual dignity and transcendental calling, from which derive natural rights of the person that are superior to those of the State. . . ."[36] That conception seemed to correspond to historical, liberal

[35] Cristi, *El pensamiento político de Jaime Guzmán,* 51.

[36] Acta 280-A, 1976, 3.

notions of the individual as unique and autonomous and bestowed with natural rights that the state was obligated to protect.[37]

The constitution's declaration of the individual's rights seemed to establish a social contract that obligated the state to protect the individual and society's well being, but it disproportionately vested that responsibility in the individual. Meanwhile, the state maintained the authority to restrict individual freedoms. Leigh, in fact, argued that the constitution could not guarantee freedom of association while at the same time, the regime restricted the political parties and unions. Guzmán, however, contended that such restrictions were appropriate because in a state of emergency, it was the state's prerogative to restrict constitutional rights. Guzmán and junta members, at least in the written minutes of the secret meetings, portrayed policies arising from national security doctrine as rooted in liberal notions of the state's responsibility to protect the individual and the collective, rather than mindless totalitarianism, which they connected to Marxism.

At the same time, the junta grappled with what that would mean for constructing a modern constitution that had to contend with issues of human rights, especially during a time in which the regime was under international scrutiny for human rights abuses. The junta debated the connection between the physical and psychological when determining personhood and the state's responsibility to protect the "integrity of the person."[38] The constitutional committee, seeking to be more "modern and detailed" sought to re-phrase that constitutional clause by adding a psychological aspect to individual protections,

---

[37] Cristi, *El pensamiento político de Jaime Guzmán,* 52-53.

[38] Acta 280-A, 1976.

claiming that men (*los hombres*, language referencing people in general but gendered male) had "the right to life and physical and psychological integrity." Pinochet, however, argued that psychological integrity was "very relative."[39]This was a particular issue concerning the state's responsibility not to use "undue pressure or torture" on prisoners.[40] Ortúzar argued that the psychological aspect was necessary, because totalitarian regimes in other parts of the world (he was not referring to Pinochet's regime as totalitarian) used psychological tortures that were worse than physical ones. General Mendoza, a junta member, countered that the state would need a psychiatrist to determine the prisoner's mental state, since it would be easy for prisoners to feign mental illness. Pinochet, however, was concerned that any person's imprisonment would be open to interpretation as a threat to his or her psychological integrity.[41]

Guzmán and Ortúzar insisted that to explicitly protect a person's psychological integrity in addition to physical correlated to the Declaration of Human Rights and safeguarded Chileans against future regimes. At the same time, the state should maintain a balance between law and punishment; that is, the punishment should fit the crime. Guzmán had come to this philosophical conclusion after discussions with a Dr. Roa, most likely Armando Roa, who was a leading psychiatrist in Chile and head of the psychiatry program at the Catholic University.[42] Roa argued that man was comprised of the physical, psychological, and spiritual. The spiritual, however, was separate from the psyche: It was something the state could neither harm nor protect, unlike the physical or

---

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

[42] http://medicina.uc.cl/psiquiatria/historia, Accessed January 26, 2015.

psychological. Guzman and the constitutional committee, therefore, decided to use, "the most technical, modern, and precise language possible," by adding the psychological aspect to the integrity of the person. After all the discussion and debate, however, Pinochet had the final word: the language would remain ambiguous, but the integrity of the person implied the philosophy laid out by Dr. Roa and Guzmán. But while the final reading, "the right to life and the integrity of one's person, notwithstanding the validity of the punishments established by law," muddled the state's philosophy of the person it would protect, it clarified that the state reserved the right to punish those who broke the law. The regime thus gave itself interpretive power over the ambiguous elements of the clause.[43]

The debate over citizens' rights to life and physical and psychological integrity led to another point on rights important for the regime to clarify: the right not to suffer "pressure or *tormentos*." The junta and constitutional committee debated whether to redact the word "tormentos" (alluding to torture), which some of them interpreted as sounding "very intense."[44] Some contended that such safeguards against the tactics of future regimes needed to be included in the constitution. Others offered that including protections against torture would improve the image of the regime, which had been scrutinized for violating that very right. General Leigh, however, had a different take: He contended that leaving the protection against torture in the constitution might call more attention to the regime and ignite more criticism from the international community and "the Marxists." On the other had, the likelihood that the general public knew the word

---

[43] Acta 280-A, 1976.

[44] Ibid.

was in the original constitution was small; therefore, erasing it would be a more prudent political move.[45]

These deliberations, made in secret meetings, demonstrate that junta and constitutional committee made calculated decisions about the language and definitions about citizenship and rights in a way that provided what seemed to be the framework of a democratic society and notion of rights, but intentionally allowed space for the regime to maintain authoritative power by manipulating the interpretation. As Guzmán clearly stated, during times of emergency, individual rights must be suspended in order to protect the whole. But even in times that were not considered emergency, the junta and constitutional committee mapped out rights and state power in a way that seemed to protect and promote the individual, but behind that, actually protected the power of the regime.

National Security and the Family

The first section of the constitution's fourth act laid the foundation of the rights of man, family as the cornerstone of society, and the role of the state in securing both.[46] This was the section of the constitution that Admiral Merino so vehemently defended, and which mapped out the junta's vision of man and society in accordance with the principles it laid out in its 1974 declaration. At this point in the constitution, just after the junta proclaimed the armed forces the renovators and keepers of Chilean democracy, it also claimed to promote and protect individual rights, which came from the Christian god.

---

[45] Ibid.

[46] Acta 280-A, 1976.

The state paralleled itself with a godly omnipresence and omnipotence, charged with setting moral standards that, would supposedly allow man, in the individual and collective sense, to achieve his full potential. Crucial to achieving one's full potential was to play what the state considered proper roles within the heterosexual, male-headed nuclear family. The family was the essential social unit from which national unity and individual self-actualization would spring. If the armed forces claimed to unify Chile by returning to traditional values, then it drew on Christian notions of family to do so.[47]

It is this subsection of the act with which General Leigh took issue. When Leigh contended that the principle of family should not be stated explicitly, Merino countered that Marxism posed too serious a threat to the family and therefore to national security. Linking Marxism to immorality and perversity, Merino continued his support for the act by remarking that Marxists "engaged in all the vices."[48] The Siloists (a humanist organization comprised mainly of young people), he said, were mostly Marxist sympathizers who sought to "destroy the family."[49] Merino contended that to solidify its moral stance against groups like the Siloists and Marxist organizations, and to justify constitutional provisions relating to morality, the junta needed to state explicitly that the family was the foundation of society in one of the four general acts.[50]

Like Marxism, the bodies of women threatened the stability of the regime. As Lessie Jo Frazier has argued, National Security Doctrine secured the home as the

---

[47]For right-wing women's role in mobilizing against Allende and drawing on notions of motherhood and family, see Margaret Power, *Right Wing Women in Chile: Feminine Power and the Struggle Against Allende, 1964-1973* (University Park, Pa.: Penn State University Press, 2002).

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid.

microcosm of the nation. As the regime drafted the constitution, it made itself as the protector of the family and mediator of bodily autonomy and integrity. Pinochet, in his refusal to overturn the statute in the Civil Code that privileged legitimate children, endorsed the male-headed nuclear family that reigned in sexuality for the purposes of reproducing the nation.[51] Jadwiga Pieper has shown that doctors who supported the dictatorship also removed IUDs without their patients' knowledge. By using women's medical records, the regime's Mothers' Centers (headed by First Lady Lucía Hiriart de Pinochet) also helped the regime enforce the removal of women's intrauterine devices and intimidate them into discontinuing the use of the birth control pills. The regime sought to promote a population increase and prevent women from intervening in natural processes. The privatization of health care also stripped funds from family planning programs, leaving many women without access to quality health care and contraception.[52]

Ultimately, through trying to eradicate Marxism inside the home and out, the regime linked national security to its own power over protecting the lives and the rights of some, and violating the rights and taking the lives of others. The junta reinforced a heterosexist and patriarchal vision of society rooted in the male-headed nuclear family, shrouded in a constitutional article that would supposedly grant women equal rights to men. Those rights, as the junta discussed them, were conceived as equal in terms of non-discrimination before the law and in the workforce, but as long as women's primary role was still that of wife and mother and men maintained authority in the home. Some junta

---

[51] Lessie Jo Frazier, "Gendering the Space of Death: Memory, Democracy, and the Domestic," in *Gender, Sexuality, and Power in Latin America since Independence,* ed. William E. French and Katherine Elaine Bliss (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), 261-282.

[52] Jadwiga Pieper Mooney, *The Politics of Motherhood,* 142-143.

members claimed that while men and women's roles were different, they were also equal and necessary in their own ways. They also recalled the regime's "homage to the Chilean woman," indicating that the junta needed to consider women's rights.[53] Indeed, as Margaret Power has shown, the right successfully garnered women's support by recognizing their ability to organize based on their sense of duty as wives and mothers.[54] While Guzmán, Leigh, and others debated the philosophy of women's rights and how they fit in the schema of the constitution, Merino and Pinochet took a more fundamental view: that women were subordinate to men, as the Bible stated, and that subordination was, as Pinochet claimed, "the natural order of things."[55] Merino and Pinochet argued that marriage was key to societal order: marriage between man and woman was a microcosm of society. Envisioned this way, the regime sought to congeal as a natural truth men's power over women in marriage in the family and in society—and thus men's power over women's bodies, and the state as a proxy for all men.

In their discussions over protecting individual rights, the constitutional committee also debated the language of protecting "the being that has yet to be born," and granted constitutional protection to fetuses by proclaiming them autonomous individuals. The members debated the redundancy in the original wording, "*el ser que está por nacer,*" when "*el que está por nacer*" would have been sufficient and grammatically correct. Guzmán, however, insisted upon the redundancy, because he wanted to underscore that the fetus was a ser. That is, it was an individual protected by the constitution. Pinochet,

---

[53] Acta 280-A, 1976.

[54] Margaret Power, *Right-Wing Women in Chile: Feminine Power and the Struggle Against Allende* (University Park: Pennsylvania state University Press, 2002), 1-15, 45-70, 169-193.

[55] Acta 280-A, 1976.

the Minister of Justice, and even Enrique Otúzar, the head of the constitutional committee who had suggested that addition, insisted that the life of the mother took precedence over the life of the fetus if the mother were in danger, and that therapeutic abortion (abortion to save the mother's life) should remain legal. Even Pinochet did not question the decriminalization of therapeutic abortion that had passed under Allende. He pointed out that a woman could argue that endangering her health would mean a violation of the integrity of her person.

But more significantly, writing the protection of fetal rights into the constitution demonstrates the power the dictatorship wielded over women's bodies in an effort to prove its moral preeminence over its Marxist predecessor. The Allende government had significantly widened access to abortion, especially for poor women, even though it did not condone its practice. The government promoted the use of birth control, rather than abortion, for controlling birth. It did not legalize abortion, despite feminist demands within the party. The UP did, however, significantly limit criminal prosecution of abortion and it allowed abortions to be performed under special conditions, such as saving the woman's life. Doctors, especially those working in hospitals that attended to the urban and rural poor, interpreted the stipulation broadly and often performed abortions when their patients' birth control methods had failed. Although documents cannot attest to unrecorded abortions, the number of abortions rose significantly from 1970 to 1972, especially among peasant women who recently gained access to safe means to terminate pregnancies.[56]

---

[56] Tinsman, *Partners in Conflict,* 227-228.

The clause protecting fetal rights foregrounded the junta's commitment to protecting the male-headed nuclear family as the foundation of Chilean society. But it also posed questions about whether or not the Civil Code would need to be changed to fit the constitutional language. The junta and constitutional advisors did not question the necessity to allow for abortions that would save the woman's life. They did not want to change the Civil Code in that respect. In that sense, they did not completely close the opening that the UP had made. In fact, the Minister of Justice proposed the stipulation that women could terminate a pregnancy in the case of rape. That matter, Guzmán and other advisors argued, would be left to the courts. The language of the constitution would remain vague enough to allow the courts to interpret individual cases brought before court, while at the same time making a bold statement that the regime, unlike Marxists, would protect what it considered all human life in the best interests of the nation. It was not until 1989, when the regime was on its way out of power, that it changed the Civil Code to criminalize abortion under all circumstances. Generals Matthei (Navy) and Stange (national police) argued fervently against the change, but eventually conceded. Everyone had agreed that it would be impossible to send thousands of women to jail, and that despite its criminalization, women would continue to seek abortions or attempt to perform them on themselves. But, similar to a decade before when it drafted the constitution, the junta wanted to send a message to Chileans about its role, and the role it had played for nearly two decades as the guardian of proper sexual and moral behavior, which it cast onto the bodies of women—particularly poor women. That message sought to convince Chileans that Marxists' sexual immorality threatened to destroy the family, and thereby the social order.[57]

[57] República de Chile, Junta de Gobierno, Acta no. 24/89, August 17, 1989,

Conclusion

The family, the basic social unit, was contested terrain between Marxism and the Pinochet regime's new neoliberal order. While Marxists posited capitalism as the utmost threat to the family (and to children, the family's most vulnerable members), the Pinochet regime reversed that discourse and argued that Marxism was the greatest menace to the family, and thereby to Chilean society as a whole. Over the course of the twentieth century, the Chilean state, like many others in Latin America, modernized longstanding notions of patriarchy in order to draw working-class men and women into citizenship and consolidate modern welfare states. For those governments, the male-headed nuclear family provided the basis for men and women to engage in citizenship practices and to secure social and economic stability.

The junta drew on ingrained traditions of gender and constitutionalism in Chile as it re-wrote the constitution based on ideas about family and rights. In a thrust against Marxism and a desire to dismantle the welfare state, the regime promoted the idea that it was reflecting ingrained beliefs and traditions about family, nation, and liberal notions of rights—which conveniently aligned with what many considered to be a God-given, natural order. The regime touted the centrality of the family and Chile's exceptional adherence to the constitution. While constructing the constitution, political advisors like Jaime Guzmán argued that minimal state intervention, as opposed to the interventionism of the welfare state, would lead to both individual self-actualization and national

---

http://historiapolitica.bcn.cl/historia_legislativa/visorPdf?id=10221.3/34435#f=3,p=1,t=aborto, accessed January 26, 2015. The change was first proposed in 1988, República de Chile, Junta de Gobierno, Acta No. 19/88, July 12, 1988, http://historiapolitica.bcn.cl/historia_legislativa/visorPdf?id=10221.3/34919#f=3,p=1,t=aborto, accessed January 26, 2015. For a discussion of abortion politics under military regimes in Latin America, see Mala Htun, *Sex and the State: Abortion, Divorce, and the Family under Latin American Dictatorships and Democracies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

renovation. But that fit uncomfortably with the military interventionism of National Security Doctrine. The junta argued, however, that by suspending individual rights for a supposedly brief time, it protected the rights-based traditions of the common good. The protection of the family from Marxism was at the heart of national security. The junta thus repurposed gendered notions of rights, family, and the relationship between the individual and collective to justify military intervention.

Chapter 2

Denouncing Torture and Reconstructing the Masculine Self

With the advent of the Pinochet dictatorship, thousands of leftist militants experienced the crashing of their political projects. In the first five years of the Pinochet dictatorship, the regime imprisoned and tortured at least 30,385 people in clandestine torture centers and prisons throughout the country. Thousands were executed or disappeared—that is, their family members, attorneys, public officials were not given information about their whereabouts, and they were never found again.[1] This chapter begins by providing background on political violence and the rise of human rights organizations in Chile. Then, it shows how mental health became incorporated into those organizations and how they connected mental health to human rights. Finally, it explores mental health professionals' methods for reconstructing the self and how they interpreted survivors' narratives of torture along gendered lines.

As this chapter will demonstrate, mental health professionals' concepts for reconstructing the self of those who had been tortured, especially those subject to sexual torture, involved encouraging speaking about the experience, then forming a narrative to make sense of it, and eventually converting that narrative into a denunciation of human rights violations. However, that process of narrating and denouncing torture focused particularly on regaining leftist men's violated sense of

[1] It is unclear how many people were disappeared in each period of the dictatorship (1973; 1974-78; 1978-1990), since Valech II provided this information only for victims of political imprisonment and torture. Comisión Asesora Presidencial para la Calificación de Detenidos Desaparecidos, Ejecutados Políticos y Víctimas de Prisión Política y Tortura, *Informe de la Comisión Presidencial Asesora para la Calificación de Detenidos Desaparecidos, Ejecutados Políticos y Víctimas de Prisión Política y Tortura,* Santiago, February 5, 2010, http://www.indh.cl/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Informe2011.pdf,

heterosexual masculinity. Mental health professionals argued that by reconstructing themselves psychologically and rebuilding their political projects, male militants—the nation's leaders and protectors—would return Chile to the non-violent democracy of Salvador Allende's Popular Unity, which had been leading Chile, and the world, on the peaceful road to socialism before the violent rupture of the coup. Both mental health professionals and their patients deployed discourses of homosexuality as deviance in order to restore men's sense of themselves as heterosexual militants and protectors of women's bodies. They also linked the deviance of violence to homosexuality.

Violence and Resistance

The Pinochet regime brutally tortured thousands of leftist militants, their family members, sympathizers of the left, and perceived enemies of the dictatorship. The armed forces and national police, as well as hired civilians and special intelligence operatives, used physical and psychological torture methods, although, as one mental health publication pointed out, "all torture [was] psychological."[2] In 1974, the junta created the Directorate of National Intelligence (Dirrección de Inteligencia Nacional, DINA), a secret intelligence service that carried out many of the grave human rights violations until 1978. In 1978, it was replaced by the National Intelligence Center (Centro Nacional de Inteligencia, CNI) in an attempt to quell international outcry over human rights violations, though the CNI continued to arrest and torture leftists with impunity.

[2] CODEPU-DITT, *Tortura*: *Documento de denuncia*, Santiago, 1985.

The dictatorship operated approximate 1,200 clandestine torture centers, in addition to holding militants in public prisons throughout the country. People were often taken from their homes or off the street, blindfolded, and thrown into a van with other prisoners, where typically a lower-level officer drove them to a clandestine torture center. The driver often took a circuitous route so that the passengers could not detect where they were being taken. Several DINA torture centers operated in the neighborhoods of Santiago, or even downtown. One center, Londres 38, was the former headquarters of the Socialist Party.[3] Thousands were also tortured in the National Stadium, converting a beloved soccer arena into a center of violence and death. Another center, Villa Grimaldi, was a private estate in the neighborhood of Peñalolen where many artists and intellectuals connected to the Popular Unity had gathered.[4] Under the dictatorship, it became one the centers in which some of the most ruthless torture took place, and from which many militants disappeared. The armed forces also created torture centers—the Naval War Academy in Valparaíso was particularly infamous for its brutality—and the national police tortured and detained political prisoners in public prisons.[5]

Torture tactics threatened prisoners' physical and psychological integrity. Prisoners were held captive with little or no food or water. Sometimes, they were provided a mattress to share between several people in a crowded cell. Often, they were provided one toothbrush to share with other prisoners. Prisoners were beaten,

---

[3] Some prisoners caught a glimpse of the unique tiles from underneath their blindfolds. See Luz Arce, *El infierno* (Santiago: Planeta, 1993).

[4] "Antes de 1973," Villa Grimaldi-Corporación Parque por la Paz, http://villagrimaldi.cl/historia/antes-de-1973/, Accessed March 5, 2015.

[5] *Informe Valech,* 299-557; *Informe Rettig,* 97-98.

hung in contorted positions, burned with cigarettes, and submerged in water until they almost drowned. They were electrocuted in the temples, genitals, nipples, feet, hands, anus, and stomach on the *parilla*—a bed of iron rods. Torturers threatened prisoners' families, tortured them in front of their families, and tortured their families in front of them. Prisoners overheard the wails and moans of others being tortured. Regime agents simulated shootings to frighten prisoners. They forced prisoners to eat their own excrement. They raped, sexually assaulted, and sexually harassed both men and women. They put rats and spiders in women's vaginas and used specially trained dogs to sexually assault them.[6] We know most of this information because of the human rights organizations that formed in response to the dictatorship's violence and gathered information from political prisoners and their family members.

Elizabeth Hutchison and Patricio Orellana have identified four "generations" of human rights organziations that formed in Chile under the dictatorship. The Pro-Peace Committee, its predecessor, the Vicaraite of Solidarity, and FASIC comprised the first generation. Religious leaders formed these first organizations. The Pro-Peace Committee (Comité Pro-Paz), was founded in 1973 by leaders of various protestant churches, the Jewish community, and the Catholic Church. Primarily, the Pro-Peace Committee helped families search for detained loved ones and find refuge. The military regime forced the Pro-Peace Committee's closure in November 1975 when it learned that some priests had been involved in protecting militants from the MIR. The Archibishop of Santiago, Raúl Silva Henríquez, founded the Vicariate of Solidarity in January 1976 to continue the work of the Pro-Peace Committee. The Foundation of

---

[6] *Informe Valech,* 253-299.

Social Aid of the Christian Churches (FASIC) was founded in April of 1975 as a collaboration between the Catholic Church, Protestant churches, and the Jewish community. Fundamentally, FASIC helped the politically persecuted, both Chilean and form other Latin American countries, escape from Chile.[7]

The Vicariate of Solidarity's mission drew heavily on Liberation Theology. A re-interpretation of Vatican II, Liberation Theology stressed the need for conscientious individual social action, rather than mere charity, to help the poor and liberate the soul. The individual could foster a direct relationship with God and interpret doctrine for him or herself. Alison Bruey points out that in Chile's case, church-affiliated human rights NGOs conceived of their duty as providing assistance to not only the poor, but also to the persecuted, like Jesus. In the spirit of liberation theology, that assistance was meant as working with the oppressed, rather than for them, in order to help them restore their dignity in ways that receiving charity would not as easily allow. They found agency through taking individual responsibility. [8] Especially for men, that could have meant having a job and being able to fulfill the role of breadwinner. In this context, reconstructing the self, principally by rebuilding the family and the roles individuals played as family members, complemented the goals of liberation theology.

Liberation Theology as a broad concept greatly influenced the human rights work of the Vicariate of Solidarity as a whole, and even FASIC, though it is stated

---

[7] Elizabeth Hutchison and Patricio Orellana, *El movimiento de derechos humanos en Chile, 1973-1990* (Santiago: Centro de Estudios Políticos Latinoamericanos Simón Bolívar, 1991), 14-16.

[8] Alison J. Bruey, "Transnational Concepts, Local Contexts: Solidarity at the Grassroots in Pinochet's Chile," in Jessica Stites Mor, ed., *Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity in Cold War Latin America* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014), 120-142.

less explicitly in the organization's literature. It is unclear, however, to what extent the church as an institution shaped the concepts and practices of each oraganization's mental health team, or the approaches of individual professionals within each team. Often in the introduction of conference papers and publications, professionals mentioned the ecumenical mission of their organizations as a formal description of their institution, but they did not typically reference the Bible or make other, more explicit references to religion or theology in their analysis.

The Catholic Church's mission was a complicated one that combined the desire to defend human rights, evangelize, and aid the repressed, all while not antagonizing the military regime. International support, both financial and political, made human rights and aid programs a concrete possibility. Given traditional Marxist theory's stance on religion as a distraction for the working classes from the realities of class warfare, the dictatorship had assumed the church would offer its support in eradicating Marxism. The Archbishop of Santiago, however, publicly denounced the regime's political repression and violence. While the Catholic Church collaborated with military dictatorships in some Latin American and European countries to eradicate what they perceived to be godless Marxism, the Chilean Catholic Church, as well as other churches, took another theological tack. They found the neoliberal state's use of violence against its citizens, as well as the breakup of community solidarity and the emphasis on personal gain embedded in neoliberal policies, as incompatible with the teachings of Jesus. For them, it was evident that the church

played a vital role as a powerful social institution with an obligation to aid those whom the state persecuted.[9]

The churches—institutions symbolizing moral authority—led the charge in defending human rights, but the regime did not, or perhaps could not, launch a full-scale attack on these first institutions. That does not mean that their members were not persecuted: many priests, nuns, and lay people who worked with the organizations were arrested, tortured, exiled, disappeared, and executed over the course of the dictatorship. But as Hutchison and Patricio Orellana have argued, the regime's attacks on human rights workers were rarely transparent. Reasons for attacks included confrontations with police, a human rights worker's subversive political activities, or even revenge by the left. The regime needed to maintain at least some credibility in the interational community. Overtly attacking institutions that defended human rights and had created spaces where civil society had re-emerged would have been a great political risk.[10]

Families of political prisoners, the disappeared, and executed formed the second generation of human rights organizations. Hutchison and Orellana posited, "the origin of these [organizations] is in the family, which as a social institution, legitimizes their struggle."[11] In 1975, the Pro-Peace committee sponsored the Association of Families of Poltical Prisoners (Agrupación de Familiares de Presos Políticos, AFPP) and the Association of Families of the Disappeared (Agrupación de

---

[9] Vicariate of Solidarity, "Declaración Pública," 1975; "Misión liberadora de la Iglesia," 1977; Arzobispo de Santiago, "Evangélio y misericordia," 1975, Fundación Archivo Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Santiago de Chile.

[10] Hutchison and Orellana, *El movimiento de derechos humanos en Chile,* 14-16.

[11] Ibid., 18.

Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos, AFDD). While the AFPP formed first, the AFDD was the first to come together as a cohesive organization that launched effective campaigns for its cause. Because FASIC worked more closely with political prisoners, the AFPP eventually gravitated toward that organization, as well as the Corporation for the Promotion and Defense of the Rights of the People (Comité por la Promoción y Defensa de los Derechos del Pueblo, CODEPU).[12] Other family organizations sprang up later, including assocations for families of the exiled and internally exiled (*relegados*), which were also sponsored by larger human rights organizations.[13] The close relationship between early human rights organizations sponsored by churches and those comprised of family members—two powerful social institutions that symbolized traditional moral values—solidified the legitimacy of the human rights movement.

Individual church leaders participated in the third generation of human rights organizations, which were secular institutions affiliated with politcal parties and other social organizations, formally or informally. Leaders in these organizations wished to expand the work of the church organizations to encourage the rest of society to participate in defending human rights. The Chilean Human Rights Commission (Comisión Chilena de Derechos Humanos) and CODEPU were two of the most important organizations of this generation. A group of lawyers from diverse political backgrouns formed the Chilean Human Rights Commission, though their most well-known leaders were former Christian Democratic ministers. CODEPU, founded in

---

[12] The current name of the organization is Corporación por la Promoción y Defensa de los Derechos del Pueblo.

[13] Ibid., 17-18.

1980, focused its work in the popular sectors. While characterized as a secular organization, church leaders participated in CODEPU on an individual basis. According to the organization's literature, the lawyer, nun, and MIR militant Blanca Rengifo Pérez, who had previously worked with the Pro-Peace Commitee and Vicaraite of Solidarity, founded CODEPU in 1980.[14] The fourth generation Hutchison and Orellana identified was the Sebastián Acevedo Movement Against Torture, whose namesake set himself on fire in the main plaza of the city of Concepción in 1983 to protest the disappearance of his son and daughter. The movement promoted the widespread recognition of torture and denounced torture through various public rituals, such as vigils and litanies.[15]

The Right to Mental Health

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, The Vicariate of Solidarity and FASIC had incorporated teams of mental health professionals to provide individual group, family, and couples' therapy to the populations they served.[16] Hutchison and Orellana did not

---

[14] CODPEU, *Tortura: Documento de Denuncia,* Vol. VIII, no. 2 (Santiago: CODEPU, 1987), 115; "Blanca Rengifo Pérez: la necesaria memoria subversiva, http://www.mensaje.cl/iglesia/blanca-rengifo-prez-la-necesaria-memoria-subversiva, Accessed March 6, 2015.

[15] Hutchison and Orellana, 18-19. See also Hernán Vidal, *El Movimiento Contra la Tortura Sebastián Acevedo": derechos humanos y la producción de símbolos nacionales bajo el fascismo chileno*. (Minneapolis, Minn: Institute for the Study of Ideologies and Literature, 1986).

[16]Professionals I interviewed from FASIC and the Corporation for the Promotion and Defense of the Rights of the People (CODEPU), an organization not affiliated with a religious institution, insisted that the church did not insert itself into the teams' patient treatment; it provided them financial support and solidarity and proved a forceful opponent to the regime. It seems reasonable that, if professionals wanted to offer their services to the human rights movement, an organization's religious affiliation may have mattered less to them than the infrastructure and relative safety the organizations provided as opposed to treating victims of state violence through private practice. Furthermore, there was a very limited number of human rights organizations with which a health professional could work. In other words, it would be imprecise to say that all mental health professionals who treated patients at the Vicariate or FASIC were heavily motivated by religion. At the same time, gendered religious

identify another group of human rights organizations: Those that were founded specifically to provide mental health services to victims of human rights violations and their families. These organizations sprang from the development of mental health teams within the first human rights organizations. From their inception, the Vicariate of Solidarity and FASIC began referring former political prisoners and family members who sought legal and financial aid to mental health professionals for psychological therapy. Those mental health professionals were either sympathetic to the left or already affiliated with the human rights movement. They soon developed the argument that humans had a right to mental health, and that politically persecuted Chileans should have those services available to them on a regular basis along with the other services that human rights organizations provided. Unlike neighboring Argentina, where psychoanalysts had been driven out of the country or repressed by the military regime, mental health professionals in Chile were able to begin providing treatment on a broad scale to politically persecuted Chileans under the protection of organizations like FASIC and the Vicariate.[17]

In 1980, the Protection of Infancy from Harm in States of Emergency (PIDEE) was founded to treat children and adolescents' psychological and medical cases, and in the mid-to-late 1980s, two other human rights NGOs formed specifically to treat psychological and psychiatric problems related to human rights violations: the Center for Research and Treatment of Stress (CINTRAS) in 1985 and the Latin

---

discourse long-encoded as common sense, especially as it bolstered the male-headed nuclear family and sexual behavioral norms, likely influenced individual therapists' interpretations and interactions with their patients. Elizabeth Lira, personal Interview with author, April 2013; Paz Rojas, personal interview with author, May 2013.

[17]On political persecution of psychoanalysits in Argentina, see Mariano Ben Plotkin, *Freud in the Pampas: The Emrgence and Development of a Psychoanalytic Culture in Argentina* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

American Institute of Mental Health and Human Rights (ILAS) in 1988. The basic conceptualization of mental health, and all health professions, was social medicine: the practitioner used his or her skills to benefit the common good, and health care is not only a basic right, but is also necessary for the health of the social body. Those principles drove the health professionals who worked within human rights organizations. Yet they had not been trained to work with patients who experienced collective violence or part of a threatened population. Elizabeth Lira, a therapist who worked with FASIC since its inception, founded ILAS in 1988, and served on the Valech Commission, pointed out that even Holocaust studies that had begun to surface in the 1970s and 1980s did not fully address their specific situation, as what Chileans experienced was not genocide, but violence targeted at destroying political projects. National Security Doctrine, an international Cold-War ideology that elevated the military to the ultimate arbiter of life and death over large swaths of the population should military bureaucrats (like Pinochet and the junta) deem it necessary to protect the state from communism, indicated a distinct historical moment that necessitated its own study.[18]Mental health professionals drew on their university training in psychoanalysis, but they also grew much of their knowledge, concepts, and practices through years of confronting the extreme conditions of political repression and state violence for which their university education had not prepared

[18]Interview with Elizabeth Lira, by Brandi Townsend, April 2013; Interview with Paz Rojas, by Brandi Townsend, May 2013. Sergio Lucero, Curriculum Vitae, Fundación Archivo Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Santiago, Chile; Haydee López C., "Estudio de las condiciones sanitarias de los hospitales de la zona poniente de Santiago, con especial relación a la disposición de excretas y al cumplimiento de las disposiciones sobre estos servicios," Tesis de especialista en salubridad, Universidad de Chile, Santiago de Chile, 1954.

entirely them. They adapted their knowledge base and proposed new ideas as Chileans faced collective trauma.

They worked together to help current and former political prisoners, their families, families of the disappeared and executed, and poor communities. They studied the connections between inidividual and collective trauma. This resulted in *documentos de trabajo* (working papers), conference papers, and published studies (mainly later, under democratic governments). The teams exchanged their work with each other, and human rights organizations, and circulated their bulletins among national and international NGOs. These studies, along with the testimonies mental health professionals gathered, helped create a body of proof demonstrating the psychological effects of the dictatorship's violence.

Helping those who experienced and witnessed state violence turn unspeakable experiences into public denunciations of state violence was a key part of mental health professionals' work within the human rights movement. After mental health clients worked through their experiences in therapy, they would convert their narratives into a concise document that could be used to denounce the dictatorship's human rights violations. Besides serving the psychological purpose of reconnecting the patient to politics, and the practical purpose of recording the dictatorship's human rights violations, the denunciation was a cultural marker of respect for the rule of law—the antithesis of the Pinochet regime's authoritarianism. Pinochet had restricted public sphere in general and had sought to silence political militants through torture and a state of exception. To reconstitute a public sphere, the opposition took control of the spoken and written word. Paz Rojas, a leader in the Chilean human rights

movement and one of the founders of CODEPU's mental health team, explained to me the importance of the relationship between denunciation and therapy:

> We named our team DITT: Denunciation, Investigation, Treatment [of the Tortured person and his/her nuclear family], because when people left prison, we told them —in a good way, not a bad way— "Your case will help others." It wasn't a trap; it was the truth, for us. That's why denunciation was fundamental for us. And many of those who didn't want to talk or remember gave extraordinary denunciations, and we recorded everything and then transcribed it. At that time there were no computers; there was nothing. But that incentive that their cases would help others, and above all codemn the dictatorship, made it easier for them to talk.[19]

Many survivors of torture thus recognized that their experiences, which they had internalized to the point of being unable or unwilling to speak about to others, constituted a form of knowledge that, if made public, could help the overall fight against the dictatorship. The realization that their individual experiences could benefit the common good if made public, allowed them to speak about the personal, humiliating pain they had suffered and place it into the context of collective violence in order to begin healing, a concept Elena Gómez of ILAS called "the de-privatization of pain."[20] As Rojas indicated, connecting the personal to the political was integral to addressing human rights violations and combatting the dictatorship.

Rojas laid out the basic process through which many organizations recorded testimonies. It was not always uniform: many of the Vicariate's mental health studies, for example, show that the organization's lawyers or social workers gathered brief testimonies and then referred them to the mental health team.[21] In organizations

---

[19] Paz Rojas, personal interview with author, May 2013, Santiago de Chile.

[20] Elena Gomez, "La des-privatización del daño," conference paper, Vicariate of Solidarity Archive, 1988.

[21] This does not negate mental health professionals' importance in speaking with those who suffered from repression, however: their studies on the psychological effects of political violence and

that offered both legal aid and mental health services, a person may have made a denunciation first with the legal department after referred to therapy. Once survivors had spoken about the violence they suffered, human rights workers converted recordings and notes into a document that could be used to denounce the regime's human rights violations internationally or in national court cases. Some mental health professionals foresaw a mass reckoning process akin to a truth commission. They launched efforts to disseminate information to the Chilean public, especially the poor urban neighborhoods (*poblaciones*). Throughout the 1980s, with funding from the U.N., CODEPU-DITT organized statistics and featured testimonies and mental health studies in small, quarterly booklet series called *Tortura: Documento de Denuncia.*[22] They distributed the booklets to the poblaciones as well as other human rights NGOs, in Chile and abroad.

Denouncing Torture and Reclaiming Masculinity

For psychic healing, too, some mental health professionals argued that the act of creating the written testimony was the final step in reconnecting oneself to politics and thus reconstructing the self. It signaled the progression from the regressed, inarticulate person who could not connect to the outside world because he or she had not successfully narrated the traumatic experience and grappled with its meaning, to the re-evolved, socially conscious, democratic citizen whose written testimony signified a return to a fighting for a cause greater than himself.

---

repression and their work within the NGOs not only ensured their place within the human rights movement during the dictatorship, but also helped mental health professionals gain some authority during human rights proceedings during transition to democracy.

[22] Paz Rojas, interview with author, May 2013, Santiago.

This subject who was to be rehabilitated to fight for Chilean democracy was gendered male. In 1985, echoing other mental health professionals working within human rights organizations, social worker Berta Bel described "el hombre," or "man" as the protagonist of social and historical change, as well as the subject of torture in need of rehabilitation. Paraphrasing French existentialist philosopher Albert Camus, Bel deployed a gendered, racialized narrative of man's evolution from early, aggressive conquest of natural elements and resources, until the achievement of social democracy, to argue that Pinochet had thrust Chile backward in time by ousting democratically elected Salvador Allende (the "natural leader") by force. She stated that "Man considers other men his equals. . . in the deadly fight against one another for the conquest of fire, food, or later, for the conquest of power." Furthermore, competition for resources and power "result in a display of aggressiveness."[23] Chile, however, had reached a point in the history of civilization in which the "community" bestowed power upon the "natural leader." When Pinochet seized power, he not only destroyed Allende's leadership, but also executed, disappeared, imprisoned, and tortured most of the political party and union leadership. Pinochet outlawed political parties and replaced union leaders with his own lackeys, rather than receiving power from the community democratically. By proxy, his delegates took power forcefully and had upset the "natural" social order.[24]

---

[23] Berta Bel, "La tortura. Efectos sociales y apoyo a la superviviencia," paper presented at the symposium, "La tortura en América Latina," Buenos Aires, Argentina, File 10.9, Biblioteca FASIC, Santiago de Chile, 1985.

[24] Ibid.

This framework could apply to women if stripped from its historical context. Yet for Chile in 1985, it reads as a description of the masculine, rather than genderless, political subject and historical protagonist. Man ideally considered other men his equals in his quest for power, and the community and "natural leader" forged a social contract and traded aggressiveness and anarchy for government, protection, and equilibrium, how But if men overwhelmingly comprised the leadership body in public and exercised power over women in the home and in society, women not guaranteed equal protection in the social contract.[25]

Furthermore, this conceptualization pointed to a form of masculinity in which, through evolution, men tempered their natural aggression by channeling that energy through engaging in politics and rising the ranks to leadership positions. Bel drew on utopias of the disciplined worker and political actor and social democratic citizen, gendered male. She argued that the regime sought to destroy those utopias in the interests of neoliberalism, which thrust Chile backward in time and threatened to break down the achievements that a state, working with welfare elites, had implemented over the course of the twentieth century. The regime also undermined the rule of law and Chile's alleged tradition of nonviolent democracy, which contributed to its myth of exceptionalism.[26]

Mental health professionals extended this view to their work with individuals, constructing an ideal of reconnecting to democratic struggles through nonviolent means that elided the differences between armed and unarmed political ideologies

---

[25] Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 77-115; Julieta Kirkwood, *Ser política en Chile*, 33-44.

[26] Ibid.

and practices, while developing concepts and practices to reconstruct the self. In doing so, however, they constructed an ideal of reconnecting to democratic struggles through nonviolent means. As Alison Bruey has argued, the urban poor used violence as one of many tools in their struggles against the regime and protecting their communities against the violent raids of the national police.[27] Categorizing violence in those communities, and within armed organizations, as collective symptoms of the psychological effects of repression may have been a strategy for drawing attention to the regime's human rights violations and for debunking its claims that Marxism caused violence and aggression. At the same time, however, it also implied that violence—from throwing rocks to firing arms—was not a legitimate political tool deployed by individuals and communities conscious of their choices.[28]

According to mental health professionals, in order to return to Chile to its exceptional status as a nonviolent, Socialist country at the peak of civilization, those who had experienced torture needed to narrate their traumatic experiences. Verbalizing unspeakable trauma and converting oral testimony into written text facilitated the reversal of what Cristina Monelli and Ana Cienfuegos called in a 1980 pioneer study a "regressive cycle" or a "cycle toward deterioration."[29] They and other therapists characterized that cycle by the break in social ties, the loss of a political project, anxiety, depression, aggression, and the presence of overwhelming

---

[27]Alison Bruey, "Archeology of Discontent: Popular Sectors and Opposition to Neoliberalism in Chile," paper presented at the Latin American Studies Association International Congress. Chicago, May 2014.

[28] Mallon, "*Barbudos,* Warriors, and *Rotos*," 179-215.

[29] Ibid.

psychosomatic symptoms, including sexual dysfunction and loss of motor skills such as language ability.

Cienfuegos and Monelli detailed their "*testimonio* method" for converting former political prisoners' trauma into public human rights denunciations. Through a series of sessions, patients talked through their experiences with torture and the ramifications of state violence, which therapists recorded on a voice recorder. The recordings and the transcribed documents could be used both to contain the horror of the traumatic experience and to denounce human rights violations to international organizations, in court, and in future truth commissions. The method also allowed therapists to compile evidence of some of the most extreme cases of torture and resulting psychological trauma, and to argue that other political prisoners and their families faced the same or similar situations.[30]

Recuperating language helped the patient represent the traumatic experience and organize it into his a narrative. The testimonio method, "guided and contained the [patient's] aggression" as he or she symbolized experiences of state violence through language and folded them into his or her life narrative—rather than an experience apart that remained unresolved. The authors' concept of the "hombre concreto" formed the conceptual foundation of the testimonio method. It was masculine concept of selfhood, which could be rebuilt through therapeutic practices like testimonio. He was a self-actualized man who assumed a social responsibility and political commitment, which the dictatorship sought to destroy, mainly through torture. Drawing on existentialist writings, primarily Sartrian psychoanalysis, the authors

[30] Ana Cienfuegos y Cristina Monelli, "El testimonio como instrumento terapeútico al nivel individual y social," abril de 1980, artículo, ficha 002057, Fundación Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Santiago de Chile.

posited that testimonio formed part of the process of what the authors called the "dialectic of the individual," or the remaking of the self: integrating past experiences with the present in order to plan a future. This dialectical process, facilitated by constructing a narrative that integrated the experience of violence into one's life story, was central to the making of the hombre concreto. After imprisonment, torture, and long-term unemployment from political blacklisting, "the politically and socially active adult man is reduced to the private space of his family," according to Arcos and Monelli.[31] If the left's leadership had retreated into the private sphere, then fighting the dictatorship and restoring democracy would prove difficult. This directly correlated to notions of citizenship from previous governments (the UP, Frei, and the popular fronts—though the authors noted only the UP). The hombre concreto was not complete unless he participated actively in the public sphere for the collective. Being a responsible head of household and breadwinner translated into political participation and drew working-class men into citizenship. It was therefore necessary for the hombre concreto to link his private life and responsibilities to his political or social project. The hombre concreto had not reconstructed his selfhood until he had re-internalized the popular democratic past to re-create a socialist future.[32]

Sexual Torture, the Normal, and the Abnormal

To demonstrate the extreme torture that their patients experienced, as well as the psychic recovery that the testimonio method facilitated, Arcos and Monelli chose a case study of a twenty-seven-year-old male prisoner who had experienced and

[31]Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

witnessed sexual torture. The choice of this case also reiterated the notion of recovering heterosexual masculinity as a normative goal. When the patient had expressed concern over decreased interest in sex and impotence, Arcos and Monelli explored the problem and found that he had been sodomized with an electric prod (*la picana*) and witnessed the gang rape and sexual torture of women in prison. In the case presentation, the authors referred to the patient's sodomy as "homosexual torture," rather than sodomy or rape. They called the electric prod a "metal penis with electric current," and in this patient's case, the torturer who sodomized him against his will was a man.[33] Both the act of penetration by a penis-shaped instrument, as well as the execution of the sexual torture by a man, qualified the torture as "homosexual" in their taxonomy.[34]

The passage in which the patient recounted being sexually tortured underscored the relationship between the false choices involved in rape, witnessing another's torture, and talking under force. Two soldiers inserted a prod into his rectum and electroshocked him for hours alongside his brother. Eventually, when the political prisoner could no longer bear to witness his brother's suffering, he told the torturers that he would talk about a list containing the names of some of his compañeros. The soldiers threatened to sodomize and electroshock him with a larger prod if he did not talk, and said, "The women enjoy this, so imagine what it will be like for you."[35] He had been presented with the false choice of subjection to even

---

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

more painful and humiliating sodomy, and to witness his brother's suffering and possible death, or to inform on his compañeros. Monelli and Cienfuegos had stated earlier in their report, ". . . sexual harassment, denigrating or aberrant sexual experiences, and finally, in more than a few cases, betrayal [of a compañero] as a result of physical and psychological suffering, are difficult things to communicate."[36] Talking about sexual torture and betraying a compañero under force was particularly arduous because of the internalized guilt and shame that those experiences provoked, and how they ruptured gendered social and political ties. For many militants, especially men, emotional suffering signified weakness and instability—not the masculine strength of the revolutionary hero. Yet as this patient revealed in testimony when he was on the verge of leaving Chile for exile:

> It's just that within the law [the rules] one shouldn't even move with everything one is living, don't break, one has to remain self-controlled, alert. . . . For me, I would have kept those things secret all my life, that it was my fault that some of my comrades fell, that indirectly, I'm the reason for a *desaparecido*. That overwhelms me. I did not live all that experience alone. Yes, I lived a large part of it alone. . . . But this will not be in vain, because this has made me mature and stand firm in my position. Why are we going to talk about hatred and resentment? . . . But the thing is you have to push for Chile, even from the outside.[37]

As the patient expressed, ideas about militant masculinity connected silencing one's suffering inside prison and out. His party expected militants to withstand torture, stay alert, and maintain silence to protect their compañeros, and perhaps also to bear witness to what happened to others. The inability to withstand, or silence, emotional

---

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

suffering during or after prison signaled instability and untrustworthiness. Yet the authors argued, and the patient came to accept, that the path to emotional stability came through speaking about his experiences. Talking about his suffering, although it contradicted "the law" (most likely a reference to doctrine or practices of a leftist group) had helped him regain his mental health and reinforce his political beliefs. Working through his trauma had also been integral to building a new political project: he had made connections with a political group in exile and continued his fight for lo social. This patient, in many ways, expressed his feelings of de-masculinization when he spoke about his sexual torture. Talking about these feelings suggested a softening of notions of masculinity that prescribed staunch stoicism in the face of emotional and physical pain. The hombre concreto the authors proposed he reconstruct, however, was a heteronormative self. And that concept facilitated the very process of silencing one's suffering that the authors and other mental health professionals sought to undo.[38]

By talking about and writing down his experience for his benefit and others', this patient and former political prisoner began the path to reconstruction of the self, to becoming an hombre concreto again. On the one hand, the authors reinforced a categorization of "homosexual torture," even if briefly in the presentation of the case. This pathologized certain forms of sexual torture in the case of men, and both patients and professionals denied, to an extent, the de-masculinization of the male patient to reconstruct masculine heteronormative selfhood. Nonetheless, on a more fundamental level, this patient's case study and testimony not only denounced gross human rights violations, but also demonstrated that even those who experienced such extreme

[38] Ibid.

torture could remake their senses of self. Talking, writing, and bearing witness were central to the individual and collective healing processes, and to the recuperation of democracy. This was an important reminder in a context in which many survived by keeping silent, or suffered from guilt because they had talked. It was also significant when few victim-survivors had spoken in public about sexual torture, and even fewer of those were men.

Being secure in one's sexuality was part and parcel of being secure in one's own body. In a 1980 report from a seminar at the Vicariate of Solidarity, the authors addressed the issue of the "psychological regression of the individual" and rupture of social bonds to sexual torture, and they noted "homosexual practices" as a form of sexual torture that contributed to that process.[39] The torturer denigrated prisoners and "perverted and destroyed" their senses of relationships "through physical harm to the genitals, homosexual practices, participation in observation of the most varied aberrations and bestial conduct. . . ."[40] This caused victims to reject and distrust human contact, which both impeded their social reinsertion and could result in "the regression of the individual to more primitive forms of the connection of his or her body with others."[41] The authors of this report recognized the importance of sexuality to the self and the connection of sex to power. A democratic society could not function if citizens felt no trust for each other and believed their bodies were in

---

[39] The authorship of this report, and the organization that sponsored it, is not clear. It appeared in a compilation of reports from a seminar at the Vicaria de la Solidaridad, and none of the works named specific authors, which was a common practice for the Vicaria's mental health team. Elizabeth Lira, and expert in the field, also identified this document as the Vicaria's. However, I found another document dated 1980 with the some of the same passages that was attributed to FASIC.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

danger, especially when the state tortured them with impunity. Sexual torture, they argued, was an extremely effective way to accomplish the destruction of the self and social connections. It reduced human beings who had risen to the level of social democracy to isolated, primeval, backward behavior. The ideal, reconstructed self (gendered male and hetero-sexualized) triumphed over primitive, uncivilized disorder.

While these professionals recognized sexual torture broadly as a perversion of power that distorted the sex act by stripping away power, or consent, from the victim, they defined "homosexual practices" as deviant, dangerous, and even potentially violent. Same-sex torture suggested a particular threat to male militants' ability to rebuild their senses of themselves as heterosexual, democratic citizens who fulfilled a political project. The leftist political prisoner was not deviant, but the victim of deviance. That conceptualization also silenced and pathologized same-sex desire. It could have also implied that people who experienced sexual trauma who identified as homosexual or experienced same-sex desire were deviant or perverse.[42]

A case study from the Latin American Collective for Psycho-Social Work (COLAT) in 1976 demonstrates how a militant deployed discourses of homosexuality as deviance to speak about his sexual torture and separate himself from his supposedly abnormal torturers. The report highlighted the testimony of a male patient who had been sexually tortured by male officers and experienced sexual dysfunction after his release. The twenty-four-year-old married student, who had been detailed by the Navy Intelligence Services in Valparaiso, described his torturers as

[42] FASIC, Tortura, tratos crueles e inhumanos en 1980. Su impacto psicológico. Anexo III: Daño psicológico producido por la represión política. Fundación de Documentación y Archivo de la Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Santiago, Chile, 1980.

"homosexuals" and insisted on their "un-natural-ness." He described how they pushed him against the wall and began to touch and kiss him, but did not succeed at masturbating him. The final time he was taken to the military barracks, the agents made him take off his clothes and,

> An official who was an open homosexual began to search me. My reaction was to contract my muscles and give him a furious look. It was the only thing I could do, and tell him, "If I am naked, why are you searching me?" The repercussions of torture didn't affect me at that exact moment. What I felt in front of the interrogators was disgust, hatred […] but *when I left prison I began having problems*, that is, sexual impotence. Suddenly I realized my relationship with my compañera was not normal.[43]

Perhaps he focused on the supposed sexual aberrance of his torturers in order to make sense of his traumatic experience and to reaffirm a sense of heterosexual masculinity and power that he had lost. In his narrative, he connected his sexual torture to the symptoms of sexual dysfunction that he experienced for months afterward. Yet he also emphasized his resistance to his torturers: they did not succeed at masturbating him, and he tightened his muscles to protect his nude body during a search, and perhaps from penetration. His use of the verb "*allanar*," the verb for "*allanamiento*," or a violent break-in and search, could have signaled a means of talking about forced penetration, or the threat of it, indirectly.[44]

---

[43] Colectivo Latinoamericano de Trabajo Psicosocial (COLAT), "Los problemas psíquicos provocados por la tortura." Emphasis in original text. While I do not study the work of COLAT comprehensively, I find it important to analyze this study since it is one of the few that highlights a case of the sexual torture of men. COLAT consisted of Latin American mental health professionals, including Chilean psychologist Jorge Barudy, who worked in Belgium with Latin American exiles. The case study formed part of a larger paper for a conference in Prague, in which the group offered statistics and an overview of their cases and treatment, as well as excerpts from patient testimonies.

[44] Ibid. Testimonios also bear witness to sexual violence and harassment against male prisoners. See Hernán Valdés, *Tejas Verdes: Diario de un campo de concentración en Chile* (Barcelona: Laia, 1978); Anibal Quijada Cerda, *cerco de Púas* (La Habana: Casa de las Américas, 1977); Jean Franco, "Fear, Death, and Resistance: Facing the Ethical Vaccum," in *Fear at the Edge:*

His narrative goal was to maintain his dignity as a heterosexual male and militant: He gave an angry look at the official who tried to search him and questioned his actions; he interrogated his interrogator. In the beginning of the excerpt, he claimed that "it seemed" that his torturers were homosexuals, and as he recounted his experience, he became more definitive in his assessment. The official who searched him was a "declared homosexual." He referred to the officers as homosexuals thereafter. If this patient "always had an aversion to the anti-natural," then he made sense of his experience—or found a way to talk about it—by thinking of the men who sexually tortured him as abnormal.[45]

The authors of the paper did not comment further, but let the testimony speak for itself. Earlier in the presentation, however, they had noted that several of their male patients had suffered from symptoms caused by "homosexual abuses." On the one hand, they called attention to the fact that men as well as women were being sexually tortured and raped. The patient spoke about an experience that many men had likely silenced. This case, however, portrayed regime agents who raped other men as homosexuals and homosexuality as "un-natural." It constructed a false notion of same-sex desire as a catalyst for deviant aggression against heterosexual masculinity. In reality, the patient's aggressors were agents of the dictatorship who enacted sexual violence on other men's bodies with impunity, just as the regime's agents did with women's bodies. As Michel Foucault argued, however, the construction of the abnormal reinforced ideas about normality. As discourse

---

State Terror and Resistance in Latin America, ed. Juan E. Corradi, et. al (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 104-120.

[45] Colectivo Latinoamericano de Trabajo Psicosocial (COLAT), "Los problemas psíquicos provocados por la tortura."

constructed subjects, subjects shaped discourse and situated themselves within it as they sought to distinguish the normal from abnormal and the healthy from the degenerate. And some mental health professionals and patients equated homosexuality with the abnormality of the torture situation that violently violated the democratic norm.[46]

Research has uncovered homophobic discourses and practices in the left, in Chile and other Latin American countries. The International Communist Party linked homosexuality to bourgeois excess. Homosexuality signified deviance, and a departure from the heterosexist model of the male-headed nuclear family. Homosexual men were associated with effeminacy and permeability, rather than the ideal of a strong, impermeable, masculine militant. The permeable body correlated to the accessibility of information. Ideally, men—their bodies and their psyches—were impenetrable, and their physical and psychic strength could protect the information they held. When male political prisoners spoke about sexual violence in therapy, and when mental health professionals wrote about it, they projected notions of perversion and devolution onto the regime's agents to preserve their status as heterosexual, masculine militants, rather than deviants.

In this context, we can see why both patients and some therapists seemed to lack a framework for understanding, or at least expressing, the sexual torture of men by other men that clearly separated sexual torture from same-sex desire. In the few

---

[46] Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality Vol. 1*; On active-passive stereotypes, see Roger Lancaster, *Life is Hard: Machismo, Danger, and the Intimacy of Power in Nicaragua* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Matthew C. Gutmann, *The Meanings of Macho: Being a Man in Mexico City,* 10th anniversary ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

early studies that addressed the sexual torture of men, most professionals categorized sodomy with objects (such as the picana), penile penetration, and masturbation of the prisoner as "homosexual torture." When forced nudity, sexual harassment (such as calling men "maricones" or antagonizing them about their sexuality or that of a female loved one), electrocution to the genitals and anus, and beatings to the testicles accompanied sodomy or masturbation, therapists and patients tended to classify them as sexual (or homosexual) torture. Yet if a male political prisoner reported only beating and electrocution to the genitals, for example, human rights workers and mental health professionals tended to categorize those acts as "physical" and not "sexual" torture. They seemed to associate acts such as electroshock to the genitals, and sexual torture in general, as more of a threat to women's bodies and sexuality. On the level of discourse, professionals and victim-survivors encoded men's experiences of sexual torture in terms of perversity and abnormality such that, to an extent, they inadvertently normalized certain forms of sexual torture of women. The rape and sexual torture of women was more fathomable, even if horrific; it was a trope of war and a logical, if inexcusable, extension of male violence against women in society.[47]

[47]Some examples include: Mario Insunza B. y Manuel Almeyda M., "Efectos físicos y psicológicos de los tratos crueles y degradantes," ca. 1983, documento de trabajo, Fundación Archvio Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Santiago de Chile; Vicaría de la Solidaridad, "Tortura, tratos crueles e inhumanos en 1980. Su impacto psicológico. Anexo III," junio de 1980, documento de trabajo, ficha 001803, Fundación Archivo de la Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Santiago de Chile; Ana Cienfuegos y Cristina Monelli, "El testimonio como instrumento terapeútico al nivel individual y social," abril de 1980, artículo, ficha 002057, Fundación Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Santiago de Chile. FASIC, "La práctica de la tortura en Chile durante 1984," 1986, papers on torture, Biblioteca FASIC, Santiago de Chile; Comité Pro-Paz. La situación general de la mujer bajo el Gobierno Militar de Chile. Fundación de Documentación y Archivo de la Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Santiago, Chile, 1975; Colectivo Latinoamericano de Trabajo Psico Social, "Los problemas psíquicos provocados por la tortura en los refugiados chilenos y latinoamericanos," Paper presented at VI Congreso Médico Internacional de Resistentes, Prague, November 1976, Fundación de Documentación y Archivo de la Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Santiago, Chile.

Yet, as Hillary Hiner has argued, a binary of male victimizer/female victim arose from human rights discourse and was later reinforced by the Rettig and Valech Commissions. This binary both marginalized men's experiences with sexual torture and abuses under the regime and undermined women's agency by normalizing their sexual passivity and naturalizing their roles as mothers.[48]We can see some of this discourse at work in a 1975 work by a group of sociologists, who wrote a report for the Pro-Peace Committee on the effects of the dictatorship's violence on women. The report emphasized the danger the regime posed to the female body as a bearer of life and nurturer of children. While presenting cases of women militants, the authors focused on women who were detained, tortured, and raped in order to threaten their male family members who were militants. They underscored the torture of pregnant women and women who were mothers and wives. While they cited statistics of how many married women, mothers, and pregnant women were detained and tortured, they did not offer statistics on single or childless women. Subsequent reports from other organizations emphasized the torture of pregnant women and mothers and the imprisonment of children alongside their mothers. Yet the male body also contributed to bearing life; in fact, some men expressed anxiety over their inability to function sexually and bear children after beatings and shock to the genitals.

Highlighting the torture of pregnant women and accentuating women's roles as mothers could have placed focus on the social effects of torture rather than the violation implied in the act. The authors may have appealed to the underlying cultural

---

[48] Hillary Hiner, "Voces soterradas, violencias ignoradas: Discurso, violencia política, y género en los Informes Rettig y Valech," *Latin American Research Review* 44, no. 3 (Nov. 2009): 50-74.

beliefs that potential readers may have associated with motherhood to call attention more forcefully to human rights violations committed against women, rather than relying on an argument of human rights for human rights' sake. Whether this strategy was inadvertent or not, it reinforced ideas about motherhood as women's primary purpose, as well as the permeability and vulnerability of women's bodies against the regime's aggression. The cases in this chapter also suggest that mental health professionals and militants feared leftist men were at risk for becoming aggressive and deviant if they did not reconstruct heteronormative selfhood.[49]

Ideas about regime agents as deviant masculine aggressors and women as essentially vulnerable to violence also enable us to understand testimonies of former political prisoners who seemed astonished that women were most ruthless torturers than men and took more pleasure in their work. It is difficult to say whether or not women torturers were actually more violent than their male colleagues, or if they seemed more cruel and cold to prisoners because torturing people contradicted the conventional role of the nurturing woman. Torture was an extreme exaggeration of male aggression and thus easier for prisoners to fathom in male form. It is clear, however, that women were not always the victims of men, but also their victimizers.

For example, COLAT's 1976 report also featured a case study of a male patient who had been tortured by a female agent of Pinochet's national intelligence agency, the DINA. In one passage from the patient's therapy session transcript, he stated that it was fathomable that a man, as a "political entity," could become "deviant" like the DINA had "with our women, with our *compañeras*." Only men

[49] Comité Pro-Paz, "La situación general de la mujer bajo el Gobierno Militar de Chile," 1975, documento de trabajo, Fundación de Documentación y Archivo de la Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Santiago de Chile.

were capable of being corrupted by the regime and convinced to commit heinous, violent acts of sexual deviance—especially if they lacked the "political education" and "manners" or "culture" to think for themselves, and to thereby restrain their aggression.[50]

His language insinuated that women, however, were the property of men, and the objects corruption and violence. His compañeras were educated, cultured, and pure, which correlated to a social norm of women as gatekeepers for sexual propriety, tradition, and culture. The compañeras this former political prisoner and patient describes perhaps reaffirmed his heterosexual masculinity and sexuality, whereas the female DINA agents, through state-sanctioned violence, stripped away the power of the outside world in which men had sexual, social, and political power over women.[51]

Rather than analyzing the gendered constructs that informed the patient's testimony, the authors' primary purpose for highlighting this case was to demonstrate that women torturers existed, and they actively sexually tortured male political prisoners, as did male DINA agents. While the authors gave little commentary and largely let the testimony speak for itself, they offered that to be a man and to be tortured by a woman, especially sexually tortured, caused an "emotional shock" that they "could not analyze precisely at the moment." The team's lack of framework for

---

[50] Colectivo Latinoamericano de Trabajo Psicosocial (COLAT), "Los problemas psíquicos provocados por la tortura en los refugiados chilenos y latinoamericanos," Trabajo presentado al VI Congreso Médico Internacional de la Federación Internacional de Resistentes en Praga, Bélgica, 1976, ficha 0002004, Fundación Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Santiago de Chile.

[51] For similar cases elsewhere in Latin America, see: Lessie Jo, Frazier and Deborah Cohen, "Mexico '68: Defining the Space of the Movement, Heroic Masculinity in the Prison, and 'Women' in the Streets" *Hispanic American Historical Review* 83, no. 4 (November 2003): 617-660; Victoria Langland, "Birth Control Pills and Molotov Cocktails: Reading Sex and Revolution in 1968 Brazil," in *In from the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War*, edited by Joseph M. Gilbert and Daniela Spenser, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 308-349.

dealing with the situation not only points to how deeply ideas about violent men and vulnerable women were ingrained in common sense. On the other hand, by presenting testimonies of a man being sexually tortured by a woman and a man being sexually tortured by a man, COLAT illuminated situations that had not yet been studied in Chile's case of state violence. Whereas most militants and human rights organizations considered women to be more at risk of sexual torture (and rarely or never its perpetrators), the COLAT team showed that the state's repressive agents were indeed sexually torturing men, and that at least some men were talking about it. But in their narratives, those men underscored the deviance of the right to regain ownership of women's bodies.

Conclusion

Mental health professionals working within human rights organizations, as well as the patients they treated, wrestled with forms of violence that occurred on a broad scale and cut to the core of victims' sexual subjectivities. Several mental health professionals and their patients conflated the sexual of torture of men by men with homosexuality. This pathologized same-sex desire by failing to separate sexuality from violence and power. As male militants spoke about their experiences and labeled their torturers homosexual, they reinforced notions of heterosexual masculinity, particularly as those ideas were refracted through the world of leftist militancy.

Mental health professionals who deployed categories such as "homosexual torture" or "homosexual practices" in relation to state violence reinforced

heteronormative and patriarchal frameworks for reconstructing the self. This does not mean that they intentionally denigrated gay men or perpetuated a system in which men dominated women. What is more likely is that sexual difference, and the power relations that constructed its meaning, had become so ingrained in common sense that neither mental health professionals nor their patients entirely realized that they were promoting a mode of recovery that revolved around a heterosexual, masculine self.

Mental health professionals argued that forming a narrative about the experience of violence and denouncing human rights violations would help the individual reconnect to collective struggles for democracy and return Chile to the apex of civilization. But letting the violence fester within oneself could lead individuals (particularly men) to become aggressive and violent, like deviant, uncivilized regime agents who sexually tortured the leftists' *compañeras*. Those leftist men, with ruptured selves that exacerbated their isolation from the collective, were not fit lead Chile in the fight for democracy, nor to protect women's bodies from the regime's violence. The next chapter continues the discussion of violence's effects on gender relations by looking mental health professionals' work with families, couples, and children.

Chapter 3

Breadwinners and *Compañeras*: Reconstructing the Self and the Family

Although traditionally, psychoanalysis has been concerned with women and women's sexuality, mental health professionals in Chile, who drew on psychoanalysis, focused overwhelmingly on the psychological effects of violence on men—the family breadwinners. This chapter deals with both men and women as family members. It will show that mental health professionals' approaches to reconstructing the self drew on the left's longstanding critiques that capitalism threatened the family and needed to be restrained by state welfare. The chapter will discuss two main aspects of mental health professionals' studies: their discussions of the roles of men and women within marriage, particularly stemming from employment issues following imprisonment; and the roles of men and women as fathers and mothers raising the next generation of Chilean citizens to carry on the legacy of democracy. For these professionals, and for the people they treated, family and political reconstruction went hand in hand.

Mental health professionals noted that the regime's combination of violence and economic reforms broke down the male-headed nuclear family. Due to death, imprisonment, the psychological effects of torture, or the inability to find a job, men were often unable to fulfill their roles as breadwinners. They also became absentee fathers, or they left their wives widowed. To reconstruct their senses of self and reconnect to a collective political project, men, especially, needed to work. Women, forced to work outside the home and search for their husbands, were unable to fulfill

both parental roles. They also became anxious and mentally unwell, according to professionals.

Reconstructing Breadwinners

The regime began implementing neoliberal reforms in the late 1970s, and in 1978, it instituted the Chicago Boys' drastic measures for creating a free-market economy. The Chilean economy initially boomed in the 1980s, but at the cost of the imprisonment, execution, and forced disappearance of thousands of labor leaders. The regime also established a labor code that made it practically impossible for workers to defend their rights to fair wages, collective bargaining, and electing their own union leaders. Additionally, the dictatorship arrested middle-class professionals whom it deemed subversive. If political prisoners returned home, they often found it difficult to find work because employers were hesitant or unwilling to hire former political prisoners. Unemployment rose above 30 percent and wages fell by approximately 11 percent from 1979-1982. Chile's so called economic miracle crashed in 1982 into the worst depression the country had experienced since the 1930s. Wages dipped 20 percent. The working and middle classes paid for the "economic miracle," both economically and with their lives.[1]

In one of its first mental health studies, the Vicariate of Solidarity posited that prolonged unemployment threatened men's potential to fulfill their political projects and maintain their status as breadwinners. In this 1978 report, the Vicariate's team argued that the unemployed whom they had treated, who were mainly working-class

[1]Peter Winn, "The Pinochet Era," in *Victims of the Chilean Miracle: Workers and Neoliberalism in Pionchet's Chile, 1973-2002* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 25-33.

men whose first experience with unemployment had come after the coup, felt marginalized and presented "diverse forms of neurotic conduct" since they were no longer able to fulfill their roles as the main or only providers for their households. The team described symptoms such as guilt, anxiety, fear of rejection, depression, self-degradation, sense of powerlessness, alcoholism, and a lack of sexual interest or sexual impotence. Wives would sometimes become "ambivalent" toward their husbands, alternating between blaming them for the situation and shielding them from any additional emotional distress in an effort to protect them. For men, unemployment meant a cessation of their "central activity," while for women, their husbands' unemployment meant adding "other activities connected to the search for some type of income" to their "central activity (the home, children)." Men and women showed different somatizations, but the authors did not provide details. While the team observed more cases of intense depression and anxiety in women, they noted a "predominance of reactions of anxiety, instability, and emotional uncontrollability that can occasionally convert into a hysterical type of crisis" in women.[2] The authors did not question the patriarchal organization of the home and labor as a factor in the exacerbation of marital conflict and widespread depression and mental health problems due to unemployment under the dictatorship. While the patients' symptoms and conditions surely existed, the team's presentation of them drew on gendered stereotypes to forcefully argue that the dictatorship, not the left or the regime's perceived enemies, threatened the physical and emotional stability of the family, sexuality, and traditional working-class masculinity and femininity.

[2] Vicaría de la Solidaridad, "Algunos problemas de salud mental destacados por Equipo Psicologico-Psiquiatrico," Fundación de Documentación y Archivo Vicaría de la Solidaridad, 1978.

A case study in the same report demonstrated how, chronic unemployment due to political repression, like a traumatic event such as torture, could cause an educated, productive member of society to regress mentally and physically to a "primitive" state. On a broad level, this could signal the devolution of a generation of social leaders and community members to the level of animals, as Berta Bel hypothesized. (See chapter two.) The case study from the Vicariate featured a twenty-seven-year-old sociology student who also worked and his thirty-six-year-old wife, an elementary school teacher. Both lost their jobs, and the male patient was dismissed from his studies, in 1973. They were not at home when officers attempted to arrest them, and they moved around, living apart for two years to avoid detention. When they consulted the Vicariate in 1977, they had been living together again for about two years.[3]

Although both husband and wife received therapy, the authors shared the case of the husband, whose condition, they claimed, was much worse and demonstrated more clearly the long-term effects of unemployment. The wife complained that she and her husband were experiencing great tension in their marriage. She blamed herself partially, claiming that she became frustrated with her husband for not relieving their economic distress, and she admitted to belittling him. Then, she would feel guilty and apologize. She reported that she and her husband experienced sexual problems, and that he had become "stupid" recently. He was unable to express

[3] Ibid. Although the therapist's name is not mentioned, since the Mental Health Program did not consolidate until 1978, it can be inferred that the Vicariate referred her to one of the therapists that treated patients upon their referral or the Pro-Peace Committee when it existed. The woman consulted the therapist on behalf of her husband, whom she wished to convince to receive treatment upon a doctor's request. The authors did not recount how the husband eventually came to therapy. They noted that while the wife had approached the Vicariate on behalf of her husband, she also showed signs of anxiety and subsequently received treatment.

himself well with words and he "says words that make no sense, like an animal….He does not enjoy his food and eats with his mouth open, he puts his fingers in his nostrils, he says obscene things. His sexual conduct is just as primitive."[4]Not only mental health professionals, but also ordinary people who sought therapy for themselves and their families used a vocabulary of devolution-evolution to explain the effects of a political and economic repression.

The therapist reported that the man seemed unkempt and noted his inability to speak well. The author remarked that the patient seemed like an "*indébil mental*" or "feebleminded person," and in fact, he stated that he would have considered the patient as such had he not known the man's training as a sociologist and work as a secondary school teacher. After a prolonged attempt to speak beyond broken, unintelligible speech, the patient finally described how, after he had been blacklisted from work and he and his wife had been forced into hiding, he became mute. He described a devolution in his behaviors, which cut to the core of his sense of self:

> I regressed as a person and things became very difficult for me….I was humiliated, timid…. I felt like a beggar when I asked for help. There were some very dark times for me…in which I only wanted to eat…a plate of food…I turned crude, animalistic, my cultural level diminished…I regressed as a person…subcultural eating habits…a vulgar person. (He breaks emotionally and starts sobbing.)[5]

The wife, therapist, and patient each note the patient's regression from a cultured, educated family provider to an "animalistic," disheveled, regressed version of himself that could not speak or function on a basic level. The patient himself emphasized his

---

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid. Ellipses and parentheses in original text.

"regression as a person," using the phrase twice to demonstrate how his whole self—physical, mental, emotional, political, and social skills that comprised his individuality and allowed him to relate with the world—had moved backward drastically.[6]

In this scenario, every player placed the burden of providing for the family on the man, even though the woman was a teacher and had also lost her job. Although we do not have details about the woman's case, she mentioned blaming her husband for not finding a solution to their problems. The woman's emotional distress seemed to derive more from her role as wife than as a person who also lost her job due to political repression—or at least that is how it was presented to the reader with the selections from the interview with the therapist. The man's emotional problems, on the other hand, connected directly to his unemployment, which had significant repercussions for his status as family provider. In many other cases, men experienced sexual impotence; their inability to provide economically translated into an inability to perform sexually. In this patient's case, prolonged unemployment had the effect of mental regression. All of his actions, from speech to eating to conduct to sex, seemed "primitive." Yet the purpose of the report was not to outcast this man, but to argue that the dictatorship, even when it did not physically torture people, caused psychological damage that seemed to turn cultured, productive citizens into reclusive, uncivilized animals—men, especially.[7]

---

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

More than Compañeras

Fulfilling the roles of breadwinner for men and compañera and mother for women provided a foundation for therapists to help their patients rebuild their senses of self and their families. Group therapy sessions conducted in 1978 by the Vicariate's mental health team illuminate these early family dynamics as former political prisoners, their families, and the mental health professionals treating them confronted the effects of the first five years of the regime. The therapy sessions revealed that since the family provider was absent, the women had assumed that role by selling eggs, cigarettes, and other goods. Others worked outside the home for the first time in order to maintain their families. In their new roles as heads of household, they made sole decisions about how to raise and discipline their children without consulting their husbands. The women said that although they found the situation stressful and frightening, they gained independence and greater self-esteem through it. When their husbands returned, many of them could not find work due to both their status as former political prisoners and the economic crisis.[8]

The husbands reacted in mixed ways: some were impressed and surprised that their wives had the ability to survive without them, and others were disoriented and frustrated in the face of the radical changes in the home. Other men were not quite as flummoxed. One man said that they [leftist men] had never wished for women to be "chained up," and they had always considered them to be their "compañeras."[9] This

[8] "Relegaciones: su impacto psicológico en las personas y en la familia" (Working paper, File CD 2757.3, Archivo Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Santiago, Chile, 1980); "Relegaciones: su impacto psicológico en las personas y en la familia" (Working paper, File CD 2462.3, Archivo Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Santiago, Chile, 1980).

[9] Ibid.

conception resonates with the gendered organization of the family in the 1960s and 1970s, discussed in chapter one: Ideas about gender mutualism emphasized parity within marriage and romantic relationships, but women were still considered the compañeras of their male partners and secondary political actors.[10]

A section of the report subtitled, "The woman's experience. Arrest as expectation and as reality," highlighted featured the story of Eugenia, who found a sense of autonomy in the wake of her husband's arrest. She had not known about her husband's political activities until shortly before he had been arrested, and she found a job less than a month after he was detained. Having a job "allowed [her] to be calmer, because even though [she] was not completely independent, [she] could contribute to the household and [she] was no longer a burden for the family." She could also provide for her husband in prison, herself, and her child. Eugenia felt like a "burden" to her family before having a job of her own—like a person who needed to be cared for, rather than a provider like her husband. Eugenia gained some independence in spite of the frightening and difficult conditions she faced as a result of both the dictatorship's repression and the patriarchal structure that had long contoured social and family relations in Chile. Underscoring her experience in the transcription spoke to its legitimacy.[11]

In a continuing report on the group therapy sessions, one has to read between the lines to glean women's active resistance in the face of repression. The author of the report frequently used words such as "broken" and "acutely anxious" to describe

---

[10] Kirkwood, 40-41.

[11] "Relegaciones," File 2462.3.

them. While the women certainly suffered tremendous emotional pain, they, too, were pro-active. They not only found common ground in their pain, but also informed the Vicariate's psychologists of their husbands' and sons' psychological states and the symptoms they witnessed when they visited them in the place of their internal exile or detention. After they had completed the dangerous task of searching for them in police stations and jails, the women sought help not only for themselves, but also for their family members.[12]

The author of this follow-up report underscored the effects of state repression on families through the case of a woman named Nancy, whose son had been detained and relegated. The narrative of the case portrayed her as infantile and hysterical, while, read another way, Nancy could be seen as exerting agency under dangerous circumstances. She was a thirty-seven-year-old housewife and mother of two grown sons whose younger, eighteen-year-old son had been detained and internally exiled. Nancy searched in several police precincts for her son and was followed by the secret police. She sent her older son to live with his father in the north to protect him from the danger their family faced in the capital. The author of the report provides excerpts of the testimony Nancy gave (presumably in therapy, as a diagnosis follows the report). The therapist emphasized Nancy's emotional fragility, describing the beginning of a session: "From the beginning of the clinical interview one observes that she is very emotionally broken, she cries during the entire thing." The author concluded that while Nancy's depression and acute anxiety predominated, she also showed signs of "regression to a type of infancy," and cited bedwetting, feelings of dependence on her sons and mother, and feelings of defenselessness and helplessness

[12] Ibid.

as evidence.[13] In spite of the fact that Nancy took an active role by searching for her detained son, visiting him where he was internally exiled, informing the Vicariate of his emotional state, and sending her older son (who was twenty-one) to live with his father up north, the report stressed her emotional instability. Rather than pointing out that she put herself in danger to secure the emotional and physical safety of her family, the author accentuated Nancy's regression to childish behavior and her dependency on her sons and her mother, rather than her son's dependency on her.[14]

Absent Fathers and the Anxious Mothers

Mental health professionals, as well as leftist parents, were also deeply concerned with the mental and physical health of children whose parents or other family members had been victims of state violence. These children were the heirs of the democratic society their parents had fought, and even died, for. To carry on their parents' work, they needed to develop whole selfhoods that would allow them to engage in collective political projects as adults. And as we saw in chapter one, debates over the creation of the Ministry of the Family under Allende's Popular Unity invoked the image of the child who embodied the family's suffering under capitalism. Children, the left argued, were the most innocent victims of capitalism. And now, mental health professionals argued, they were the most innocent victims of the regime's violence and economic repression. Focusing on children reaffirmed

---

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

childrearing as a public good, not simply a private matter. An emphasis on children was also a vehicle for talking about the roles of fathers and mothers.

From their inception in the late 1970s and early 1980s, mental health teams began studying the effects of state violence and repression on children. Although many children were imprisoned, executed, disappeared, and faced police violence in their communities, many of the mental health studies focused on children who also suffered due to state violence against their parents. Mental health professionals drew on the image of the male head of household whom state violence had displaced from his role as father and husband. The military regime had disappeared, executed, or imprisoned their parents (statistically, mostly men), or it had tortured their parents to the point that they could no longer fulfill their paternal roles. Mental health professionals also constructed an image of mothers as overwhelmed in the search for their husbands or in their attempts to take on the role of both parents. As a result, children became indirect victims of state repression and suffered their own forms of trauma, which could inhibit them from growing into healthy adults—both physically and emotionally—as some manifestations of trauma caused children to regress in their behavior by years.

Mental health teams' work with children made it strikingly clear that the Pinochet regime had caused great psychological damage to a significant portion of the population that was completely innocent. This made mental health professionals' work even more relevant for bolstering the human rights movement, especially when the right (and some of the armed left) claimed a "state of war" that could contradict

many arguments for human rights. Moreover, it underscored the idea of victimization as the foundation of human rights discourse.

A report from the Vicariate of Solidarity posited that caring for the mental health of children of the disappeared was essential for them to become "whole persons." According to the authors, a person's mental health was neither static nor individual; rather, it depended on one's ability to relate to others and society as a whole. Overall, an individual's mental health rested largely on knowing that he or she had certain rights as a human being, and those should not be violated capriciously. The dictatorship had made such a state of mental security impossible, leaving the population, including children, without the necessary confidence to develop as individuals, even within the family unit, where ideally they were supposed to feel the most secure and the family was seen as politically determined. In fact, the majority of the children that the Vicariate treated had regressed to the behavior of younger, less-developed children. Through therapy, these children could overcome their psychological problems, which would give them the possibility to develop normally and become democratic citizens. Children represented the future of the nation and a democratic society. To fully reconstruct the nuclear family, and in the process individual selfhoods, children as well as adults needed to be mentally healthy.[15] The Vicariate's study also mentioned that typically mothers brought in their children for mental health care, and FASIC reports indicated the same. Women who were mothers and wives of militants played an important role in seeking therapy for themselves and their families. Besides charging themselves with the emotional recovery of their

[15] Programa Salud Mental, "Informe trabajo diagnostico niños de detenidos desaparecidos" (Working paper, File 00911.00, c.2, Archivo Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Santiago, Chile, 1978).

families, they opened the space for talking about private trauma. They not only sought to heal psychic wounds but also provided testimony of human rights violations and their effects on the family.[16]

One 1977 FASIC study on psychological trauma in the children of victims of state violence recognized that both the mother and father might be imprisoned, but they stated that they did not have sufficient data to analyze those situations. The following passage encapsulates the authors' analysis:

> The father suddenly 'becomes absent,' dies, or 'disappears.' The mother goes out without clear direction, very anxious and fearful. In general, she is not clear as to where she should go; the most common scenario is that she has not been given any information. She goes to the police station, she roams the jails, in the first days she is generally denied everywhere. If he was detained in his own home she at least has a reference point, but if he suddenly disappeared she has only rumors, sometimes witnesses, and great desperation. And so begins the long suffering: she practically abandons her home and her children, sometimes she has no alternative other than to have them accompany her […]. The family has disintegrated, the roles have been confused, the younger children feel abandoned, they have a double and painful loss: the father and the mother always absent, the fights between siblings begin, the oldest "thinks himself the dad," he does not obey, fights, frustrations, lack of affection. [*sic*] The children are distanced from the home; they are taken to stay with relatives or friends.[17]

Throughout the narrative, the man was a militant and fallen hero. The woman played an active role as the wife who fought to find her husband and recover her broken family, which required confronting the dictatorial state. Still, the authors, while showing sympathy for the children, depict the same valiant wife as a failed mother. According to these professionals, the loss of the male head of household—a situation

---

[16] Ibid.

[17] FASIC, "El daño en los menores, hijos de familias directamente afectadas por la represión" (Working paper, Biblioteca FASIC, document 5.88, Santiago, Chile, 1977).

the dictatorship caused—ended in total chaos in the home. The children lost not only a father, but also a mother, because their mother could not fulfill both roles, and to do so only confused the children and forced the eldest son into his father's role and into disobeying his mother. Furthermore, the authors contended, the mother could not parent her children properly while also searching for her missing husband. She would either abandon them or expose them to psychological damage by taking them with her to police stations and jails in her search. The mother did not know how to confront the situation and the children suffered for it. When the dictatorship took the man out of the house, it also took away rationality, and the nuclear family "disintegrated."[18]

Mental health professionals also underscored the importance of the father-son bond, which the dictatorship's violence had strained by separating families and unsettling their dynamics. In a 1985 paper for the Inter-American Psychological Society Conference in Caracas, FASIC social worker Adriana Maggi argued that the persisting effects of violence manifested themselves on families and children, and thereby damaged Chile's potential to reclaim democracy. She made her case through the story of Pedro: When he was eight years old, Pedro and his younger brother hid in a nearby factory as they witnessed military officers raid their home and arrest their father. The officers found the children in the factory and interrogated them. Pedro's father was imprisoned in a concentration camp, tortured, and sent to live in a part of the country far away from his home. Within a year, Pedro's family relocated to be near his father. After Pedro's father was freed from prison, he was internally exiled—unable to leave the city where he lived and forced to sign in at a police station every

[18] Ibid.

day. Five years later, when Pedro was thirteen, he experienced a cluster of troubling symptoms that fell out of the realm of his parents' knowledge. After several stressful days at home and in school, Pedro followed a pattern of sleepwalking to his parents' room and vomiting next to his mother's side of the bed. He also had recurring nightmares, during which he shouted, "They're going to kill us all," "Take a bath," and other things of which his parents could not make sense.[19]

Since the family's reunion five years earlier, Pedro's father had often been "impatient and irritable with his son, who was also apathetic and hypersensitive, [and] 'cried about everything.'"[20] The family struggled economically, and Pedro's father suffered from insomnia, irritability, and "emotional fragility."[21] Pedro's mother was anxious, but did not wish to burden her husband with more problems, and the couple faced a general breakdown in communication. The FASIC team concluded that Pedro's vomiting and nightmares were psychosomatic manifestations of what he imagined his father and his father's friends had suffered in prison. They noted that at night, Pedro overhead his father cry and recollect his experiences of torture. The most impactful for Pedro was learning that his father had been forced to eat human excrement and show his teeth to his torturers. As Pedro recounted this to his therapists, he would begin to experience stomach pain. The team posited that this was the possible link to Pedro's nighttime vomiting: he could not tolerate the knowledge or the image of his father consuming human feces, and vomiting was his psyche's

---

[19] Adriana Maggi V., "Trauma Psíquico, Trauma Social?" ponencia presentada al XX Congreso de la Sociedad Interamericana de Psicología, Caracas, Venezuela, 1985. Biblioteca FASIC, Santiago de Chile.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

way of "releasing the child momentarily from the tremendous weight that the fantasy produced, a thousand times over."[22] The father's suffering was not only his own; his son had taken on the emotional weight of his father's torture, and, unable to bear it, his psyche forced him to replay it over and over in other ways, such as unconscious vomiting and nightmare, until it could be purged. As Pedro assumed his father's psychological suffering in a profound way, his relationship with his father deteriorated. Maggi and her colleagues sought to demonstrate how state violence wore away at the parent-child bond (which the regime supposedly held sacred), even if the parent survived and returned home. Embodying his father, Pedro reproduced the citizen psychologically damaged by state violence.[23]

In the same year (1985), the human rights NGO, Protection of Infancy Damaged by States of Emergency (PIDEE), created a temporary home with substitute parents for children in especially precarious situations due to state violence and repression in their families. PIDEE was founded in 1979 and catered to the needs of children who were victims of state violence or, more often, whose parents were victims of state violence, and the mental health professionals, social workers, and medical doctors who worked within the organization treated children for physical and mental health in its center in Santiago and eight other centers in various regions of Chile, mainly south of the capital. They published accounts of their activities, denunciations of human rights violations involving children, and case studies in annual reports that circulated among other human rights NGOs. Like other human rights NGOs of the period, PIDEE later published reports on the regime's violence

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

against children that they presented to the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

PIDEE's Casa Hogar was a children's home specifically designed for temporarily housing and providing medical and mental health care for impoverished children exposed directly or indirectly to state violence. The children were often malnourished and had other medical problems that their families could not afford to treat.[24] Parents sent their children to Casa Hogar instead of appealing for assistance to the dictatorial state that had caused direct violence and repression to their families. Some children lived in the Casa, while most went home with their parents each day, since PIDEE did not have the funds to permanently house all of the children in need. Human rights NGOs filled a vacuum the Pinochet regime created as it broke down the welfare state and repressed leftists and the poor. PIDEE's executive secretary and the other members of the team envisioned the program, which began in 1985 and ended with the return to democracy in 1990, principally as a means to offer treatment to children in the provinces who lived in precarious situations and did not have access to the treatment options that NGOs provided in Santiago, such as treatment by medical specialists. Even though PIDEE had opened several centers throughout the country by 1985, children in the regions needed more constant care. The PIDEE team realized, however, that even though children in Santiago had access to more resources, they also needed the benefits of a stable home environment that provided parental affect along with physical and mental health services—which were the goals of Casa

[24] M. Estela Ortiz R. and Chetty Espinoza M., *Casa Hogar. Familia en emergencia.* (Santiago: PIDEE, 1990), 11-12; "Memoria Anual 1985. Reseña de trabajo efectuado" (Santiago: PIDEE, 1985), 171-173.

Hogar.[25] PIDEE published data and case studies from Casa Hogar in their yearly reports. A 1990 book recounted the history of the project along with two case studies.

To provide the children with both the nurturing and affect that they would or should receive from parents, PIDEE designed the home to be headed by a married couple who would live in the house with the children, act as a "substitute father and mother," and "reproduce the parental image."[26] The team also consisted of a pre-school teacher who worked full time, a children's psychiatrist who worked two hours a week, and part-time social workers. PIDEE's social worker and psychiatrist hired the members of the team. The parental substitutes are anonymous in the documentation, but their roles show what the PIDEE team posited to be essential for a child to develop into a healthy person. The substitute parents were the first to receive the child into the home, and they, not the psychologist, listened to the child's first testimony of what had occurred in his or her family. The substitute parents were also charged with providing affect, which the team considered integral to the children's psychic recovery. In an ideal home, then, parents would be available physically and emotionally to listen to their children and to fulfill their need for affection. In Casa Hogar, the substitute father also took an active role in caring for the children, and since living in and administrating the house was his job, he did not leave to work as a typical father presumably would. The substitute mother reproduced ideal, traditional gender roles, keeping house and feeding and clothing the children.[27]

---

[25] Ortiz and Espinoza, 9-33; "Memoria Anual 1985," 171-173; "Memoria Anual 1986. Reseña de trabajo efectuado" (Santiago: PIDEE, 1986), 55-57; "Memoria Anual 1987. Reseña de trabajo efectuado" (Santiago: PIDEE,1987), 47.

[26] Ortiz and Espinoza, 11-13.

Even if it was not intentional, Casa Hogar's designers and report authors seemed to uphold a negative image of single mothers (or mothers without their children's fathers in the home, in the case of those whose husbands were in prison). In the 1990 publication, the authors, pre-school teacher María Estela Ortiz and psychologist Chetty Espinoza, stated that the children from Santiago who were incorporated into the home had suffered familial rupture and lack of affect "due to the disappearance of a parent or because the mother had to carry out errands in various institutions and did not have anywhere to leave her children."[28] While the statistics do not tell the sex of the parent who suffered from state violence whose situation caused the child to come to Casa Hogar, the case studies most often pointed to neglectful mothers who could not care for their children when their husbands were in prison or after they had been disappeared. In one case, the authors called the mother "lazy" and posited that the father, who was in prison, had been the center of family life. The family was crumbling without him. In another case study, the authors recounted their work with three siblings whose father was imprisoned and whose mother often left them to carry out legal procedures to free their father. The eldest son assumed the role of both father and mother to his siblings.[29]

These children undoubtedly suffered greatly. Still, by highlighting cases such as these, in which mothers seemed not to be able to fulfill their duties without the aid of their children's fathers —or worse, neglected their children— reinforced the idea that the nuclear family was the most psychologically and physically healthy

---

[27] Ibid., 12-13, 17-18, 23-24, 27-33.

[28] Ibid., 17.

[29] Ortiz and Espinoza, 17-18; "Trabajos y Experiencias" (Santiago: PIDEE, 1986), 41-45.

environment for a child. This was the very concept upon which Casa Hogar was founded: a "substitute" father and mother administrated the home and provided the supposedly-ideal image of a family, which, for those children who had a disappeared or executed parent, may not have ever become a reality again.

The increased emphasis in the mid-1980s on the importance of the father's affection, in addition to the mother's, can be read a couple of ways. On the one hand, mental health professionals challenged notions of the armed militant and the distant father who provided for his family but focused on political activities. In particular, this seemed to contest ideas about the leftist guerilla, who, according to Che Guevara, should put the concerns of all children above his own family in order for the revolution to be successful.[30] These men thus were capable of and had an obligation to provide emotionally, as well as financially, for their children. These mental health studies signaled that the left's politics that looked toward the benefit of future generations also needed to turn inward and consider the emotional well-being of their own children. Emotional development was part of the development of a whole selfhood that encompassed the psychological and the physical, and ultimately, the political.

So, on the one had, holding fathers, in addition to mothers, accountable for their children's emotional development represented a shift between the earlier studies in the 1970s and the studies in the mid-1980s. The ideal, however, was still the heterosexual nuclear family. Yet that in itself was also the point—to denounce the

---

[30]Ernesto Guevara, *Socialism and Man* (New York: Young Socialist Alliance, Merit Publishers, 1968). Leftist revolutionaries, particularly the extreme left, were heavily influenced by the Cuban revolution, and even sought asylum there in the 1970s. Cuban guerillas also trained the MIR in the use of arms and strategy.

fact that the regime was responsible for depriving children of an "ideal" family life with a father and mother whose capacity to love and care for them had not been shattered by state violence. And to insist that the opposition would fulfill that ideal, no matter what, publicly and privately.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that mental health professionals developed concepts and therapeutic practices for reconstructing the self by drawing on pre-conceived notions of the male-headed nuclear family and its relation to politics under the welfare state. To reconstruct their senses of self and reconnect to collective struggles for democracy, men who had been imprisoned or internally exiled must return to their former status as breadwinners. This had been complicated, however, by the regime's neoliberal economic policies and continued political repression. Men who sought the help of mental health professionals had tended to turn inward and become reclusive. They did not attempt to rebuild social or familial bonds. The inability for political participants to connect with each other would endanger collective struggles for democracy. Their incapacity to provide for their children's economic and emotional needs would compromise the future health and social reproduction of the democratic citizenry.

Women, on the other hand, became more active outside the home. Often out of necessity, they began working outside the home for the first time and earning their own money. They searched for their relatives in police stations. They became involved in human rights organizations. And they found a new sense of autonomy.

Sometimes, mental health professionals recognized this new type of agency women exercised. But primarily, they denounced the harm the regime caused to men and women who wanted to work and raise families. The supposed permanency or "common sense" of the male-headed nuclear family provided a framework for helping patients recover and re-build a sense of stability when political, social, and economic upheaval had invaded their personal lives so profoundly. It also provided a moral foundation for the human rights movement to challenge the legitimacy of the regime.

But in the mid-1980s, feminists would challenge the idea of male-headed nuclear family and drew connections between the gender politics of the dictatorship and the left. They offered new interpretations for reconstructing the self and reconnecting the individual to collective struggles for democracy, which is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 4

From *Compañeras* to Militants: Reconsidering Women, Gender, and Selfhood

As we have seen, mental health teams working in human rights organizations conceptualized the heterosexual male citizen as the mold for reconstructing the self. They confronted the sexual torture of men and women by casting regime agents who sexually tortured men as sexual deviants and by conceptualizing women's bodies as the natural target of male sexual aggression. To help their patients reconstruct their senses of self and their families in the face of economic and political dislocation, mental health professionals tapped into pre-existing gendered ideas about men as breadwinners and women as mothers and men's compañeras. Mental health professionals also sought to ensure that children would be fit to inherit the democracy their parents were fighting for. But that also meant re-constructing the male-headed nuclear family.

Feminists changed the conversation by influencing how mental health professionals wrote about sexual torture, family dynamics, and women as political agents. Women's activism, budding feminist scholarship in Chile, and the increase of women militants and activists' visibility changed mental health professionals' ideas about women's experiences of authoritarianism in the home and in society. First, this chapter traces the development of the feminist movement and its central concepts within the context of the dictatorship and struggles for democracy. Like mental health professionals, feminists saw the importance of restoring the bonds between the individual and the collective in order to regain democracy in Chile. And like mental

health professionals, feminists conceived of the private life of the individual as part and parcel of the larger collective project of democracy and social equality. In fact, that was feminists' founding principle: The personal is political. The private space of the home reflected gender inequality in society and vice versa. Through workshops, meetings, bulletins, and publications, feminist organizations provided women with spaces and language to speak about their experiences in the home and in public. In particular, women found ways to speak about violence perpetrated by regime agents, as well as family members, romantic partners, and strangers.

The second half of the chapter discusses mental health cases from the mid-to late-1980s and early 1990s to demonstrate how mental health professionals incorporated feminist principles. Although mental health professionals had provided therapy to women militants as well as men since the 1970s, their publications—the body of knowledge about individual and collective trauma they created—focused on men as militants and political prisoners. Women appeared as wives and mothers of the disappeared, executed and political prisoners.[1] The experiences of women militants and their families, particularly single mothers, were mostly invisible in those earlier studies. But in beginning in the mid-1980s, mental health professionals tended to underscore women's agency more.

---

[1] I discuss this at length and the notion of silence as evidence in document analysis of women militants in Brandi Townsend, "La psique democrática. Género, salud mental y militancia bajo Pinochet, Revista Internacional Interdisciplinar INTERthesis, v10 n1 (July 2013): 65-88. Furthermore, in oral interviews I conducted, women who were imprisoned in the 1970s and early 1980s spoke about the mental health services that FASIC and other human rights organizations offered. Sylvia and Alicia, Interview with author, June 2012, Valparaíso, Chile; María Cristina, Interview with author, August 2012, Valparaíso, Chile.

Democracy in the Home and in the Country

Latin American feminists conceptualized their goals as part and parcel of collective struggles against the neoliberal reforms, authoritarianism, and U.S. imperialism that sprang from the Cold War.[2] In the context of that activism, some Chilean women activists identified as feminists, and others did not. But by the end of the 1980s, many espoused feminist principles. Middle-and working-class women held workshops and talked about their personal experiences and the situations in their communities, families, and society as a whole. They organized soup kitchens and bazars where they sold handmade crafts to provide extra income for their families. They circulated bulletins that educated women about their bodies and sexuality on one page and denounced human rights violations in the community or provided a testimony of political imprisonment and torture on the other.[3]

The feminist movement did not gain a formidable public presence until 1983, when the organizations Feminist Movement (Movimiento Feminista, MF) and the Pro-Women's Emancipation Movement '83 for (Movimiento Pro Emancipación de la Mujer '83) linked groups of previously disconnected feminists to protest in the streets. MEMCH '83 drew together several groups of middle- and working-class women's organizations with varying degrees of feminist orientation. Some of these included the MF, the Chilean Women's Movement (Movimiento de Mujeres de

---

[2] Heidi Tinsman, "A Paradigm of our Own: Joan Scott in Latin American History," *Amerian Historical Review* 113:5 (2008): 1357-1374.

[3] Patricia M. Chuckryk, "From Dictatorship to Democracy: The Women's Movement in Chile," In *The Women's Movement in Latin America: Participation and Democracy*, 2 ed., edited by Jane S. Jaquette (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994); Teresa Valdés, *De lo social a lo politico. La acción de las mujeres latinoamericanos.* (Santiago: LOM, 2000), 43-109.

Chile), Women of Chile, (Mujeres de Chile, MUDECHI), and several others.[4] In August 1983, the MF marched in the streets and launched a campaign for "Democracy Now, in the Home and in the Country." Sociologist Natacha Molina argues that the MF was the first to "'take up the banner and take to the streets,' not just as women—they were doing that before—but as feminists."[5]

Feminists in the academy like Julieta Kirkwood, a Chilean sociologist and pioneer feminist intellectual, merged their scholarship with activism to fight for women's rights as human rights. Since 1976, the Women's Studies Circle (Círculo de Estudios de la Mujer, CEM) had served as a shadow academy for feminist intellectual production. In 1982, the Casa la Morada (Purple House) was created to do the same. Feminist scholars were active members of these institutions and taught in Chilean universities. Kirkwood gave talks and taught several seminars on feminist issues at the Latin American School of Social Science (Facultad Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales, FLACSO) and universities in Santiago in the early 1980s.[6] Chilean feminist intellectuals learned not only practical approaches to fighting for women's rights as human rights, but also developed ways to understand social, political, and economic processes, and their inextricable relationship to personal experiences. Researchers, many of them graduate students or women who recently graduated with master's and

[4] Natacha Molina, *Lo feminino y lo democrático en el Chile de hoy* (Santiago: VECTOR, Centro de Estudios Económicos y Socialies, 1987), 23-25.

[5] Ibid., 24.

[6] A collection of some of Kirkwood's lectures can be found in Julieta Kirkwood, *Feminarios,* compiled and annotated by Sonia Montecino (Santiago: Ediciones Documentas, 1987).

professional degrees, interviewed and held workshops with women in poblaciones of Santiago.[7]

Many working-class feminists drew on the works of feminists like Kirkwood, and applied concepts to their daily lives, personal experiences, and collective identity as *pobladoras* (women from the shantytowns). The Committee for the Defense of the Rights of Woman (CODEM) and Women of Chile (MUDECHI) pulled working-class and pobladoras, as well as some middle-class women, into political organizing for women's rights and reclaiming democracy. They established chapters in Santiago, as well as regional cities such as Concepción and Valdivia in the South, Valparaíso (200 kilometers from Santiago), and Iquique in the north. Members also traveled throughout the regions and directed workshops. These organizations, in addition to several others, connected struggles for women's rights to the opposition's struggles against state violence, economic repression, and the restriction of rights the dictatorship imposed upon the general population.[8]

Feminist activists engaged in regular dialogue with major human rights organizations with prominent mental health teams: CODEM was affiliated with CODEPU, and MUDECHI and FASIC coordinated joint activities. FASIC psychiatrist Fanny Polarollo was one of the founding members of Women for Life, a feminist group of prominent women leaders in political parties. By the mid-to-late

---

[7] Women in Chile: pamphlets, 1982-1986. Princeton University Latin American Pamphlet Collection. Chile: Women and Gender. Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Library, 1987, microfilm.

[8] Chilean women's organizations and protest activities, 1985-1987, Princeton University Latin American Pamphlet Collection, Princeton University Library, 1987, microfilm; Chile: Women and Gender, Princeton University Latin American Pamphlet Collection, Princeton, N.J.; Princeton University Library, 1987, microfilm.

1980s, some mental health professionals began to reference works by Kirkwood and other feminists to draw on feminist principles to interpret the situations their patients faced. Kirkwood wrote several works on feminist politics, theory, and women's realities in Chile. Her pathbreaking re-interpretation of Chile's narrative of political history displaced traditional, masculine perspectives of history and citizenship and showed how the military dictatorship contributed to men's increased dominance over women in both public and private.[9]

Women's and feminist organizations also participated in national and international assemblies for women's rights, and they applied international campaigns for women's rights as human rights, such as the United Nations' No Discriminación a la Mujer campaign, to their own struggles in Chile.[10] Gathering collectively and participating in a global process of change, and representing their respective countries in that movement, also gave Chilean feminists a sense of self-confidence and a way to enact social change in ways that they had never before experienced.[11]

While Chilean women of the opposition generally agreed that women's emancipation should accompany democracy, they did not agree on how emancipation should come about. Kirkwood defined two sides of the women's movement: the feminists and the *políticas.* Both groups, unlike political parties dominated by men,

---

[9] Temma Kaplan, "Women's Rights as Human Rights: Women as Agents of Social Change," in Marjorie Agosín, ed., *Women, Gender, and Human Rights: A Global Perspective* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2001), 191-205; Tinsman, "A Paradigm of Our Own," 1357-1374.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Kaplan, "Women's Rights as Human Rights," 191-205; Jadwiga E. Pieper Mooney, *The Politics of Motherhood: Maternity and Women's Rights in Twentieth-Century Chile* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), 163-193; Julieta Kirkwood, "Los nudos de la sabiduría feminist (después del II Encuentro Feminista Latinoamericano y del Caribe, Lima, 1983).

emphasized non-hierarchical organization and communication, and they shared a deep concern for women's issues. In that sense, all the groups had feminist characteristics. The politícas, however, adopted an approach, as Kirkwood described it, of, "There is no feminism without democracy." In other words, the políticas argued that they were most useful providing support for political parties in struggles for democracy, and once democracy was achieved, they could focus their efforts on making concrete gains for women's rights. Without democracy, such efforts would be in vain. Kirkwood contended, however, that feminists' approach, "There is no democracy without feminism," would end in more gains for women's rights and bestow political importance upon the realm of the private. Women, she argued, had experienced authoritarianism in the home before the dictatorship. Only if Chileans envisioned the private as political, and fought for democracy in the home and in the country, could they truly achieve a democratic society. That required imagining women's emancipation and democracy as mutually constitutive, rather than women's rights as a project to be incorporated after a return to democracy.[12]

The notion of women as men's compañeras in politics pre-dated the dictatorship, as Kirkwood argued in her 1980 work *Ser política en Chile. Las feministas y los partidos.* As discussed in chapter one, during the Popular Unity period, women had participated politically, but neither women nor men on the left had not necessarily conceptualized women's equality as something distinct and worthy of its own analysis within issues of class. Women, according to Kirkwood,

[12] Kirkwood, *Ser política en Chile. Las feministas y los partidos*, 2 ed. (Santiago: LOM, 2010), 166-178.

were idealized as "mothers, daughters, *compañeras*, 'of the workers.'"[13] With the coup in 1973, the military dictatorship broke down democracy and sought to reinforce the strictest and most traditional forms of men's domination over women both in the home and in society as a whole. Women were meant to both reproduce the workforce and maintain the market through their roles as consumers. Authoritarianism both at a political level and in the home facilitated this gender model.[14]

Delineating the connections between the militarization of society and the domination of women in the home, sociologist María Elena Valenzuela argued that stereotypes of *machismo* and *marianismo*, as well the valorization of hierarchies, buttressed patriarchy in the home and in society.[15] Women, through the entrenched sense of being gatekeepers for their sexuality, often inadvertently bore the burden of guilt. In the home, when husbands, fathers, and sons abused women and children, it sprang from a sense of ownership and entitlement. Valenzuela argued that domestic violence endured because women understood their subordination to men as natural. More broadly, she contended, boys and girls were taught from a young age that the binary of masculine aggression and feminine weakness were inherent traits that provided social order, rather than constructed gender stereotypes that perpetuated men's domination over women.[16]

---

[13] Kirkwood, *Ser política en Chile,* 36.

[14]Ibid., 36-37.

[15] María Elena Valenzuela, *La mujer en el Chile militar* (Santiago: Ediciones Chile y América CESOC-ACHIP, 1987), 11.

[16] Valenzuela, 225-236.

Valenzuela noted the particular danger of sexual torture and rape, and their connection to domestic violence. Paraphrasing Ximena Bunster, Valenzuela argued that the dictatorship used rape and sexual torture to shatter women's sense of themselves. By using the ingrained ideals of marianismo and motherhood against women, sexual torture made women feel impure. Women internalized a sense of guilt for these acts forced upon them. She added, "Rape is not only a sex crime, but simultaneously an act of violence and authority. Exercised upon women, but also through them, it also penalizes and terrorizes men, who symbolically are deprived of their sexual property."[17] Rape and sexual torture by the state, and the reasons the state deployed it, demonstrated an underlying patriarchal structure that linked state authoritarianism and authoritarianism in the home: the masculine military state exercised ownership over women's bodies, and it threatened the (masculine) opposition's ownership over the bodies of their wives, mothers, sisters, daughters, and compañeras.

The first lesbian feminist group to organize in the 1980s, Ayuquelén, also challenged the patriarchal ownership of women's bodies. did not produce or circulate written publications as did other feminist organizations. In an interview with the leftist magazine *Apsi* in June 1987, four members of the organization discussed the oppression of lesbians in society, which was grounded both in men's domination over women and in homophobia. One of the women, Inés, explained that lesbian relationships tended to be more horizontal than heterosexual relationships, because

---

[17] Valenzuela, 225. The author paraphrased Ximena Bunster-Burotto, "Surviving Beyond Fear: Women and Torture in Latin America" in *Women and Change in Latin America,* ed. June Nash and Helen I. Safa (South Hadley, Mass.: 1986), 297-395.

lesbian partners were not often pressured into framing their life projects around a male partner's priorities, or constructing their relationships around a an expected sense of dependence on a man. They challenged the notion of motherhood as women's primary purpose, which turned maternity into and obligation and women's bodies into "machines" for having children. The inability of two women to conceive a child together was perhaps the foundation upon which the cultural notion that lesbianism was un-natural, abnormal, and a sickness was built. The women of Ayuquelén explained that culturally ingrained notions of lesbianism, especially those that deemed it a sickness, led to their "ghettoization" in society, as well as lack of support from their families.[18]

The women maintained, however, that lesbianism was a choice, not a sickness, and they argued for its power as a political identity that connected the personal to the political and challenged unjust social structures. Some women who had been in heterosexual relationships discussed men's disproportionate power over women's bodies and sexual subjectivities. The women also contended that vaginal penetration was a male-centered approach to sex. But their discussion of sex was not flippant. This public conversation about the sexual frustrations of lesbian women (which they related to those of heterosexual women), and the patriarchal power that shaped them, signaled a bold step in contesting cultural notions of sexuality. Speaking about same-sex sexuality in a public medium was especially radical at a time when gay men and women could be arrested under the broad umbrella of delinquency.[19]

---

[18] "Colectivo Ayuquelén: 'Somos lesbianas por opción,'" *APSI*, June 22-28, 1987.

[19] Alison Bruey, "Neoliberalism and Repression in Poblaciones of Santiago de Chile," *Stockholm Review of Latin American Studies* 5 (September 2009): 23-24; Victor Hugo Robles,

Connecting ingrained notions of heterosexual sexuality to patriarchal power over the body and society was especially important at a time in which more women, as well as some men, were beginning to speak publicly about sexual torture.[20]

Like other feminists, the members of Ayuquelén connected individual sexual subjectivities to larger social and political processes of discrimination and inequality. But while making considerable gains in women's rights, consciousness-raising, and public visibility as political agents, the feminist movement in general remained overwhelmingly heteronormative. However, as women circulated their testimonies and became more publicly visible as political agents, and as mental health professionals began to engage with feminist texts and moved in the same circles as feminist activists, some professionals began to offer interpretations about gender and reconstructing the self that incorporated the basic feminist principle of gender equality in the home and in society.

New Perspectives on Selfhoood, **Militancy, and Torture**

Several women's organizations illuminated the dictatorship's violence against women by featuring women's testimonies in bulletins and informing the press of women political prisoners' situations and demands. The testimonies denounced human rights violations, but they also made women's experiences of state violence, told in their own words, more visible. Their actions chipped away at a narrative that marginalized women as political militants. In 1987, CODEM published a testimony

---

Bandera Hueca: historia del movimiento homosexual en Chile (Santiago: ARCIS/Cuarto Propio, 2008).

[20] "Querrella por sodomía contra la CNI," *Cauce,* March 14, 1987.

of a former political prisoner who described being sexually tortured and abused by a commander she called "Pacheco," along with other military officers. In the introduction to her testimony, she wrote that she had been imprisoned many years ago, but her memory of what happened to her remained clear. In that statement, the author established her credibility as someone who could recount an experience of violence in a cogent manner, even though it happened several years beforehand. She also indicated that speaking about such experiences could take survivors years, precisely because memories of violence haunted them every day and acted as a recurring threat to their humanity.[21]

After listing different types of sexual torture she experienced, the author explained how sexual torture worked to break down political prisoners' sense of self, and how she and other women resisted that attack:

> That torture technique was meant to break us as people, since they ignored the values that we learned since we were little. Many of us had to confront that at that time, without the possibility of public denunciation, nor grievances . . . . But the most important thing is that they did not achieve their goal. We left with our ideas intact and with a stronger conviction to fight this dictatorship to the end. A conviction that we share with the great majority of our people.[22]

The author clearly connected sexual torture to breaking down one's sense of self by stating that sexual torture disrespected the political prisoners' "values [they] had learned since [they] were little." She implied that those values were entrenched beliefs about sexual purity that Valenzuela described. But the author also emphasized that despite brutal torture, she and her compañeras left prison with their "ideas intact," an allusion both to mental stability and to resisting being "broken," or

---

[21] "Vamos Mujer, Boletín CODEM" 7 (Santiago: 1987), Biblioteca FASIC, Santiago, Chile.

[22] Ibid.

reneging on political beliefs under torture. Her statement implied an argument for women's tenacity and dedication to collective struggle as political agents in their own right, not as compañeras of male militants. She spoke on behalf of herself and other women who, as she stated, coped with that reality without the possibility of denouncing it publicly (or perhaps, without the hope that a public denunciation made through a human rights organization, or one that could have legal consequences under a democratic government). She also suggested that cases like hers were not well known publicly, and that media like the bulletins of women's organizations were effective ways of making their stories public by circulating their testimonies among and human rights organizations and their readers in working-and middle class communities. In the mid-to-late 1980s, women's organizations also gathered testimonies of women political prisoners and campaigned to publicize their situation in the leftist press.[23]

In the mid-1980s, CODEPU-DITT conducted the first mental health study that focused on women militants. The team visited between twelve and twenty political prisoners during the year of 1983, offered them therapy, and converted the narratives the women related in therapy sessions into testimonies denouncing human rights violations. CODEPU-DITT published the study in a 1986 edition of *Tortura: Documento de denunica* (a quarterly publication that they circulated to other human rights organizations) and in a book called *Persona, estado, poder* in 1988, which was a compilation of studies they conducted throughout the 1980s. The team also presented the document's section on motherhood in the San Miguel prison at the

[23] Vamos Mujer, boletín CODEM 7 (Santiago: 1987), Biblioteca FASIC, Santiago, Chile; "Prisioneras de Coronel tienen quien les escriben," *Análisis,* September 14-20, 1987.

United Nations' conference on women and development in Nairobi in 1985, which inserted Chile's women militants into the global conversation on women's rights as human rights and dialogued with the women's movement in Chile.[24]

Before the San Miguel study, women militants were mentioned occasionally in psychological reports. Their statistics appeared in charts, and their testimonies were compiled alongside men's in the organizations' records. Yet before this study, women militants were rarely the focus. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, several other studies began to incorporate studies on women who had been politically imprisoned and tortured. But as I have suggested, throughout most of the 1980s, most of the studies that were so critically important for the development of the human rights movement focused on men as political agents.

The study highlighted a group testimony from the prisoners in which they explained the difficulties of being both militants and mothers. Yet both the militants and authors of the study stressed that the women remained committed politically despite the responsibilities of motherhood. Eleven of the twenty-three women in the San Miguel prison had children in prison with them, and three of them gave birth while incarcerated. Those children stayed in a separate area of the prison, which, the therapists argued, caused their mothers anxiety. In the testimony, the women said they shouldered the primary responsibility for caring for their children, while the children's fathers played a secondary role. The women's commitment to politics also created a new generation of leftist activists: women militants who were mothers taught their political ideas to their children, which strengthening the bond between

[24] Equipo de Denuncia, Investigación, y Tratamiento y su Núcleo Familiar del Comité de Defensa de los Derechos del Pueblo, *Persona, estado, poder. Estudios sobre salud mental. Chile, 1973-1989.* (Santiago: Sergio Pesutic, 1989), 163-180, 253-279.

them. The idea of mothers passing on political values to their children was not a new concept—Rousseau had indicated centuries before that a mother should teach republican values to her children, and various dictatorships (both right-and left-wing) in the twentieth century had idealized women as both the physical and cultural agents of the nation's reproduction. Yet these militants, while assuming the traditional responsibility of passing on their political values to their children, did so while also committing themselves to other areas of political struggle, and in the case of these women, while in prison for political reasons.[25]

The study also called attention to the torture of pregnant women who then gave birth in prison and the particular psychological effects this experience wrought. Three of the women entered the prison at various stages of pregnancy, and all of them were tortured. This included threatening to perform premature caesarian sections, beatings, electric shock, and once the children were born, keeping them in the prison, which caused their mothers to fear for the children's safety and health. One woman recounted thinking of a guard standing next to her sleeping child with a machine gun. The team contended that, like sexual torture, threats, and denigration of women prisoners' bodies, threatening to perform caesarian sections on pregnant prisoners was another tactic that the regime's agents used to make women feel as if they had no control over their bodies, "with the only end of bureaucratically dealing with a moment so significant in the life of a woman, which is the birth of her child." The CODEPU-DITT team drew connections between specific types of torture and the

[25] CODEPU-DITT, *Persona, estado poder*, 172-173. See also Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Emilie: Or On Education* (Hanover, New Hampshire: Dartmouth, 2009).

ways in which the regime sought to break down women's gendered subjectivities through them.[26]

The authors argued that the regime's agents had used sexual torture and harassment systematically against political prisoners, particularly women, that "fundamentally intends to destroy the *person*."[27] They signaled the problem of catharsis for the militant, whom they had treated between September and December 1986. Although her family and the other women in the prison provided her with emotional support, she suffered from severe anxiety. The weeks after her rape, however, were even more challenging for resisting the total destruction of her selfhood. During that time, she worried constantly about becoming pregnant as a result of the rape. The authors emphasized the problem of fully coming to terms with the experience of rape and finding a mode of catharsis when "said violence remained present through a haunting prospect that was more possible every day—pregnancy." She then had a miscarriage, which both confirmed her pregnancy and caused more emotional suffering.[28]

For the authors, her emotional distress from the miscarriage was perhaps understood and needed no elaboration. As they had noted, her torturers sought to destroy her sense of self through sexual torture—in this case, rape, an unwanted pregnancy, and the fear and uncertainty in between the rape and the miscarriage as to whether or not she was pregnant. By threatening these militants as mothers, the

---

[26]CODEPU-DITT, *Persona, Estado, Poder***,** 163-180.

[27] CODEPU, *Tortura: Documento de denuncia,* Vol VII (Santiago: CODEPU, 1987), 116.

[28] Ibid., 117.

regime sought to reinforce the idea that women should dedicate themselves to being housewives and mothers who passed along the cultural and political values of the dictatorship to their children. Instead, these women passed on leftist political ideas to their children while fighting for the cause themselves. CODEPU-DITT argued that, for the case of the eighteen-year-old prisoner subjected to rape and miscarriage, the regime did not reach its final goal:

> Their final objective, *the destruction of the person*, was not achieved. At the beginning of December 1986 the political prisoner publicly denounced the complete lived experience. The denunciation was possible only after she had overcome the life crisis and through her personal choice to reflect on her experiences. It represents a fundamental stage in the psychotherapeutic process of returning to the social body a criminal experience that cannot be explained by the mere psychopathological deviation of a given individual in a given moment. By speaking in public, with name and surname, everything that she lived, the prisoner *makes herself the protagonist again.* She casts off the powerless role of the victim that part of society wanted to label her as a paternal and comfortable solution.[29]

The above passage gets at the crux of how CODEPU-DITT connected the therapeutic process to the greater struggle for human rights. The team argued that this political prisoner could recover full agency, and thus avoid the full destruction of the self, through denouncing publicly—and not anonymously—the human rights violations perpetrated against her. They connected the very intimate experience of the physical and sexual body, which was inextricably linked to the psyche, to the collective healing of the social body as a political unit. That final act of catharsis—of "returning" her pain to the social body (or socializing it) when she denounced her rape publicly—re-affirmed her selfhood and her political militancy. In her case especially, her rape took place in the context of mass human rights violations, and it

---

[29] Ibid.

was the duty of the collective to bear witness to and answer for her pain. Psychotherapy helped her through that process.[30]

CODEPU-DITT's San Miguel prison study marks a change in how mental health teams associated with human rights NGOs wrote about women militants. While the team indicated that the women militants spoke of terror, panic, humiliation, and constant fear of rape (and rarely referred to the physical pain of torture), the authors did not emphasize the women's fear, but rather that their anger towards the guards made them determined to persevere. They organized for better conditions, created art and read poems, and they brought humanity into the prison. They found ways to maintain their selfhoods and solidarity with each other. CODEPU-DITT's findings emphasized to other mental health and human rights workers that women political prisoners were doing the same things that men had done, such as forming solidarity networks in prison, organizing, and braving torture and other forms of repression. Furthermore, women militants worked to maintain their political activities even when they bore most of the burden of raising their children. The study affirmed women's capacity for political agency and solidarity by taking the militants on their own terms, rather than the "*compañeras de*" male militants.[31]

A 1989 case study highlighting the experience of Josefina, a woman union leader and militant, in a publication from The Latin American Institute for Mental Health and Human Rights (ILAS) illuminates the shift in mental health professionals' willingness to use women militants as examples as protagonists in their case studies. ILAS was founded in 1988 by Elizabeth Lira. Several of the psychologists and

---

[30] Ibid.
[31] CODEPU-DITT, *Persona, estado, poder,* 179-180.

psychiatrists that worked at ILAS at its inceptions had previously worked with FASIC, including Lira, David Becker, and Elisa Neumann. Lira stated that one of her main reasons for founding a new organization was to focus more rigorously on research and publication and thus further the body of knowledge that had grown out of treating patients through human rights NGOs.

A case she and Becker analyzed in a chapter of one of ILAS's first published collections of essays used Josefina's case to illustrate the changing effects of trauma as the dictatorship and opposition to it changed from the 1970s through the 1980s. At a young age, Josefina helped organize a local women workers' union to foster women's education. Later, she was elected into the national president of the union and became active in formal politics. She was arrested by regime agents in 1974. In 1978, she sought psychological therapy for at an NGO (most likely FASIC, since Lira worked there during that time) for recurring headaches, insomnia, eye pain, nightmares, and irritability after a doctor had ruled out neurological causes for her symptoms. She was unable to speak about her experience at that time, but returned in 1979 for six sessions. She also returned in 1983 when her symptoms recurred in the wake of national protests, and later in 1985 after three Communist leaders (including a teacher and a sociologist from the Vicariate of Solidarity) were sequestered and found days later in a field with their throats slit. In her therapy sessions, Josefina often expressed guilt for exposing her children to danger and not being an adequate mother after returning from prison. She resisted talking about her experience with torture, but eventually, as she narrated the story of her childhood and young

adulthood, she eventually worked up to narrating her experience of rape by regime agents.

The authors' analysis of Josefina's case provides some striking contrasts to previous case studies by FASIC and other mental health teams operating in the late 1970s and 1980s. Mainly, they conceived of Josefina's recovery as that of reconstituting her whole self, which was not entirely centered on motherhood. The authors recognized Josefina's concerns and needs as a mother, but they also pushed against Josefina's narrative of framing her anxiety in terms of her failure as a mother. They suggested that Josefina's guilt was a product of her trauma, rather than an actual lack of maternal responsibility, and that overcoming that sense of guilt and anxiety was crucial to recovering her sense of self. Furthermore, Josefina was not part of a male-headed nuclear family structure, which mental health teams touted, if implicitly, as ideal for the development of selfhood (and thereby political agency). She had left home at a young age, and since age twenty-eight, she had children with a partner, but never lived with him. The authors did not talk at length about her partner, and did not argue that his participation in her life was necessary to her personal development and recovery. They focused on Josefina and her perseverance, rather than emotional fragility or weakness, and they emphasized all her dimensions, not just mother and compañera. And, quite simply, they used her as a case of a militant and leader who was tortured, rather than a woman who was tortured. Whereas in the late 1970s/early 1980s, someone like Josefina may have been seen as the exception to the rule and therefore not the most urgent subject of study.

In 1974 the authors of a report from FASIC stated that while they were aware that women with children had been tortured, they did not believe they had sufficient cases to draw definitive conclusions. Josefina could have been one of those women. Mental health professionals who worked in FASIC in the 1970s and 1980s might have published her story when they transferred to ILAS in 1989. But in earlier reports, they focused on male militants and their wives in the late 1970s and early 1980s, even though they were providing treatment to women leaders and militants. In earlier reports about women militants who were tortured and disappeared focused on the fact that the women were pregnant, mothers, daughters, sisters, and compañeras of male militants. Reports like this one Josefina's case study showed a more complete picture, comparable to analyses of men. Women had become protagonists through women's and feminist organizations in calling for democracy, and those very organizations brought to light women's capacity for political agency independent from men, and for fighting for their own rights to gender equality in a democratic society.

The authors' discussion of Josefina's rape also somewhat complicated earlier understandings of sexual torture. The authors wrote of Josefina's recounting of her experience, "Focused only on the face of her son, in the face of her compañero, she could resist beatings, electric shock, insults, and abuses. But she could not resist being raped."[32] Based on the way this was written, it is probably how Josefina remembered and recounted her experience of torture and how she remembered it. Her role as a mother and heterosexual life partner are juxtaposed both to her resistance

[32] Elizabeth Lira and David Becker, *Todo es segun el dolor que se mira*, (Santiago: ILAS, 1989), 63.

and to her rape, which called attention to women as mothers and compañeras being both strong and being violated.

The authors underscored how rape was different from other forms of torture: Forced penetration made psychological resistance one could employ against torture occurring on the body's surface seem futile. Rape had an insidious way of making the victim believe him or herself a collaborator in his or her own violation and unable to protect his or her own sexuality. Rape by the state connected that sense of collaboration to the overall demands and responsibilities of protecting the collective, while simultaneously making collective violence appear highly individualized to the victim. The women's movement created spaces for women to talk about sexual violence, both by the state and inside the home. This helped women, as well as mental health professionals in the human rights movement, connect women's individual experiences to a collective narrative of gendered and sexual oppression.

Reconsidering Family Dynamics

As some mental health professionals began to incorporate new perspectives on gender, militancy, and torture into their therapeutic concepts and practice, they also began to integrate feminist ideas about the patriarchal organization of the family and society when assessing the ramifications of state violence and repression. In 1988, CODEPU-DITT gave a more nuanced interpretation of the experiences of former political prisoners and their families in a study called, "Long-term study on the effects of torture on the family." The team used the term "family group" to signal the many different types of family situations that they encountered when treating victims of

state violence and their families. They argued that many families stretched beyond the traditional nuclear family to include not only extended family such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, but also community members, friends, and fellow members of human rights groups.

Unlike previous mental health studies, this report argued explicitly that by reaching out to these forms of support, women found new ways of expressing agency in difficult and unprecedented situations. Their husbands' political imprisonment, while indeed very upsetting, nonetheless provided them with an opportunity for realizing their independence, autonomy, and self-confidence. Male heads of household, however, tended to become reclusive after facing torture, imprisonment, losing their political projects, and returning to a completely different situation at home.[33] The authors concluded that the male heads of household suffered psychologically more than their wives from political violence and repression. But departing from previous studies, the authors contended that this was not because men sacrificed more than women, but because men were more reluctant to relinquish the power they held over women in the sexist, *machista* structure of the family. The authors suggested that men felt they had lost control over their families, as well as every other aspect of their lives. They became even more patriarchal in their attitudes than they had been before the coup, which, according to the team, often contradicted the men's political beliefs. The authors referred to this phenomenon as the

[33]CODEPU-DITT, "Estudio evolutivo del efecto de la tortura en la familia," Working paper, revised version, 16 March, 1989. CINTRAS Library, Santiago, Chile. Also published in *Persona, Estado, Poder. Estudios sobre salud mental en Chile, 1973-1989* (Santiago: CODEPU, 1989), 143-162. Also presented at the Seminario Internacional "La Tortura en América Latina," Buenos Aires, Argentina, diciembre de 1985. Published in *Tortura: Documento de denuncia,* vol. IV, Santiago, febrero de 1986. Also published in *Soc. Sci. Med.* Vol. 28, no. 7, 1989, London.

"authoritarian patriarch," which they claimed was the most "archaic form of patriarchy."[34] Here, it is clear that the authors drew on feminist ideas, such as Kirkwood's concept of the "little dictator" in the home and Valenzuela's argument about the militarization of society exacerbating patriarchal attitudes in the domestic sphere.[35] In their bibliography, the authors of the CODEPU document specifically cited Elsa Chaney's *Supermadre*, which argued that women in Latin America who entered politics seemed to exhibit characteristics as mothers in their exercise of politics, which reflected a political system dominated by patriarchy that viewed women's political participation as inextricable from their roles as mothers.[36]

Whereas earlier studies sought to restore the male-headed nuclear family, the authors of this report drew on feminist ideas to re-conceptualize the power structures within the homes of former political prisoners. They connected their patients' experiences to greater social relations and called attention to the dictatorship's injustices at the same time. They did not argue that state violence benefitted these women; rather, they showed how women drew on traditions of collective solidarity and community outreach in spite of the regime's harsh repression, human rights violations, and temptations to buy into a neoliberal, consumerist economic model. CODEPU-DITT's report on the family group problematized traditional concepts about the nuclear family and showed how members of nuclear families—women, in

---

[34]"Estudio evolutivo," 160.

[35] Kirkwood, *Ser política en Chile;* Valenzuela, *La mujer en el Chile militar.*

[36] The authors cite the version: Elsa Chaney, *Supermadre* , 1 ed. in Spanish (Ed. Fondo de Cultura Económico, 1983), in CODEPU-DITT, "Estudio evolutivo del efecto de la tortura en la familia,"45. The first edition was presented as a paper in Austin, Texas in 1971 and was published as a book in English in 1979: Elsa Chaney, *Supermadre: Women in Politics in Latin America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979).

particular—reached out to other kin networks and responded to state violence largely with solidarity rather than isolationism.

Another study by CODEPU-DITT also showed that, like former political prisoners who had returned to their homes and could not find work, men in exile often found themselves sealed into the interior life of the family as they adapted to their adoptive countries, in which they were far away from their political organizations in Chile. Women, by contrast, adapted more easily to their new situations, as they found work outside the home and participated in solidarity groups and activities. Women advanced their political and social consciousness, but if their partners or husbands stagnated in that environment, then conflicts that destabilized the family dynamic and influenced decisions such as whether, when, and how to return to Chile.[37]

The authors offered a feminist perspective on history to explain this situation. Echoing Julieta Kirkwood, they wrote that although women had become more integrated into political and social participation under the Popular Unity, men remained the primary breadwinners and political actors, while women largely fulfilled the role of the compañera who supported them. The authors contended that women were generally less politically active than men because "[t]he traditional family model—authoritarian and patriarchal—did not favor women's political and ideological development. . . . Therefore, it is the man who has assumed the political

---

[37]"Exilio y retorno. Itinerario de un desafío," in *Persona, estado, poder,* 218. Also published in *Tortura: Documento de denuncia,* vol. IX, 1988, CODEPU, Santiago. On leftist women adopting feminism in exile, see Julie D. Shayne, *The Revolution Question: Feminisms in El Salvador, Chile, and Cuba* (New Brunskwick: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 67-115; Julie D. Shayne, *They used to Call us Witches: Chilean Exiles, Culture, and Feminism* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009), 157-206; Rachel Soihet, "Mulheres brasileiras no exílio e consciêcia de gênero," in *Gênero, feminismos e ditaduras no cone sul,* ed. Joana Maria Pedro and Cristina Scheibe Wolff (Ilha de Santa Catarina: Editorial Mulheres, 2010), 208-225.

commitment, and it is he who goes into exile and is followed by his compañera and children."[38] This argument countered pre-conceived notions that women were naturally apolitical, and that their predetermined place was in the home. It also provided a framework for reconstructing the selfhoods of individual family members that considered the gendered dynamics of the self in relation to the family and society, rather than a generic concept of selfhood that was grounded in the masculine experience.

Conclusion

In the late 1980s, some mental health teams took more nuanced approaches to family dynamics and considered the agency that women as well as men employed in order to improve their situations. Influenced by a feminist movement that gained ground through the 1980s, mental health professionals wrote studies about the experiences of women militants and emphasized their commitment as political agents in their own right—not as defined by their relationships to men. Mental health professionals stressed women's resilience as they reconstructed their senses of self after facing sexual torture. They also reconsidered the natural-ness of the male-headed nuclear family, and instead stressed women's equality within the home and society as essential to reconnecting the individual to the collective. Feminist concepts that mental health professionals incorporated gradually in the 1980s became even more prominent in mental health studies in the 1990s and 2000s.

But these ideas did not completely displace ingrained notions of gender difference. As we will see in the following chapters, in the late 1980s and 1990s,

---

[38] Ibid., 206.

individuals and families still living in precarious economic conditions grappled with the traumatic past in the context of a new and uncertain democracy in which most of their former torturers were free from punishment.

Part II: Reconstructing the Self in Transition

The transition to democracy brought new challenges to the reconstruction of the self. During the dictatorship—especially the first five to ten years—Chileans grappled with a moment of crisis. During the later years of the dictatorship and the transition to democracy, they dealt with the long-term effects of violence and repression. As the transition to democracy began in 1990, the memory of the violent past resurfaced as Chilean society grappled with how to reckon with the regime's atrocities and carry out the work of individual and collective healing. The following chapters address how victims of human rights violations coped with memories of state violence and repression during that era of tension between forgetting and remembering. But I show that the history of gender over the course of the dictatorship, and even before, also shaped those memory struggles on the individual and collective levels.

The first half of the dissertation complicates a somewhat nostalgic vision of the left by showing how mental health professionals working in human rights organizations, as well as many of their patients, reaffirmed ingrained notions of gender inequality as they confronted the effects of state violence. Ideas from the feminist movement influenced some mental health professionals' interpretations of notions of the self. This half of the dissertation considers how those gendered ideas and experiences factored into the ways in which Chileans spoke about and coped with violence years after it had passed. It asks how Chileans inhabited the world of the transition—a world in which individuals and society dealt with issues of truth-telling,

impunity, and what democracy post-Pinochet would become.

The 1988 plebiscite in which Chileans voted Pinochet out of power set the stage for a transition to democracy characterized by uncertainty and compromise with the right, rather than a sharp break with the past. In 1987, with several restrictions, Pinochet legalized political parties after negotiations in which representatives of the moderate opposition agreed to respect the 1980 constitution he had passed. Pinochet then called a plebiscite designed to keep him in power for six more years under constitutional law. Due to the opposition's vast social mobilization, as well as an advertising campaign for the Coalition for NO Parties with the slogan, "Chile: La alegría ya viene," (Chile: Joy is coming), Pinochet lost that plebiscite on October 5, 1988. The "no" vote earned 54.7% of the vote. For both the "NO" campaign and the 1989 presidential elections that followed, the opposition successfully brought together political coalitions on the left and center left that had a history of disagreement and outright opposition to each other. They banded together to create the Concertación of the Parties for Democracy (Concertación de los Partidos por la Democracia, hereafter referred to as the Concertación), as a united front against Pinochet and nominated Christian Democrat Patricio Aylwin as their candidate for the presidency. Pinochet had another chance to prolong his power through a right-wing presidency in the hands of finance minister Hernán Büchi or millionaire Javier Errázuriz. The right-wing candidates lost the presidency to Aylwin, who earned 55.2% of the vote.[1]

The plebiscite and presidential election, however, did not usher in a radical

[1] Pamela Constable and Arturo Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies: Chile under Pinochet* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991), 314-315; Manuel Antonio Garretón, "The Political Opposition and the Party System," in *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile,* Revised Edition, ed. Paul W. Drake and Iván Jaksić (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 211, 231-232.

transition to democracy, but several years of a move toward democracy, with the constant threat of Pinochet looming in the shadows. Rather than pursuing an aggressive overhaul of the regime's policies and dismantling the power of the armed forces, the technocrats and center-left elite of the Concertación chose the careful application of reason and tread carefully around Pinochet to avoid another coup.[2] Chileans were still greatly divided between pro- and anti-Pinochet in 1990, the year Aylwin took office. The left was also divided on how the transition should take shape. Chilean society as a whole faced the task of reckoning with the past and building a new future.[3]

The transition was not the downfall of a disgraced dictator and army, as was the case in Argentina. Rather, the political elite focused on order, pragmatism, and the rule of law. These were all characteristics of Chilean "exceptionalism," a belief that in a region fraught with violent revolutions and insecure democracy, Chile was distinct as a peaceful nation.[4] While the regime obviously broke with that convention, the democratic government could frame it as a parenthesis in an otherwise peaceful democratic tradition. Pinochet could also incorporate himself into the democratic

---

[2] Alfredo Joignant, "Tecnócratas, *tenchnopols* y dirigentes de partido. Tipos de agentes y especies de capital en las élites gubernamentales de la Concertación (1990-2010)," in *Notables, tecnócratas y mandarins. Elementos de sociología de las êlites en Chile (1990-2010)*, ed. Alfredo Joignant and Pedro Güell (Santiago: Ediciones de la Universidad Diego Portales), 49-76.On Aylwin's political approach to the transition, see Rafael Otano, *Nueva Crónica de la transición* (Santiago: LOM, 1995), 125-140.

[3] Cath Collins, Katherine Hite, and Alfredo Joignant Rondón,*The Politics of Memory in Chile: From Pinochet to Bachelet*. (Boulder: First Forum Press, 2013); Alexander Wilde, "Irruptions of Memory: Expressive Politics in Chile's Transition to Democracy," *Journal of Latin American Studies.* 31, no. 2 (1999), 473-500.

[4] For a succinct but excellent discussion of Chilean exceptionalism, see "Introduction," *The Chile Reader: History, Culture Politics,* ed. Elizabeth Quay Hutchison, Nara B. Milanich, Thomas Miller Klubock, and Peter Winn (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 1-2.

story: since he produced the 1980 constitution which dictated a "protected democracy," and outlined the procedures for the plebiscite that he lost in 1988, he could spin his defeat as part of a democratic praxis, rather than the downfall of a dictator.[5]

Confronting the violent past was further complicated by the fact that Pinochet's 1980 constitution was not discarded with the transition to democracy. While Aylwin did not believe that the 1980 constitution was legitimate, he did believe that lawfully, it reigned, and amending it would prove a more effective strategy that Pinochet could not contest. In 1989, the regime passed several laws that strengthened Pinochet's power base: It further privatized industry, increased military autonomy, and Pinochet appointed enough judges in the Supreme Court to get a majority by paying elderly judges to step down. Constitutionally, Pinochet also remained head of the armed forces. Given this context, the civilian government opted to channel the transition through institutional reform, rather than revolution, and left space for Pinochet in hopes of avoiding another military coup. Pinochet proclaimed publicly that he handed Chile over to civilian rule after keeping it safe from Marxism for the past seventeen years.[6]

Elizabeth Lira and Brian Loveman have underscored the frustrated relationship between memory and forgetting during the transition, as well as the

---

[5]See especially Patricio Navia, "Democracy to the Extent Possible in Chile," in "Living in Actually Existing Democracies," *Latin American Research Review* 45 (2010): 298-328.

[6] Constable and Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies*, 316-318; steve J. Stern, *Reckoning with Pinochet: The Memory Question in Democratic Chile, 1989-2006* Durham, Duke University Press, 2010), 26-27; María Olivia Mönckeberg, *El saqueo de los grupos económicos al Estado chileno* (Santiago: Ediciones B, 2001), Carlos Hunees, *El regímen de Pinochet* (Santiago: Editorial Sudamericana, 2000).

debate between the government and victims of human rights violations over the processes of reckoning and reconciliation. According to Lira and Loveman, those uncertainties and range of opinions confirmed for the democratic government that "social peace would come with the forgetting of everything that had happened. And the recommendation to forget and forgive was made indiscriminately, as if for the victims it was psychologically possible to forget was had happened."[7] Forgetting, too, also necessitated creating an official memory, which the state enshrined in two separate truth commissions in 1990 and 2004 (and later re-opened in 2010 to include more testimonies). But certain memories were marginalized from that official truth.[8]

The truth commissions did not name the names of regime agents who tortured, executed, and disappeared the thousands of victims of state violence. The democratic government did not mete out punishment, which had been determined through specific procedures restricted by the legal legacies of the dictatorship.[9] It accepted Pinochet's 1978 Amnesty Law, which pardoned political crimes committed between 1973 and 1978 and shielded perpetrators from prosecution. This law protected not only the secret police and armed forces, but also militants. However, it was a measure meant to create the myth that the violence was over, that it was part of war that had been settled (and thus the violence was legitimate), and that Chilean society could

---

[7]Elizabeth Lira and Brian Loveman, *Políticas de reparación. Chile, 1990-2004* (Santiago: LOM, 2005), 15.

[8]Ibid. For an excellent collection of essays regarding problems of civil-military relations, human rights, and new formulations of citizenship in transitions to democracy in Latin America, see: Elizabeth Jelín and Eric Hershberg, *Constructing Democracy: Human Rights, Citizenship, and Society in Latin America* (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1996).

[9]Leigh Payne discusses how the ways certain regime agents spoke, or did not speak, about their crimes fomented debate within the new democratic society over truth, reckoning, and reconciliation. See Payne, *Unsettling Accounts: Neither Truth nor Reconciliation in Confessions of State Violence* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

now move on in harmony under the regime's tutelage. The law posed particular obstacles during the transition and left judges largely powerless in their ability to convict former regime agents. Eventually, Aylwin's approach, along with other judicial reforms, eroded the amnesty law. Aylwin argued that judges had the responsibility to first investigate cases, and then determine whether or not the amnesty law was applicable. That gave judges both the imperative to investigate the cases brought before them, as well as some space to forgo the amnesty law.[10]

The law was eventually challenged in 1995 with the conviction of former head of the DINA, Manuel Contreras, a conviction that seemed impossible in 1990. At the time, his case seemed to be the exception. Over the years, however, more and more perpetrators were prosecuted and convicted.[11] Cath Collins has shown that this path to justice did not begin in the truth commissions or trials during the transition, but with the injunctions that lawyers from the Vicariate of Solidarity (and I would argue, other human rights organizations, too) filed and archived.[12] The paper trail they created served as an evidentiary base. As the first half of the dissertation demonstrated, mental health professionals, too, encouraged many torture survivors to speak about their experiences by working with them to turn their narratives into denunciations of human rights violations. Many people had become willing to speak about their experiences because they could use their pain to speak on behalf of others.

---

[10]Mark Ensalaco, *Chile under Pinochet: Recovering the Truth* (University Park, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 191-194; Rafael Otano, *Nueva Crónica de la transición* (Santiago: LOM, 1995), 125-140; Stern, *Reckoning with Pinochet,* 67-98.

[11] Stern, *Reckoning with Pinochet,* 142, 150-155, 277.

[12] Cath Collins, "The Politics of Prosecutions," in Cath Collins, Katherine Hite, and Alfredo Joignant Rondón, ed., *The Politics of Memory in Chile: From Pinochet to Bachelet* (Boulder: First Forum Press, 2013).

The following chapters demonstrate the tensions between speaking for oneself and speaking for the collective that torture survivors faced as Chilean society opened and the process of public truth telling began.

To create the official narrative that would shut the door on Chile's painful past, the Rettig Commission had to interpret the causes of the coup and mass human rights violations. The Rettig Commission investigated the regime's crimes of forced disappearance, execution, and death by torture. Out of 3,500 cases heard, the commission recognized 2,296. The historical framework outlined in the report narrated a cold-war division between left and right that had come to a head in Chile. The report associated the MIR, along with factions of other leftist political parties that did not oppose the use of arms, with the Cuban Revolution and armed struggle. While pointing to the revolutionary left's contribution to increasing polarization, it dismissed the idea that the 1973 coup was inevitable, and that the conditions leading to it justified systematic violence and human rights violations. This angered Pinochet and critics in his camp, who argued that they had been engaged in a war, and both sides used violence and had casualties. Exacerbating the dispute over how Chile should to come to terms with the violent past, Pinochet and his agents also claimed that they had been the victims of human rights violations perpetrated by the left. In the early 1990s, Aylwin pardoned or commuted the sentences of hundreds of leftists who were imprisoned for violent crimes, which further offended the general.[13]

Aylwin intended for the Rettig Report and the exercise of the law, rather than

[13]*Informe Rettig,* 28-35; Paul W. Drake and Ivan Jaksic, "Introduction: Transformation and Transition in Chile," in *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile*, ed. Paul W. Drake and Ivan Jaksic, Revised Edition (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 1-17; Brian Loveman, "The Transition to Civilian Government in Chile, 1990-1994," in in *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile*, ed. Paul W. Drake and Ivan Jaksic, rev. ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 305-337; Stern, *Reckoning with Pinochet,* 106-136; Stern, *Reckoning with Pinochet,* 82-84.

violence, to forge the path to justice. But some of the armed left did not agree, especially when, on top of the regime's impunity, the Communist Party had been marginalized within the left through the new electoral process. The tension culminated in April 1991, when the armed militant group Manual Rodríguez Patriotic Front (Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez, FPMR) assassinated Jaime Guzmán. He was Pinochet's top political advisor, the principal author of the 1980 constitution, and the creator of the right-wing party Independent Democratic Union (Unión Demócrata Independiente, UDI). Fearing a violent response from Pinochet and the army, and because the assassination supported Pinochet's argument that the left and right had been at war, the Aylwin government responded by reaffirming the rule of law, not vengeance, as the path to social reconciliation.[14]

It was not until thirteen years later that former political prisoners and torture survivors were able to have their experiences recognized officially by the state. When Concertación candidate Ricardo Lagos took the presidential office in 2000, he did not have a clear agenda for human rights. That changed after the UDI crafted an initiative to increase pensions to family members of the disappeared and executed and create structures that would provide them with indemnity payments in exchange for not bringing civil suits against former regime agents. The measure also cleared the records of political prisoners who had been judged guilty by military tribunals. It also proposed plea-bargaining and other incentives to witnesses and collaborators to gain confidential information about disappeared persons. Judges would also have a time limit in investigating cases of disappeared persons, which had been protected before

[14] bid., 96-97.

by a doctrine of "permanent kidnapping" that allowed cases to remain open and had weakened the impunity of the military. Instead, according to the UDI proposal, judges would have to either proclaim the person deceased or that the kidnapping continued.[15]

The UDI initiative prompted a change in elite political culture from the 1990s approach that encouraged closure through human rights initiatives. Stern argued that Lagos's "There is no Tomorrow without Yesterday" proposal signaled elites' recognition that "[m]emory work—truth, justice, repair, prevention—was a cumulative and continuing process, not a transition with a natural endpoint."[16] One of the initiatives in the proposal included the establishment of the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture, informally known as the Valech Commission for its chair, Monsignor Sergio Valech, the last head of the Vicariate of Soldarity.[17]

The commission's work began in November of 2003, and it sought to document the indisputable truth of torture. Survivors had to prove political imprisonment to be registered in the report and receive benefits, but they did not have to prove torture, since that was problematic to prove with the passage of time. On the other hand, many pobladores and people living in rural communities (especially indigenous people) fell short of the requirements that allowed the commission to achieve moral certainty, since police and military officers often tortured them in their homes and neighborhoods. They had no documentation for their individual cases.[18]

---

[15] Stern, *Reckoning with Pinochet,* 286-288.

[16] Stern, *Reckoning with Pinochet,* 289.

[17] Ibid., 289-290.

[18] Clara Han, *Life in Debt;* Claudio Javier Barrientos, "Crafting Indigenous Oral Histories: Social Scientists and NGOs in the Production of Oral Archives and Sources in Chile, 1990-2011," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, January 4, 2015, New

As we will see in chapter four, police documentation of assaults on civilians by regime agents could also conveniently disappear.

In 2004, the commission certified 28,459 cases.[19] In 2010, Michele Bachelet's government re-opened the commission to receive more cases of torture and political imprisonment, as well as death and disappearances.[20] Whereas survivors and family members testified before the commissions in 1990 and 2003 in addition to receiving a written testimony and supporting documentation (such as newspaper clippings or reports from human rights organizations that recorded the arrest), the commission, called Valech II, received only documentation. That commission added 9,075 cases of political imprisonment and torture and thirty cases of execution and disappearance.[21] Neither the Rettig nor the Valech commission gained the judicial power to overturn the 1978 amnesty law that protected Pinochet and his agents from prosecution. Some perpetrators, however, were convicted later in court due to the tenacity of survivors, family members, and the human rights community and shrewd judicial work.

Stern argues, however, that the Valech Commission did produce an additional "memory truth" about torture: The commission revealed that the silencing of state violence was not only because of the dictatorship's threats, but also the victims' own

---

York.

[19] Informe de la Comisión Nacional de la Verdad y Reconciliación, http://www.ddhh.gov.cl/ddhh_rettig.html

[20] Informe de la Comisión Presidencial Asesora para la Calificación de Detenidos Desaparecidos, Ejecutados Políticos y Víctimas de Prisión Política y Tortura, Gobierno de Chile, 2011. http://www.indh.cl/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Informe2011.pdf

[21] Comisión Presidencial Asesora para la Calificación de Detenidos Desaparecidos, Ejecutados Políticos y Víctimas de Prisión Política y Tortura, *Informe de la Comisión Presidencial Asesora para la Calificación de Detenidos Desaparecidos, Ejecutados Políticos y Víctimas de Prisión Política y Tortura,* 6, http://www.indh.cl/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Informe2011.pdf, Accessed January 26, 2015.

deep senses of degradation and indignity. The commission operated under United Nations definition of torture, which, at bottom, emphasized the state's intentional use of physical and mental violence for the purpose of destroying one's personality.[22] I would argue that by helping torture survivors reconstruct their senses of self and denounce torture, mental health professionals working within human rights organizations had been working to reveal the those memory truths over the course of the dictatorship. As we will see in chapter four, they began to develop new strategies in the late 1980s and early 1990s for the changing social and political conditions during the transition to democracy, as well as the challenges survivors faced when other survivors began to speak about their experiences with the advent of mass public truth- telling. Talking about torture in public, and learning how to verbalize torture and experiences of violence that one had kept silent (or perhaps not fully explored) for years, or sometimes decades, was extremely difficult. The following chapters capture some of the ways in which survivors dealt with that experience.

While the first half of this dissertation explored responses to the crisis moment, the following three chapters, in different ways, take on how mental health professionals and former political prisoners grappled with the "chronic," or long-term ramifications of violence. Chapter four analyzes how, in the late 1980s and into the 1990s, mental health professionals signaled this shift to "chronic" pain, pointing to both individual and collective trauma: Years of violence had produced a buildup of pain on the psyche, much like a chronic physical pain on an area of the body that resulted from overuse, or pain from a powerful injury that refused to disappear over time. It asks how mental health professionals and their patients found ways to

[22]Ibid., 292-294.

interpret and deal with that pain, especially as former political prisoners, their families, and families of the disappeared and executed dealt with the problem of impunity—the state not meting out justice to perpetrators. It asks how the shift from the dictatorship's patriarchal order to a new form of patriarchy vested in the technocratic, masculine state that sought to instill order affected the relationship between individual and collective healing.

In the story of Arturo (chapter five), we see a more personal working of the development of this form of masculine, professional, middle-class memory. The chapter relates Arturo's personal attempts to understand and instill order on the disorderly past, full of the inexplicable death epitomized in the mass grave in the northern desert of Pisagua, where Arturo worked for the regional government when the grave was discovered in 1990.

The final chapter analyzes a conversation between three women from Valparaíso—Sylvia, Alicia, and Oriana—who were imprisoned together in the mid 1970s. The chapter draws on feminist oral history concepts of women deploying the "rebel" or "irreverent" woman stereotypes as a means to call attention to a an unjust gender order. It explores how each woman spoke about struggles to reclaim bodily autonomy from the dictatorship and connected their individual stories to a collective project of educating future generations about human rights. In sum, the following chapters draw on the history mapped out in the first half of the dissertation to explore how Chileans grappled with the intensely personal experience of violence and connected it to a larger story of collective violence and human rights struggles.

Chapter 5

A Chronic Pain: Living with the Memory of Violence

The late 1980s and early 1990s, brought new challenges as the atmosphere of uncertainty surrounding the transition to democracy caused many torture survivors, as well as family members of political prisoners and the disappeared and executed, to confront and speak about their experiences for the first time. To help their patients work through trauma, mental health professionals developed fresh approaches to therapy that accounted for the effects of impunity: the military regime's long-term and blatant practice of human rights violations without fear of punishment, as well as the democratic state's failure to name and adequately penalize those who committed human rights violations under the dictatorship. This focus on the long-term effects of impunity signaled a turn in how mental health professionals conceived of their role.

These professionals argued that nearly two decades of military dictatorship, and the impunity that reinforced its power and legitimacy, had resulted in a "chronic pain" for both their individual patients and the collective Chilean psyche.[1] Several mental health professionals used the term "la cronificación del daño," or they referred to the "cronificación" of a specific set of psychological and psychosomatic symptoms. A direct translation of "cronificación" into English refers to the process of a condition, generally a medical condition, becoming chronic. I therefore refer to "chronic pain," and "the accumulation of pain" to signify this process of a buildup of psychic pain over years and

[1] Though many studies refer to this process and use this terminology, a work that explains it particularly well in relation to impunity and reconstructing the self (and which will be discussed in this chapter) is Programa Medico Psiquiatrico, FASIC, "Impunidad, la cronificación del daño y subjetividad," Biblioteca FASIC, Santiago de Chile, 1997.

the transition of a condition such as anxiety from temporary to chronic. This psychical pain accumulated over time as Chileans lived with memories of violence and as the culture of violence and impunity continued.

This chapter shows how professionals and their patients spoke about how that pain accumulated, how it came to a head in specific historical moments, and what that meant for survivors and their families as they transitioned themselves psychically to a democratic Chile. As mental health professionals warned, their patients' experiences violence and repression over and over. By failing to prosecute regime agents and provide adequate mental health and legal services for survivors and their families, the civilian government perpetuated that cycle and violated the affected population's human rights. As I will argue below in victims' testimonies, this cycle of violence cannot be separated from its longer history of gender inequality and violence.

Mental health professionals argued that to work through chronic pain, their patients had to piece together their broken family relationships, sexual subjectivities, and sense of security and belonging in Chilean society. Therapeutic concepts and practices focused on working through the past to build a stable future, and ideas about gender and family—ostensibly stable notions—provided a framework for building that future. While on the surface this did not differ greatly from earlier concepts of reconstructing the self and reconnecting to politics, by the late 1980s and early 1990s, survivors of state violence faced the new challenge of re-incorporating themselves into democratic society while remaining in a liminal space. On a collective level, the notion of reinserting mentally healthy individuals and families into democratic society would allow the Chilean state to re-write a national narrative that emphasized the dictatorship as a rupture in an

historically democratic, disciplined, and orderly Chile: The political polarization that came to a head in 1973 would not happen again. But that tack, along with certain procedures of the truth commissions, marginalized the narratives of many survivors. Some survivors' inability to fully voice the past, and others' inability to document the violence the regime enacted upon them, clashed with the objectives of the transitional state, which sought to move forward quickly and not prolong the social healing process.

Comparing the cases of two women I interviewed, Solsticio and Ana María, demonstrates how chronic pain was lived and integrated into narratives of state violence, and how the state either recognized that pain or did not.[2] Their narratives also demonstrate the importance class and gender and their relation to the democratic state's truth-telling processes. Both women experienced extreme sexual torture by military regime agents. Only Ana María received benefits from the 2004 Valech Commission, however, because she was able to provide written proof of her detention, even though she could not utter her experience aloud to the commission because doing so was too painful. Like many pobladores, Solsticio was not tortured in a formal detention center recognized by the state. Although she filed a police report, it disappeared by the time she could seek justice with the Valech Commission. After years of being silenced by the regime, the democratic state excluded Solsticio's narrative from the official history of the dictatorship, like it did for so many pobladores, indigenous people, and *campesinos*,

[2]Ana María chose to use her real name for this research and any publications resulting from it. For her, using her real name was a political act and also gave her a sense of relief for having her truth heard. Solsticio, however, is a pseudonym used to protect my other interviewee's privacy. Her reasons for using a pseudonym are her own, and they should not detract from the reader's perception of her courage in comparison to other people in this study who chose to use their real names.

because of her lack of paperwork and inability to fulfill the commission's requirements to certify their cases.[3]

What is perhaps even more pertinent and obscured about Ana María and Solsticio's cases, and what connects them, are the layers of gender violence that made it difficult for both women to speak about their experiences. General discrimination against women and gender violence outside the bounds of the dictatorship silenced many women from speaking about sexual torture and gender violence—or even consciously remembering it—for decades.[4] Others minimized their sexual torture in comparison to the disappearance and execution of their male companions, husbands, and family members. The impunity of patriarchy, enacted directly by the military regime and structurally by democratic state, and through long-ingrained notions that privileged men's experiences of political struggle, caused many women to silence, to varying degrees, their experiences of violence. The pain that accumulated over decades, and the context in which it was spoken aloud, was informed by a longer history of patriarchal violence.

First, the chapter will trace mental health professionals' general concepts about how psychical pain accumulated and became chronic over time, especially in relation to specific historical events over the course of the late 1980s that caused former political prisoners' memories of violence to surface years after they had been imprisoned. Then, the chapter will show how mental health professionals deployed ideas about chronic pain

---

[3]Claudio Javier Barrientos, "Crafting Indigenous Oral Histories: Social Scientists and NGOs in the Production of Oral Archives and Sources in Chile, 1990-2011," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, January 4, 2015, New York.

[4] Several mental health studies, some of which will be discussed in this chapter, point to this conclusion. The Instituto de la Mujer and Corporacion Humanas gathered women's testimonies in 2003, during the Valech Commission, and learned that many women had never spoken about their sexual torture previously. See *Memorias de ocupación. Violencia sexual contra mujeres durante la dictadura* (Santiago: Fundación Instituto de la Mujer, 2005).

in terms of gender, sexuality, and family dynamics in order to help their patients reconstruct their selfhoods and reconnect to the collective. The following section will examine how mental health professionals clashed with the incoming civilian government during the transition to democracy over reconciling the individual and society, especially in regard to the relationship between truth-telling and impunity. Finally, oral histories of Ana María and Solsticio demonstrate how they embodied the historical processes laid out in the chapter.

A Chronology of Chronic Pain

Toward the end of the 1980s, after the opposition won the plebiscite that voted Pinochet out of office, mental health professionals working within human rights NGOs reflected on the past decade of their work to face the current challenges their patients faced. At a 1989 conference in Switzerland organized by CODEPU and sponsored by FASIC, PIDEE, and CINTRAS, psychologist Adriana Maggi from FASIC outlined a chronology of the organization's therapeutic interventions according to the changing needs of their patients throughout the dictatorship. What she and professionals from other organizations noted was the concept of an accumulation of psychical pain, or a pain that became chronic, over the course of the dictatorship. Mental health professionals working within human rights organizations thus recognized the need to develop strategies for repairing long-term damage to the individual and collective psyche so that Chileans could become active democratic citizens and Chile could begin to recover from its violent past.[5]

Maggi explained that from 1983 to 1987, social conditions began to change and signaled the need for mental health professionals to begin dealing with the long term

[5] Maggi, "Programa Terapeútico FASIC."

psychological effects of state violence, in addition to the immediate aftermath. At that time, opposition protests increased, while forms of repression and violence changed. Forced disappearances and executions had been replaced largely by death in false confrontations with the police and CNI. Abductions on the street by the CNI and other branches of the regime, such as the national police's Direction of Communications (DICOMCAR), which resulted in torture or threats of torture, or sometimes execution, also prevailed. While the CNI continued to operate clandestine torture centers, many militants were incarcerated in public prisons (where they were also tortured) for years, and several, especially from the armed MIR and Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front (Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez, FPMR), were sentenced to death.[6]

According to Maggi, Many people who sought therapy recalled that the protests in 1983, 1984, and 1987 caused them to remember their torture, or family members being killed in front of them. Specific events, such as increasing protests in the mid-1980s, the 1985 abduction and execution by throat-slashing of three Communist leaders, which came to be known as the "Caso Degollados," triggered traumatic memories for many Chileans who had experienced state violence in earlier years of the dictatorship. The failed assassination attempt against Pinochet in 1986 and subsequent repressive backlash, as well as the 1988 plebiscite, also contributed greatly to a climate of uncertainty and apprehension. While fear-inducing in their own right, those events provoked memories of individual and collective terror and insecurity that many militants and their families felt in the early 1970s, when the regime's oppression was harsh, and largely indiscriminate. Violent spectacles of terror reinforced the regime's impunity, which made survivors'

---

[6] Ibid.

psychological insecurity and their hope for fully confronting their trauma much more difficult to overcome, and the advent of the plebiscite signaled for many the fear of a second coup as much or more than a real opportunity for democracy to prevail.[7]

The Caso Degollados in particular exemplifies a spectacle of violence and the regime's boldness to act with impunity. In 1985, DICOMCAR abducted three communist leaders: José Manuel Parada, Santiago Nattino, and Manuel Guerrero. Nattino, an artist and member of the teacher's union (AGECH), was abducted on March 28 in the upper-middle class neighborhood of Las Condes. On March 29, police abducted Parada, a sociologist for the Vicariate of Solidarity, and Guerrero, a teacher and leader of the teacher's union outside a school, the Colegio Latinoamericano, in the upper-middle class neighborhood of Providencia. On March 30, their bodies were found in a field in Pudahuel, a community on the outskirts of Santiago. Their throats were slit, and their bodies showed signs of torture. Unlike execution by gunshot, slitting the three men's throats was a particularly gruesome and personalized performance of violence. Abducting the beloved community members alive in public, then displaying their bodies the next day, demonstrated the extent of the regime's power, and it made the violence more visible. The case garnered remarkable media attention. Seeing brutal violence was not limited to secret torture centers or prisons of which only political prisoners, their families, and human rights workers had first-hand knowledge. Police violence was not limited to

[7] Ibid. On violence and spectacle under military regimes in Latin America, see Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's "Dirty War"* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 1-29.

raids in the poblaciones, or in public protests. There was no mistaking what agents of the regime could, or would, do to those who fell into their crosshairs.[8]

Ximena Taibo Grossi, a social worker from the Vicariate of Solidarity, argued that abductions between 1983 and 1985, and especially the Caso Degollados, signaled a new wave of terror over the Chilean population. Beginning in June 1985, just a few months after the triple execution, leaders from local political, social, and student organizations were abducted. Then, the abductions increased, especially targeting young people. According to the Vicariate's figures, the number of abductions increased 166% between 1983 and 1985. Taibo argued that the sheer horror of the Caso Degollados, along with increasing abductions, crippled many people from engaging in political projects, because they felt a perpetual threat of violence. She emphasized that even though the abductions tended not to last for more than a few hours nor involve prolonged torture, the Caso Degollados had terrorized both victims and the general population such that they constantly worried more brutal and irreversible violence awaited them.[9]

The failed assassination attempt against Pinochet in 1986 bashed hopes of ousting Pinochet definitively by violent overthrow and led to a state of siege, in which the regime restricted freedoms much like as it had in the first decade of the dictatorship.[10] The Communists had decided that 1986 would be the year to return Chile to democracy by

---

[8] There are volumes of newspaper articles and radio and television report transcriptions about the Caso Degollados. A small sample of articles from major newspapers reporting on the March 30 abduction and March 31 finding of the cadavers includes: "Baleo y secuestro en colegio particular," *Las últimas noticias*, March 30, 1985; "Asesinaron a 3 secuestrados," *El Mercurio,* March 31, 1985; "Horrible muerte de secuestrados en Pudahuel: Aparecieron degollados!" *La Tercera* March 31, 1985; "Muertos aparecen los secuestrados," *Las últimas noticias,* March 31, 1985.

[9] Ximena Taibo Gross, "Método del amedrentamiento mediante secuestro," ficha 00715.00, Fundación Archivo y Centro de Documentación Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Santiago, Chile, July 15, 1986.

[10] *Solidaridad*, No. 231, 18 septiembre-2 octubre de 1986.

increasing protests to destabilize the regime. But they began to move more toward violent tactics, which they had previously espoused rhetorically. The FPMR, which stemmed from the Communist Party, began amassing arms in 1986, which the regime found and which justified Pinochet's concerns about a terrorist attack. The FPMR accelerated its end goal—the assassination. At 6:37 p.m. on September 7, 1986, after camping out for two months along the route Pinochet took to his house in the Cajón del Maipo in the mountains outside Santiago, the team launched its attack on the convoy. While five bodyguards were killed and eleven injured, the small rocket launcher that hit Pinochet's Mercedes failed to explode, and Pinochet and his grandson survived the attack. The failed assassination attempt strengthened the image of Pinochet's invincibility, fractured the alliance between the Communist and other leftist parties, and laid the foundation for uncertainty and compromise that characterized the eventual transition to democracy.[11]

The 1988 plebiscite encapsulated this air of uncertainty, triggering painful memories that many survivors of state violence had long repressed. Mental health professionals noted in their reports that many patients experienced anxiety and re-lived past trauma during the period leading up to the plebiscite. Many Chileans believed that the plebiscite was a ruse to re-elect Pinochet as president for eight more years and legitimize his power. But Pinochet was confident he could win a clean, democratic election. He legalized all non-Marxist political parties, as long as they could collect around 35,000 signatures. The states of exception he imposed after the assassination attempt, however, made voter registration difficult: the regime had the power to arrest people for three weeks, restrict public meetings and censor the media. The left, however,

---

[11] Constable and Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies*, 291-295.

chose to accept Pinochet's terms at the risk of internal division and prolonging military rule.[12]

Noting that climate of extreme uncertainty in the months leading up to the plebiscite, mental health professionals wrote that their patients expressed intense anxiety over the possibility of another coup. For them, the moment at which the population could decide between democracy and dictatorship—and Pinochet could possibly deny a decision not in his favor—was a very real and imminent threat. Publicity in the television in newspapers featured images that highlighted the militarism of the past fifteen years and also provoked symptoms that led former militants and families to seek therapy at human rights NGOs. The accumulation of years of pain had come to a boiling point. At the same time, Chileans who had fought for democracy now faced the task of re-integrating themselves into the democratic society they had fought for.

Gendering Chronic Pain

In 1988, days after Chile voted Pinochet out of power, a woman named Matilde sought help at the Vicariate of Solidarity when she began to experience heart palpitations, extreme fear and anxiety, vomiting, insomnia, digestive issues, problems with motor function, and high blood pressure. At the Vicariate, Matilde told a social worker that, twelve years ago, when she was eighteen years old, her husband Alejandro had been shot and killed in front of her. Matilde was then detained and tortured, and her one-month-old daughter Verónica, whom she left with a neighbor, was taken to a children's home. The Vicariate sent Matilde to ILAS, where a psychologist trained to treat extremely

[12] Constable and Valenzuela, 296-311.

traumatized patients began a series of therapeutic sessions with Matilde, and eventually, her new partner and her daughter.[13]

In 1992, ILAS psychologists María Isabel Castillo and David Becker presented Matilde's case study to the Chilean Psychoanalytic Association as part of a work on psychotherapy for "extremely traumatized patients." They conceptualized this type of therapy and practiced it particularly for cases in which reactions to latent, extreme trauma began to surface after several years, a phenomenon they and other human rights mental health professionals witnessed during the changing political and social context of the late 1980s and early 1990s.[14] In Matilde's case, the television advertisements for the 1988 plebicite triggered in her a panicked reaction that something terrible would happen to her. They brought a "secret" about which she had never spoken to the surface. Matilde had been sexually tortured and raped as a political prisoner. Both the general horror of torture and not speaking about it broke down a person's political subjectivity, in addition to the deeply internalized shame that rape induced. That experience provoked in Matilde twelve years of reticence and disassociation between her everyday life and the memory of the torture chamber in order to survive what had happened to her. She did not speak of this at the beginning of her sessions, but told her therapist about the night her husband Alejandro was killed and she was arrested. Matilde was freed after three months, and she stayed at her mother's house to recover.[15]

---

[13]David Becker and María Isabel Castillo, "El tratamiento psicoterapeutico de pacientes traumatizados extremos," Work presented to the Asociación Psicoanalítica Chilena, November 19, 1992, ILAS Documentation Center, Santiago de Chile, 1992.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

In therapy, Matilde slowly began to talk about the sexual torture and rape. When she told her therapist about her experiences, she fainted and was assessed by the institution's doctor. As she began to describe more details in subsequent sessions, Matilde and her therapist were able to connect her other symptoms and emotional reactions to her past experiences, and thus link the past with the present. After she was able to speak about her torture and begin to cope with her experience, Matilde returned to the Vicariate to make a formal statement that were used in a judicial proceeding to document the whereabouts of disappeared persons she had seen while imprisoned.[16]

According to the authors, however, Matilde still wrestled with conflicting emotions about Alejandro, and she did not feel ready to tell her new husband or her daughter Verónica about what had happened to her. Matilde found that she had constructed her narrative as one of "successive abandonment by the men she loved." Her parents had separated and her father had gone to live with another woman. Alejandro had left her through his death. On the one hand, Matilde idolized Alejandro as a martyr who gave his life for others, and on the other hand, she felt anger toward him for endangering her and having a child with her, thereby endangering their daughter as well. A narrative of unreliable men allowed her to make sense of her experiences, and it justified her determination to keep her torture a secret from her husband, distance herself from her past, and maintain stability in her life.[17]

Matilde decided she should tell her husband and daughter about her torture after she witnessed the death of a twelve-year-old girl in a traffic accident, which worsened her

---

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

psychological symptoms and fear of death. At first, Matilde did not tell her husband about her sexual torture, claiming that he was "very *machista*." After he learned of her torture, Matilde's husband became depressed and lost his job. Verónica, who was ten years old, cried often and isolated herself, and expressed her fear that her father loved only her younger siblings, and not her. Matilde's husband reassured Verónica that her loved her, and Verónica revealed that she knew that Alejandro was her real father. At the house of her "aunt and uncle" (her biological grandparents), she had seen a photograph of their son, who had been "assassinated."[18] On a school field trip to the National Library, she looked up newspapers from the date of the event and recognized the young man in the photograph, alongside her mother, and a caption that said, "Child of [. . .] abandoned by her terrorist parents." There, she also saw her photograph. Verónica, the authors argued, had kept her own secret for two years, mirroring her mother's behavior.[19]

According to Castillo and Becker, these secrets of political violence came out during the end of the dictatorship because people like Matilde could no longer rely on defense mechanisms like disassociation to survive psychologically. Human rights became a public debate in Chilean society in the late 1980s and early 1990s. While the plebsicte was successful, and discussing human rights publicly was an important step forward, Matilde, and others like her who had experienced political violence, fully experienced the anxiety, fear, and onslaught of psychosomatic symptoms that they had managed to thwart for years while compartmentalizing their traumatic experiences. But, the authors noted, while these social and political openings where generally positive, they also fomented psychological upheaval for many Chileans who had suffered state violence. At the same

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

time, however, opening those wounds and addressing painful memories also allowed Chileans to begin the work of healing from trauma.[20]

Children, adolescents, and young adults who grew up under the shadow of state violence faced unique challenges in the 1990s for reconstructing their selfhoods as Chile attempted to reconcile collectively with its past. This "second generation" was comprised of people who had one or more disappeared, executed or imprisoned parents. Many spent several years of their youth in exile and had returned with one or both of their parents to Chile.[21] These youth, who came of age toward the end of the dictatorship and during the transition to democracy constituted Chile's up and coming citizens and leaders who would, ideally, carry on the legacy of democracy their parents had fought for them to have. But many of those young Chileans found many gaps in their life stories, particularly during their early childhood years when political violence and repression struck their families most harshly. They felt excluded, as if they could not reveal their true identities to others. Many young Chileans sought therapy because they had reached a point at which they could no longer lead separate lives and construct a contradictory outward identity to protect themselves from their fragmented life narratives, what ILAS psychologist Margarita Díaz called a "false self" in a 1994 study.[22]

Díaz also argued that there was a parallel between the split self of individual youths in relation to their family histories with Chilean society in the context of the

---

[20] Ibid.

[21] Sometimes, mental health professionals categorized "youth" as adults in their early-to-mid twenties who had been imprisoned in the 1980s and freed in the early 1990s.

[22] Margarita Díaz C., "Jovenes traumatizados extremos: Identidad fragmentada como froma de sobreviviencia en el context social post-dictadura en Chile," working paper, ILAS Documentation Center, Santiago de Chile, ca. 1994.

transition, which had not adequately addressed the truth and meted out justice for the dictatorship's crimes. With accounts still unsettled, the gap between past and present grew wider, but with unhealed wounds. Chilean youths, she feared, might therefore find it more difficult to become active citizens who connected the individual to the social. Her argument implied an anxiety that the second generation might not be able to carry out the legacy of their parents' political struggles without learning the truth about their own life stories and reconciling with that past, which directly correlated to the necessity for Chile to reckon with its own past. That would involve a careful and comprehensive process of truth-telling that, according to Díaz and many of her colleagues in human rights work across institutions, would also necessitate the perpetrators bearing responsibility for their crimes, rather than expecting survivors and their families to forgive and forget.[23]

Díaz noted that many young people had trouble establishing steady romantic relationships, and in fact, many would choose partners who would have to leave for some reason after three or four months. These young adults believed that everyone would leave them after a few months, which typically reflected feelings of abandonment by a parent. While this may seem trite on the surface, underlying those concerns were concerns that the so-called second generation had inherited their parents' psychological problems, if not genetically then through growing up in an unstable family environment. This, argued Díaz and others, hampered the second generation's ability to establish stable families of their own, and family was the social fabric of the nation and a springboard for political action.[24]

---

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid.

As mental health professionals argued ten to fifteen years earlier, the more stable one's family situation, the more likely a person would be to participate actively as a democratic citizen. Some recognized the value of families that did not fit the norm of a male-headed household. But mental health and human rights workers emphasized that impunity was formidable impediment to complete individual and social recovery after almost two decades of military rule.

Truth, Impunity, Pain

Mental health professionals thus argued that if the new democratic state did not explore the full truth of the dictatorship and make the perpetrators of violence take responsibility for their actions, then victims' individual selfhoods, and thereby Chilean society, could never completely heal.[25] Impunity also had grave consequences for the roles Chileans played as members of families as they re-integrated into democratic society after nearly two decades of dictatorship. Reiterating arguments from the Vicariate and other mental health teams from the past decade and a half, Sergio Lucero of the Vicariate's mental health team emphasized how the neoliberal economic model, which accompanied state violence, displaced roles within the "healthy family," and thereby inhibited the development of the "hombre integral" (the whole man), especially when he suffered from prolonged unemployment and could not fulfill his role as head of household and primary breadwinner.[26] The dictatorship, Lucero argued, had

---

[25] Paz Rojas, "Crimenes de lesa humanidad e impunidad. La mirada médica psiquiátrica," in *Persona, Estado, Poder: Estudios sobre salud mental, volume II, Chile 1990-1995* (Santiago: CODEPU, 1996), 197-223.

[26] Ibid.

systematically broken down the sense of masculinity that men needed to assume command of rebuilding Chilean society at that critical moment of the transition to democracy. But more than that, at the moment of truth telling, the state could help rebuild that masculine model (the hombre integral) if it were to name the perpetrators and punish them adequately. Otherwise, the democratic, rights-bearing citizen would remain emasculated.[27]

Paz Rojas of CODEPU-DITT also signaled the damage impunity did to the family, the most basic unit to which, she argued, every person who suffered from some form of state violence or repression belonged. She contended that while survivors also may have belonged to collective units such as political parties or unions, they also played a role as a family member. She indicated that when families "privatized" their pain, or treated the death or torture of a family member as an event as a normal, if traumatic, occurrence disconnected from its larger social context, family hierarchies tended to become more rigid as family members directed their frustrations at each other. When families sought help with human rights and community organizations and shared their stories with others, thus connecting their pain to its social context and giving it meaning, they tended to re-direct their anger toward its deserving source, the dictatorship, even if they still had family conflicts.[28]

---

[27] Equipo de Salud de la Vicaria de la Solidaridad, integrado por Dr. Andrés Donoso, Dr. Guillermo Hernández, Ps. Sergio Lucero, Dr. Ramiro Olivares, Aux. Enf. Janet Ulloa. Autor Responsobale: Sergio Lucero Conus, "Derechos Humanos y Salud Mental," in *Tortura. Aspectos medicos, psicológicos y sociales. Prevención y tratamiento* (Santiago: Quimo Impresores, CODEPU-DITT, 1989), 137-144.

[28] Paz Rojas, "Crímenes de la lesa humanidad e impunidad. La mirada médica psiquiátrica," in CODEPU-DITT, *Persona, Estado, Poder. Estudios sobre salud mental, volumen II. Chile, 1990-1995* (Santiago: LOM, 1996), 197-223.

Rojas contended that torture (or for a family member of a torture survivor, the imagined experience with torture or death) was only one part of the destruction of the self, in which the victim loses his or her self-esteem. The other process took place in the relationship between the torturer and the victim (or the imagined relationship, in the case of a family member). That exchange altered the victim's intersubjectivity, or his or her connection to other people. Rojas outlined a triangle of the doer (a torturer, a guard, an agent who detained a family member, or any other responsible agent of the regime), the victim, and the connection to others. She argued that impunity meant, for many, the perpetuation of this triangle, which, on a large scale, and in the context of democracy, perpetuated the social and political climate of distrust and fear that the dictatorship had instilled.[29]

Even later in the 1990s, mental health professionals argued that the problem of impunity continued to thwart the reconstruction of the self, in addition to threatening a second split of the self and the collective. In 1997, FASIC mental health team members Jorge Pantoja, Eliana Horvitz, and Francisco Rivera argued that subjectivity depended on being able to reconcile the self to social processes, yet democratic processes had marginalized the very people who had been "othered" by the dictatorship, such as torture survivors and former political prisoners. In closing their paper, however, the authors argued that the democratic system was failing to make strides to solve problems of other marginalized groups, such as discirimination against women, child abuse, homosexuals, ethnic groups, and populations vulnerable to police persecution. A democratic system that did not address those problems, they contended, continued the paradigm of state

[29] Ibid.

impunity and thereby contributed to chronic pain by continuing impunity through it. In such a system, the self remained split, and the person powerless.[30]

Mental health professionals from human rights organizations advised the civilian government on how to proceed with an important part of the reconciliation process: reparations in the form of free mental and physical health care for the population affected by the regime's human rights violations. As part of the reparations project of the Rettig Commission, the Concertación implemented the Program for Reparations and Comprehensive Health Care (PRAIS), which provided free physical and mental health care to former political prisoners, their families, and family members of the disappeared, as well as residents of areas designated by the Rettig Commission in which the general population was significantly affected by the regime's violence. The primary example was Iquique, where the Vicariate of Solidarity and local officials uncovered a mass grave in Pisagua in 1990—an occurrence that justified and invigorated the Rettig Commission, which Pinochet and the right had tried to stall.[31]

The family was extremely important in mental health professionals' arguments for comprehensive mental health care from victims of human rights violations. They argued that the whole family was severely affected by direct violence against one family member. The trauma of one person affected everyone else in his or her family, and the environment of stress and mental instability could carry on for decades. It was therefore essential, professionals argued, that free mental health treatment be available, and written

---

[30] Programa Medico Psiquitra, FASIC, "Impunidad, cronificacion del daño y subjetividad," 1997.

[31] See Chapter 6. Clara Han has contended that the civilian government, in implementing PRAIS and the truth commissions, sought to pay a social debt to Chileans affected by political violence, while doing little to address the health concerns of the many people also grappled with the economic debt that sprang from neoliberal credit policies implemented under Pinochet. See Han, *Life in Debt,* 4.

into legislation, for family members through the third generation.[32] Lessie Jo Frazier has argued, however, that PRAIS, unlike the mental health programs from the human rights organizations that preceded it, individualized health care by disconnecting the meaning of problems such as domestic violence from the social and historical realities of the dictatorship and transition.[33]

Indeed, in their 1989 proposal to the Subcommittee for Reparations of the Concertación's Human Rights Commission, Elizabeth Lira and David Becker of ILAS contended that mental health professionals working within human rights organizations were the only people in the country qualified to conceptualize and carry out treatment. The civilian government, therefore, should coordinate with them. But the state should also lead this endeavor, because not only was it the state's responsibility to the affected populations, but human rights organizations did not wield the same resources as the state for implementing programs on the necessary scale. Lira and Becker estimated that around 200,000 people were affected in some way—a figure that included family members of political prisoners, the disappeared and executed, and Chileans who had been exiled and returned to Chile.

An important aspect was "proof" of the link between symptoms and state violence. The authors insisted that, given that observable symptoms of psychic trauma could remain latent for years, affected persons should be believed and provided

---

[32] Elizabeth Lira and David Becker, "Proposiciones preliminaries respecto a una política de salud y salud mental dirigida a las víctimas de la repression política en Chile para el period de transición a la democracia," Fundacion Archvio Vicaria de la Solidaridad, Santiago de Chile, 1989.

[33] Lessie Jo Frazier, *Salt in the Sand: Memory, Violence, and the nation-State in Chile, 1890 to the Present* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 190-241; Lessie Jo Frazier, "Gendering the Space of Death: Memory, Democracy, and the Domestic," in *Gender, Sexuality, and Power in Latin America since Independence,* ed. William E. French and Katherine Elaine Bliss (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), 261-282.

treatment, as long as they qualified under the legislation (which would prove problematic for many, but was well-meaning in theory). The authors cited studies that showed how Germany and Netherlands dealt with generations of trauma after the Holocaust, and how Argentina had reincorporated former political prisoners into social life without stigma. They also argued that, to confront this reality and better equip the mental health and medical community, the government should ensure more training of medical and mental health professionals in the specific area of human rights, both in the existing community and as part of university curricula. Furthermore, Lira argued, Chile needed more research on human rights and mental health (an implicit push for the government to fund such studies), as well a formal advisory committee to the government on mental health and reparations.[34]

The incoming civilian government led by Patricio Aylwin in 1990 recognized the need for mental and physical health care as part of a human rights program, and it recognized human rights NGOs that provided comprehensive health services as experts in the field of human rights and mental health. The Vicariate, FASIC, CINTRAS, ILAS, and PIDEE joined together to form the Organization of Mental Health Teams (CESAM) in 1989 to advise Chile's new government on such matters. Their recommendation, much like that of Lira and Becker from ILAS, included statistics on the estimated population that would require comprehensive health services (physical and mental) as a result of the dictatorship's human rights violations. FASIC, PIDEE, CINTRAS, and ILAS attended approximately 10,000 mental health cases since the inception of their respective

[34] Ibid.

institutions until April 1990.[35] The Vicariate's medical and mental health clinic attended approximately 22,000 cases, 46% of which corresponded to mental health and 42% of which corresponded to physical health. (The remaining 12% were mixed, or unclear.) The final figure came to at least 32,000 cases of mental health attended by the organizations, possibly as many as 42,000. CESAM noted that mental health demand had grown steadily since 1988 and would continue to do so. Indeed, they estimated approximately 921,000 people returning from exile (the person sentenced to exile, along with an average of five per family) would require care, in addition to hundreds of thousands of former political prisoners and tortured persons, their family members, and family members of the disappeared and executed, as well as the second generation.[36]

Somewhat surprisingly, CESAM also noted that they conceptualized a "family member" of a former political prisoner, or disappeared or executed person, as any person who sustained a long-term affective relationship with that person, rather than relying on a traditional or legal definition of a nuclear family.[37] Years of working with various types of families, and trying to get as much care for as many affected people as possible, perhaps loosened the rhetoric of the traditional, male-headed nuclear family that undergirded many of the organizations' programs.[38]

In a separate report from 1991, for example, the Vicariate's mental and physical health program proposed to provide psychological therapy to family members of the

---

[35] FASIC – 5,510; PIDEE1,338 in Sntaigo and more than 1200 in provinces; CODEPU 1605; ILAS 114; CINTRAS 487. This is up until April 1990. In: CESAM, Letter to Don Jorge Jiménez de la Jara, Ministerio de Salud de la Republica de Chile, Santiago de Chile, 11 May, 1990, Biblioteca CINTRAS.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

disappeared, whom they argued constituted the population most in need of mental health services at that moment. While the Vicariate's did not elaborate a definition of family, its body of work suggested a viewpoint more focused on the male-headed nuclear family, even though the organization had led programs educating women of their rights as equal partners (thanks to feminist influence).[39] Still, this program sought to provide therapy for a limited population due to restricted funds. The Vicariate team argued that, due to the inconclusive nature of the crime against their loved ones, family members of the disappeared suffered from chronic stress and mental health problems, as well as fatal illnesses and a shorter life span than the general population. Impunity had facilitated the lack of information about where the bodies of the disappeared were buried, and thus family members' grieving process was trapped between accepting and mourning their loved one's death, and clinging to the hope that he or she may still be alive.[40]

CESAM also recognized the urgency of providing treatment to communities in which mass graves had been found, and in which state violence had decimated the majority of social and political networks. This was especially the case, they argued, in places like Yumbel and Lonquén, both small communities where mass graves of local peasants and political militants had been found in the late 1970s. They also proposed treatment for populations that had been particularly subjected to collective violence in their communities, such as poblaciones subjected regularly to violent raids. CESAM, in

---

[39] On those programs, see Heidi Tinsman, *Buying into the Regime: Grapes and Consumption in Cold War Chile and the United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 207-255.
[40] Vicariate of Solidarity Equipo de Salud, Dr. Guillermo Hernández, Director, "Proyecto: Asistencia médica y psiquiatrica-psicologica en el policlinico de la Vicaria de la Solidaridad para el period de la transición, 1991-1992," Fundacion Archivo Vicaria de la Solidaridad, Santiago de Chile, ca. 1991.

essence, enjoined the state to consider the psychosocial effects of human rights violations on the entire population, not just those most directly affected.[41]

Aylwin's government, however, did not implement entirely the program that CESAM had devised when it instituted the Program for Reparations and Comprehensive Health Care (PRAIS) along with the Rettig legislation. CESAM had, like ILAS, underscored the necessity of using mental health professionals who worked in human rights NGOs (the experts on this subject) as interlocutors in the seven PRAIS centers it proposed to open across the country. The government claimed to have coordinated with CESAM for the pilot program in Iquique, but according to the professionals involved in CESAM, that was not the case: They had been invited only to the first meeting regarding the program design. In general, CESAM contended, the government dragged its feet through bureaucracy and political posturing, which had the effect of excluding CESAM to a large extent, as well as ignoring key aspects of the plan they created, such as prioritizing attention in communities besides Iquique in which mass graves had been uncovered. CESAM reiterated that human rights organizations did not have the resources to provide care on the level that was needed. Furthermore, they argued, that was the state's responsibility: Throughout the dictatorship, human rights organizations had provided services that the welfare state had provided and subsidized before.

But more than that, the democratic state owed the population affected by human rights violations in order to settle accounts with the past and re-build a democracy that integrated individual and collective rights. It was also the state's responsibility to take the

---

[41] Ibid.

reins from human rights organizations and rehabilitate the individuals and families that the dictatorship had broken down, and thereby reconstruct the collective.[42]

Chronic Pain and the Limits of Representation

In a glaring omission, the Rettig Commission did not elaborate on gender and sexual torture in its discussion of the regime's torture tactics. Perhaps this omission could be attributed to the fact that the commission's limits for investigating torture were to provide, on the one hand, a broad context of the regime's violence, and on the other, to focus on cases of torture that led to death. Investigating individual cases of torture in their own right fell beyond the scope of what the Aylwin government and legal advisors believed the commission could handle in 1990, especially with Pinochet, the armed forces, and a conservative Supreme Court wielding a large amount of power. [43] The purpose of sexual torture was not to kill, but to break down the prisoners' subjectivity and social bonds. The new national narrative written into the Rettig Report sought to smooth over the past and lay the groundwork for an orderly future. Disorderly and inconvenient memories of torture slipped through the cracks of the official history it constructed.

As a group of feminist intellectuals argued in a report in 2005, one of the many factors that silenced women who had been tortured was the notion that their experiences paled in comparison to those who had died. In the words of psychologist Margarita Díaz, women contrasted their own torture (including sexual torture) and the death and

---

[42] Letter to CESAM from Jorge Jiménez de la Jara, Ministerio de Salud de la República de Chile, received 5 March, 1991, Biblioteca CINTRAS, Santiago de Chile; CESAM, Acta Reunión Ordinaria, 14 September, 1990, Biblioteca CINTRAS, Santiago de Chile.

[43]Steve J. Stern, *Reckoning with Pinochet: The Memory Question in Democratic Chile, 1989-2006* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2010), 65-77.

disappearance of their husbands, fathers, and brothers "[a]s if the line between life and death were the only referent to validate pain."[44] The line between life and death was orderly, and easier to prove within the confines of the law. But torture, especially when the living victim could not remember it or put the experience of it into words, was disorderly, and not easy to prove. Sexual torture was even harder for survivors to understand. Not only did it silence the victim through immense shame, but the ingrained violence of patriarchy in social institutions made it difficult for many women and men to discern whether or not what they experienced was sexual torture, harassment, rape, or something else. (This is further discussed in chapter seven.)[45]

The 2003-2004 Valech Commission attempted to correct the Rettig Commission's limited treatment of sexual torture. The report included a section dedicated to a discussion of sexual torture against women, which included a narrow discussion of sexual torture against men. Hillary Hiner has argued that this special section of the report perpetuated a binary of feminine vulnerability and masculine aggression. She contends that while shedding light on the problem of sexual torture under the dictatorship, the report also victimized women and portrayed their bodies as inevitably permeable and violable. She shows that both the Rettig and Valech reports favored men as agents—

[44] Margarita Díaz C., "Efectos psicológicos de la tortura sexual en mujeres. Una reflexión de nuestra experiencia de treinta años de golpe militar. In: Paulina Gutiérrez, ed., *Memorias de Ocupación. Violencia Sexual contra mujeres detenidas durante la dictadura* (Santiago: Andros Ltda., 2005), 19.

[45] Ibid. On the relationship between state recognition of sexual torture, women's hesitance to speak about sexual torture, and state policies on abortion and the morning-after pill during the transition to democracy, see María Elena Acuña Moenne, "Embodying Memory: Women and the Legacy of Military Government in Chile," trans. Matthew Webb, *Feminist Review* 79 (2005): 150-161.

either of aggression or protection—while women lacked the ability to reclaim their own agency as political subjects.[46]

The report's meager treatment of the sexual torture of men, especially in comparison to human rights reports from the late 1970s (discussed in chapter two) and testimonial literature from men, reaffirms this point.[47] The Valech report, like the prior accounts analyzed in chapter two, used the category of "homosexual torture" was also used to denote sexual torture against men—although electrocution to the genitals was not characterized as such. Even if not intentionally meant as such, that taxonomy continued to associate same-sex desire, rather than patriarchal power, onto an act of violence perpetrated by state agents. The report's scarce discussion of the sexual torture of men, despite those earlier studies and reports, as well as male survivors' autobiographical literature attesting to various forms of simulated sodomy and sexual humiliation, reinforced the idea that men's bodies were always sources of sexual aggression, never victims of it. Only in anomalous cases would men succumb to a type of torture that could not perhaps escape a narrative of feminization that could only be righted by counter-aggression.[48]

But at least for Ana María, and many women who shared similar experiences, perhaps for the Valech Commission signaled a moment in which their stories could be

---

[46] *Informe Valech*, 290-299; Hillary Hiner, "Voces soterradas, violencias ignoradas. Discurso, violencia política y género en los Informes Rettig y Valech," *Latin American Research Review* 44 (3): 50-74.

[47]Hernán Valdés, *Tejas Verdes. Diario de un campo de concentración en Chile* (Barcelona: Editorial Laisa, 1978); Anibal Quijada Cerda, *cerco de Púas* (La Habana: Casa de las Américas, 1977); Inger Agger, "Sexual Torture of Political Prisoners: An Overview," *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 2, no. 3 (1989): 305- 314; Ximena Bunster-Burotto, "Surviving Beyond Fear: Women and Torture in Latin America" in *Women and Change in Latin America,* ed. June Nash and Helen I. Safa (South Hadley, Mass.: 1986), 297-395.

[48] Ibid.

heard, and the silence could be broken. She could not speak of her experience for nearly thirty years, and could not fully narrate her testimony to the Valech Commission. Still, because she had the required paperwork documenting that she had been imprisoned at the Naval War Academy in Valparaíso, she was able to be registered in the report and receive reparations. I met Ana María through her friend María Cristina, a former political prisoner from Valparaíso whom I had interviewed previously. Ana María welcomed me into her home and told me her story. She came from a middle-class background, and in the 1970s, she went to college at the University of Chile in Santiago, where she joined the MIR. She met and married her husband Alfredo, who she convinced to join the MIR as well. She was arrested in 1974. She did not remember, however, being sexually tortured at the hands of state agents. She did not begin to remember until 2003, when the Valech Commission began receiving testimonies from victims of torture and political imprisonment. With the advent of the commission, she heard other stories of torture circulating by word of mouth, and suddenly, she began to feel ill and unable to get out of bed. Then, her memories began to return. She decided to give her testimony to the Valech Commission, and then she sought psychiatric treatment. Ana María told me,

> It's been hard for me, you know. It's been hard for me. . . . I went on for many years like nothing happened. I never wanted to return to that. And when there was the Valech Commission, which gave us the opportunity to tell our stories, but I couldn't tell them anything. But get this—everything came back to me. I was in psychiatric treatment afterward, only for the past few years. Because after [my torture] I went on living, well, relatively so, because you know what happened? I blocked everything, all that, all of it. I blocked it and I never went back . . . until the Valech Commision. And I was in psychiatric treatment for five years. That's how I came to know CINTRAS. And yes, I recovered, I recovered quite a bit, but I believe there are things that you can't ever forget.[49]

[49] Ana María, Interview with author, Valparaíso, Chile, August 2012.

We can see notions of chronic pain in Ana María's account of her process of remembering her torture after thirty years and beginning the process of psychological recovery. She drew on ideas from psychoanalysis, most likely learned during her therapy sessions, to make sense of why she had "blocked everything" for so long, and because she had blocked experiences of torture, she had been able to carry on with her life without the burden of unbearable psychical pain. The Valech Commission, more precisely the open circulation of stories of torture and the moral imperative to recount one's own experience for truth and reconciliation, caused Ana María's chronic pain to erupt, flooding her with memories she could not find the words to narrate. She recounted how she presented the required documentation to confirm her imprisonment, without having to narrate the details of her torture: her proximity to active human rights organizations in the V region (200 kilometers from Santiago), and her imprisonment in prisons and torture centers recognized by the commission provided her with the paper trail and narrative framework that coincided with the commission's definitions of victimhood.

Perhaps, too, Ana María remembered her experiences at that moment—2003—because the state had broadened its definitions of victimhood. More precisely, the state legitimized more people's experiences of political imprisonment and torture, in their own right—not as part of a narrative of bearing witness to another's disappearance, execution, or death by torture. As in Ana María's case, Chileans could begin to confront their experiences for the first time because there was an official space of recognition for doing

so. The state would now incorporate her experience into its official history, what Veena Das has called the "stamp of the state," rather than relegate it to the space of "rumor."[50]

Years later, in therapy at the human rights organization CINTRAS (Center for Research and Treatment of Stress),[51] Ana María began to form a narrative about her experiences. In her interview with me, she emphasized the tension between remembering and forgetting. There were advantages and disadvantages to both. Remembering was a signifier of individual and social recovery: only when she remembered her painful memories could she begin the process of recovery. But there were also "some things you can never forget," acts of horror that haunted Ana María, and Chilean society and contributed to her ongoing pain, and against which she struggled daily. Impunity directly informed those struggles:

> . . . I recovered quite a bit, but I believe there are things that you can't ever forget. No, no. It is terrible to . . . realize what human beings can become, what they can do, how there can be so many psychopaths—and how there's no punishment right? Look, I am not a hateful person . . . . But I believe that there should be punishment. Because if there is no punishment, history could repeat itself. . . . .[52]

Ana María had witnessed the human rights atrocities committed by the regime's agents, and with those images engraved in her mind—and now her in conscious mind—she concluded that "history could repeat itself" if there were no punishment. Impunity created the environment for precisely that form of uncertainty and the chronic pain that sprang from it: without punishment of torturers, people who suffered from state violence could continue to feel the psychical ramifications of their experiences decades afterward. As in

---

[50] Veena Das, *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 162-184.

[51] The organization, while maintaining the original acronym, has since changed its name to the Center for Mental Health and Human Rights.

[52] Ana María, interview with author.

Ariel Dorfman's *Death and the Maiden*, former political prisoners faced the possibility of crossing paths with their torturers in public spaces. While torturers remained unpunished and moved about freely, people they tortured faced the possibility of reliving those moments over and over and taking refuge in private spaces which did not even protect one from memories of violence.[53] Ana María found that for her, ". . . freedom isn't whether I can choose one movie theater over the other, right? Freedom is. . . in the mind. It's in your head."[54] Although the state did not punish her torturers, she began to find ways to find a version of freedom, based in the psychical, that would allow her to begin to cope with her chronic pain, reconstruct her sense of self, and allow her to reconnect to society. But she did not lose sight of her belief that even is if she began to reconcile her experiences on an individual level the state should assume responsibility on a collective level for settling accounts with the dictatorship to protect future generations from experiencing the same traumatic history.

For many of the same reasons, Solsticio agreed to do an interview with me. But telling me about her abduction and rape by a police officer occurred spontaneously.[55] Unlike Ana María, Solsticio remembered what had happened to her when the attack occurred, and she filed a report with the local police, to no avail. Her case did not move forward in court, and when she searched for the records to present to the Valech Commission decades later, they had been "lost."

---

[53] Ariel Dorfman, *Death and the Maiden* (New York: Penguin, 1992).

[54]Interview with Ana María.

[55] I asked Solsticio at the time of the interview, one week after, and two years after if she wanted this part of the interview (about her rape) to remain available for use in this project. She confirmed, and hopes that her story will help promote knowledge of women's experiences under the dictatorship and contribute to Chile's continual struggle for human rights and against forgetting the past.

Solsticio was from the *poblaciones* (poor neighborhoods on the peripheries of cities) just outside of Arica, a city located close to the Peruvian border, around 2500 kilometers from the capital of Santiago. Human rights organizations did not develop in the area until the early 1980s, with the founding of the Chilean Human Rights Commission in Arica. Solisticio's attack occurred in the late 1970s.[56] In the 1970s and 1980s, violent raids became part of everyday life in Solsticio's community. In general, however, Solsticio emphasized her more positive memories of resistance. She stressed her participation in a cultural resistance movement, in which she wrote poems, performed plays, and founded an artisan's guild. She continues to engage in those activities to maintain her community activism.[57]

Solsticio focused her narrative on repression against her community as a whole, and on violence committed against other people, rather than herself. Trauma studies scholars, as well as oral historians and anthropologists who have interviewed people who survived some form of violence, war, or other traumatic experience, have argued that individuals often cannot find the words to express the horrors they witnessed. They have urged us to read the silences in oral narratives as closely as we read what is spoken. Feminist scholars have argued similarly for analyzing women's experiences, violent or not, since women, often inadvertently, subsume their individual experiences into a collective narrative or tend to speak of others' experiences (especially men's) as more significant than their own.[58] Ultimately, we as scholars can analyze what is spoken, and

---

[56] Solsticio, Interview with Author, October 2012, Arica, Chile.

[57] Ibid.

to an extent what is silenced, through the historical and cultural frameworks that shape our interviewees' narratives.[59]

Solsticio fluctuated between relative silence and speaking about her most violent and traumatic experience of the dictatorship, and perhaps her life. Around 1977 (she could not remember the exact year), she was kidnapped and raped by a military officer. After nothing came of her attempt to denounce his crime, she decided not to speak of it, until she began therapy with a psychologist at the local center for the Program for Reparations and Comprehensive Health Care (PRAIS). She mentioned the rape briefly toward the beginning of the interview, while talking in a general sense about how women she knew had suffered from the loss of their husbands and from being tortured themselves. She counted herself among those who experienced violence, but said that she was not going to talk about it in detail, because it was painful for her. Later, when she had described at length the violence her población had faced, but had avoided speaking in the first person, I asked if she had any personal experiences of violence she could talk about, such as a raid on her own home. She talked about the police raiding her home on multiple occasions, and then began to recount the story of her kidnap and rape. She assured me that she wanted to talk about it, because she and I were both invested in spreading knowledge about women's experiences, and because she felt the urge to speak about of the dictatorship's violence, particularly against women like herself, whose experiences had not been acknowledged by the state.

---

[58] Daniel James, *Doña María's Story: Life History, Memory, and Political Identity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000); *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History,* ed. Daphne Patai and Sherna Berger Gluck (New York: Routledge, 1991).

[59] Luisa Passerini, ed., *Memory and Totalitarianism* (New York: Transaction Publishers, 2005); Cathy Caruth, ed. *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Ruth Leys, *Trauma: A Genealogy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000); Daniel James, *Doña María's Story: Life History, Memory, and Political Identity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000).

She recalled that on her way home from work at her stand in Arica, when a *milico* (derogatory term for military officer) took her by force far from the city, where he held a gun to her head and raped her. He ordered her to tell him where she lived and to bring out her daughters. She directed him instead to a neighbor's house. The neighbor gave her refuge inside, alerted the neighborhood, and called the police, and the officer escaped. Solsticio went to the hospital and received stitches on her arm and showed me the scar—a memory of the attack permanently etched onto her body. She filed a police report and attempted to prosecute her rapist. She and her neighbors identified him, and he was arrested, but according to Solsticio, nothing happened to him because the regime had helped him shirk punishment. Later, around 2003, when she was searching for her police report to present to the Valech Commission, she discovered that her papers had been lost, thus leaving her without the necessary documentation to present to the commission. The county clerk who filed Solticio case when it occurred offered to provide his testimony to the Valech Commission, but it did not suffice as corroborating evidence.

After recounting the basic details of her attack, Solsticio commented on the psychological effects she still experiences, and how the Valech Commission did not recognize what had happened to her. She began with the thoughts that went through her mind as she was being attacked, which affected her ability to speak about it in a comprehensive way until years later:

> Well, there comes a time, when things like that happen to you, in which you leave your body. You're no longer yourself; you leave that place, because it's the only way that you can get through something like that. I don't know, at least he didn't kill me, because I had my little girls. At some point, you just leave your body and go, and say, “Hopefully he doesn't kill me,” right? "Better that he kill me right away, and doesn't prolong my suffering." But that didn't happen to me. Of course, my life was messed up forever, yes. I can't sleep before three in the morning, you know, and it scares me to get into a vehicle by myself. I have a lot of aftereffects

> like that. Also, the state doesn't recognize what happened to me. There are a lot of people who receive benefits from the Valech Commission who never experienced anything. It seems that was manipulated, I'll tell you, by someone in the Communist Party [in Arica]. And that causes us a lot of pain as people who really suffered these tragedies, because they happened to us. Maybe we took a while to talk about them because that's how the process is: You don't want to; you forget. But then, at any given moment it leaves your body, that is, you want to say it. That's what happened to me.[60]

Solsticio's experience had, for decades, been rotating in a cycle of trauma, silencing and forgetting. Solsticio's rapist silenced her by taking control over her body. Saying no, even speaking that word, could have easily meant death, leaving Solsticio with a false choice. The failure of the judicial and law enforcement system to give weight to her voice, her denunciation, silenced Solticia, and for almost thirty years, she forgot in order to survive and to avoid being silenced again. She had scarcely spoken to anyone about the details of what had happened; her husband did not know she had been raped. She decided not to speak of the experience to anyone else, but wrote poetry and songs over the years as both therapy and resistance the dictatorship. Years later, after the Concertación governments created PRAIS, she sought professional therapy and began to work through her trauma. She then decided to testify before the Valech Commission, only to find that her documents had been lost, and her testimony and that of the county clerk were not enough. Furthermore, she insisted that someone in Arica's Communist Party did not vouch for her or for others.

Solsticio, however, was not attacked or held in a torture center or prison officially recognized by the state, which was also a criterion for the commission's recognition. Perhaps this, more so than, or alongside, the word of a local Communist Party member, contributed to her case being denied before the Valech Commission. Human rights

[60] Solsticio, Interview with author, October 2012, Arica, Chile.

workers, as well as the democratic government, had more abundant and detailed documentation of individuals who were held in specific torture centers and prisons. They could decipher prison records to determine who was a political prisoner versus a common criminal or "delinquent." Written records from the time of the event, even those produced by the military regime, held weight over oral testimonies from victims and eye-witnesses—even when the very regime that produced those records perhaps made them conveniently disappear. Regardless, in Solsticio's narrative, that particular party member dashed any hope she had of having her case considered. She never offered the name of the man, which invoked a sense of fear from the years of the dictatorship of the backlash that could occur from speaking publicly about powerful people (men, particularly) who had proven that they could contradict her word, practically without question. Yet she could have her experience recognized through alternative means, such as community performances of theater, poetry, and music, and even sharing her story with me to promote knowledge of women's experiences under the dictatorship.[61]

Conclusion

As Chile transitioned to democracy, concepts and practices about reconstructing the self were in flux. Spectacles of horror like the Caso Degollados, the uncertainty of the plebiscite and transition to democracy, and the circulation of stories of personal experiences as survivors gave their testimonies to truth commissions brought about the

[61] Recent work in Performance Studies has underscored theater as a site for psychological healing and finding ways to elaborate experiences of political repression, as well as reaffirm revolutionary values. See Diego A. Benegas Loyo, "Against Terror: Trauma and Political Action in Post Dictatorship Argentina." PhD Dissertation, New York University, 2009; Laurie Frederik, *Trumpets in the Mountains:* Theater and the Politics of National Culture in Cuba (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).

boiling point for years of psychical pain for many Chileans affected by state violence. Mental health professionals argued that the notion of "chronic pain," and its connection to broader problem of impunity, were chief among the challenges to reconstructing the self in the late 1980s and into the transition. The accumulation of years of psychic pain had complicated psychological recovery for many of those affected by human rights violations. Mental health professionals were also concerned that chronic pain would have a detrimental impact for the children of torture survivors, and ultimately, Chile's future. They continued to grapple with the roles Chileans played as members of families and emphasized the strength of the family unit as a springboard for political participation in Chile's new democracy. These ideas undoubtedly drew on gendered notions of family discussed in previous chapters, even though most mental health professionals acknowledged that family dynamics had changed.

According to mental health professionals, the civilian government's refusal to name and punish perpetrators of the regime's crimes, combined with of years of state violence and repression enacted without regard to the rule of law, impeded many people from resolving their chronic pain and fully reconstructing their senses of self. It also left unresolved the collective trauma that Chile faced. Without a full recounting of events, incorporation of those events into Chile's autobiography (or its collective memory), and settling of accounts, Chile's collective psyche would remain split. But mental health professionals partially succeeded by convincing the incoming civilian government of the necessity of state-sponsored mental health care for survivors, their families, and families of the disappeared so that Chileans could come to terms with mass human rights violations.

Ana María and Solsticio's cases illuminate the insidious impunity of patriarchy embedded in the process of wrestling with long-term memories of violence, finding ways to speak about them, and being heard by the state. Women experienced sexual torture and silenced by both political trauma and gender inequality began to find space to talk about their experiences. The extent to which they were heard, however, could be limited by factors like class, as the cases of Ana María and Solsticio show. Although she was not able to talk about the types of torture she experienced to the Valech Commission, Ana Maria was able to provide documentation and receive benefits, unlike Solsticio. Even though she had received psychological therapy for a few years before our interview, she was unable to speak about experiences fully. She said that telling her story for this project, to the extent that she could, was "a little bit alleviating." Part of that relief entailed using her real name, rather than a pseudonym. It gave her a sense of power and conferred meaning upon her testimony, "reversing the shame" the dictatorship inflicted upon her.[62]

Solsticio, however, did not feel comfortable using her real name, perhaps reflecting the systematic silencing she had experienced over the past thirty years as a working-class woman. As Alison Bruey has argued, while the dictatorship targeted the urban poor for repression, the civilian government marginalized their memories of the regime's violence.[63] For both women, memories of violence stayed with them and their pain erupted at particular historical moments. Gradually, they have worked to purge it

---

[62] Temma Kaplan, "Reversing the Shame and Gendering the Memory," *Signs* 28:1 (2002): 179-199.

[63] Alison Bruey, "'I don't like to ask names, and I never remember anything': Narratives of Violence, Resistance, and Justice in Poblaciones of Gran Santiago, 1973-2013," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, January 4, 2015, New York City.

and reconnect to the collective by reaching out to mental health professionals, community organizations, friends, and cultural expression. The next chapter examines the other side of this coin. It explores how a regional government official constructed a narrative of professional, bureaucratic masculinity that allowed him to reconnect his individual work supervising the excavation of a mass grave to the collective project of settling accounts with the dictatorship.

Chapter 6

Speaking through the Dead: Narrating State Violence and Masculinity

In early June 1990, human rights workers, archeologists, forensic medical experts, attorneys, judges, and family members who hoped to find disappeared relatives searched the Chilean desert in Pisagua, near the northern city of Iquique. There, they located a mass grave where the Augusto Pinochet dictatorship's agents had executed and buried political prisoners in 1973. In 1989, representatives from the Vicariate of Solidarity, a major human rights organization sponsored by the Catholic Church and based in the capital of Santiago, received information regarding the mass grave and its location from Dr. Alberto Neumann, a former political prisoner held at Pisagua at the time of the executions. The Vicariate strategically waited until after the presidential elections in December 1989 that ushered in the transition to democracy in the wake of seventeen years of military dictatorship under Pinochet. Until late May 1990, a military barricade blocked the entrance to the area human rights workers intended to search. At the end of May, the Vicariate sent one of its lawyers, along with Dr. Neumann, to present the case to the district court in Pozo Almonte, and the search began in the first week of June. The twenty-seven bodies the team found inside the grave (nineteen corresponded to political prisoners) legitimized the nascent truth and reconciliation commission of the fledgling civilian government, despite the fact that Pinochet and the military wielded a good deal of power during the transition.[1]

[1] *Hoy,* June 11-17, 1990, 14-16.; Lessie Jo Frazier, *Salt in the Sand: Memory, Violence, and the Nation-State in Chile, 1890 to the Present* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 158-214; Lea Spira T., "Neoliberal Captivities: Pisagua and the Low-Intensity Form," 112 (2002): 127-146.

A public defender at the time of our interview, Arturo was the Regional Secretary for the Ministry of Justice (*SEREMI de Justicia*) during the transition to democracy.[2] One of his duties as Regional Secretary of Justice was to supervise the regional branch of the national government's forensics service. He, along with local judges, mediated between the forensics team and the public during the excavation and identification process. I had contacted Arturo through a reference who did not mention the Pisagua excavation, but told me only that Arturo had been *relegado* (internally exiled) to a small town in southern Chile in 1984.[3] He was arrested as part of a mass detention that targeted the Chilean Human Rights Commission in Arica, a nongovernmental human rights organization through which Arturo provided legal aid to the politically persecuted under the dictatorship.[4]

Arturo stressed to me that the other commission members faced worse treatment and longer sentences than he did. The Arica court ordered a medical and psychological exam to prove the police's humane treatment of Arturo, and the National Bar Association (*Colegio de Abogados*) launched a campaign to free the seven attorneys in the country who had been sentenced to internal exile. Of this, Arturo said, "I'm telling you that it was only because I was an attorney, and that I was in constant contact with the court." His

---

[2] Arturo and all others interviewed, unless otherwise noted, chose to use their real names for this dissertation and other papers and publications.

[3] As discussed in previous chapters, "Internal exile" is the closest translation for "*relegación,"* which was a form of exile within Chile. *Relegados* (the relegated or internally exiled) were banished from their hometowns and assigned a place to live within Chile, typically a small town or small city thousands of kilometers away from their hometowns, families, and political and social contacts. They had to sign in at a police precinct, usually every day. They were allowed to work, but it was typically very difficult to find work with the status of *relegado.* Families were allowed to move to the area where the relegados had been relocated, but it was usually a large expense, especially for families with children. The sentences lasted from months to years.

[4] Arturo, interview by Brandi A. Townsend, Arica, Chile, October 2012; *La Estrella de Iquique*, June 1990.

warning privileged a collective story of human rights violations over his individual case. Underlying his experiences, such as suspension from law school, and later, internal exile, lingered a sense of compunction for not having borne the regime's wrath to the extent that others had.

Despite these personal confrontations with the regime and opportunities to magnify the part he played in resisting it, in his interview, Arturo explored his personal grief and uncertainties by focusing on the stories of the cadavers found at Pisagua and of the families of those who searched for them. This chapter will show how Arturo built his narrative of political and social activism around the bodies of men in the mass grave and their relatives: a young Communist militant named Manuel "El Choño" Sanhueza; Julio César Cabezas, a well-known district attorney who prosecuted a narcotrafficking gang connected to a local judge-turned-military prosecutor; and Cabezas's son-in law, who worked on the excavation of the grave and identified his father-in-law's remains in the morgue. By framing his narrative around these men's stories, Arturo raised questions about how his opposition to the dictatorship measured up to that of Sanhueza and Cabezas.

At the same time, he made his own narrative relevant by projecting himself onto the stories of those men, whose cases dominated the regional and national coverage of the mass grave. By focusing his story of Cabezas's son-in-law, whose presence was overshadowed in the press by Cabezas's son Patricio (and, interestingly, whose name even Arturo could not remember), he connected with another man like himself who, away from the spotlight, did the emotional and concrete work of reconciling with the violent past and attempting to impose order on the turmoil of death.

I argue that Arturo shored up his masculinity in his profession—the reason-bound and male-dominated sphere of the law—rather than party militancy or his experience in prison. An ingrained culture of legalism undergirded the myth of Chile as a nation exceptionally peaceful and respectful of democratic rule in comparison to its neighbors. A discourse of restrained, disciplined masculinity coincided with that of a technocratic, middle-class and elite left ascending to governmental power. This chapter suggests that Arturo's narrative reflects greater historical processes of the transition.[5]

We know that the transitional governments (Aylwin's in particular) connected a scrupulous reading of the law to restoring political and social order. The transition to democracy drew on the meticulous work of the "Arturos" of Chile, or the state functionaries and professionals who mediated truth and reconciliation. We know about the dictatorship's emasculation of workers, thanks to important recent scholarship.[6] Yet we know nothing about how professionals like Arturo imagined themselves as part of that project. I argue here that rational masculinity, in contrast to violence, involved moving past the violence of the Pinochet era but, ambivalently, also speaking about that violence empathically.

Law and Order

Alfredo Joignant has demonstrated the importance of *technopols* in fomenting a culture of reason in state building during the transition through their ministerial and

---

[5]Rosemblatt, *Gendered Compromises,* 1-26.

[6] Heidi Tinsman conducts a brilliant feminist analysis of the erosion of the patriarchal household toward the end of the dictatorship in her study of fruit workers in rural Chile in *Buying into the Regime,* 207-255.

secretarial positions. These Chilean lawyers and economists held political party leadership positions before the transition, earned graduate degrees outside Chile, and were active in the University of Chile and Catholic University intellectual and activist circles in the 1980s. Technocrats also cultivated pragmatism in their governmental methods.[7] When he served as Regional Secretary of Justice during the Pisagua excavation, Arturo formed a part of that universe of reason-bound approaches to navigating the precarious transition.

Arturo and leftist professionals like him who attended college during the 1960s and engaged in social activism, and later worked opposed the dictatorship through human rights activism in the late 1970s and 1980s, did not tend to discard traditional party practices and respect for discipline and professionalism entirely.[8] But they were also part of the '68 generation of student activists who sought new paths and fresh perspectives on effecting local and global change.[9]Arturo publicly opposed the dictatorship as a law student at the University of Chile, Valparaíso, where he was a student at the time of Pinochet's military coup in 1973. There were only six law schools in Chile then, a fact which both Arturo and another (female) attorney I interviewed pointed out, perhaps both for general context and to mark, subtly, their place among the class of experts in their

---

[7] Alfredo Joignant, "Tecnócratas, *tenchnopols* y dirigentes de partido. Tipos de agentes y especies de capital en las élites gubernamentales de la Concertación (1990-2010)," in *Notables, tecnócratas y mandarins. Elementos de sociología de las élites en Chile (1990-2010)*, ed. Alfredo Joignant and Pedro Güell (Santiago: Ediciones de la Universidad Diego Portales), 49-76.

[8]Katherine Hite, *When the Romance Ended: Leaders of the Chilean Left, 1968-1998* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

[9] Deborah Cohen and Lessie Jo Frazier, "Mexico '68: Defining the Space of the Movement Heroic Masculinity in the Prison , and 'Women' in the Streets." *Hispanic American Historical Review* 83 (4) 617-660; Victoria Langland, *Speaking of Flowers: Student Movements and the Making and Remembering of 1968 in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press), 2013; Eric Zolov, "(Barr-Melej 2006, 747-784; Cohen and Frazier 2003, 617-660; Langland 2013; Eric Zolov "Expanding our Conceptual Horizons: The Shift from an Old to a New Left in Laitn America," *A Contra Corriente* 5 (2008): 47-73, http://www.ncsu.edu/acontracorriente/winter_08/documents/Zolov.pdf. Accessed August 12, 2014.

generation.[10] Arturo had entered the university in 1971, which he described as a time of university reform and compared to May '68 in France and Kent State in the United States. He was part of the university leadership, and he said that because of that, "the dictatorship meant a very strong and large blow to us young people who wanted to change the world. '73 was more or less traumatic; I had classmates that I never saw again."[11] Arturo supported the government of Salvador Allende through a university movement created by the Christian Left, which he described as "the most progressive wing of the Christian Democrats. Well, it was not communist or socialist or the MIR, which were the ones who had the greatest loss, right?"[12] It was because of his activism in one of the more center-left organizations, he argued, that the only political persecution he faced was expulsion from his university studies, to which he was able to return and finish after some years. Yet, considering he graduated in 1981 or 1982 and had originally entered in 1971, and law was a five-to six-year program in Chile, he was likely suspended expelled for around five years, which could have been a long time for a young man with high professional aspirations.

Arturo expanded on the loss of his political project later in the interview, when I asked him to reflect on how he felt when his studies were suspended. He explained that by the time he was allowed to return to school, he was not sure if he wanted to continue studying law and that when he returned, it was taxing to finish. His involvement in the student movement before the coup had included changing the law school curriculum to

---

[10] Arturo, interview; Sylvia, interview by Brandi Townsend, Valparaíso, Chile, August 2012.

[11] Arturo, interview.

[12] Ibid.

focus on civil rights and a balance between collective and private property, and the regime's influence had thwarted those reforms. Many others had also been expelled from universities and saw their political projects destroyed or deferred. But Arturo had not been disappeared like many of his compañeros. He downplayed what was probably a painful and uncertain reality at the time—and which, in retrospect, may have been overshadowed in his memory by bearing witness to others' encounters with death.

Internal Exile

Arturo returned to his hometown of Arica, a city in the north of Chile near the Peruvian border, after receiving his law degree around 1981. There, he and other professionals organized a branch of the Chilean Human Rights Commission. While he was affiliated with the Chilean Human Rights Commission during the dictatorship, Arturo also worked in a private practice to earn a living, and could have continued that work upon the return to democracy. He reminded himself, me, and his imagined audience that he chose public service upon the return to democracy instead of possibly gaining more wealth in the private sphere. He affirmed, "My social commitment was clear, no?"[13] He thereby confirmed his commitment to social justice, and consequently a sense of middle-class masculinity rooted in that social activism, rather than backing away from those ideals when the dictatorship was no longer an imminent threat.

Many of the men associated with the Chilean Human Rights Commission were arrested and internally exiled at the same time as Arturo—on December 23 and 24, 1984. I interviewed many of them. Some, who comprised most of the men Arturo's social

---

[13] Ibid.

circle, emphasized the suffering of others and the exercise of their professional skills in service to the common good, like Arturo. Others seemed to portray themselves, and were portrayed by others, as embodying characteristics of heroic, masculine sacrifice for democratic struggles. [14]

Most people I interviewed insisted I talk to Pedro, a torture survivor. As a worker and a union man, he was the quintessential Chilean Old Left leader who was persecuted by the regime and persevered. Pedro was mostly illiterate, which he embraced as a marker of his condition as a poor worker, and which added pathos to his story and power to his accomplishments. We held the interview in Pedro's dining room, as his wife prepared lunch in the adjacent kitchen and affirmed many of his statements, but did not wish to join the interview. As we began, Pedro pointed out a portrait of his brother on the living room wall, and explained that he first experienced the dictatorship's brutality when the regime detained and disappeared his brother. Pedro carried on his brother's work in the party leadership and the Construction Workers' Union. Pedro related how the regime's agents detained and tortured him several times, and his wife and eldest daughter searched for him, making sure he was not "one more disappeared."[15] He could not find steady work for years, because the regime had blacklisted him for his status as a former political prisoner. He took pride, however, in having done odd jobs to support his five children, and making sure his wife never had to work outside the home. Pedro embodied the disciplined, working-class family man that whom middle-class professionals and

[14] I refer to twelve interviews that I conducted with men and women in Arica and Iquique (Arturo was the only Iquique resident) in April and October 2012. I compare these to interviews I conducted in Santiago, Valparaíso, and the southern island of Chiloé in 2012-2013, as well as interviews in the "Proyecto Cien Entrevistas" of the Museo de la Memoria y Derechos Humanos in Santiago de Chile.

[15] Pedro, interview by Brandi A. Townsend, Arica, Chile, April 2012.

elites touted as the backbone of socialism.[16] Arturo and other middle-class men in Pedro's community did not overtly reference this intersection of gender and class. Rather, middle-class, professional men like Juan, Arturo, and many others with whom I spoke, directed me toward Pedro because they saw him as the primary example of the regime's global assault on Chile's working class, and working-class men and their families.

But middle-class men and their families also experienced the dictatorship's violence in Arica. Juan, president of Arica's branch of the Chilean Human Rights Commission throughout the 1980s, served as a link between the professionals who worked at the commission (such as doctors, lawyers, journalists, teachers, and social workers) and the people they served.[17] Many people whom I interviewed in Arica referenced Juan's kindness, as well as his bravery. He had received numerous death threats, his car was bombed, and the secret police attempted to kidnap his infant daughter. He was internally exiled to the south with Arturo in 1984. Juan, like Arturo, diminished his own painful experiences in favor of a narrative of the commission's work and the collective suffering of the people.[18] Other men I interviewed highlighted their individual accomplishments and bravery in service to the party and society. Nolberto, a Communist Party leader affiliated with the Chilean Human Rights Commission in Arica, rose through the ranks of the local party. He carefully guided his interview with me by offering me a copy of his C.V. and narrating his story through its lines, which interlaced his service to the party with his professional work as a veterinarian, as well as a state administrator for

---

16 Rosemblatt, *Gendered Compromises,* 185-230.

[17] Juan gave explicit written preference to use his actual name, rather than a pseudonym.

[18] Juan, interview by Brandi A. Townsend, Arica, Chile, October 2012.

the Ministry of Agriculture before the coup.[19] The space and experience of the party provided Norberto with a foundation for shaping a narrative of Old-Left masculinity grounded in discipline, respectability, and service to the party, while also leaving room for acts of heroism in the dangerous context of the dictatorship.[20]

On the evening of December 23, 1984, the police arrested around sixteen people, all male professionals, including Nolberto, Juan, and Arturo. Most of those arrested were members of the Chilean Human Rights Commission in Arica, and the police arrested the majority of them in their homes with an order from the Ministry of the Interior. A report from the Vicariate of Solidarity stated that the regime gave the order to arrest the members of the local commission in responses to protests in Arica upon Pinochet's visit to the city of Iquique (the major city nearest Arica and Pinochet's birthplace) earlier that month.[21] Arturo evaded arrest that night. In recounting the event, he struggled between attributing his eluding the police to chance or to his own actions: "I had the luck, or, I don't know, the swiftness, to avoid arrest."[22] He, along with two others, presented themselves the next day (December 24th) to the Court of Appeals. The police sent them to Santiago by bus, where the others had been sent, and on the 25th, they were relegated to various small towns in the south of Chile.[23]

---

[19] Nolberto, Interview with Author, Arica, Chile, October 2012.

[20] Barr-Melej, "Siloísomo and the Self," 747-784; Mallon, "*Barbudos*, Warriors, and *Rotos*,"179-215.

[21] *Informe mensual*, Vicaría de la Solidaridad, December 1984, Fundación Documentación y Archivo de la Vicaría de la Solidaridad, Santiago, Chile, 70-72.

[22] Arturo, interview.

[23] Arturo, interview.

Because Arturo had minimized his experience of internal exile throughout his narrative in favor of the stories of the men found in the mass grave in Pisagua, I asked him to elaborate on that experience. He described moments of intense solidarity with the people of the small town of Portezuelo, where he was internally exiled for two months, along with Juan, who was sentenced to an additional month. The local church met them upon their arrival and gave them care packages. Juan, a doctor, provided medical care to the townspeople in a makeshift clinic, and Arturo served as his secretary. The local priest, a blue-jean-wearing North American whose rugged appearance Arturo compared to John Wayne, invited Arturo and Juan to attend mass at a small church in the woods. Although they were agnostics, the two men also wished to show their gratitude for the support the town had shown them, and they attended the mass. Upon their tardy arrival, the priest announced their presence to the congregation and stated that while the regime had sent Arturo and Juan to Portezuelo to punish them, the town "could not let it be a punishment." At that moment, the men "broke down" over the "expressions of solidarity" the people from the countryside had shown them. Arturo reflected, "So maybe there is something that you can't measure, because it was not the traumatic experience of having one's fundamental rights trampled on. It didn't feel like that."[24]At that point, I intervened more than I had elsewhere in my interview with Arturo and suggested that while, undoubtedly, the dictatorship was brutal, stories like his encounter at the church demonstrated that the dictatorship did not fully stamping out Chileans' humanity. Stories like this complicate a narrative of overwhelming tragedy, and demonstrate the persistence of individual subjectivities under authoritarian regimes.[25] I stressed to Arturo what the

[24] Ibid.

priest had expressed: I challenged him not to think of his internal exile as being a false experience of human rights violations, but to consider that his positive experience of solidarity did not necessarily spring directly from regime's oppression, but despite it.

Arturo agreed that in situations like the Pinochet dictatorship, both the "worst and best comes out of human beings."[26] He noted that while the regime's agents committed atrocities, the spirit of solidarity also grew in many people. His camaraderie with the people of Portezuelo and vice versa constituted a refusal to let the regime crush individual and collective agency, nor the will to fight for a democratic future. In an interview about political activism and one's experiences with the dictatorship, Arturo's memories of the men executed at Pisagua overshadowed his memories of internal exile to the point that he had practically dismissed it as a human rights violation. It also invoked the discourse of solidarity within the collective, which came to an end during the transition to democracy.[27]

But while Arturo doubted his level of social commitment for the period of the dictatorship, he emphasized his power and ability to exercise his profession as a public defender for the past ten years—which seemed to contradict the overarching narrative of the destruction of collective solidarity under the transition. His work as a public defender during the transition to democracy seemed to consolidate his sense of masculinity, which was historically rooted in exercising a profession for the good of the collective.

---

[25]Richard Crownshaw and Selma Leydesdorff, "Introduction to the Transaction Edition," in *Memory and Totalitarianism*, ed. Luisa Passerini, Transaction Edition (New York: Transaction Publishers, 2005), xv.

[26] Arturo, interview.

[27] Ibid.

Pisagua

Arturo explained his role to me as the Regional Secretary of Justice during the Pisagua excavation in June 1990: He went to the morgue every day and supervised forensic experts from the Medical Legal Service, and he participated in guiding family members through the identification process. Arturo recalled that some of the most difficult moments he experienced were the identification of the bodies of the public defender Julio César Cabezas and the young militant Manuel "El Choño" Sanhueza. Arturo related the basic story about how the team found the grave in the desert, which generally matched what was printed in local newspapers:

> The identification of the Pisagua bodies is due to the determination and work of the son [of Cabezas] and Cabezas's son-in-law, a professional who married this young man's sister, the daughter of the attorney Cabezas. And at the time of the arrest and shooting, they were fourteen years old. When he was older, he moved to the south of the country, but these two young people began to travel to Iquique. They went to Pisagua to find him. And they helped locate the grave. I tell you, it was found almost by accident, because it was being looked for in another area. And the day after beginning the work, an anthropologist that was working there goes to the other side to see what the ground's like, and says that there is an old shoe—a leather boot, a flower, on top of a rock, and when he approaches the place, there is a circle that said, "73," like it was made with a foot, written in the ground. We figured it was a native, someone who had known about its existence, saying that there was the grave, and said it anonymously—the last push to determine that it was there—and there it was. This was perhaps one of the toughest things that I have had to experience. I was in the Regional Secretary of Justice for ten years in the region, until the year 2000, and there, I was in all the process of the penal reform, which started in the year 2000 again, and I began to work in that again. And from the year 2002 until now, I am in charge of the Public Penal Defense of the region.[28]

Unlike Arturo's version of the story, periodicals and news reports focused on Cabezas's son Patricio, and rarely mentioned the son-in-law, who figured as the main character in Arturo's story of Cabezas's identification.[29] Arturo noted that the son-in-law was a

[28]Arturo, interview.

young professional, implicitly pointing out a similarity between himself and this man who was who was only a few years his junior. Periodicals often included photographs of the grave and the team working to uncover the bodies, and more than one national periodical featured photographs and testimony from Patricio Cabezas, but made no mention of the son-in-law. The periodical *Análisis* claimed that Patricio Cabezas had motivated Neumann to formalize his testimony with the Vicariate to stimulate the opening of the case.[30] News reports also featured photographs of Manuel Sanhueza, then an unidentified youth with blindfolded eyes, with a brutally tortured body and expression of agony on his face. His remains, both in photograph and artistic renderings, became a symbol for the mass grave and the terror of the dictatorship.[31]

Arturo recounted the discovery of the grave as if the way it was found defied the carefully applied reason and work that the professionals sought to instill upon the search, almost as much as the horror the grave contained defied human understanding. At that moment in our interview, however, Arturo did not expand upon the story of his experience at Pisagua. He simply concluded with, "That was perhaps one of the toughest things I had to experience." He then left the grave neatly sealed and shifted his narrative, somewhat abruptly, to the present, summarizing his own public service in the judicial system over the past twenty years.

Arturo also showed how expertise could translate into gestures of care that humanized the bodies the regime had brutalized. After I gently pushed him to elaborate on the mass grave by commenting that the experience must have been shocking, Arturo

---

[29] Arturo, Interview. *La Estrella de Iquique,* June 11, 1990; *Análisis*, June 11-17, 1990, 30-34.

[30] *Análisis*, June 11-17, 1990, 30-34; *Hoy,* June 11-17, 1990, 14-16.

[31] Frazier, *Salt in the Sand,* 158-160.

began to relate some of his most upsetting experiences, including the removal of the remains from the mass grave and a conversation with the body of the young militant El Choño Sanhueza in the morgue:

> It's very difficult, or, I told you part of it. There are some things that I can overcome now, perhaps. I get emotional, but I can overcome it and I can talk about it. Tremendously difficult moments. For example, the encounter with death is a very intense thing. Like this young man I told you about who was the last one to be identified. Leaving at one in the morning, after a workday in the Medical Legal Service, and almost all the bodies are identified and he still isn't. And they were there on trays, because they were there together in rooms, in these large rooms. The bodies were there, on top of stretchers—some not even on top of stretchers. And I remember one night when I was walking by, and I told him, I hit him on one foot, and I said, "Okay now, tell me who you are. Speak! Tell me who you are." It was heavy, in that moment. Or during the identification of the attorney Cabezas, yes, that was tremendously hard and intense. I told you that his son and this man who married the sister came. They were working [at the grave site]. And they were like front men there, digging to remove the bodies. But he [the son-in-law] did it with, with care, working almost like an archaeologist, like this: with brushes, [motioned as if moving a brush] like this, removing the earth, to remove each body.[32]

He described, in great detail, how the bodies were buried in layers, wrapped unceremoniously and tossed on top of each other in the middle of the desert. He juxtaposed the condition in which they were found—in burlap bags, anonymous, uncared for, forgotten, lined up one by one and stacked—to their condition in the lab. Although the lab was clean and orderly, its sterility was almost as unfeeling as the desert grave. The lines of stretchers holding remains formed a similar image to the lines of stacked corpses the team found in the earth. Arturo recalled that some of them were not even on stretchers, reiterating the coldness of the medical lab and its uncomfortable similarity to the grave. He explained, however, that Cabezas's son-in-law and son cared for the remains as he extracted them from the ground, "digging to remove the bodies, but [doing

---

[32] Arturo, interview..

it] with care, working almost like an archaeologist . . . with brushes . . . removing the earth, to take out each body."[33] Arturo assigned affect to a place of horror through the actions of the son and son-in-law. Through emotional diligence and careful application of expert skills, the survivors—family members of the disappeared and professionals like Arturo—had pieced together the some of the brokenness of the past seventeen years.

But Arturo also expressed how haunted he felt when expertise and rationality failed to bring closure to the families of the disappeared by the inability to match a name with a body, and turn physical remains back into a person. Manuel Sanhueza, a militant of the Communist Youth who came from Concepción who came to Arica to work with the local party, was the first victim to be executed and the last to be identified, at the end of the month, according to Arturo.[34] The salt in the desert sand had preserved many of the physical remains, and Sanhueza's body was particularly disturbing because of the torture marks and facial anguished expression. Arturo told me that before going home every night, he would stop by Sanhueza's stretcher. He recollected that the long process of identifying the young militant was one of the hardest moments that he experienced. Seeing Sanhueza's tortured corpse and the pain that was registered in his face, and living every day with his status of being unidentified, perhaps resonated with Arturo's younger self who lost friends like Sanhueza while in law school. Furthermore, rationality and expertise had stalled in Sanhueza's case, conceivably leaving Arturo with a sense of powerlessness and lack of closure until the remains were finally identified.

Sanhueza's body on the stretcher alongside the others encompassed the cruelty of the dictatorship. Arturo worked in a morgue full of male cadavers, which represented a

[33] Arturo, interview.

[34] Ibid.

generation of militants, leaders, fathers, workers, and professionals whose lives the dictatorship cut short, and whose voices it silenced through death. Yet Arturo remembered pleading with Sanhueza's body to speak to him and tell Arturo who he was. Arturo had entered a world in which reason, logic, and the application of professional knowledge—concepts and practices that constituted much of middle-class masculinity—did not always yield results. Nor did reason explain why young men had been executed for their political beliefs. Political power trumped expertise, as well as the rule of law.

While Arturo had survived, men like Sanhueza, whose bodies spoke of the torture they suffered but whose voices could no longer denounce the dictatorship for themselves, had sacrificed their lives but could not be identified. Their martyrdom as *desaparecidos* consolidated their masculine legacy. As an activist who had been internally exiled but not tortured, it seemed that a large part of Arturo's sense of masculinity came not from his persecution or activism under the dictatorship, but as one of the experts who would attempt to bring the dictatorship to justice on behalf of those men during the transition to democracy. Professional rationality and truth formed a bridge to the past, before the exceptionalism of the legal system, and the masculine expertise that dominated that system, had been interrupted in historical memory by the violence of the coup.

The regime's assault on the legal profession affected Arturo as an attorney and a Chilean committed to fostering social democratic institutions through the legal system, and Arturo made this connection between the personal and the political as he began to talk about Pisagua. The identification of Julio César Cabezas, who had been executed serving the public as a district attorney, greatly affected Artuor. Indeed, there were several similarities between the two. At the time of his arrest, Cabezas was a public

defender in Iquique, as was Arturo at the time of our interview. In 1990, when the mass grave was discovered, Arturo would have been approximately forty, and Cabezas was killed at age forty-five.[35] Even if Arturo deflected some of his personal experiences of fear through telling another's tragedy, these similarities between him and Cabezas perhaps explain why Arturo focused on the attorney's story to communicate the danger the regime posed to professionals like them who interpreted the law, defended citizens, and prosecuted criminals. Arturo and Cabezas's political agency was bound up more in their work than in party militancy. In fact, Cabezas was not known to have a party affiliation.[36]

Arturo told me Cabezas's story: The attorney, who was in charge of public defense in Iquique before his execution in 1973, participated in a case in 1972 against a corrupt judge who was involved with a narco-trafficking gang. That judge, Mario Acuña, was deposed, but later became a military prosecutor under the Pinochet regime. According to Arturo, Acuña ordered the arrest and execution of Cabezas, as well as the narco-traffickers with whom he had been involved. The Rettig Commission report states that Cabezas was sentenced to death, along with four other men, under the first court martial of the regime in the region. Based on the documentary evidence, as well as the circumstances under which Cabezas was arrested, the commission concluded that a court martial did not take place, and that Cabezas, along with the four other men supposedly sentenced to death, were in fact summarily executed by state agents. All but one of the men were leftist militants, and they each held some sort of governmental or private

---

[35] *Informe Rettig,* 238.

[36] Ibid.

management position. They, along with the narco-traffickers, were found in the mass grave at Pisagua.[37]

Arturo's emphasis on the story of the attorney Cabezas's identification, and Cabezas's son-in-law's role in it, underscores the magnitude of the blow the regime dealt to the traditional rule of law and the implicit emasculation of middle-class professionals, imagined as male. The story of Cabezas and his son-in-law also, however, emphasized the careful work professionals like Arturo saw themselves playing in restoring the rule of law and sense of masculinity that the dictatorship had tried to take away. Recovering the legal system by relating rationality to politics provided an opening for giving legal weight to the truth about the regime's crimes. But, perhaps as Arturo saw, the truth that could be framed by the law often fell short of the truth enveloped in experience and memory.[38]

Arturo attempted to impose order and rationality on the story of Cabezas's identification, but implicitly, he also explored the emotions evoked by Cabezas's son-in-law's situation as a survivor, as well as the possibility of being assassinated like Cabezas. Although many other people, such as attorneys, judges, and professionals from the Medical Legal Service, worked on the excavation, and newspapers and periodicals had highlighted the role of Cabezas's son in finding his father in this nationally recognized case, Arturo focused on the role of Cabezas's son-in-law.[39] Arturo warned before delving into his account of the manifestation of the son-in-law's psychological trauma that it was the most difficult part for him to talk about. He then told me how, after the team had

---

[37] Arturo, interview; *Informe de la Comisión Nacional de la Verdad y Reconciliación (Informe Rettig),* Ministerio del Interior, Programa de Derechos Humanos y Seguridad Pública, Santiago, Chile, 238-240, http://www.ddhh.gov.cl/ddhh_rettig.html, accessed August 11, 2014.

[38] Macarena Gómez-Barris, *Where Memory Dwells: Culture and State Violence in Chile* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008); Leigh A. Payne, *Unsettling Accounts: Neither Truth nor Reconciliation in Confessions of State Violence* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 1-12.

[39] *APSI*, June 1990.

identified Cabezas's remains, they called in the family to complete the process with their identification:

> And among those [on the stretchers] was the attorney Cabezas, and also, [we could identify him] because of his physical structure, that is, Cabezas was an older person. So, it was this one or that one, who was also older, so, we were more or less certain. And the son arrives—sorry, the son-in-law arrives, and he arrived around, it must have been nine-thirty at night, ten at night, when he came, or when we called him to come from Pisagua to Iquique. So, we brought him in, the forensic expert was there, and we asked him if he could identify him—without giving him any information or signal, so that we wouldn't influence him, right? So, he approached, and he turned. I was here on the other side, beside him, and he begins—and this is what I—what was really hard for me to talk about:
>
> He turns and enters into a state that a psychiatrist who was also there later told us he had entered into a state, I don't remember now what it is called, but it was a state, a state of regression, in which he returns to being that young, sixteen-year-old boy that he was back then, and he begins to speak in the present tense. And he begins to speak in the present tense looking at his father-in-law, who at that time [of the arrest and disappearance] was not his father-in-law, who was—at that time he was the boyfriend, or he wanted to go out with the daughter—but he was a friend of the son, and the dad did not like him, because among other things, he had drunk some of the dad's whisky. So, he begins to speak in the present and starts talking to the old man, and he begins to describe him—but he describes him in the present—and the description coincided completely with the man that we were standing beside, looking at. And one of the most intense parts is that he says that this old man was really messy, and he always wore sweaters. And he wore sweaters in Iquique—and it's more or less a sin to wear a sweater in Iquique, but it was one of those sweaters with buttons. And he says, 'and he never buttoned it correctly, he always wore it—and he did this [Carlos acted out buttoning a sweater crookedly]—he always went around with his sweater buttoned wrong. Or rather, 'He always goes around' not 'went.' He always goes. With a button out of place. And one of the people who was there, did this [Carlos motioned as if to Cabezas's body]—and the sweater was like that.[40]

Following proper procedure, the team did not influence the family by pointing them to a specific body. Arturo explained the various protocols and procedures the team followed both to identify the remains and to ensure that people who came to the morgue identified their family members without the team's bias. The identification followed the orderly, rational procedure, which made the son-in-law's psychic break all the more

[40]Arturo, interview.

dramatic. When the son-in-law viewed his father-in-law's remains, he experienced a form of psychological break and began speaking in the present tense about events that occurred in the past, until the team gently guided him back to the present reality. Arturo offered Cabezas's son-in-law's story as an example of the psychological ramifications of the dictatorship's violence, through which he narrated a version of his own grief. He explained this phenomenal experience using the team psychiatrist's explanation, rather than religion or some other set of principles that could help him make sense of it. Arturo recounted how the son-in-law described Cabezas as having been "messy," and that "he always goes around with his sweaters buttoned wrong."[41] An auxiliary at the site noticed that the sweater on Cabezas's remains was indeed, buttoned incorrectly. Arturo assured me that this was not the only evidence that these were the remains of Cabezas. He remembered,

> Besides, I said, he has, he had a foot defect, and he used an insole, a metallic insole in his shoes. And one of the auxiliaries, with a scalpel in the boot that was a little deteriorated and had been eaten away over time, so he makes a little hole and takes out the—and indeed he had an orthotic insole. That is, it was him, you see? And I remember that I take him, and I say, "Look, do you recognize him?" And in that instant, he had seen him, but he had not *seen* him before, and there, and that instant, he recognizes him. . . . We all ended up crying, because he bends down, he puts himself on top of Cabezas's body, and he hits him, and he tells him, We found you, you old son-of-a-bitch.[42]

Arturo's description of Cabezas's body and his clothes (the mis-matched sweater, the orthotic insole) underscored the imperfections and vulnerabilities of Cabezas and his actions. Just as viewing the remains with the mis-buttoned sweater had propelled the son-in-law backward in time, so viewing the sweater—a symbol of disorder—brought the son-in-law back to the present. Time had come full circle. Cabezas had pursued a corrupt

---

[41] Arturo, interview.

[42] Ibid. Emphasis mine to note inflection.

military judge in the name of justice, but at the cost of his life and the emotional sacrifice of his family. The son-in-law's anger and frustration over the sweater, which in the end facilitated his recognition of his-father-in law, highlighted the powerlessness he had felt over the years when he and his family had searched for Cabezas. Arturo expressed his profound grief over the loss of the rule of law, embodied in Cabezas, through the emotional account of the son-in-law losing a father figure. Only when the son-in-law recognized his anger with Cabezas—his lack of perfection, and how his relentless pursuit of a corrupt judge affiliated with the regime ended in his execution and emotional grief for his family—was the son-in-law able to come to terms with the dictatorship's violence.

Similarly, many young professionals like Arturo, who were disillusioned by the loss of their political projects and the promise of the road to socialism, continue to reconcile the deficiencies in that system with their understanding of the dictatorship. Perhaps they also continue to struggle with Pinochet's legacies for Chile's current democracy, as well as the role they play as citizens now that, as Philip Oxhorn has argued, the civil society that flourished in opposition to the dictatorship has waned.[43] Through Cabezas's son-in-law's story, Arturo could express the anger, frustration, and guilt felt by survivors and family members who were left to pick up the pieces in the aftermath of violence and make a life for themselves, while simultaneously mourning the loss of the ideals of their youth.

Governing by reason and order in a time of great uncertainty, expressed in terms of modernity and a peaceful bridge from the authoritarian past to a democratic future,

[43]Philip Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society: The Popular Sectors and the Struggle for Democracy in Chile* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1995).

formed the ideological foundation of the transition to democracy in Chile.[44] As a government functionary and dedicated human rights activist and lawyer, it was important to Arturo to prove that the identification of Cabezas was done properly and professionally. Emphasizing the meticulous steps of the identification brought order to Arturo's narrative of the son-in-law's disorderly experience of pain that had transported both of Arturo and the son-in-law through time. From the basic explanation of the identification process, in which the team did not influence families, to small gestures such as indicating to me the additional proof of the orthotic insole, Arturo's story of Cabezas's identification turned into an attempt, albeit an inadequate one, to impose his attorney-like reason on the painful and cumbersome memory of the son-in-law's psychic break. In these stories, Arturo may have played the role of the professional who oversaw technical processes and shepherded others' grief while restraining his own to a great extent. That was the role he could most comfortably play within discourses of gender, class, and the history of the dictatorship. But his more intimate grief over his own personal losses, as well as his doubts over his actions, seeped through the interstices of his narrative.

Conclusion

The mass grave at Pisagua served as a staggering reminder of the dictatorship's violence, especially as Chile had just begun to transition to democracy. Young militants and respected public servants—all men—were found after almost two decades of being disappeared. Arturo's memories of the Pisagua excavation served as a catharsis to help

---

[44] Joignant, "Tencócratas, *technopols* y dirigentes de partido," 49-76.

him work through his own personal suffering and the suffering of others that he witnessed.[45] But often, they overpowered the memories of his struggles during the dictatorship, including his internal exile. At the same time, his memories of solidarity in internal exile challenged his painful narrative of Pisagua.

Arturo's narrative thus unearths the value assigned to rationality in the construction of middle-class, professional masculinity during the transition while also revealing a softening of that masculinity through empathy. Arturo downplayed his sacrifice and commitment to fighting the dictatorship, but he took pride and demonstrated his labor for social justice when recounting the meticulous exercise of his profession at Pisagua. He explored those contradictions through the stories of the bodies he cared for in the morgue. By helping facilitate truth and reconciliation in Chile, and by working to restore the legal institutions that he had believed in and engaged with so vigorously as a young law student, an older and wiser Arturo argued for his commitment to rebuilding Chile in the wake of the dictatorship. And perhaps also, by reclaiming a sense of professional masculinity through his work at Pisagua—rather than through than a personal, foundational experience of heroism or tragedy as a militant—Arturo remains committed to working for the common good. [46]

---

[45]Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (Baltimore: Johns Jopkins University Press, 2000), 43-85.

[46]Marie Françoise Chanfrault-Duchet, "Narrative Structures, Social Models, and Symbolic Representation in the Life Story," in *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History,* ed. Daphne Patai and Sherna Berger Gluck (New York: Routledge, 1991), 77-92.

Chapter 7

Feminist Oral History and Lessons for the Future of Human Rights

I met Sylvia in the lobby of her law office in downtown Valparaíso. She escorted me up the antique elevator, and from the fourth floor balcony, we beheld the view of the ornately adorned walls, and the marble staircase that circled down four floors. We continued to Sylvia's office, which was somewhat austere compared to the grandeur of the old building's architecture. That we met at her law office, rather than her home, bespoke the sense of pride Sylvia took in her work. Indeed, she had spent twenty years in exile before returning to Chile to finish her law degree. I had contacted Sylvia through the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Santiago after I read the transcript of an interview she gave for the museum's One Hundred Interviews project. A law student at the University of Chile-Valparaíso (now the University of Valparaíso) at the time of the coup, Sylvia was arrested in October 1973. She also gave birth to her daughter, Laura, while in prison. Sylvia had invited three friends who had been imprisoned with her to join us. Two of them, Alicia and Oriana, came that day for a group interview.

This chapter analyzes a conversation between three women—Sylvia, Alicia, and Oriana—to explore how they narrated individual bodily autonomy as part of a collective story of state violence and human rights. In particular, the chapter shows how each of these women used the past to teach their imagined audience lessons for the future. Sylvia and Alicia focused on narratives of rebellion against the regime's

attacks against their bodies or restrictions to their bodily movement.[1] Their cases demonstrate some of the more subtle and structural ways in which the regime restricted power over women's bodies. Sylvia and Alicia, however, also pushed against those constraints through stories of transgressing gender norms and reclaiming a narrative of agency, rather than passivity.

As I suggest below, Alicia constructed a narrative of "never regretting anything," which linked her choices about political militancy with her personal decisions about her sexuality, her body, and when to become a mother. Sylvia spoke of the ways in which she always felt dirty and that prison conditions were unhygienic, showing one of the ways the regime used the body to break down individuals' sense of humanity in mundane ways, not just through extreme violence. But while recounting memories of bodily restriction, Sylvia also spoke about how she transgressed gender norms and rebelled against the regime's authority. I argue that by constructing her narrative in this way, Sylvia not only sought to restore her own sense of autonomy, but also to "set the record straight" and to teach a broader lesson about gender equality and human rights on a collective level.

Oriana's narrative clashed somewhat with her friends' narratives. She highlighted her continuing struggles to overcome the effects of sexual torture. Regime agents stripped her sense of power over her own body, and decades later, she was still battling to regain it. Her narrative highlights the connection between the regime's

---

[1]Luisa Passerini, *Memory and Utopia: The Primacy of Subjectivity* (London: Equinox, 2007), 1-14, 54-76. Passerini argues a similar point about women teaching lessons about gender rebellion to listeners by narrating a "rebel" stereoptype, or transgressing gender norms in their narratives of the past. See Luisa Passerini, "Women's Personal Narratives: Myths, Experiences, and Emotions," in Women's Personal Narratives Group, ed., *Interpreting Women's Lives: Feminist Theory and Personal Narratives* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 189-199. See also Daniel James, *Doña María's Story: Life History, Memory, and Political Identity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).

perpetrations of sexual violence and how that was reflected in sex (even if consensual), marriage, and gender and sexual relations more broadly, as previous chapters demonstrated. Oriana thus taught her audience about reclaiming the body from the dictatorship, but she did so from a different angle than Sylvia and Alicia, who deployed what Luisa Passerini has called the allegory of the "rebellious" or "irreverent" woman.

Passerini and others have also underscored the instructive value of irreverence and rebelliousness in women's narratives: When women recount rebellious acts, the true significance lies not in whether or not they actually happened (and they may have). Rather, the image of the irreverent woman in narrative calls attention to a gender order that oppresses women. Moreover, the very fact that one re-tells a particular story of transgressing gender norms is so that others can become aware and integrate that lesson into agendas for change.[2] This is particularly relevant for understanding speakers' agendas in narratives of state violence and repression. Following in the tradition of *testimonio*, and placing their narratives within the Chilean context of truth-telling and human rights education, many Chileans have stated explicitly that they shared their experiences publicly in order to promote knowledge of human rights and educate future generations.[3] Sylvia, Alicia, and Oriana stated that they hoped their interviews would contribute to spreading knowledge of human rights, especially for the benefit of younger generations who

---

[2] Passerini, "Women's Personal Narratives: Myths, Experiences, and Emotions," 189-199

[3] *Proyecto Cien Entrevistas*, Museo de la Memoria y Derechos Humanos, Santiago de Chile; *Archivo Oral,* Parque por la Paz Ex-Villa Grimaldi, Santiago de Chile; Wally Kuntsmann, ed., *Cien voces rompen el silencio* (Santiago: DIBAM, 2010).

might "forget" this history if it were not ingrained in Chile's collective conscience.[4] This chapter will move through the stories of each of these women and explore the ways in which, together, they sought to teach lessons about the dictatorship and human rights through their struggles to reclaim bodily autonomy.

Alicia

"But in my life, my life—I always talk about this feeling that I have to do something. I can't just stand by and watch."—Alicia, Valparaíso, 2012[5]

Alicia entered the university in 1971 and joined the Young Socialists in 1972. Her father had been a member of the Socialist Party and union leader, and she had grown up following his political ideology. Alicia, however, joined the MIR in October 1973, one month after the coup. The MIR embraced a radical approach to politics and struggled with the traditional discipline of the Old Left.[6] She recalled that she and her friend Milena (a MIR militant who was imprisoned with her) worked together clandestinely to

> …topple this dictatorship, because people talked about guerrilla warfare, they talked about coups that we ourselves had seen and that we had read about in Latin America, Argentina, Bolivia, but we—the resistance that is—wanted to

---

[4] Sylvia, Alicia, and Oriana, Interview with author, June 6, 2012, Valparaíso, Chile.

[5] Alicia, Interview with Brandi A. Townsend, Valparaíso, Chile, June 2012.

[6] Patrick Barr-Melej, "Siloísmo and the Self in Allende's Chile: Youth, 'Total Revolution,' and the Roots of the Humanist Movement," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 86 (2006): 747-784; Florencia Mallon, "*Barbudos,* Warriors, and *Rotos*: The MIR, Masculinity, and Power in the Chilean Agrarian Reform, 1965-74. In *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America*, ed. Matthew C. Gutmann (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 179-215.

> topple it. But it was a pipe dream, a utopia, I don't know. They arrested me in '74. January of '74.[7]

Alicia underscored a memory of utopia under the Popular Unity, and the imagined Socialist utopia more broadly. As they reflected on their life trajectory, many survivors like Alicia have grappled with the ways in which their revolutionary goals were unfulfilled, but they also sought to teach future generations about the importance of historical memory for achieving a society based on human rights—perhaps a new kind of utopia.[8]

Alicia juxtaposed her hopes for defeating the dictatorship with the crashing, at least temporarily, of that plan when she was arrested. Although her involvement with the MIR did not end with her arrest, she characterized the organization's use of guerilla warfare as a "dream," and implied it was a romantic ideal—in fact, she said it was a "utopia,"—based on grand narratives of resistance in other Latin American countries.[9] In her study of Latin American "boom novels" of the 1960s, Diana Sorensen has noted, "Imminence as possibility is entwined with the spirit of utopia, which central to the cultural and political imagination of the sixties."[10] In what historians have called "the long 1960s" (the late 1950s through the mid-1970s), revolutionary utopia signified the sensation that a better world was on the horizon, and that young people would bring it about by overthrowing old systems. The very meaning of utopia necessitated a dream—unfulfilled, but within reach.

---

[7] Interview with Sylvia, Alicia, and Oriana, June 6, 2012, Valparaíso, Chile.

[8] On the idea of human rights as a post-Socialist utopia in Latin America, see Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2010).

[9] Ibid.

[10] Sorenson, *A Turbulent Decade Remembered:Scenes from the Latin American Sixities,* 2.

The regime sought to eradicate the MIR in the first years of the dictatorship. Alicia and Milena were tortured together at the Naval War Academy, which was notorious for its brutal torture, including sexual torture. Alicia was part of the last groups of miristas to be arrested, and was the final person in her group to "fall." She explained that a compañero who had been arrested before her had talked, and regime agents had subsequently let him go and followed him to the group. Her friend Milena, who was also a militant in the MIR and was eight months pregnant, was part of Alicia's cell. First, they arrested Milena, and then Alicia, for possession of propaganda pamphlets.

The torturers shocked Alicia with electric current and forced her to hold a pregnant Milena, thereby transferring the current to her. Alicia said that this was "much worse, it was so terrible, more than anything for me because it didn't matter to me if they beat me but because Mile was pregnant—it was terrible. For me it was so much pain, so much sorrow for Mile, but *la flaca* was strong. But they punished her a lot."[11] Alicia indicated the psychological pain that has lingered to the present from being forced to cause physical pain to her friend—her pregnant friend. The regime's agents manipulated the gendered notion of nurturing motherhood and the expectation that this norm connected women to induce psychological pain on both of them. An embrace, typically a gesture of solidarity, became a form of torture intended to break down their bond of friendship and political camaraderie. Alicia felt pity for Milena and underscored her friend's pregnancy as a factor in what made Milena's torture more brutal than hers. By comparing her experience to Milena's in this way, Alicia used gendered ideas about motherhood, the pregnant female body, and friendship

[11] Alicia, Interview, 2012.

between women to highlight Milena's strength in the face of gender violence—which Alicia argued was worse than hers. At the same time, she spoke about her psychological torture in their shared moment of horror between them. Alicia interpreted the unjustified violence to strengthen their bond of friendship and political camaraderie, rather than as an experience that drove a wedge between the two women.

In 1976, after spending almost two years in the women's prison at the Good Shepherd convent, Alicia and Milena were sentenced under court martial to exile for five years and one day. Milena and her daughter Paloma, who was born in prison, went to Belgium, where they live currently. Alicia's sentence was commuted to internal exile, and she was sent to Arica, a city in the far north near the Peruvian border and approximately 2000 kilometers from Santiago. In a follow-up interview with Alicia and Sylvia one month later, Alicia expanded on her experience in Arica and her life when she returned to Valparaíso after her she completed her sentence. In spite of having to sign in at a local police station every day and not being allowed to leave Arica, having difficulty finding work with her status as a former political prisoner and a *relegada* (internally exiled person), and living thousands of miles away from her political contacts, family, and friends, Alicia quickly reconnected to the MIR in the north and resumed her political activities. Also, a university classmate from Valparaíso had voluntarily relocated to Arica and helped her get a job as a secretary at the University of Tarapacá, where she also studied. Alicia stated that she was never timid and fit in easily wherever she went. By her account, Alicia turned her

unjust situation that restricted her freedom of movement into an opportunity to build a new political network, study, and continue resisting the dictatorship.

While in Arica, Alicia became pregnant and had a secret abortion. Alicia said in the group interview that she had rarely spoken about the subject, which exemplified not only patriarchal domination over women's bodies under the dictatorship, but also how it continued to be a taboo subject. When Alicia became pregnant while in Arica, her mother arranged for her to return to Valparaíso to have an abortion. The subject arose somewhat surprisingly in our conversation. After recounting her positive memories of Arica, Alicia began to reveal the more difficult topic, which also signaled the end of her internal exile in Arica and her move back to Valparaíso:

> Well, that was in Arica, until I came back [to Valparaíso]. And I came back when, there's something grave, that one has hidden in one's hard drive. Overcoming it is a long process. Not overcoming it, because I never felt guilty about anything. I've never regretted the things I've done. But I got pregnant when I was internally exiled and I couldn't have it, so I decided to have an abortion. I told to my mom immediately, and I told my family, "I'm pregnant, but I can't have it right now because having a child now isn't ideal, even less so bringing it into this situation." So, we talked in the naval district attorney's office, and I came to Valparaíso, and my mom took me to a gynecologist, and I had the abortion. Then, I had to go back to Arica, because I was still internally exiled. And it was something that was just, you know, situational, because you weren't prepared to be a mother, you didn't plan it, either, and you didn't think about having it. It wasn't the right time. And the economic situation was difficult. So that was a little, how can I explain it—it was a little hard for me to absorb it and think through it, and then say no, it's okay, I don't have to feel bad. Because you tell other women, and they tell you abortion is unthinkable. But if you're with a group of people that thinks that way, they stigmatize you. But it didn't matter to me. It's my decision, it's my body, it's my life.[12]

Here, Alicia revealed a small crack, or perhaps a parenthesis, in her narrative of unstoppable strength and unbreakable spirit. She admitted that she rarely spoke about

[12] Interview with Alicia, Brandi A. Townsend, July 2012.

the abortion because it was a difficult time in her life. Alicia did not want to bring a child into "this situation," referring to the social and political upheaval of the dictatorship, the economic difficulties that resulted form her imprisonment and internal exile. Besides, she was also not ready to be a mother. Similar to how the regime's agents had forced her hold her pregnant friend, the dictatorship exacerbated the restrictions on Alicia's choice over what to do with her own body. Internal exile itself was a restriction of her bodily movement, even if she found happiness through new social and political connections in Arica. But her body was also constrained through longstanding notions of gender, sexuality, and the body, and how they had been encoded in law and social praxis.[13] Under those combined constraints, obtaining an abortion from internal exile was difficult, but it was possible due to support from her mother and family.

Alicia drew on current debates about abortion and women's control over their own bodies—also a topic in some feminist circles in the 1980s—to lend cohesion to her narrative of maintaining control over her own body and never regretting making her own decisions.[14] She even used the present tense to sum up her final argument regarding the abortion: "It's my decision, it's my body, it's my life." She and Sylvia referenced current debates, and they explained to me that abortion had always been a crime. As discussed in chapter one, the military junta had written protections of the unborn into the constitution of 1980 as part of a larger imperative to promote the

[13] Olga Grau, "El aborto: un problema que divide," in *Discurso, género, poder: Discrusos oplíticos en Chile, 1973-1993*, ed. Olga Grau, et. al (Santiago: ARCIS, 1997), 301-322.

[14] Abortion debates prevailed in the news from 2010-2012. See, for example, http://diario.latercera.com/2010/12/29/01/contenido/pais/31-54554-9-protagonistas-detallan-como-se-derogo-el-aborto-terapeutico-en-1989.shtml; http://www.biobiochile.cl/2011/09/09/presidente-pinera-utilizara-veto-presidencial-en-caso-que-se-apruebe-el-aborto-terapeutico.shtml, Accessed March 10, 2015.

male-headed nuclear family, which the regime claimed was both the foundation of society and a fundamental weapon against Marxism. But abortion had only been de-criminalized under Allende, and only in cases in which the mother's life was in danger, as discussed in chapter one.[15]

While telling this story, Alicia vacillated between defining her psychological process of coping and working through the abortion as "overcoming" and not regretting, perhaps because feeling guilty about her actions or having regret could have signaled a weakness that disrupted her narrative of political conviction and decisiveness. In our interview a week before, she had also used the same phrase, "I never regretted anything," to refer to her political activities. This simple phrase allowed Alicia to connect her association with the MIR to her abortion, and thereby obscure any past or present ambivalence she may have felt about them. The civilian government, as well as some leftist parties, argued that the MIR contributed to the polarization of Chilean society in the era before the coup.[16] At the time of our interview in 2912, abortion continued to be a subject of heated that underscored women's sexual morality, their rights over the own bodies. Whatever Alicia may have felt sure about the decisions she made, her declarations of "never regretting" her actions were in dialogue with these discourses, and her assumptions about the possible opinions of an imagined audience.

The recurring themes of "always having to do something" and "never regretting anything" gave Alicia's narrative cohesion and provided her with

---

[15] In chaper 1 I discuss Acta 280 1976, in which the junta debates these issues at length.

[16] See Introduction to Part II.

justification and explanation for her actions, including her later decision to plan a pregnancy outside the confines of marriage or a long-term relationship. When Alicia had returned permanently to Valparaíso in 1979 after completing her internal exile sentence, her friend Ana María encouraged Alicia to join local human rights organizations, where she connected her political principles and desire for social justice to human rights and social activism, rather than returning to clandestine activities in the MIR. She worked with the local branch of the Corporation for the Defense of the Rights of the People (CODEPU), as well as the women's organization sponsored by CODEPU. That organization, the Committee for the Defense of the Rights of Women (CODEM) had branches in Santiago and in other parts of the country, as discussed in chapter three. Through CODEM (which later became Casa de la Mujer, or Women's House), Alicia developed her feminist consciousness, and at the same time decided she wanted to have a child as a single mother. In CODEM, she said, the majority of mothers were single. Alicia recounted that after the FPMR attempted to assassinated Pinochet in 1986, Alicia took stock of her life and decide to plan a pregnancy. She came to the conclusion that in her "accounting book," she neither "had credit or debt, so [she] had to do something." Her choice of words here speaks to the intermeshing of social and economic debt that prevailed during the transition to democracy as the civilian government grappled with truth-telling, reparations to victims of human rights abuses, and social welfare programs to rectify economic imbalances.[17] It resonated, too, with Alicia's narrative thread of "needing to

[17] Clara Han. *Life in Debt: Times of Care and Violence in Neoliberal Chile* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

do something"—having a social debt to fulfill as part of a political and social project. Significantly, this led to a personal choice to become a mother.

Alicia's experiences as a single mother and activist point to the gender inequalities that impeded women from participating politically on equal footing with men. In chapter four, we saw how, in the 1980s, feminist activists decried sexism within the opposition. Women political prisoners with children and the mental health professionals who treated them spoke about the difficulties women faced when balancing political militancy with cultural expectations of motherhood. We can see these themes in Alicia's story as well. She planned her pregnancy with a compañero, with whom she agreed would not play an active role in her child's life. She remarked that before she had her daughter Carola, she was "grumpy," and after, she was "happy," and even her friends noticed the change in her personality. She took Carola to CODEM meetings, where other members—many of them also single mothers, according to Alicia—brought their children as they participated in meetings and workshops. Alicia also brought her daughter to a national meeting in the southern city of Concepción, where the organizers had arranged childcare. She recalled that her mother did not approve of her taking her child on a long journey only to be cared for by others while Alicia attended meetings. Although Alicia's mother offered to care for Carola, Alicia insisted she take the child with her. Alicia explained that eventually, however, she had to give up her militant activities (her participation in CODEM and other social and human rights activism), because she could not balance caring for her daughter with social and political activism. Sylvia tried to correct Alicia on this point by reminding her that she participated in the parents' association

at her daughter's school and engaged in other volunteer work, and that those activities, though sometimes not considered "militant," also counted for bettering Chilean society.

It is important to note here that when Alicia, and other women like her, decided to reduce or completely refrain from conventional revolutionary or human rights activities, it was not because they were not good or dedicated militants, or that their belief in the aims of political and social struggles had become diluted. Such a reduction misses the everyday experiences, and the power relationships and social structures that informed them, that led historical actors to making decisions about the course of their lives. While, as Alicia and Sylvia argued, more women participated politically under the Popular Unity than before, and women's and feminist movements gained ground in opposition to Pinochet, gender inequalities had not been rectified to the point at which women could participate on equal footing with men because the domestic was not shared equally, as Julieta Kirkwood argued.[18]

When Alicia had an abortion, and when she planned a pregnancy and became a single mother by choice, she did so despite the constraints of living in a society ruled by a military regime that exacerbated a long history of patriarchal domination of women's bodies in private and public. She asserted control over body and her life when she chose to have an abortion, as well as when she chose to have a child. And she reclaimed her bodily autonomy through narrative by emphasizing her rebellion against the dictatorship as a whole, as well as the structural and physical violence against women that it perpetuated. The ostensible ease with which she pulled her life

[18] Julieta Kirkwood, *Ser política en Chile. Las feministas y los partidos* (Santiago: FLACSO, 1986).

together and found motherhood as an empowering answer to the dictatorship's patriarchal authority, however, collided with Oriana's continuing struggle to overcome sexual torture.

Oriana

Oriana was arrested when she was only seventeen years old. She became involved in the Young Communists after regime officers broke into her family's home in 1973 to arrest her brother, a mirista, who was not in the house. The officers ripped out the floors and walls searching for arms. They threatened to rape Oriana, which was only the beginning of the sexual violence she would endure over the following years: "They took me outside into the garden by the hair and told me to talk, because if I didn't, they would rape me and hit me."[19] Neither Oriana, her mother, father, nor her little sister knew anything about her brother's whereabouts. Officers took turns staying in the house, in groups of three, until Oriana's brother was captured two weeks later in a nearby town. They did not know where he was for six months. Oriana's mother finally found him in the Valparaíso public prison, where he remained for nearly four years until the 1978 amnesty law. When the family visited him for the first time, Oriana noted the marks of brutal torture on his body, and how he "walked like a zombie with his arms open." In a symbolic parallel, she claimed that it was at that moment that she decided that she could no longer "stay at home with her arms crossed" and not become involved in resisting the dictatorship. At sixteen years of age, Oriana began her political militancy.

---

[19]Oriana, interview with author, Valparaíso, Chile, June 2012.

Oriana arrived at the Good Shepherd Prison sometime after Sylvia (late October or early November 1973) and was internally exiled to Iquique before Alica arrived in January 1974. She had been participating clandestinely in the Communist Youth and living with a group of militants from the organization. Her mother sent word that Oriana's younger sister "had become very ill because of what happened in the prison [seeing her tortured brother]." Oriana's younger sister cried for her and believed that Oriana had also been arrested. Oriana attempted to visit her house, even though her compañeros warned her of the risk. Because of that, she said, she felt somewhat responsible for her own arrest. Oriana explained that she never arrived to her house. At the time of our interview, seven years after returning to Chile, she was trying to investigate the circumstances leading to her detention. She hypothesized that someone had given her name to regime agents. Recently, someone had told her that a person on the street had seen Oriana step off the city bus and called the authorities. Oriana was arrested by the Naval Intelligence Service (SIN), and officers took her to the Naval War Academy and then the Silva Palma barracks—the main torture centers identified by the Rettig and Valech commissions for the Valparaíso region. Then, she was transferred to the Good Shepherd prison.

Oriana centered her narrative on the psychological ramifications of her experiences in prison, internal exile, and later, her exile in Canada. She contended that she was "intact" before her detention, and that her "psychological damage" began when she was imprisoned, not before. Perhaps she made this comment to lend credence to her narrative of psychological trauma inflicted by the dictatorship, and to separate herself from others who were not "intact" psychologically due to conditions

not caused by state violence.[20] The narrative she had been able to construct through years of therapy was that of a person who was becoming psychologically whole again, not a person who was supposedly never psychologically whole in the first place. But she also emphasized the arduous process of psychological rebuilding. On the other hand, Oriana also made frequent comments like "I'm blank," or stated that she could not remember anything, especially when she could not recall specific dates, or when Alicia and Sylvia contradicted her explanation of events. In those cases, she implied that the trauma of state violence and the resulting years of psychological distress explained moments in which she did not remember events, or did not remember them in the same way as others.[21] We can see from her narrative that as a young girl, Oriana was oblivious to the destruction around her until she and her family were assaulted and spied on in their home, and her brother was arrested. She then joined a political party to fight for democracy, only to be arrested. The idea of being "intact" psychologically—for her, having control over her own body and enjoying her sexuality, crashed alongside her political aspirations.

Alicia's narrative of maintaining control over her body, especially when she chose to have a child and found happiness in motherhood, affected Oriana profoundly and undoubtedly catalyzed the response below. Oriana describes sex with her husband here, even though she said earlier in her interview that she "could not consummate her marriage." This provides a clue into how her experiences of sexual torture informed her mentality about sex: even if she were physically present in the

[20]Ibid.

[21]Ibid.

act, mentally, she reverted back to her torture, rather than a separate sexual act with another person. Her description of the conception of her son follows that pattern:

> When she [Alicia] was talking with so much love about the process of planning her daughter, I can't really say the same. Let's see, how do I explain it. That is, my husband didn't rape me, but the way I was, it felt like a violation, because I was doing it practically because I came to a point in which I forced myself brutally. That caused me more damage, according to the psychologist, but I forced myself because I had to do it. I saw it as an obligation to respond in some way. We got married young. He was young. He helped me—I won't deny that he helped me, and that he had a lot of patience and everything. But a point came in which I forced myself to do it, and it was also like rape even though he didn't do it like a rape. He helped me; I know that he helped me. It didn't work. At least I managed to have a child. I say, at the age I am now, why am I going to keep experimenting if I have these feelings that in the end are going to make me suffer more?[22]

Overwhelmingly, Oriana spoke about sex as an obligation tied to cultural expectations of motherhood and sexual availability to men, rather than an act of personal pleasure. Oriana also referred to the sense of sexuality enjoyed by Alicia, Sylvia, and compañeras who had overcome sexual difficulties after torture. Oriana compared her experience of conceiving a child to Alicia's: While Alicia expressed "so much love" when describing how she planned her pregnancy, Oriana stated that she could do no such thing, because she felt terrorized when she conceived her son as when she had been raped. She forced herself to withstand the act, as she likely did during sexual torture. But what Oriana's narrative reveals about how she experienced so violently the heterosexist norms of motherhood and sexual service to men also sheds light on Alicia's narrative of motherhood, which she claimed was such a positive experience—and surely she felt that way about it. This is not to trivialize Alicia's, or any other woman's, feelings about motherhood. Both women's narratives,

[22] Ibid.

however, demonstrate how ingrained notions of motherhood's relationship to selfhood mediated their narratives of reclaiming the body from state violence.

We can see the intertwining of Oriana's experience of sexual torture with the violence of the domestic: She vacillated between describing her sexual torture with elaborating her feelings of being raped during the conception of her son. Oriana was not sure how to categorize the sexual violations she experienced by regime agents. She explained, "I was not raped, but I was sexually harassed. They put their hands and fingers and other things inside me, and maybe that's rape, I don't know."[23] As we saw in chapter three, feminists argued that men's sexual domination over women's bodies pre-dated the dictatorship, but the militarization of society and the promotion of the "little dictator at home" exacerbated these circumstances. Ayuquelén, the lesbian feminist group, also highlighted the inherent violence of heterosexual sex. The authoritarian, patriarchal construction of the home and society shaped each other; the private and public were not separate dimensions.[24] Prior to feminism, women did not have a language for talking about men's power over their bodies and the myriad forms that violence took.

Oriana referred to her supposed obligation to provide her husband with sexual pleasure, and her social and cultural imperative to have a child. ("At least I managed to have a child.") Both required forcing herself to perform an act which made her re-live her sexual torture over and over. Tellingly, she repeated that her husband "helped" her and was "patient" with her, and re-assured her audience that her husband

---

[23]Ibid.

[24] See chapter three.

did not rape her. But she said over and over, "I forced myself." With this phrasing, Oriana depicted herself as if she were an accomplice to her own sense of violation. This is not to say that Oriana was actually responsible for her continued feelings of violation. It is to say that the shame of rape and the sense of obligation to provide her husband with sexual pleasure were so deeply ingrained that Oriana took on, inadvertently, the language of "force" to project blame onto herself for the violence perpetrated against her by others.

But Oriana also released herself from a duty to regain her sexuality. that she was at a socially acceptable age to refrain from sex (because she could no longer have children and perhaps also because she is no longer young and supposedly no longer beautiful), so she could finally free herself from "experimenting" and making herself suffer more.[25] In that sense, Her explanation echoed ingrained notions of women's bodies as territory in a battle between men, in this case torturers and husbands or compañeros.[26] Oriana had paid part of her social debt as a woman by becoming a mother, and now that she was no longer young and stereotypically sexually desirable, she could retreat from making herself sexually available to men.

Oriana's narrative reveals how regime officers used her body as an instrument of torture against her own psyche by playing on notions of the female body as an object of male temptation. Oriana, as well as Sylvia and Alicia, rationalized that Oriana was young and beautiful, and had large breasts. Sylvia and Alicia assumed that since they were older (they were in their mid-twenties, while Oriana was a

---

[25] Oriana, Interview with author.

[26]This issue is discussed at length in chapter two.

teenager), they were not targeted for sexual assault like Oriana.[27] In her testimonio *Recuerdos de una mirista*, for example, Carmen Rojas recounted that she feared her torturer, Osvaldo Romo, would rape her (he did not at that moment) because he said to the other torturers, "Look, this one has green eyes, and you wouldn't think so, because she's *morena."*[28] Guards' and torturers' remarks about beauty and sexual desirability instilled fear of rape, even if it did not come to pass, while their comments about "being ugly" led women prisoners to think that they would not be raped. And, we recall from chapter two the sexual violence against men and how it was understood as the product of a deviant homosexuality. Both misconceptions rely upon the ingrained assumption that rape had anything to do with the beauty of the victim or even sexual desirability; rape was and is, fundamentally, a display of power. Telling political prisoners they were ugly also manipulated gendered expectations and ideas about sexuality. It could have possibly induced the psychological conundrum of not having risen to culturally accepted standards of beauty and sexual desirability, based largely upon ideas about race and class. In other cases, however, women deployed ideas about sexual desirability and hygiene to thwart sexual assault by regime agents.[29] In cases like Oriana's, however, in which the victim of sexual torture understood her fate relative to others' escape from such torture as due to her youth, beauty, and body, then in that narrative, her body supposedly contributed to her own downfall by tempting the officers who leered at her, harassed her, and tortured her.

---

[27] Sylvia and Alicia, interview with author, June 2012.

[28] Carmen Rojas, *Recuerdos de una mirista* (Montevideo: Edición del Taller, 1988), 27.

[29] In a testimony recorded by FASIC in 1983, for example, a woman recounted thwarting sexual assault by regime agents by convincing them she had scabies, which she claimed would be most bothersome to their testicles.

The experience thereby became removed from its social, cultural, and historical context and became an individualized, privatized story of a power struggle between rapist and victim, torturer and tortured.[30]

But like the many militants discussed in this dissertation who reconnected to a collective project of democracy and human rights, speaking about her experience marked Oriana's efforts at inverting the de-socializing effects of torture. The very act of speaking about her experiences demonstrated a level of self-awareness and the ability to connect her individual suffering to a collective story of state violence and psychological rebuilding.[31] As discussed in previous chapters, the primary purpose of sexual torture was to shame and silence the victim and break down his or her sense of political agency by shattering sexual subjectivity. It took years, sometimes decades, for many women to speak aloud what had happened to them, or even remember the traumatic experience. While Oriana may not have deployed the stereotype of the rebellious or irreverent woman to signal the need to change an oppressive gender order and its link to human rights violations, her speaking about sexual violence was in itself a rebellious act.

Sylvia

Sylvia was four months pregnant when she was arrested in 1974, but in her narrative, she focused on transgressing stereotypes of pregnant women as physically

[30] See chapters four and five. See also: Lessie Jo Frazier, "Gendering the Space of Death: Memory, Democracy, and the Domestic," in *Gender, Sexuality, and Power in Latin America since Independence,* ed. William E. French and Katherine Elaine Bliss (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), 261-282.

[31] Temma Kaplan, "Reversing the Shame and Gendering the Memory," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 2002, vol. 28, no. 1: 179-199.

and mentally fragile. She opened her interview with me and with the Museum of Memory by stating that she was an attorney, and she had completed her degree after twenty years after being expelled from law school and living in exile.[32] Sylvia was studying law at the University of Chile in Valparaíso, one of the country's six law schools at the time of the coup, and was arrested in 1973 for militant activity. Sylvia claimed in our interview that she had not participated in militant activities. All she had done, she told her interrogators, was take a university class called "Political Agitation and Propaganda." She did not say this in a way to cover up a secret, but rather to signal that the charges upon which she was detained were completely baseless, even during a time in which basic political freedoms were abolished. At the same time, Sylvia could have also implied that she could not see how someone like her, who was not a militant, would be arrested in the first place, serve over a year in prison, and live twenty years in exile, when others (including her close friends) resisted the regime more openly.

Sylvia's partner had managed to escape to Italy and avoid arrest, but she had been arrested before she could follow him. In October 1973, Sylvia was arrested by the Naval authorities and held for three days on the Lebu ship, which was used as a temporary detention center before prisoners were moved elsewhere. Then, she was sent to the Naval War Academy, notorious for its harsh torture, and its sadistic sexual

[32] She introduced herself first as an attorney who had been expelled from her university and later finished her degree, and then as a mother to Laura. By contrast, some of the other women I interviewed introduced themselves first as mothers and grandmothers, and then as party militants or professionals, ensuring me and the imagined audience that despite their party militancy and working outside the home, they also took pride in their roles as mothers. Perhaps more tellingly, though, men I interviewed and generally in the interviews for the museum did not introduce themselves as a husband or father, but stated their profession and history of party militancy or other forms of activism, whereas women generally included this information, unless I interviewed them in their capacity as a human rights worker, rather than a former political prisoner.

torture. She was sentenced by a military tribunal to one and a half years in the women's prison of Valparaíso, which at that time was located at the Good Shepherd convent, since a prior earthquake had destroyed the original prison building. She gave birth to her daughter Laura in February 1974 at the Naval hospital, and after she completed her sentence, they finally met her partner (and Laura's father) in Italy. Sylvia returned to Chile in 1992, and Laura shortly thereafter, when she graduated from high school.

Sylvia had tried to make sense of how the officers perceived her pregnant body and the extent to which that factored into why she was not tortured. She recalled that on the day of her arrest, she was wearing blue jeans, but when she heard that the naval officers were coming to arrest her, she changed into a maternity dress for the first time in her four and a half months of pregnancy. She thought that the officers would be less likely to hurt her, and therefore the baby, if they saw that she was pregnant. After telling me this, however, she quickly followed up with the addendum, "But as for me personally, they never tortured me physically, never, never. I would be lying if I said they tortured me physically. They never did."[33] In both her interview with the Museum of Memory and with me, she attempted to explain why she was not physically tortured when she was interrogated at the Naval Academy. At first, she thought that she was not tortured because she was visibly pregnant, and according to her, the interrogators' sense of machismo would not allow them to interrogate a pregnant woman. Furthermore, she could see, beneath her blindfold, the face of one of her law school classmates. She knew that other classmates of hers were also sailors, and assumed that their mutual ties to the law school, along with her

[33] Sylvia, Interview by author, August 2012.

pregnancy, had spared her. Later, however, she decided that this was not the case. A friend of hers, Milena, arrived at the Good Shepherd prison and had been beaten and electrocuted when she was eight months pregnant. Looking back on her experience from the present, and trying to make some sense of it, she could not find the logic. Machismo, to her, did not seem to be the ideology informing the officers' treatment of her, even though she recognized its existence and significance as a driving force in gendered relations of power. Between the lines, however, she still cast herself in opposition to a dominant frame of expectations for women that the Pinochet regime furthered as part of a gendered agenda of National Security Doctrine that sought to promote the family (the heterosexual, male-headed nuclear family) as the core of the nation and protect the family and nation against Marxism.[34]

Sylvia also narrated to contradict a stereotype of pregnancy as making women more frightened and fragile than they supposedly already were. She mentioned her pregnancy casually, as if it were any other medical condition, except to indicate the machismo of the naval authorities who arrested and interrogated her and moved her from the Naval War Academy to the Lebu ship. As she narrated the chain of events of her arrest and transfer between detention centers in her interview with me (2012), as well as in her interview with the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Santiago (2010), Sylvia recounted that she attempted to convince the officers to give her seat to a male prisoner during their transfer between detention centers. The prisoner was unable to move from the effects of his torture, but Sylvia was given the passenger's seat in the truck because of her pregnancy, a gesture she challenged:

[34] See chapter one.

> At around one o'clock in the afternoon they call for me, and a young man, a sailor, with a hat, tells me that I am going to be freed—that I am pregnant, that I should concern myself with my baby and stay out of trouble, right? And he called for some other people and we left, and there was a van below. Then they tell us to get into the van, and I tell them that I don't understand—that we had been told we were being freed, and now were weren't. There was a compañero in terrible condition: He couldn't move. So they told me to go up front and I said, "Look, I'm fine, but this compañero that's not doing well should go up front. So, he [the sailor] cursed at me, [and said] that he gave the orders here, so I got in the van.[35]

The incident illustrated Sylvia's defiance against patriarchal norms and authority, even if she eventually took her seat in the truck as the sailor ordered. The sailor had, like an authoritative father figure, scorned her for not behaving like a good mother, which he implied was tied to militant activity. She said this to her imagined audience and her interviewer at the museum as if they would comprehend the sexism informing the sailor's comment: "…that I should concern myself with my baby and stay out of trouble, right?" Adding "right?" to the end of her comment could the purpose of drawing her listeners into a common understanding of that sexism and could them appreciate why she would give up her seat for a tortured compañero. In recounting that event, Sylvia responded by questioning the sailor's authority, and by proxy, the dictatorship and its gender order. Taking on the "rebel" stereotype served the purpose of instruction, whether or not the events took place exactly as recounted. And just because Sylvia portrayed herself as a rebel in this parable does not mean that she fabricated the story. But for the purposes of oral history, this point is not as important as what she tried to teach us through this example. She insisted that a tortured body, even if male, was more fragile than a pregnant (female) body. She also warned of the

[35] I quote here Sylvia's interview with me. She recounted, however, the same basic lines in the interview with the museum, indicating she had told this story several times as a core part of the narrative of her arrest.

danger of trusting the enemy: Ostensible acts of propriety, such as giving a pregnant woman a seat in the front of the van, or acts of justice, such as allowing prisoners to be freed when there was no legal cause for them to be detained, should not be taken at face value. It is no mistake that Sylvia interwove a story about subverting gender norms with part of her narrative of being told she would be freed, but instead being transferred to another detention center.[36] She reckoned with the lack of control over her freedom by transgressing gender norms in her narrative; she asserted agency through memory.

Through that example, as well as the rest of her narrative, Sylvia pointed to the dictatorship's manipulation of the body and psyche: She recalled that one of the worst "psychological tortures" was being told over and over that she would be freed, only to remain detained. The dictatorship controlled her freedom of movement, restricting her physical body, moving it from place to place, and managing its torture and its care. During this incident, she was not freed, but taken to the ship and detention center Lebu, where she stayed for some days in a cramped room, where a small stream of water trickled down for her to wash her hands. The guards fed her a small portion of soup, but it was full of worms, and she could not eat it. She thus went for days without eating, she recalled.[37]

Sylvia repeatedly lamented the lack of cleanliness and hygiene in all of the places where she was held, which implied a link to the care of the body and maintaining preconceived notions of class, gender, and race. She complained that she

---

[36] Luisa Passerini, "Women's Personal Narratives," ; Daniel James, *Doña María's Story*.

[37] The Rettig and CODEPU reports confirm these conditions, as well as sexual harassment of women. Red Cross visited Oct 1, 1973, just a few days before Sylvia was there. Found 374 people on board in these conditions, with no running water, only a basin for washing.

always felt, "dirty." Roger Lancaster has argued that the idea of "dirtiness," which occurred throughout his interviews with women in Nicaragua, corresponds to notions about gender and sexuality in which women are pure, clean virgins (or "madonnnas") on the one hand, or sinful, unclean virgins on the other.[38] This could certainly resonate with Chilean women's narratives as well: outward appearances of cleanliness resonated with class markers, and the urban poor have, historically, been associated with prostitution and lascivious behavior. In Chile, and elsewhere in Latin America, social reformers in the early twentieth century emphasized cleanliness and hygiene in order to uplift the *raza chilena*. Welfare programs targeted poor and single mothers, who were supposedly more susceptible to prostitution and having sickly children who would weaken the race. The state sent social workers, a new profession and entirely women until later in the twentieth century, to visit working-class families and ensure that women maintained hygienic households. [39]

Gendered discourses about hygiene did not disappear in the first half of the twentieth century, however. Heidi Tinsman has shown that in the 1980s, Chilean businessmen used a "whitening" discourse to market grapes to the U.S. Chilean grapes were a clean fruit, a product of Chile's orderly, hygienic factories staffed by hygienic, clean women. Perpetuating a myth of a racially homogenous Chile, these

---

[38] Roger Lancaster, *Life is Hard: Machismo and the Intimacy of Danger* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

[39] Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt, "Biopower article," Elizabeth Quay Hutchison, "Venemous fruit" article. Thomas Miller Klubock, *Contested Communities: Class, gender, and Politics in Chile's El Teniente Copper Mine, 1904-1950* (Durham: Duke University Press); Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt, *Gendered Compromises: Political Cultures and the State in Chile, 1920-1950* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), Heidi Tinsman, *Partners in Conflict: The Politics of Gender, Sexuality, and Labor in the Chilean Agrarian Reform,* Mary Kay Vaughan, "Modernizing Patriarchy: State Policies, Rural Households, and Women in Mexico, 1930-1940," in *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America,* ed. Elizabeth Dore and Maxine Molyneux (Durham: Duke University Press, 194-214; Barbara Weinstein, *For Social Peace in Brazil: Industrialists and the Remaking of the Working Class in São Paulo,* 1920-1964 (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

businessmen distinguished their "clean" grapes from those coming from "tropical" countries, a racially coded term for countries with people of color.

Sylvia did not overtly reference these discourses in her interviews. But given Chile's long tradition of weaving together ideas about hygiene, whitening, class, gender, and sexuality, to the point that they have become part of common sense, we can begin to contextualize why she repeatedly talked about being dirty, rather than disregard it as a natural and common human reaction that any two people on opposite sides of the world would have.[40]

After three days on the Lebu ship, the guards took Sylvia to the Naval Hospital to be treated for a possible miscarriage. Describing that event, she also emphasized her distress over the lack of hygiene. Her account for the Museum of Memory and for me differed slightly, but in a telling way. Her room, where she remained for two weeks, was surrounded by guards, and they had covered the windows so that no one could see inside her room (or so that she could see out). She was not allowed out of bed, and thus barred from using the restroom or bathing in private. She had, however, been given a sponge bath and allowed to use a bedpan. In her account for the museum, she said that, "unconsciously," she had not relieved herself for a few days, implying that it was because she did not want to use the bedpan. In her interview with the museum, she said that she asked to be allowed to use the restroom, and the guards eventually allowed her to do so. In her interview with me, however, she subtly narrated a more defiant memory of the event. She used more detail about asking for authorization to use the restroom rather than the bedpan,

[40] Heidi Tinsman, *Buying into the Regime: Grapes and Consumption in Cold War Chile and the United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 103-146.

and she added that she was also given permission to shower. She insisted upon using the restroom rather than use the bedpan, and the guards eventually conceded to her demand. Sylvia continued a theme of hygienic conditions that implicitly distinguished between classes, as well as a lack of control over her body and privacy that the regime (rather than typical hospital regulations) had taken from her. She spoke to the general public, which she may have imagined as feeling uncomfortable, or ambivalent, about a woman being "demanding," but still probably would have understood her request. Recounting the event to me as "demanding," however, could have demonstrated a rebellious attitude, bravery, and the ability to gain concessions from the dictatorship not by asking, but by refusing to give up control over her own body: She refused to urinate until she could do so under conditions she deemed sanitary and proper.

By recounting the story in this way, she pointed to her own attempt to regain control over her body. Perhaps, since the time of the interview with the museum, she re-thought how she wanted to craft her narrative: she shifted from a memory in which she compromised gender norms, pushing back against the dictatorship, but in a polite way, versus demanding her right to movement and bodily autonomy. And perhaps it was also influenced by her audience—a general public holding myriad opinions and judgments, versus a young, North American feminist who would likely be more impressed by her defiance than her politeness. And historically, pre-conceived notions of race and hygiene cast poverty and, implicitly, indigeneity, against the ideal of North-Atlantic whiteness.[41]

[41] Appelbaum, et. al, *Race and Nation in Latin America*, introduction.

After spending two weeks at the Naval Hospital, military officials sent Sylvia to the women's prison in Valparaíso, located at the Good Shepherd convent. Sylvia explained that an earthquake in 1971 had destroyed the city's women's prison, so the Good Shepherd served as an interim facility. The military officers' respect for the nuns who ran the institution, she and the others explained, afforded them somewhat better treatment and living conditions than political prisoners in other institutions. Sylvia was, however, quick to note the unsanitary condition of the prison, and how she demanded that the nuns provide them with a bath separate from the other general population inmates because,

> …they weren't accustomed to cleanliness. They didn't bathe; they didn't wash themselves. They had lice. Since they didn't wash themselves, they had scabies. So we asked for a bathroom, and we kept that bathroom clean so only we could use it. And when the majority of the political prisoners came, with a bunk that they made especially for us—bunk, blankets, mattresses, all those things.[42]

Sylvia, as well as another political prisoner, María Cristina, told me in a complicit tone about the indignity of sharing cells with common criminals and delinquents. Maria Cristina also noted an uncomfortable amount of "lesbianism" in the cells on the part of the non-political prisoners, which she attributed to their lack of morality and class.[43] These comments point not only to a hierarchies political prisoners created to distinguish themselves from non-political prisoners (who were often treated far worse than political prisoners), as scholars have noted.[44] They also show the implicit

[42] Interview with Sylvia.

[43] Interview with Maria Cristina.

[44] Frazier, *Salt in the Sand,* chp on Pisagua.

understandings of race, class, and hygiene, and heteronormative sexuality that informed those hierarchies.

Although she stressed that she was not tortured physically, and she did not categorize the unclean living conditions as "torture," her persistence on the theme, and how she fought for changes, points to how violence, perhaps now considered more mundane, was has been interwoven into memory and shows itself in the intersticies of narratives. Taking away the right to basic hygiene also stripped Sylvia of a sense of herself, which, stated explicitly, may seem overblown in comparison to more horrific acts of violence. But they were structural violences and bodily experiences woven into the everyday and the ordinary that stuck with her, and that reminded her, on a deeper level, that at that point in time, the dictatorship made her feel excessively dirty physically and mentally, and without control over the ordinary—things such as hygiene, and movement. Even if she was not tortured to the extent that others were (in her judgment), the memory of the dictatorship's omnipotence, as well as her resistance to it, remained.

Sylvia insisted that she was not tortured, except "perhaps psychologically." In her interview for the Museum of Memory and Human Rights, the interviewer asked her directly if she had been tortured (a question they asked of everyone who had been imprisoned). The subject also arose in her free narrative with me. To quote from my interview with her, Sylvia reflected on the process of interrogation in comparison to others' experiences:

> They only tortured me psychologically, because several times when they interrogated me they told me they would free me and never, or well, it wasn't effective because they never laid their hands on me. So I don't know what my level of endurance is. I don't have the luxury of not having given names

> because I was never pressured, I think, but I don't know. I say this because other compañeros denounced their comrades, but I can't judge them because, like I told you, I was never pressured. Besides, the torture methods were savage. They pulled out fingernails and toenails, they put rats in the compañeras' vaginas, they applied electric current to their vaginas. I didn't suffer those things; I don't know what they're like. That's why I say that I don't know how strong my ability to resist torture would be.[45]

Sylvia's contemplation over how much physical torture she would have been able to withstand, if any marked a reflection on the conceptions, past and present, within the left over breaking under torture and promoting dialogue about the depth of human rights violations and their repercussions. Rather than stating definitively that she would have never given names had she been tortured more harshly, Sylvia insisted that she did not have the experience to judge others who gave the regime the names of their comrades. Sylvia compared physical and psychological torture, and separated the two as distinct forms of violence, with psychological torture as the less effective of the two. She listed some of the violent and unimaginable torture methods, including explicitly sexual torture against compañeras, to demonstrate the severity of what others experienced in comparison to her. Speaking to a broader narrative of "collaboration" versus "never giving names," she claimed that she did not have the "luxury" of having withstood brutal torture without giving names. She did not infer that torture itself was a luxury, but that many who gave names of the compañeros under torture have been scrutinized within the left, named and have lived with immeasurable guilt. This reflection also dialogues with well-known cases such as Luz Arce and Marcia Alejandra Merino Vega ("La Flaca Alejandra"), two leftist militants who, after brutal rape, torture, and psychological manipulation, worked as secretaries

[45] Sylvia interview.

for the DINA, engaged in romantic relationships with infamous torturers, provided names of other leftist militants, and sometimes participated in torture sessions.[46] Sylvia indicated implicitly that those who resisted torture and did not provide names enjoyed the "luxury" of a clear conscience and sense of moral superiority.[47]

This polarization fomented Sylvia's—and many other former political prisoners'—ostensible need to explain to themselves and others that they were not tortured, or not tortured to the extent that others were. As discussed in chapter four, CODEPU's interdisciplinary mental health team studied this phenomenon in the mid-1980s and concluded that stoic attitudes among political prisoners (especially men) in the face of human rights violations were informed by both the imperative of emotional stability promoted in revolutionary movements, as well as the normalization of human rights violations in Chile. A prisoner would remark, for instance, that he had not been given food or had been forced to sit upright in a chair overnight, but at least he had not been electro-shocked.[48]

Sylvia reflected a similar stoicism, or perhaps pragmatism, when speaking about having her daughter with her in prison. Sylvia gave birth to her daughter Laura in February of 1974, four months after she had been detained. She had been sentenced

---

[46] See Luz Arce, *El infierno* (Santiago: Planeta, 1993); Michael J., Lazzara and Luz Arce. *Luz Arce and Pinochet's Chile: Testimony in the Aftermath of State Violence* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Marcia Alejandra Merino Vega. *Mi verdad: Ḿás allá del horror, yo acuso-- "*. Santiago: 1993. More recently, the case of Jorgelino Molina, "el mocito," has also become emblematic in debates over the gray area of collaboration and coercion. See Javier Rebolledo, *La danza de los cuervos: el destino final de los detenidos desaparecidos*. 2012.

[47] Sylvia, interview with author.

[48] See chapter four and CODEPU-DITT, "Una experiencia psicoterapeútica con prisioneros politicos al interior de las carceles," *Persona, Estado, Poder. Estudios sobre salud mental en Chile, 1973-1989.* (Santiago: CODEPU, 1989), 260-261. Also published in *Tortura, Documento de denucina,* vol. II, diciembre de 1987, CODEPU, Santiago, Chile, and presented at the 1er Congreso Chilenno de Ciencias Neurológicas y Psiquiátricas, Santiago, diciembre de 1987.

under court martial to a one-and-a-half-year sentence. The interviewer for the museum asked her if she feared for her daughter's safety while in prison. She answered, "No. The truth is, no, or I guess maybe." Her only anxiety was related to her lack of knowledge over what she would be charged with, how long she would be imprisoned, and if they would allow her to continue her prenatal care. She did not, for example, claim to have feared that the military officers would harm her child directly or take her away.

Sylvia also bragged to both the museum interviewer and to me, in almost the same words, about how Laura left the prison walking at nine months old—very early for a baby. She and the other women in her cell (including Oriana; Alicia was not there at the time) fashioned straps to guide the baby as she learned to walk, and playing with Laura helped them pass the time in prison. That Sylvia may have understated her fear and uncertainty, and that she focused her narrative on the positive aspects of having her child in prison with her, does not necessarily indicate a lack of regard for what might have happened, or what happened to other women in her situation and how they reacted.[49] Rather, we can read it as showing reverence for women who were tortured and disappeared when pregnant, women who were imprisoned along with their children and were threatened with having them taken away, and women who were imprisoned and forced to leave their children in the care of family members. And we can also read it as irreverence for a regime that attempted to control Sylvia's body and mind.

---

[49] See chapter four and Equipo de Denuncia, Investigación, y Tratamiento y su Núcleo Familiar del Comité de Defensa de los Derechos del Pueblo, *Persona, estado, poder. Estudios sobre salud mental. Chile, 1973-1989.* (Santiago: Sergio Pesutic, 1989), 163-180, 253-279.

Conclusion

Sylvia, Alicia, and Oriana's narratives reveal the importance of reclaiming the body as part of a larger lesson for the future of human rights in Chile. Sylvia and Alicia deployed stereotypes of the rebellious or irreverent woman, a tactic that called attention not only to the regime's overt human rights violations, but also to the ways in which it constrained women's bodies more in more imperceptible ways, such as restricting the right to control birth and chipping away at one's humanity by denying basic hygiene and freedom of movement. Their narratives also demonstrate how arguments from feminists like Julieta Kirkwood unfolded: Pinochet did not rupture a gender order in which women enjoyed full equality to men. He intensified a long history of gender inequality and men's domination over women's bodies. Feminism gave women, including Sylvia, Alicia, and Oriana, a language for understanding these injustices and the larger trajectory of their lives.

Oriana kept Sylvia and Alicia's narratives in check by reminding them, and the audience, that sexual violence cannot be expelled so easily. Even if it did not obliterate her subjectivity, sexual violence became a central part of Oriana's everyday life and her relationship to the outside world.[50] As I argued, however, we can read Oriana's narrative as a rebellious act against a regime that sought to silence and shame her, as well as an extended history of gender inequality that continues to bond women to motherhood. She transgressed the gender norm of remembering the conception of her child as joyful. For her, consensual sex with her husband morphed into a replay of her sexual torture. That she reassured the audience that her husband "helped" her is not much of a surprise, given the insidiousness of patriarchy and its

[50] Das, *Life and Words,* 38-58.

tendency to remain entrenched. What is more remarkable about Oriana's narrative is that she departed from the stereotype of the joyful mother and compared the conception of her son to her sexual torture.

By subverting gender roles through their narratives, Sylvia, Alicia, and Oriana highlighted the dictatorship's control over women's bodies and sexuality. These lessons could serve an agenda that promoting women's rights as human rights and call into question the gender order that pre-dated Pinochet, but was exacerbated under his authoritarian regime. Here, it is crucial to consider the context of Chilean women speaking to a feminist scholar from the United States. Scholarship of the *testimonio* genre has delved into the particular dynamics between Latin American survivors of atrocity and the U.S.[51] Similarly, oral historians and ethnographers have long recognized oral history as a joint narrative constructed by interviewer and interviewee and shaped by mutual perceptions of difference and similarity.[52] Together, Sylvia, Alicia, Oriana, and I constructed a history based on our shared knowledge and implicit understandings of gendered relations of power, human rights, and the primacy of memory for promoting public awareness of those issues and their interconnectedness.

---

[51] John Beverly, *Testimonio: On the Politics of Truth* (Minneapollis: Unviersity of Minnesota Press, 2004); Georg M. Guegelberger, ed., *The Real Thing: Testimonial Discourse in Latin America* (Durhma: Duke University Press, 1996); Kimberly M. Nance, *can Literature Promote Action: Trauma Narrative and Social Action in Latin American Testimonio* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2006); Joanna Bartow, *Subject to Change: The Lessons of Latin American Women's Testimonio for Truth, Fiction, and Theory* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

[52] Passerini, *Memory and Utopia*; Daniel James, *Doña María's Story: Life History, Memory, and Political Identity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000); Alessandro Portelli, *The Battle of Valle Giuilia: Oral History and the Art of Dialogue* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures (New York, Basic Books,* 1973), Walter Benjamin, art of performance.

Conclusion

Gender shaped notions of the self that undergirded human rights struggles in Chile under Pinochet and the transition to democracy. Mental health professionals working within human rights organizations translated technical terminology about the reconstruction of the self into a common language of repairing the bonds between the individual and the collective that had been shattered by state violence. They helped survivors of torture and political imprisonment, their family members, and family members of the disappeared and executed make sense of what had happened to them. Ideas about the heterosexual, male-headed nuclear family that had developed over the century provided an accessible framework for understanding experiences of violence and crafting narratives of state terror and human rights violations. Many people did not want to talk. Many remembered only fragments of what they had endured. Most experienced physical symptoms that were not the result of a biological ailment, but a psychological response to the memory of terror they held inside. Still others remembered nothing, or spoke about nothing, until years or decades later. But working through those experiences in therapy, and then converting them into testimonies that could be used to denounce human rights violations, allowed Chileans to rebuild not only their senses of selves as men and women, but also as political agents, truth-tellers, and contributors to democratic struggles.

In individual, group, and family therapy, both patients and mental health professionals reproduced gender paradigms and inequalities as they sought to understand experiences of state violence and take steps toward reconstructing the self. Mental health professionals argued that through torture, the regime turned civilized,

disciplined, democratic citizens into introverted, aggressive, and violent beings who did not empathize with others. Their social bonds and political loyalties were broken, as well as their basic capacity for trust. Mental health professionals argued that sexual torture, in particular, shattered one's ability to open up to others and evolve from a primitive state of protecting one's body. Several mental health professionals pathologized same-sex desire by conflating it with the sexual torture of men by male agents of the regime. As patients spoke about their experiences and labeled their torturers homosexual, they sought to reinforce their senses of heterosexual masculinity. This discourse also returned to the left its control over women's bodies, which the regime had supposedly taken from them by sexually torturing their compañeras, wives, mothers, and daughters. As such, concepts of the self—a fundamental element of human rights—were based on the heterosexual, male, democratic citizen.

In therapy, professionals drew on ideas about the male breadwinner and female compañera. While their concepts reflected earlier notions of gender mutualism that prevailed during the 1960s and 1970s, changing circumstances complicated those dynamics. When men were imprisoned, their wives began to work outside the home, they became involved with human rights and community organizations, and they developed a sense of autonomy that they did not want to relinquish when their husbands returned. Women who attended therapy recounted that they continued to work to provide either primary or supplementary income when their husbands could not find work. As these gender roles changed in families, and many men also dealt with the psychological effects of political violence and imprisonment, men often

demonstrated more ardent patriarchal attitudes toward their wives than they had before they were imprisoned. But until the mid-to-late 1980s, the main focus in mental health studies was to recuperate broken men and return them to their previous status as breadwinners and political agents, not necessarily help them accept or adjust to new gender dynamics. Overall, mental health professionals called attention to the harm the dictatorship had caused to the family, which was not only the key institution the dictatorship vowed to protect, but also a central concern of the Chilean left throughout the century.

Feminists illuminated the longer history of men's domination of women. They argued that the women's subordination to men did not begin with the dictatorship: Patriarchy had a much longer history, but it intensified during the dictatorship. Feminists fought for democracy in the house and in society. They argued that an approach to democratic struggles that posited democracy first, then women's rights, would not achieve true democracy. Not all factions of the women's movement identified as feminist, nor did they agree on that point: some, whom Julieta Kirkwood called, "las políticas," advocated for democracy first and then women's rights. The "feministas," however, argued for women's rights and democracy as coeval. All agreed, however, that women's rights were necessary for democracy.[1]

In feminist meetings and workshops, working-and middle-class women spoke about their bodies, sexuality, and their experiences in the home and with state violence and repression. They drew connections between different levels of patriarchal power that shaped the essential "truths" of their subjectivities as women.

---

[1] Julieta Kirkwood, *Ser política en Chile. Las feministas y los partidos*, 3 ed. (Santiago: LOM, 2012), 166-179.

They circulated bulletins breaking down these notions. Some of those bulletins also provided testimonials of sexual violence by regime agents. Feminist intellectuals published pathbreaking works outlining these issues, and some mental health professionals began to cite those works, or at least they drew very clearly on their ideas. Some human rights organizations, like FASIC and CODEPU, had direct ties with working-class women's and feminist organizations like CODEM, MUDECHI, and Women for Life.

In the mid-to-late 1980s, when feminism began to flourish in Chile, some mental health professionals began to incorporate feminist concepts into their conceptualizations of the self and their approach to treating victims of state violence and their families. They began to write studies that foregrounded the experiences of women militants and women who had experienced sexual torture. Rather than focusing on women's weaknesses, they began to underscore their strengths and agency as political actors. Professionals also began to write about families headed by women, or about women who had separated from their husbands. They also drew stronger connections between sexual oppression and gender violence that did not focus on women's bodies as inherently vulnerable. But ingrained notions of gender difference were not completely erased.

Studies on children's mental health reveal the stakes of restoring family stability and reconstructing the self along gendered lines. Professionals argued that children suffered greatly when the regime caused harm to their parents. Mothers and fathers who could not care for their children due to the effects of violence and repression were not necessarily at fault, but they also were not fulfilling their proper

roles and therefore had not reconstructed their selfhoods fully. But professionals held fathers, not just mothers, accountable for their children's emotional well-being. Children were the most innocent victims of the dictatorship's violence, whether they were affected directly or indirectly. They would also inherit the democracy that their parents and the human rights movement struggled for. In order for Chile to have a healthy democracy that would last for generations, the "second generation" needed to be physically and psychically healthy, and they needed healthy and living mothers and fathers.

Chronic pain, manifested in aches and pains, physical illness, and psychological torment, impeded the achievement of a whole self. In the final years of the dictatorship and during the transition to democracy, mental health professionals wrote about the notion of a psychical pain that had accumulated over time, both in individual patients and on the collective Chilean psyche. Events in the mid-to-late 1980s and the transition to democracy, such as the plebiscite and the truth commissions, caused many patients' long-buried traumatic memories—many from violence experienced a decade or more prior—to surface. Many people spoke, for the first time, about the violence they experienced and witnessed. For others, pain had simply converted from sharp distress suffered in the aftermath of extreme violence into a long-suffering ache that had never disappeared, but settled on the psyche and body. This was particularly important in cases of sexual torture: Many women began to speak about, or remember, those harrowing experiences for the first time in years. Chronic pain was aided and abetted by impunity. The regime's years of enacting violence without sanction and the civilian government's failure to punish the

perpetrators fed a vicious cycle of silence and suffering. The stories of Ana María and Solsticio demonstrate how gender and class inequality further complicated how and when people spoke publicly about their experiences, especially when regarding sexual torture.

Oral history provides clues as to how survivors of state violence and repression have attempted to make sense of their experiences in relation to ideas about human rights. Arturo implicitly compared his experiences to the bodies of the men in the mass grave at Pisagua, and he contemplated what his life and death might have been by telling their stories. When possible, he imposed reason on the disorderly narrative of death. This correlated to the civilian government's emphasis on reason during the precarious transition to democracy—which invoked older notions of masculine, middle- class professionalism and discipline and the rejection of violence. The transition was also a time when Arturo actualized the social commitment he perhaps felt he lacked during the dictatorship, in comparison to the fallen heroes in the grave. Arturo's narrative also demonstrates how care and empathy could also be infused into the application of reason and expertise.

The oral histories of Sylvia, Alicia, and Oriana exemplify different types of "rebel" narratives that call attention to gender inequality and its relationship to state violence. Alicia had a secret abortion that she "never regretted" and later chose to have a child without a man in her life. Sylvia stood up to the masculine authority of the state that restricted her bodily movement. Taking on the role of the rebel showed the audience that there was something unjust to rebel against, and that narrative might enjoin the audience to enact change. The women also reclaimed a sense of self and

control over their bodies through the act of narrating: Speaking about her abortion was Alicia's irreverent act against a patriarchal society. Taking on the role of the woman who confronted machista regime officers who controlled her movement allowed Sylvia to enact retroactive control over her body. Oriana did not portray herself the rebel in her narrative. But she spoke about sexual torture in a way that denied the trope of motherhood as redemption from pain. Instead, she connected the conception of her son to her sexual torture. Her narrative was thus a rebellious act.

This is not to argue that every person, man or woman, who was tortured has an obligation to speak about it, or that heteronormativity and patriarchy are the only factors that have silenced those have suffered from state violence. But they have played an indisputable role in how people make the decision to speak in public and private, and in shaming both men and women into silence, especially in cases of sexual torture. They have also subjugated, and surely they have silenced, many voices of survivors of torture who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer: None of the mental health documents that I found contained testimonies of people who identified as such. Perhaps they did not reveal that information to therapists, or perhaps therapists did not provide those details in case studies. But those silences indicate larger structural violence informed by heterosexism. As we move forward in researching dictatorships in Latin American and collective violence worldwide, it is fundamental that we be conscious of ideas about gender and sexuality that shaped how historical actors spoke and wrote—and perhaps what they silenced—about collective violence so that we can understand the impact those notions had on both human rights discourses and historical memory.

Thinking about the Past, Present, and Future

Combining the study of gender and memory has allowed me to de center what have tended to be linear narratives of the historical period leading to the dictatorship, and the dictatorship as an irrevocable rupture—for everyone. This is not to say that no one experienced the period of the dictatorship as a rupture. Rather, I suggest we should look more closely at the standard upon which we are basing the notion of rupture on. Is it the middle-class, heterosexual, male revolutionary or professional? I think so. That does not mean that other people from other backgrounds did not experience the period of the dictatorship as a rupture, but perhaps they experienced it differently. Perhaps their rupture was more attenuated, mediated, or just as profound, but for different reasons. But to uproot entrenched narratives and find new ones, we must shift our sense of historical time. We must consider the ways in which the past lives on in the present. During the dictatorship, the past of collective struggle was reaffirmed through solidarity in opposition to the dictatorship. The violent past of the dictatorship resurfaced during the transition to democracy. And individuals, like Arturo and others in this dissertation, continued to draw on the past of working for the common good in order as part of re-making a life and a sense of self in a democracy no longer engaged in collective struggle on a mass scale.

Thinking about Western, liberal notions of the self and their relation to Latin American history, this study builds upon feminist histories that have complicated linear chronologies in the region's historical narrative. In her essay on gender in nineteenth-century Latin America, Elizabeth Dore conceptualizes the shift to liberal nation-states as "one step forward, two steps back," for women. She suggests that

"changes in state policy increased more than decreased gender inequalities."[2] Women's subordination to men was more severe in the nineteenth century than under colonialism due to the effects liberalism, including reforming property and family law and the increased secularization of marriage. In general, liberal thought did not usher in a time of equal rights for all citizens.[3]

Studies on gender, race, and ethnicity have uncovered the exclusion, or at the very least subjugation, of indigenous and African- descended people in state-building projects. Instead, male liberal elites formed republics and determined who was fit for full citizenship and who was not.[4] If we think of those notions of rights in relation to ideas about an individual self who, as Lynn Hunt argued, failed to fully empathize with others, we can begin to see vestiges of the past (not sameness) in concepts of human rights movements during the late Cold War.[5]

As scholars have shown, notions of inequality did not disappear completely in the twentieth century, but were reconfigured as patriarchy was "modernized" to draw

---

[2] Elizabeth Dore, "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: Gender and the State in the Long Nineteenth Century," in Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America, ed. Elizabeth Dore and Maxine Molyneux (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 5.

[3] Ibid., 3-26.

[4] See, for example: Eileen J. Suárez Findlay. *Imposing Decency: the Politics of Sexuality and Race in Puerto Rico, 1870-1920* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); Sarah C. Chambers, *From Subjects to Citizens: Honor, Gender, and Politics in Arequipa, Peru, 1780-1854* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999); Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt, *Gendered Compromises: Political Cultures and the State in Chile, 1930-1950* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Nancy Appelbaum, et.al, *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Barbara Weinstein, *For Social Peace in Brazil: Industrialists and the Making of the Working Class in São Paulo* (Chapel HillL University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Mary Kay Vaughan, "Modernizing Patriarchy;" Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt, "Welfare States, Neoliberal Regimes, and International Political Economy: Gender Politics of Latin America in Global Context," *Journal of Women's History* 25:4 (2013): 149-162.

[5] Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007), 15-35.

the working classes into citizenship and ensure the success of state consolidation. "Soft Eugenics" that focused on uplifting the working classes, and the urban poor subtly encoded ideas about race, class, gender, and the exercise of rights. In Chile and elsewhere, welfare states excluded women from the workplace but encouraged their participation as wives mothers and became an ally in holding working-class men to their responsibilities. In general, women benefitted from welfare programs and general prosperity brought about by increased state intervention. But men tended to benefit more. Furthermore, programs reproduced gender dichotomies and the heterosexual, male-headed nuclear family, and they were not usually devised to benefit women per se.[6] Ideas and state programs geared toward gender mutualism began to change household and social dynamics by the 1960s and 1970s, but they still hinged upon notions of women as compañeras and men as the protagonists of revolution. In sum, feminist history has shown that histories of progress are uneven; therefore, a historical narrative based on the progress to a climax that ended in the rupture of dictatorship should be examined more closely. While not denying the idea of rupture, this study has sought to interrogate the dictatorship's multiple meanings more than it has attempted to start from the assumption of rupture and go from there.

The prevailing notion of the dictatorship as a rupture stems from the narrative of the Pinochet regime ushering in neoliberalism—the most successful program in Latin America—via "shock doctrine" and violence. Shock doctrine or "shock therapy" suggested the unprecedented and dramatic implementation of neoliberal reforms. State violence that broke down the social bonds and political loyalties of Chileans who were oriented toward Socialism and the common good. They became

[6]Rosemblatt, "Welfare States and Neoliberal Regimes."

individualistic and isolated beings who were ripe for consumerism in the neoliberal economy.[7] But new studies argue that neoliberal projects, while accelerated under Pinochet, were not new in Chilean history, and that the idea of a rupture obscure a more complicated history of the Chilean state and economy, as well as Chile's relationship with the U.S. Histories of imperialism and intervention have been crucial for revealing the role of the U.S. in instigating and supporting structural and actual violence in Latin America during the cold war. But telling overarching stories without due attention to local actors can lead us down a dangerous path of thinking of the U.S. as always acting upon Latin America, which leaves Latin America and Latin Americans little room to act for themselves.[8] As I show in this study, mental health professionals, as well as the survivors of state violence and families they treated, saw this happening, and they did something about it. For the first time in their lives, many women, especially working and middle-class women organized and became connected to collectivities focused on social solidarity. And women often encouraged their male kin to seek therapy. In turn, men and women recovered their senses of self and reconnected to political and social struggles.

As such, this dissertation has attempted to tease out the tensions in how Chileans grappled with historical time. They fought for notions of liberal rights based on an Enlightenment heritage. They sought to expunge the history of trauma and

---

[7] Naomi Klein, The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism (New York: Picador, 2008); Greg Grandin, The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Tomás Moulián, El consumo me consume (Santiago: LOM, 1999).

[8] Rosemblatt, "Welfare States and Neoliberal Regimes"; Thomas Miller Klubock, La Frontera: Forests and Ecological Conflict in Chile's Frontier Territory (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014); Heidi Tinsman, Buying into the Regime: Grapes and Consumption in Cold War Chile and the United States (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).

violence living within them that had seemingly made time repeat itself, or suddenly erupt at unannounced moments, and provoking reactions that signified what therapists and patients perceived to be a thrust backward in time—one that made civilized Chileans exhibit uncivilized behaviors that impeded them from exercising their rights as humans and fighting for those of others.

This is not to argue that psychoanalysis and mental health were malevolent. On the contrary, I point to their significance for understanding the shape of human rights movements during the cold war, in Latin America and elsewhere. Tracing how mental health professionals and the people they served conceptualized the self, its destruction, and its repair for a democracy based on universal (read: Western) principles of human rights about mental health and human rights reveals the meaning of universal human rights in local context. It also reveals successes and shortcomings of human rights movements—who was foregrounded, who was marginalized, who was left out, and why and how that happened. That said, more scholarship is needed on the relationship between the individual and the collective in Latin America during the cold war. Not all countries shared the same experience as Chile, but Chile can provide a starting point for future research. Were notions of the rights-bearing self and the collective always at odds with one another? How were individual and collective rights imagined? How do race and ethnicity shape notions of rights and narratives of political struggle and state violence?

This study also provides an entry into questions about twenty-first century human rights struggles. Mapuches in Chile have called upon the state to recognize their collective rights, and to end police violence and impunity in their communities.

The LGBT community in Chile, mobilizing the language of human rights, has made strides in recent years at gaining civil rights. As of May 2015, three years after twenty-year-old Daniel Zamudio was beaten to death in Santiago's Parque San Borja simply for being gay, the Chilean Congress finally passed latent hate crime legislation and overwhelmingly voted in favor of civil unions for same-sex couples. Some critics have pointed out the legacies of neoliberalism and heterosexual family models ingrained in those rights, and future studies will surely wield important analyses of movements for same-sex marriage and civil unions in Latin America and their connections to both neoliberalism and human rights. Meanwhile, former political prisoners, family members of the disappeared and executed, and the human rights community continue to fight for justice in court, launch public memory projects, and continue living their private lives with memories of violence. Future scholarship can trace the uneven histories of rights that have shaped these struggles.

Bibliography

Primary Archives and Libraries

Archivo Nacional de la Administración (Archivo Siglo XX)

Biblioteca Nacional de Chile

CODEPU (Corporación de Promoción y Defensa de los Derechos del Pueblo)

Biblioteca CINTRAS (Centro de Salud Mental y Derechos Humanos)

Biblioteca FASIC (Fundación de Ayuda Social de las Iglesias Cristianas)

Biblioteca ILAS (Instituto Latinoamericano de Salud Mental y Derechos Humanos)

Museo de la Memoria y Derechos Humanos, Centro de Documentación

Fundación Archivo y Centro de Documentación Vicaría de la Solidaridad

Library of Congress

Digital Archives

Biblioteca Nacional de Chile – Memoria Chilena
http://www.memoriachilena.cl

Biblioteca Nacional del Congreso – Historia Política, Historia Legislativa del Congreso Nacional de Chile, http://historiapolitica.bcn.cl/historia_legislativa#f=3,p=1

Instituto Nacional de Derechos Humanos – Biblioteca Digital
http://bibliotecadigital.indh.cl/

Museo de la Memoria y Derechos Humanos – Archivo de Fondos y Colecciones
http://www.archivomuseodelamemoria.cl/

Museo de la Memoria y Derechos Humanos – Biblioteca Digital
http://www.museodelamemoria.cl/centro-de-documentacion/biblioteca-digital/

Interviews

Alcázar, Ana María

Arancibia, Oscar

Atencio, Pedro

Cárdenas, Renato

Catepillán, Sonia

Collado, Raúl

Federico

Fuentealba, María Cristina

Fuentes, Carmen

García, Nolberto

González, Laura

Guajardo, Mónica

Lillo, Sylvia

Lira, Elizabeth

Manuel

Mérida, Héctor

Moncho

Mondaca, Hermann

Moya, Antonio

Olea, Alicia

Restelli, Juan

Rojas, Paz

Sierra, Benjamín

Solsticio

Vergara, Oriana

Verónica

Zegarra, Arturo

Newspapers and Periodicals

Análisis

APSI

Cauce

La Estrella de Iquique

Hoy

El Mercurio

Mensaje

La Tercera

Solidaridad

Published Primary Sources

Arce, Luz. *El infierno.* Santiago: Planeta, 1993.

Chaney, Elsa. *Supermadre: Women in Latin American Politics.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979.

Chilean women's organizations and protest activities, 1985-1987. Princeton University Latin American Pamphlet Collection. Chile: Women and Gender. Princeton, N.J. Princeton University Library, 1987, microfilm.

CODEPU-DITT. *Persona, estado, poder. Estudios sobre salud mental. Chile, 1973-1989.* Santiago: CODEPU, 1990.

CODEPU-DITT. *Persona, estado, poder. Estudios sobre salud mental. Volumen II. Chile, 1990-95.* Santiago: CODEPU, 1995.

Dorfman, Ariel. *Death and the Maiden.* New York: Penguin, 1990.

Espinoza, Chetty, and Ortíz, María Estela. *Casa Hogar. Familia en emergencia.* Santiago: PIDEE, 1990.

Informe de la Comisión Presidencial Asesora para la Calificación de Detenidos Desaparecidos, Ejecutados Políticos y Víctimas de Prisión Política y Tortura (Valech II). Santiago: Gobierno de Chile, 2011. http://www.indh.cl/wpcontent/uploads/2011/10/Informe2011.pdf

Informe de la Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación (Informe Rettig). Santiago: Gobierno de Chile, 1991. http://www.ddhh.gov.cl/ddhh_rettig.html http://bibliotecadigital.indh.cl/handle/123456789/455

Informe de la Comsión Nacional sobre Prisión Política y Tortura (Informe Valech). Santiago: Gobierno de Chile, 2004.

Kirkwood, Julieta. *Feminarios*. Santiago: Edición Documentas, 1987.

Kirkwood, Julieta. *La formación de la consciencia feminista en Chile.* Santiago: FLACSO, 1980.

Kirkwood, Julieta. *Ser política en Chile. Las feministas y los partidos.* Third Edition. Santiago: LOM, 2010**.**

Molina, Natacha. *Lo feminino y lo democrático en el Chile de hoy.* Santiago: VECTOR, Centro de Estudios Económicos y Socialies, 1987.

Quijada Cerda, Anibal. *Cerco de púas.* La Habana: Editorial Casa de las Americas, 1977.

Reszczynski, Katia, Paz Rojas, and Patricia Barceló. *Tortura y resistencia en Chile: estudio médico-político*. Santiago, Chile: Editorial Emisión, 1991.

Rojas, Carmen. *Recuerdos de una mirista.* Montevideo: Edición del Taller, 1988. Santiago: CODEPU, 1989.

Rousseau, Jean Jacques *Emilie: Or On Education***.** Hanover, New Hampshire: Dartmouth, 2009.

Tortura: Aspectos Médicos, psicológicos y socialies. Prevención y tratamiento. Seminario Internacional, Santiago de Chile, 15-18 de noviembre, 1989. Santiago: CODEPU, 1990.

Valdés, Hernán *Tejas Verdes (Diario de un campo de concentración en Chile.* 2d. ed. Barcelona:Editorial Laia, 1978.

Valenzuela, María Elena. *La mujer en el Chile militar.* Santiago: Ediciones Chile y América-CESOC, 1987.

Women in Chile: pamphlets, 1982-1986. Princeton University Latin American Pamphlet Collection. Chile: Women and Gender. Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Library, 1987, microfilm.

Secondary Sources

Acuña Moenne, María Elena. "Embodying Memory: Women and the Legacy of Military Government in Chile," trans. Matthew Webb, *Feminist Review* 79 (2005): 150-161.

Agosín, Marjorie, and Monica Bruno. *Surviving beyond Fear: Women, Children and Human Rights in Latin America*. Fredonia, NY: White Pine, 1993.

Appelbaum, Nancy P., Macpherson, Anne S., and Rosemblatt, Karin Alejandra. *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina, 2003.

Arguelles, Lourdes, and B. Ruby Rich. "Homosexuality, Homophobia, and Revolution: Notes Toward an Understanding of the Cuban Lesbian and Gay Male Experience, Part I". *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 9, no. 4 (1984).

Bacchetta, P., and Margaret Power. *Right-wing Women: From Conservatives to Extremists around the World*. New York: Routledge, 2002.

Baldez, Lisa. *Why Women Protest: Women's Movements in Chile*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Barr-Melej, Patrick. "Siloismo and the Self in Allende's Chile: Youth, 'Total Revolution,' and the Roots of the Humanist Movement." *The Hispanic American Historical Review*. 86, no. 4: (2006): 747.

Barrientos, Claudio Javier. "Crafting Indigenous Oral Histories: Social Scientists and NGOs in the Production of Oral Archives and Sources in Chile, 1990-2011." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, January 4, 2015, New York.

_____. *Emblems and Narratives of the Past: The Cultural Construction of Memories and Violence in Peasant Communities of Southern Chile, 1970-2000*. PhD Dissertation. University of Wisconsin Madison, 2003.

Benegas Loyo, Diego A. "Against Terror: Trauma and Political Action in Post Dictatorship Argentina." PhD Dissertation, New York University, 2009.

Beverly, John. *Testimonio: On the Politics of Truth.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004.

Bouvard, Marguerite Guzman. *Revolutionizing Motherhood: The Mothers of the PlazaDe Mayo*. Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1994.

Bruey, Alison. "Archeology of Discontent: Popular Sectors and Opposition to Neoliberalism in Chile." Paper presented at the Latin American Studies Association International Congress. Chicago, May 2014.

_____. "Neoliberalism and Repression in Poblaciones of Santiago de Chile," *Stockholm Review of Latin American Studies* 5 (September 2009): 17-29.

_____. "'I don't like to ask names, and I never remember anything': Narratives of Violence, Resistance, and Justice in Poblaciones of Gran Santiago, 1973-2013." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, January 4, 2015, New York City.

_____. "Transnational Concepts, Local Contexts: Solidarity and the Grassroots in Pinochet's Chile." In *Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity.* Edited by Jessica Stites Mor, 120-143 (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013.

Bunch, Charlotte. 1990. "Women's Rights As Human Rights: Toward a Re-Vision of Human Rights." *Human Rights Quarterly.* 12, no. 4: 486-498.

Bunster-Burotto, Ximena. "Surviving Beyond Fear: Women and Torture in Latin America." *Women and Change in Latin America.* Edited by June Nash and Helen I., 297-395. South Hadley, Mass.: 1986.

Butler, Judith *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, 2d. ed. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Canguilhem, Georges. *The Normal and the Pathological*. New York: Zone, 1989.

Caruth, Cathy. *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1995.

Chuckryk, Patricia M. "From Dictatorship to Democracy: The Women's Movement in Chile," In *The Women's Movement in Latin America: Participation and Democracy*, Second Edition. Edited by Jane S. Jaquette. Boulder: Westview Press, 1994.

Collins, Cath, Katherine Hite, and Alfredo Joignant Rondón, ed. *The Politics of Memory in Chile: From Pinochet to Bachelet*. Boulder: First Forum Press, 2013.

Constable, Pamela, and Arturo Valenzuela. *A Nation of Enemies: Chile under Pinochet*. New York: Norton, 1991.

Corradi, Juan E., Patricia Fagen Weiss, and Garretón A. Merino Manuel. *Fear at the Edge: State Terror and Resistance in Latin America*. Berkeley: U of California, 1992.

Cristi, Renato. *El pensamiento político de Jaime Guzmán: una biografía intelectual*. Santiago de Chile: LOM Ediciones, 2011.

Das, Veena. *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary*. Berkeley: University of California, 2007.

_____. "Violence, Knowledge, and Subjectivity." In *Violence and Subjectivity.* Edited by Veena Das, et. al. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

Dávila, Mireya and Claudio Fuentes. *Promesas De Cambio: Izquierda Y Derecha En El Chile Contemporáneo*. Santiago, Chile: FLACSO-Chile, 2003.

Dinges, John. *The Condor Years: How Pinochet and His Allies Brought Terrorism to Three Continents*. New York: New, 2005.

Dore, Elizabeth, and Maxine Molyneux. *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America*. Durham, NC: Duke Unviersity Press, 2000.

Dorfman, Ariel. *Death and the Maiden*. New York: Penguin Books, 1992.

Drake, Paul W., and Ivan Jaksic. *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile, 1982-1990*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991.

Eisler, Riane. "Human Rights: Toward an Integrated Theory for Action." *Human Rights Quarterly* (Aug. 1987): 287-308.

Elsey, Brenda. *Citizens and Sportsmen: Fútbol and Politics in Twentieth-Century Chile*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011.

Farnsworth-Alvear, Ann. *Dulcinea in the Factory: Myths, Morals, Men, and Women in Colombia's Industrial Experiment, 1905-1960*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000.

Fassin, Didier, and Richard Rechtman. *The Empire of Trauma: An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2009.

Feitlowitz, Marguerite. *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality, Volume I: An Introduction.* New York: Vintage, 1978.

Franco, Jean. *Cruel Modernity.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2013.

Frazier, Lessie Jo. *Salt in the Sand: Memory, Violence, and the Nation-state in Chile, 1890 to the Present*. Durham: Duke UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2007.

Frederik, Laurie Aleen. *Trumpets in the Mountains: Theater and the Politics of National Culture in Cuba*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2012.

Garcés, Mario, and Myriam Olguín Tenorio. *Memoria para un nuevo siglo: Chile, miradas a la segunda mitad del siglo XX*. Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2000.

Garcés, Mario, and Sebastián Leiva. *El Golpe De La Legua: Los Caminos De La Historia Y La Memoria*. Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2005.

Gluck, Sherna Berger and Daphne Patai, ed. *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History.* New York: Routledge, 1991.

Goldstein, Jan. *The Post-revolutionary Self: Politics and Psyche in France, 1750-1850*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005.

Gómez-Barris, Macarena. *Where Memory Dwells: Culture and State Violence in Chile*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.

Goodale, Mark, and Sally Merry Engle. *The Practice of Human Rights: Tracking Law between the Global and the Local*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Grandin, Greg, and G. M. Joseph, ed. *A Century of Revolution: Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Violence During Latin America's Long Cold War*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.

Grandin, Greg. *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 2004.

Grau, Olga. *Discurso, género, poder: discursos públicos, Chile 1978-1993*. Santiago: La Morada, 1997.

Green, James N. "Who is the Macho Who Wants to Kill Me?": Male Homosexuality, Revolutionary Masculinity, and the Brazilian Armed Struggle of the 1960s and '70s." *Hispanic American Historical Review* 92, no. 3 (August 2012): 437-69.

_____. *We Cannot Remain Silent: Opposition to the Brazilian Military Dictatorship in the United States*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010.

Gugelberger, Georg M., ed. *The Real Thing: Testimonial Discourse and Latin America*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996.

Han, Clara. *Life in Debt: Times of Care and Violence in Neoliberal Chile*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012.

Hilbink, Lisa. "An Exception to Chilean Exceptionalism? The Historical Role of Chile's Judiciary." In *What Justice? Whose Justice?: Fighting for Fairness in Latin America*. Edited by Susan Eckstein, and Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley, 64-98. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

Hillary Hiner. "Voces Soterradas, Violencias Ignoradas: Discurso, Violencia Política Y Género En Los Informes Rettig Y Valech". *Latin American Research Review.*44, no. 3: (2010): 50-74.

Hite, Katherine. *When the Romance Ended: Leaders of the Chilean Left, 1968-1998*. New York: Columbia UP, 2000.

Hollander, Nancy Caro. *Love in a Time of Hate: Liberation Psychology in Latin America.* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1997.

Htun, Mala. *Sex and the State: Abortion, Divorce, and the Family under Latin American Dictatorships and Democracies*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2003.

Hunees, Carlos. *El regímen de Pinochet.* Santiago: Editorial Sudamericana, 2000.

Hunt, Lynn. *Inventing Human Rights: A History*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2008.

Hutchison, Elizabeth and Patricio Orellana. *El movimiento de derechos humanos en Chile, 1973-1990.* Santiago: Centro de Estudios Políticos Latinoamericanos Simón Bolívar, 1991.

Hutchison, Elizabeth Q. *Labors Appropriate to Their Sex: Gender, Labor, and Politics in Urban Chile, 1900-1930*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2001.

Hutchison, Elizabeth Q., Thomas Klubock Miller., Nara Milanich B., and Peter Winn. *The Chile Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2013.

Instituto de la Mujer, and Corporación Humanas. *Memorias de ocupación: violencia sexual contra mujeres detenidas durante la dictadura*. Santiago: Fundación Instituto de la Mujer, 2005.

Illanes, María Angélica. *Cuerpo y sangre de la política. La construcción histórica de las visitadores sociales en Chile, 1887-1940.* Santiago: LOM, 2006.

James, Daniel. *Doña María's Story: Life History, Memory, and Political Identity.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2000.

Jaquette, Jane S. *The Women's Movement in Latin America: Feminism and the Transition to Democracy*. Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989.

Jelín, Elizabeth, and Diego Sempol. *El Pasado En El Futuro*. Buenos Aires: Siglo Veintiuno Editora Iberoamericana, 2006.

Jelin, Elizabeth, and Eric Hershberg. *Constructing Democracy: Human Rights, Citizenship, and Society in Latin America*. Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1996.

Jelin, Elizabeth. *State Repression and the Labors of Memory*. Translated by Judy Rein and Marcial Godoy-Anativia. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.

Kampwirth, Karen. *Women & Guerrilla Movements: Nicaragua, El Salvador, Chiapas, Cuba*. University Park, Penn: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002.

Kaplan, Temma. "Reversing the Shame and Gendering the Memory." *Signs* 28 (Autumn 2002): 179-199.

_____. "Women's Rights as Human Rights: Women as Agents of Social Change." In *Women, Gender, and Human Rights: A Global Perspective.* Edited by Marjorie Agosín, 191-205. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2001)

_____. *Taking Back the Streets: Women, Youth, and Direct Democracy*. Berkeley: University of California, 2004.

Khanna, Ranjana. *Dark Continents: Psychoanalysis and Colonialism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.

Klubock, Thomas Miller. *Contested Communites: Class, Gender, and Politics in Chile's El Teniente Copper Mine, 1904-1950.* Durham: Duke University Press, 1998.

_____. "From Welfare Capitalism to the Free Market in Chile: Gender, Culture, and Politics in the Copper Mines." In *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations*, edited by Gilbert M. Joseph., Catherine LeGrand, and Ricardo Donato Salvatore, 369-400. Durham: Duke University Press, 1998.

Kornbluh, Peter. *The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability*. New York: New, 2003.

Kunstman Torres, Wally, and Victoria Torres Ávila. *Cien voces rompen el silencio: testimonios de ex presos políticos de la dictadura militar en Chile (1973-1990)*. Santiago, Chile: Dirección de Bibliotecas, Archivos y Museos, Centro de investigaciones Diego Barros Arana, 2008.

LaCapra, Dominick. *Writing History, Writing Trauma*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2001.

Langland, Victoria. *Speaking of Flowers: Student Movements and Memories of 1968 in Military Brazil*. Duke University Press, 2013.

Lazzara, Michael J. *Chile in Transition: The Poetics and Politics of Memory.* Gainsville:

Lazzara, Michael J., and Luz Arce. *Luz Arce and Pinochet's Chile: Testimony in the Aftermath of State Violence*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Leydesdorff, Selma, Luisa Passerini, and Paul Thompson, eds. *Gender and Memory.*

Leys, Ruth. *Trauma: A Genealogy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

Lira, Elizabeth, and Brian Loveman. *Políticas De Reparación: Chile 1990-2004*. Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2005.

_____. *El espejismo de la reconciliación política: Chile 1990-2002*. Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2002.

Mallon, Florencia E. "*Barbudos,* Warriors, and *Rotos*: The MIR, Masculinity, and Power in the Chilean Agrarian Reform, 1965-74." In *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America.* Edited by Matthew C. Gutmann (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000).

Mallon, Florencia E. *Courage Tastes of Blood: The Mapuche Community of Nicolás Ailío and the Chilean State, 1906-2001*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2005.

Manzano, Valeria. *The Age of Youth in Argentina: Culture, Politics, and Sexuality from Perón to Videla*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014.

Merry, Sally Engle. *Human Rights and Gender Violence: Translating International Law into Local Justice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

Meyer, Raúl González. "Reflexiones sobre el consumo: Más allá de lo privado y más aca que la condena." *Revista de Economía y Trabajo* 11 (2001): 207-34.

Mönckeberg, María Olivia. *El saqueo de los grupos económicos al Estado chileno.* Santiago: Ediciones B, 2001.

Mooney, Jadwiga E. Pieper. *The Politics of Motherhood: Maternity and Women's Rights in Twentieth-century Chile*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009.

Mor, Jessica Stites. *Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity in Cold War Latin America*. Madison, WI: U of Wisconsin, 2013.

Moryano Barahona, Cristina, ed. *A 40 años del golpe de estado en Chile.* Santiago: USACH, 2013.

Moulian, Tomás. *Chile Actual: Anatomía De Un Mito*. Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2002.

_____. *El consumo me consume.* Santiago: LOM, 1999.

Moyn, Samuel. *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap of Harvard University Press, 2012.

Murray, Stephen O. "Machismo, Male Homosexuality, and Latino Culture." *Latin American Male Homosexualties.* Edited by Stephen O. Murray, 49-70. Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press.

Navia, Patricio. "Democracy to the Extent Possible in Chile." *Latin American Research Review.* 45 (2010): 298-328.

Olea, Raquel, and Olga Grau. *Volver a La Memoria*. Santiago, Chile: LOM Ediciones, 2001.

Otano, Rafael. *Nueva crónica de la transición*. Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2006.

Oxhorn, Philip. *Organizing Civil Society: The Popular Sectors and the Struggle for Democracy in Chile*. University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995.

Passerini, Luisa, ed. Memory and Totalitarianism, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1992.

Passerini, Luisa. *Memory and Utopia: The Primacy of Intersubjectivity*. London: Equinox, 2007.

_____. Women's Personal Narratives: Myths, Experiences, and Emotions." In *Interpreting Women's Lives: Feminist Theory and Personal Narratives.* Edited by Women's Personal Narratives Group, 189-199. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989.

Payne, Leigh A. *Unsettling Accounts: Neither Truth nor Reconciliation in Confessions of State Violence*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.

Pedro, Joana Maria, Cristina Scheibe Wolff, and Ana Maria Veiga. *Resistências, gênero e feminismos contra as ditaduras no Cone Sul*. Ilha de Santa Catarina: Editora Mulheres, 2011.

Plotkin, Mariano Ben. *Freud in the Pampas: The Emergence and Development of a Pyschoanalytic Culture in Argentina.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001.

Portelli, Alessandro. *The Battle of Valle Giulia: The Art of Dialogue in Oral History*. Madison, WI: U of Wisconsin, 1997.

_____. *The Death of Luigi Trastulli, and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History*. Albany, NY: State U of New York, 1991.

Power, Margaret. *Right-wing Women in Chile: Feminine Power and the Struggle against Allende, 1964-1973*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State UP, 2002.

Pozzi, Pablo A., and Claudio Pérez. *Historia oral e historia política: Izquierda y lucha armada en América Latina, 1960-1990*. Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2012.

Rebolledo, Loreto. *Memorias del desarraigo: testimonios de exilio y retorno de hombres y mujeres de Chile*. Santiago de Chile: Catalonia, 2006.

Richard, Nelly, Alan West, Theodore Quester, and Jean Franco. *Cultural residues: Chile in transition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004.

Richard, Nelly. *Políticas y estéticas de la memoria*. Providencia, Santiago: Editorial Cuarto Propio, 2000.

Robles, Víctor Hugo. *Bandera Hueca: Historia Del Movimiento Homosexual De Chile*. Santiago De Chile: Editorial Arcis, 2008.

Roger Lancaster, *Life is Hard: Machismo and the Intimacy of Danger.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

Rosemblatt, Karin Alejandra. "From Welfare States to Neoliberal State: Culture, Participation, and Policies Toward the Poor in Chile, 1960-2000." Paper presented at Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York, 2000.

_____. *Gendered Compromises: Political Cultures and the State in Chile, 1920-1950*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000.

_____. "Sexuality and Biopower in Chile and Latin America," *Political Power and Social Theory* 15 (2002): 229-262.

_____. "Welfare States, Neoliberal Regimes, and International Political Economy: Gender Politics of Latin America in Global Context." *Journal of Women's History* 25:3 (2013): 149-162.

Saldaña-Portillo, María Josefina. *The Revolutionary Imagination in the Americas and the Age of Development*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.

Sanford, Victoria. *Buried Secrets: Truth and Human Rights in Guatemala*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

Scarry, Elaine. *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Schild, Verónica. "New Subjects of Rights? Women's Movements and the Construction of Citizenship in the 'New Democracies.'" In *Cultures of Politics/ Politics of Cultures: Revisioning Latin American Social Movements.* Edited by Sonia E. Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino, and Arturo Escobar, 93-117. Boulder: Westview Press, 1998.

_____. "Recasting 'Popular' Movements: Gender and Political Learning in Neighborhood Organizations in Chile." *Latin American Perspectives* (Spring 1994): 59-80.

Schoultz, Lars. *National Security and United States Policy Toward Latin America*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987.

Scott, Joan Wallach. *The Fantasy of Feminist History*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2012.

Shayne, Julie D. *The Revolution Question: Feminisms in El Salvador, Chile, and Cuba*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2004.

_____. *They used to Call us Witches: Chilean Exiles, Culture, and Feminism.* Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009.

Soihet, Rachel. "Mulheres brasileiras no exílio e consciêcia de gênero." In *Gênero, feminismos e ditaduras no Cone Sul.* Edited by Joana Maria Pedro and Cristina Scheibe Wolff, 208-255. Ilha de Santa Catarina: Editorial Mulheres, 2010.

Sorensen, Diana. *A Turbulent Decade Remembered: Scenes from the Latin American Sixties*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2007.

Stephen, Lynn. *Women and Social Movements in Latin America: Power from Below*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997.

Stern, Steve J. *Battling for Hearts and Minds: Memory Struggles in Pinochet's Chile, 1973-1988*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.

_____. *Reckoning with Pinochet: The Memory Question in Democratic Chile, 1989-2006*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.

_____. *Remembering Pinochet's Chile. On the Eve of London, 1998.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

Stern, Steve J., and Scott Straus, ed. *The Human Rights Paradox: Universality and Its Discontents*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013.

Tal, Kalí. *Worlds of Hurt: Reading the Literatures of Trauma*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Taylor, Diana. *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's "dirty War"* Durham: Duke UP, 1997.

Tinsman, Heidi. "A Paradigm of our Own: Joan Scott in Latin American History," *Amerian Historical Review* 113:5 (2008): 1357-1374.

_____. *Buying into the Regime: Grapes and Consumption in Cold War Chile and the United States*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2013.

_____. *Partners in Conflict: The Politics of Gender, Sexuality, and Labor in the Chilean Agrarian Reform, 1950-1973*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2001.

Townsend, Brandi. "La psique democrática. Género, salud mental y militancia bajo Pinochet, Revista Internacional Interdisciplinar INTERthesis, v10 n1 (July 2013): 65-88.

Valdés, Teresa. *Centros de madres 1973-1989: solo disciplinamiento?* Santiago: Programa FLACSO-Chile, 1989.

_____. *De lo social a lo político. La acción de las mujeres lationoamericanas.* Santiago: LOM, 2000.

Vaughan, Mary Kay. "Introduction: Pancho Villa, the Daughters of Mary, and the Modern Woman. Gender in the Long Mexican Revolution." In *Sex in Revolution: Gender, Politics, and Power in Modern Mexico*. Edited by Jocelyn Olcott, Mary K. Vaughan, and Gabriela Cano, 22-35. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.

_____. "Modernizing Patriarchy: State Policies, Rural Households, and Women in Mexico, 1930-1940." In *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America*. Edited by Elizabeth Dore and Maxine Molyneux, 194-214. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000.

_____. *Portait of a Young Painter: Pepe Zúñiga and Mexico City's Rebel Generation*. Duke University Press, 2014.

Vidal, Hernán. *El Movimiento Contra la Tortura "Sebastián Acevedo": derechos humanos y la producción de símbolos nacionales bajo el fascismo chileno*. Minneapolis, Minn: Institute for the Study of Ideologies and Literature, 1986.

Vidaurrázaga Aránguiz, Tamara. *Mujeres en rojo y negro: reconstrucción de la memoria de tres mujeres miristas, 1971-1990*. Concepción: Escaparate Ediciones, 2006.

Wilde, Alexander. 1999. "Irruptions of Memory: Expressive Politics in Chile's Transition to Democracy". *Journal of Latin American Studies.* 31, no. 2: 473-500.

Winn, Peter, ed. *Victims of the Chilean Miracle: Workers and Neoliberalism in the Pinochet Era, 1972-2002*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

Winn, Peter. *Weavers of Revolution: The Yarur Workers and Chile's Road to Socialism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Wright, Thomas C. *State Terrorism in Latin America: Chile, Argentina, and International Human Rights*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007.

Zagorski, Paul W. *Democracy Vs. National Security: Civil-Military Relations in Latin America*. Boulder, Colo: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992.