Ethics of Responsibility or Ethics of Principle?

Trauma and Neoliberalism in Latin America: The 'Periphery' Gone Global

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The traumatic experiences of Latin American countries from 1950s to the 1980s clearly illustrate the region's political circumstances during the Cold War. Although many other regions shared authoritarian experiences during this period, David Harvey asserts that the South American dictatorial regimes of 1970s-1980s may be distinguished as the direct consequence of political-economic engineering. I focus my attention on Chile—and to a lesser extent Argentina—with the purpose of providing a comparative framework to examine the Southern Cone as an object of analysis in terms of the rise and social and cultural impact of neoliberal policies. While sharing a similar imposition of neoliberalism through authoritarianism, both nations have nonetheless experienced significant divergences in their respective socio-political trajectories during the last 15 years. In the Argentine case, this has been driven by the after-effects of the 2001 financial collapse, when neoliberal economic policies were drastically displaced, while at the same time making considerable progress in addressing human rights issues. Until recently, Chile, on the other hand, has continued to deepen and refine the implementation of neoliberal agendas.

In order to provide an account of Chilean processes of accountability, this article first reviews the challenges confronted by the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions, mainly emerging from the coercive nature of the negotiations between the military and the political elites, summarised in the dictum 'justice to the extent possible', which describes the legal dilemma in which an ethics of responsibility (to advance towards democratisation) had been given priority over an ethics of principle. Attention is also given to civil society groups working from the cultural-affective sphere, to conclude with an account of the civil movements initiated in 2011, which continue to

challenge the deeply ingrained neoliberal socio-economic discourses that permeate today's Chilean institutions and everyday relationships.

It fell on Latin America to be the pioneer in the establishment of neoliberalism, and it has likewise been there that the system has demonstrated the precedents of its own failure. Along with neoliberalism itself, the peripheral and seemingly removed traumatic experiences of post-authoritarian Latin America have become global, as have its political and social responses.

Experiments in the Periphery for Policies in the Centre

The Latin American region's experience during the Cold War period was marked by substantial collective trauma and the survival of a variety of civil wars, national revolutions and/or enduring dictatorial regimes. Although many other parts of the world—including those of southern and eastern Europe—can likewise be seen to have lived through authoritarian conditions during this period, David Harvey argues that the South American dictatorial regimes of the 1970s-1980s may be understood as distinct because they are the direct consequence of explicit political-economic engineering. Chile (September 11, 1973) and Argentina (March 24, 1976) were specifically targeted as guinea pigs for such engineering to test what would later be designated as the neoliberal model of political-economic organisation. As Harvey asserts: 'not for the first time, a brutal experiment carried out in the periphery became a model for the formulation of politics in the centre' (Harvey 2005, p. 9). Under the pretext of achieving political liberalisation (Drake & Jaksic 2002, pp.13-14), the application of state violence has become the vehicle for the establishment of a form of socio-economic control that is no longer restricted to post-colonial peripheral nations, but currently includes the domestic coercion of the metropolitan citizenry of hegemonic nation-states. This was further accelerated by the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990, which rendered any regionally-concerted leftist response to such policies discursively obsolete. Thus, while labour-oriented and progressive political parties reacted with 'Third Way' politics in Western metropolitan nations—a political system carefully theorised by Anthony Giddens in the UK—those countries overcoming authoritarian regimes established 'transitional democracies', a political category identified by Argentinean political scientist Guillermo O'Donnell (1986). The notion of 'transitional democracies' has since become a fundamental theoretical tool for the analysis not only of Latin American case studies post-dictatorship, but also in examining the condition of the states comprising the former Soviet Union, Southern Europe, and the Balkans (Kritz 1995; Linz & Stepan 1996; McAdams 1997). Regardless of the regions in question or the distinctions made between Third Way or transitional democratic policymaking, neoliberalism has been framed as the inevitable and most effective socioeconomic organisational model; all political systems established during this period have been structured in such a

way as to actively support the basic tenets of a process now identified as 'Global Capitalism' (Panitch & Gindin 2012).

In this article I focus my attention on Chile, and to a lesser extent Argentina, with the purpose of providing a comparative framework to examine the rise and social and cultural impact of neoliberal policies in the Southern Cone. Argentina's experience of neoliberal implementation and its fallout can, I argue, be applied more globally, especially in the wake of the financial collapse it endured in December of 2001—one that still shapes the manner in which Argentina is negotiating its traumatic past.[i] Both the Argentine and Chilean contexts offer paradigmatic examples of how transitional democracies have experienced the process of overcoming past trauma from within neoliberal social-political formations. While sharing a similar imposition of neoliberalism through authoritarianism, both nations have nonetheless experienced significant divergences in their respective socio-political trajectories during the last 15 years. This has been driven in large part by the after-effects of Argentina's aforementioned financial collapse, which forced the state to enter a period in which neoliberal economic policies and culture were displaced by more fiscally protective agendas, while at the same time making considerable progress in addressing human rights issues (Figari Layús 2012). Chile, on the other hand, has continued to deepen and refine the implementation of neoliberal agendas, a trend that has very recently been interrupted with Michelle Bachelet's return to governmental administration in March 2014—supported this time by the newly formed 'Nueva Mayoría' [New Majority] party coalition. This institutional shift comprises a reshaped version of the previous Third Way alliance, the 'Concertación de partidos por la democracia' that since the late 1980s has united most of the political factions that once opposed the dictatorial regime which, through four consecutive governments, ruled the country from 1990 to 2010. Due to the alliance's failure to extend democratic structural and civic processes to the Chilean public's satisfaction, the Concertación's hold on executive power was disrupted with the election of president Sebastián Piñera. This was the first instance in 48 years in which a right-wing coalition was brought to executive power in Chile through democratic means. Chile's collective dissent against the neoliberal rationale proper didn't emerge until May 2011 however, with the rise of the still active student-led movement, which has ignited the most important civic mobilisation in Chile since the return to democracy in March 1990. Through a campaign organised around the slogan 'No more profit', this movement has tackled issues at the core of the neoliberal order inaugurated in Chile almost 40 years ago, which has managed to become normalised and universalised during this time (Salinas & Fraser 2012; Somma 2012; Pino-Ojeda 2014).

In order to provide an account of Chilean processes of accountability designed to come to terms with the atrocities committed during the 17 years of dictatorship, I will first review the challenges confronted by institutional bodies specifically created for this purpose; in particular, I discuss the Rettig and Valech Truth and Reconciliation Commissions,

whose reports were submitted in 1991 and 2004, respectively. Responsibility for overcoming social trauma has also been assumed by civil society groups, some motivated by human rights agendas, and others working to come to terms with the past from the cultural-affective sphere—all of which have been described as 'labourers of memory' by Argentinean sociologist Elizabeth Jelin.[ii] Following this analytical overview of the political and civic processes of social responsibility in Chile, I will conclude with a brief account of the civil movements initiated in 2011, addressing how—after almost four decades—these were able to challenge the deeply ingrained neoliberal socio-economic discourses that permeate today's Chilean institutions and everyday relationships. Beyond the problematic terms in which the civil and military elites negotiated the transition to democracy at the time of governmental transition—one that Manuel Antonio Garretón (1996) describes as being dictated by the 'authoritarian enclaves' still dominating Chile in its current democratic period—there is a second, more salient hurdle. It is my contention that efforts to resolve past grievances have taken place within the social and economic parameters of interaction set by neoliberal rationales, both at local and international levels.[iii] Furthermore, I assert that the neoliberal peripheral experiences of Argentina and Chile have become global, undergoing a process of normalisation that further complicates the potential for carrying out a critical scrutiny of neoliberal agendas and outcomes. In such a milieu, the work carried out by labourers of memory has been fundamental not only in confronting the past, but also in facilitating the establishment of achievable communal agendas that respond to these agendas. By instituting critical social inquiry outside neoliberal discourse, the social and cultural activism carried out by these civil society groups has enabled social healing to take place which, in turn, has facilitated more comprehensive processes of democratisation.

Ethics of Responsibility and Ethics of Principle: 'Justice to the Extent Possible' and the Chilean Truth and Reconciliation Commissions

Consensus has largely been reached in identifying the challenges faced by transitional regimes as they move from dictatorship to democracy and attempt to formulate punitive, restorative and preventive measures for dealing with the past while moving towards democratisation. Nevertheless, there are still many points of contention outlined in studies of comparative politics, international law, and analyses of specific domestic cases, such as the Chilean return to democracy in March 1990. One area of agreement is that due to the unique character of these processes, and lack of analogous precedents, it is difficult to establish clear methodologies and standard procedures for analysis. In light of this, Naomi Roht-Arriaza addresses the role played by international legislation and the international community in working towards an effective response to the unusual political and legal consequences arising from these transitional processes (Roht-Arriaza 1995, p. 296).

An analysis of the Chilean Truth and Reconciliation Commissions makes us aware of the enormous impact that cumulative experience, and studies of previous cases over time, has had in influencing the outcomes of such Commissions. The first of these was established in Bolivia in October 1982 ('National Commission to Investigate the Disappearance of Persons'), to examine crimes committed by successive dictatorial regimes from 1964 to 1982 in that country. It was disbanded before fulfilling its mandate, and was thus unable to produce its final report. Instead, Argentina's 1983 'National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons' ('Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas' or CONADEP), also known as the 'Sábato Commission' (named after its President, the writer Ernesto Sábato) and set up by President Raúl Alfonsín, is considered to be the true precedent for not only Latin America but the world. In its publication entitled 'Nunca Más' ('Never Again'), it reported nearly 9,000 cases of forced disappearances, a figure that diverges significantly from the 30,000 provided by human rights organisations. Several studies have since affirmed that the lack of previous models of transitional governments or commissions was a disadvantage that produced substantial and lasting conflicts in Alfonsín's administration, leading to his stepping down six months before the end of his presidential mandate (Barahona et al 2001; Zalaquett 1990, 1991-1992, 1999; Kritz 1995; Méndez 1997).[iv] Although each commission of this nature can be seen to benefit from the experiences of those that came before them, they have all developed new procedures in relation to their political/historical specificity. This, in turn, has guided legal and academic discussion of such transitional processes, especially with respect to the ethical frameworks that underpin such decision-making.

In evaluating the Chilean commissions, I focus on discussions by intellectuals called upon to participate in these as a result of their academic engagement with and experience in the area of human rights, both in their own countries and in international organizations. Their reflections help us to identify the benefits and disadvantages of such commissions in promoting justice in post-conflict conditions. Legal scholars such as Chilean José Zalaquett and Argentinean Juan Méndez offer analyses in this area, with the legal expertise of Jorge Correa Sutil and Jorge Mera likewise helping to clarify key points of interpretation with regard to the March 1991 document produced by the Chilean 'Truth and Reconciliation Commission', popularly known as the Rettig Report. Named after the commission's president, Raúl Rettig, it was assigned by the government of Patricio Aylwin in April 1990, following the precedents set by similar commissions in other countries. It is particularly relevant to take a retrospective look at this work now, given the long-lasting impact of Chile's 17 years of authoritarian rule, the consequences of which are still being dealt with 26 years since the re-establishment of procedural democracy.

Transitional governments face many difficulties when working toward the achievement of justice for past atrocities. This includes the need to account for both the intensity and duration of repression, factors

which determine the nature of many socio-political after-effects, including the establishment of widespread internalized fear and ideological conformity that normalises specific policies and behaviours. This is true of course not only for the average citizen, but also for larger social networks and bodies. As Barahona et al note, '[An] entrenched, institutionalized dictatorship also implies the socialization of a class of civil servants in the values that sustained it and its repressive activities' (2001, pp. 308-09). Further, residual practices remain that work to legitimate the authoritarian regime through citizens' consent or conformity, along with the continuing support by economic sectors that would have benefitted from the conditions set up by the regime (Barahona et al 2001, p. 309). I would add that the official rhetoric of the departing dictatorial regimes contributes to the normalisation of such practices by promoting discourses of present 'stability' that demonise the democratic but unstable past.

Key factors that determine the extent to which each transitional government is able to implement legal measures include the magnitude, methods, and levels of complicity from within civil society achieved by the repressive regime. These factors suggest that the greater the coercion, the more important the need to restore justice. However, if the repression has been particularly intense and lengthy, the possibilities for this rebuilding are reduced, because practices ingrained over the years of repression will have a greater influence over the development of such policies (Barahona et al 2001; Barahona 2003; Hayner 2001; Roht-Arriaza 1995). A significant point of agreement among scholars is that the imperative to learn the truth is more urgent when the crimes committed involve the disappearance of their victims. Jorge Correa Sutil claims that this type of violation 'is a method of repression that by its very nature relies on secrecy, and its pernicious effect is perpetuated as long as the truth remains hidden' (Correa Sutil 1992, p. 1466). When deception is the primary goal of a given crime, revealing its truth is a way to solve it, since withholding information and hiding the victims' bodies are in themselves an exercise of power: 'Disappearing a person is the most blatant form of atrocity by deception, with the obvious intent to lie, hide, and conceal' (Hayner 2001, p. 27).

In assessing the real achievements of (various) Truth and Reconciliation Commissions more generally, Hayner observes that, in some cases, those appointed have been given a mandate to carry out these investigations so as to circumvent legal processes that would otherwise bring those responsible to justice—a questionable palliative that bypasses actual judicial processes. It bears mentioning, however, that those delegated authority in such circumstances are just as often nominated in contexts in which the judicial systems that would otherwise be in charge of such processes are themselves often inoperative or corrupt, meaning that the likelihood of the accused being brought to justice would thus be low to begin with. When there are amnesty laws in effect—as in the Chilean case—the commissions may be given the clear goal of seeking the truth about those

responsible for abuses, even if it is not possible to legally prosecute them. Those responsible can in such cases at least be removed from important public offices (Roht-Arriaza 1995). Some commissions have also been granted the right to modify amnesty laws in accordance with their findings. The somewhat vague title bequeathed to these entities has also had the effect of creating high public expectations that may later disappoint as to their final results (Hayner 2001). Given the variability of results obtained by such commissions since the inception of the concept, it could be said that their sole overarching agenda may most simply be seen as 'an official investigation into a *past pattern of abuses'* (Hayner 2001, p. 23, emphasis original). With regard to this primary agenda, Jorge Mera thus recalls that the Aylwin administration formulated its judicial policies around two parameters. The first of these was to avoid provoking a confrontation with the Armed Forces through the use of methods that attempted to heal civil-military relationships, while the second was to seek truth, justice and the implementation of plans for the restoration of the country's damaged social fabric within these limitations. Problems arose in the attempt to establish a balance between these two agendas. Mera argues that this first parameter (to normalize relations between the state and the Armed Forces) was effectively prioritised over the second. Although advances were indeed achieved in the work carried out by the Rettig Commission, the policy limitations ascribed by the government during this time proved to be a significant flaw in its negotiations (Mera 1995, pp. 171-172).

In Chile, progress toward finding the disappeared only began when the legal status of the victims of disappearance changed. In 1999, the Supreme Court ruled that the Amnesty Law of 1978 established by the dictatorial government was not applicable to perpetrators of disappearance, because as long as a body was not discovered, the case remained open. Jorge Mera had already rendered this legal assessment in 1995, but it was not until new judges were appointed in 1998 that the Court began to take human rights seriously into account, most importantly, when they ruled that international law in such cases should take precedence over the Amnesty Law of 1978 (Barahona et al 2001, p. 148).[v]

In spite of legal setbacks, there is analytical consensus that the Chilean transition has been able to advance more holistically than other processes in making advances towards restorative justice. This is due largely to Chile's entrenched democratic culture prior to the Coup d'état, the nature of its civil political leadership, and the strength of the human rights groups and other organizations that emerged from civil society during this period (Kritz 1995; Roht-Arriaza 1995; Linz & Stepan 1996; McAdams 1997; Zalaquett 1999; Barahona et al 2001). This relative success is also explained by the ideological preferences of the Concertación in adopting a centrist political position out of fear that drastic measures might further increase the already deep political polarisation of the wider Chilean populace. Consequently, the studies cited here agree that Chile's process of democratic recovery is notable for its consistent adherence to legal frameworks which—they

insist—provide greater guarantees of longevity than more revolutionary alternatives. Simply put, this is because such strategies tend to create more successful and sustainable transitions to democracy. Zalaquett makes an incisive historical observation in comparing the ideological decisions made by Argentineans and Uruguayans in the mid-1980s in comparison to the Chilean and Salvadoran transitions that began in the early 1990s. He points out that although in all cases the 'enemies' of the authoritarian state were leftist sympathisers, the ideologies adopted by the transitional authorities of the latter countries were influenced not only by other Latin American cases, but also more imminently by the political collapse taking place then in Eastern Europe. As these later transitions took place, the discussions occurring between Chile's civil political elites with the outgoing dictatorial regime were thus strongly shaped by the incumbent politician's inclination to accept peaceful strategies (Zalaquett 1999, p. 352). It is in this context that it is possible to understand president Aylwin's declaration that his government would pursue and achieve 'justice to the extent possible'—a dictum that Zalaquett described as a legal dilemma in which an ethics of responsibility had been necessarily given priority over an ethics of principle. The sustainability of these new democracies may be then determined by the 'prudence' (a concept developed by Correa Sutil) or 'responsibility' (Zalaquett) of the ideological and strategic decisions made by transitional governments in avoiding confrontation with Armed Forces. This approach can be seen to incorporate the lessons learned in the example offered by the Alfonsín administration of Argentina, which introduced one of the most radical campaigns for punishing guilty parties in its annulment of the dictatorship's Amnesty Law and the subsequent public trial of the generals found responsible, which was, however, ultimately undermined. In this instance, the military, seeing itself threatened, soon regrouped and began to exert pressure on the government, which was then forced to adopt much more lenient measures that undercut its previous legislation. Furthermore, when Carlos Menem succeeded Alfonsín, he granted political pardons to those yet to be prosecuted, and one year later even extended these pardons to the military officers already convicted (Zalaquett 1990, p. 625; 1991-1992, p. 1427, 1432; 1999, p. 342; Méndez 1997, p. 10). What is clear in Argentina's experience with transitional democracy is the close connection that exists between the new measures instituted in the pursuit of justice, and the legitimacy and credibility attained by the new government—particularly since the policies it establishes must be sustainable in order to be effective. Chile benefited from this historical lesson by accepting the limitations of the 1978 Amnesty Law. Such actions are consistent with political responsibility, according to the authors cited above.

Correa Sutil acknowledges that the dissemination of the Rettig Report's findings was immensely inhibited by the climate created in the wake of the April 1991 assassination of Jaime Guzmán—then leader of the Chilean right-wing Independent Democratic Union Party (UDI), and one of the authors of the Constitution imposed by the

dictatorship in 1980. This act, though carried out by radical leftists, revived social memories of state terror just as the Concertación Government was being inaugurated, further evoking already-present emotions of fear and vulnerability among both political elites and the general public. This in turn led the former to conclude that any unveiling of the Commission's expository investigations would trigger threats of retaliatory upheaval, and possibly the repetition of a military coup d'état. In the end, then, one of the less tangible but most serious consequences that this act of violence produced was to effectively quash the wider dissemination of the Rettig Report's findings. Had this assassination not happened, the results would have been exposed much more comprehensively to the Chilean public through educational campaigns and public debates designed to involve a wide sector of society in constructive conversations about the past. As a result, the Chilean populace was denied the possibility of exercising such institutionally sanctioned collective memory, and of dealing with past and still present social trauma on an officially-fostered state level. The most obvious effect of this lack of sanctioned discussion may be seen in what happened to the goal of reconciliation. Identified in the Rettig Report as a desirable objective that would follow this collective process of acknowledgement, reconciliation instead became an arbitrary imposition without any intellectual foundation, and because of this, there was no emotive or ethical commitment to its achievement.

The dilemma of choosing truth instead of justice in such scenarios ultimately rests on two issues: it first deals with the imposition of what Juan Méndez designates as the abuse of majoritarianism (or tyranny of the majority). Secondly, it concerns debates over the application of punishment and/or clemency. One of the most emphatic proponents of the need to carry out juridical justice following the establishment of historical truth is the aforementioned Argentine lawyer Juan Méndez, who has insisted that a legal solution is preferable to the inadequacy of being satisfied with empirical truth. Before establishing limitations on what is possible juridically and politically, he argues that new democratic governments should respond to international legal mandates and the obligations implied by processes of democratisation—both to the direct victims of atrocity and to the society in general. Just as it is not advisable to overestimate potential obstacles, neither can one punish those deemed guilty without taking into consideration international law or the effect that juridical processes and their fallout can have on the rights that the rest of the population should enjoy (Méndez 1997, pp. 4-5). If it is indeed true that the work of the commissions entails some advantages over processes undertaken through the courts—such as having more freedom to select the leads they will investigate and the range of their investigation, as well as offering better treatment to victims who are treated as such and not simply as witnesses—legal sentencing has its advantages too. First among these, suggests Méndez, is that juridical processes require the accused to make themselves visible and be questioned, something that dispels the presumption of innocence that protects them when the truth has been established only in

governmental reports. Secondly, society assigns more legitimacy to the truth when it has been obtained through legal processes. Finally, juridical sentencing can be seen to consolidate memory and prevent its loss (Méndez 1997, p. 16).

For Zalaquett, on the other hand, the argument made for prioritising the (politically pragmatic) ethics of responsibility over one of principle arises from recognizing the limitations of governments and the need to choose prudence with the goal of protecting the wider common good. At the same time, he argues, this should not lead decision-makers to sacrifice the attainment and/or dissemination of truth, or block the establishment of preventive and compensatory measures while complying with international obligations both to victims and the accused. Here we deal with a position that has generated some consensus, as well as many disagreements. Méndez holds that the corollary for moral debate over State responsibilities with respect to achieving justice consists of the right of victims to seek punishment in spite of the will of the majority. Although victims have no right to claim one form of justice over another, they do have the right to see justice done. He argues that the imposition of amnesty or pardon represents an abuse of majoritarianism, even and including when this has occurred through democratic consensus (Méndez 1997, pp. 5-7). Nevertheless, Barahona affirms that the emphasis on reconciliation over punishment—as in the Chilean case—has arisen without dispensing with the imperative to establish the truth and likewise compensate victims (Barahona 2003, p. 15). While I do not wish to undervalue this judgment, I do maintain that the prioritisation of reconciliation over justice in such scenarios places overwhelming demands—not necessarily on society as a whole—but primarily on the direct victims of these atrocities. Furthermore, these cases cannot be resolved through an appeal to moral imperatives alone. Philosophical, psychosocial and cultural analyses have attempted to deal with such instances of the incommensurable, but there appears no possibility of resolution because direct victims of state terrorism— those most affected by its atrocities—are further burdened with the responsibility of acting as legitimate agents of reconciliation.[vi] The point on which Méndez and Zalaquett seem to find some agreement is in Méndez's assertion that it makes no legal, moral or political sense to pursue prosecution in a context of amnesties that have managed to offer the cover of legality in spite of their immorality (Méndez 1997, p. 11). The question Zalaquett asks along these lines is nevertheless valid:

> Should a government carry the burden of these obligations at the risk of being overthrown by the same people it has put under investigation? Who is in a position to judge if a government genuinely lacks the power to fulfil these obligations, or simply lacks the will or knowledge to see them through? (Zalaquett 1990, p. 626)

If the dilemma of choosing between an ethics of responsibility and one of principle is solved by opting for the well-being of the majority over

that of direct victims, the decision to pardon or punish is related above all to the agreement on/decision about which of the two avenues offers greater guarantees that such atrocities will not be repeated. For Zalaquett, punishment within mechanisms of legality is the ideal pathway for promoting a message that discourages the creation of a culture that violates basic rights. However, he also notes that when punishment threatens the political stability of a fragile democracy, postponing and menacing processes of unification and reconciliation, clemency can offer greater advantages: 'A reasonable presumption, in some instances, is that a level of pacification in the long term will achieve more in favour of human rights than insisting on punishment and risking political instability and continued social division. In the end, of course, only time will tell' (Zalaquett 1990, p. 635). For Méndez, such a pacifist logic is consistent with the mandate of assuming responsibility for egregious crimes, which furthermore allows for a conceptual separation between individual and institutional crimes. The right to know the truth cannot be postponed in favour of loftier reconciliatory goals, he adds. Therefore, the argument that the search for justice sparks hatred and a desire for reprisal should be refuted on the basis that what is sought is to punish crimes committed against humanity, not ideas (Méndez 1997, pp. 7-9). In essence, the convicted parties should receive some form of sentence that would allow for compensation of the victims; furthermore, this would send a clear message that a culture of impunity will not be tolerated or facilitated by official or quasi-official sanctions.

One of the greatest criticisms made of the mandate given to the Rettig Commission was its limitation to the investigation of cases exclusively involving disappearance and death. The Ricardo Lagos administration eventually responded to this restriction of scope with the formation of a second commission, the 'Comisión Nacional sobre Prisión Política y Tortura' ('National Commission on Political Prisoners and Torture', also known as the Valech Commission), whose report was released November 28, 2004. While the Rettig Report identified 2,279 cases of political executions and disappearances that took place between 1973 and 1990, the Valech Commission received further declarations from around 35,000 individuals, of whom 27,000 were formally recognized as victims of torture. One of the major points of the latter document was its clarification that—unlike all declarations previously offered by military offices—torture and persecution were indeed common institutional practices in the years under consideration, and not isolated instances. The report also established that such practices were developed not only in clandestine centres of the DINA (Dirección Nacional de Inteligencia, National Intelligence Agency), but were also carried out in many military bases, which made a larger radius of armed forces personnel complicit in such activities.

Reactions to the Valech Report were made both through public declarations and judicial action, a case in point being a speech by the then Commander in Chief of the Army, General Juan Emilio Cheyre, entitled 'Chilean Army: The End of a Vision'. In this he offered a public apology for those acts in which the Army was involved, justifying them

in the context of the Cold War. The second effect produced by the release of the Report took place three months later when on January 27, 2005 the Supreme Court ruled that a six-month period remained for the conclusion of pending cases or movement toward procedures to close them. The justification given for this decision was attributed to the pressure being exerted by the Army as the result of an appeal put forward by generals under investigation for such cases. The Court upheld this decision by clarifying that it corresponded with international norms and precedents, emphasising that the accused must be judged within reasonable time periods. This excuse was criticised by the Americas Director for Human Rights Watch, José Miguel Vivanco, as being unreasonable because at that point in time, and in view of the nature of preliminary investigations under way, formal charges had not yet been laid for these crimes. In view of all the criticism of the role played by the Chilean Commissions and the results they obtained, it is clear that one of the achievements these reports allowed for was the reconstruction of collective memory through a more qualified version of Chilean history during the dictatorship (Weissbrodt and Fraser 1995, p. 473). In spite of the terms of Chile's transition to democracy—according to which officials could not be effectively brought to trial—Kritz further affirms that the new democracy nevertheless succeeded in organizing one of the most complete programs of compensation and rehabilitation for victims themselves (Kritz 1995, p. xxxvii).

Notwithstanding successes such as these, Correa Sutil maintains that one of the fundamental failures of the Rettig report was its inability to account for what happened to victims of disappearance. The reason for this failure was the lack of revelatory collaboration by those who committed these crimes. While at the beginning of the investigative process lower-level military officials offered some information in this respect, very few of the military elite who participated in the most sophisticated and systematised mechanisms of imprisonment and torture spoke, or were even called upon to testify (Correa Sutil 1992, p. 480). This absence of testimony helps to clarify that the Amnesty Law has not been the only obstacle in preventing justice being enacted. The opportunity created by the Rettig Commission was not achieved; it did not allow for the comprehensive acquisition of information. If it is indeed true that all of this caution in the name of political responsibility served to avoid a return to authoritarianism, the establishment of legal amnesty made no contribution to quelling the reticence of military personnel to provide essential information about the disappeared.

In the preceding overview of the institutional/legal restraints of the Chilean transitional process, I have attempted above all to expose the obstacles and dilemmas faced by its Truth and Reconciliation Commissions, clearly exposed in President Aylwin's phrase: 'justice to the extent possible'. For Zalaquett and other authors, acting within the realm of the possible is an act of political responsibility founded on compromise and pragmatism. It protects the interests of social peace and stability without sacrificing the revelation of the truth, even when

achieving legal justice is an impossibility. For others—in particular Juan Méndez and Jorge Mera—the concern does not lie entirely within the logic of what they designate as majoritarian rule, but above all that 'the extent possible' was established *a priori*, as decision-makers chose to work within a set of pre-inscribed limitations before considering to what extent their possibilities were actually fixed (Mera 1995, p. 183-84). How can we justify the limitations imposed upon what can be achieved in advance without testing the restrictions of what was realistically feasible? Why, instead, were preconceptions of social/judicial limitations given so much weight? Is this a decision guided by irresponsibility and/or the cowardice of those in leadership, or was the climate of terror such that even the political elite could not remain indifferent and unaffected by it? Evidently the regime of fear that inhibited the possibility of overcoming the limits of 'the possible' proved to be a paralysing one. This was not driven by a fear of the unknown, I suggest, but resulted from the anticipation of negative outcomes based on empirical experience. Quite simply, the cost of decisive action was seen as greater than the benefits that might accrue. In such a scenario, a political stance limited by 'the possible' was normalised. This is particularly evident in the Concertacion's continued adoption of the institutional structures established by the dictatorship, as well its lack of scrutiny of the neoliberal economic model the latter implemented.

Understood in this way, the ultimate accomplishment of both Commissions in Chile was to elucidate a *portion* of truth, within an environment in which passing judgement on many of the guilty was almost impossible (Collins 2010; Requa 2012). Given these intrinsically political limitations, what was sought, instead, was socially undertaken, I argue, within a framework shaped by the wider parameters of neoliberalism. Indeed, reconciliation and neoliberalism are two factors framed as completely congruous within the political formula adopted by the state. It is in this respect that one of the particularities of the Chilean context presents itself as co-extensive with global neoliberalism. The consequence for Chile has been the requirement for social and political compromise, a paradoxical adoption of a 'memory of forgetfulness': mining the most noble depths of human nature to forgive the unforgivable while at the same time framing civic behaviour within the trivialities of consumer culture. In order to rebuild Chile's social fabric under the banner of neoliberalism, the task of enacting memory has been deferred, disconnecting collective relationships to the recent past in favour of the reconciliation as a social praxis. Importantly, however, 'reconciliation' was projected and imposed primarily upon the direct victims of atrocity and their families, excluding the rest of the population from this reconstructive process. In this way, collective pain has been discursively (and thus, functionally) individualised and privatised, in a process that has run in parallel with the simultaneous privatisation of other previously collective assets and social interactions. Reconstructive 'communal' memory has been thus consigned to the care of a designated group of political victims and their families, as well as to cultural activists working from the realm of affect.

Labourers of Memory: Civic Movements and the Role of Culture

The intrinsic limitations of truth and justice commissions in being able to actually dispense justice and make the truth widely available has generated suspicions in the wider populace in Chile where important questions have been raised about both their inception and implementation. Rather than seeing these shortcomings as inherent elements of such commissions, popular criticism has tended to see them as symptomatic of the political elite's continued allegiance to neoliberal corporate interests. They are understood as having no real commitment to human rights issues insofar as they prioritise reconstruction in the economic sphere over social healing and justice. As a result, several civil Human Rights movements mentioned earlier, whose origins were in the dictatorial era, have continued with and intensified their work during the post-authoritarian period. The most emblematic of these in South America are the 'Association of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo' in Argentina, and the 'Association of Family Members of the Disappeared and Detainees' in Chile. In both these countries, the monumental task of enacting the ethical responsibility of justice through remembrance has been carried out for the most part by the families of victims of political incarceration and disappearance, with the support of local and international Human Rights organisations. These families have taken it upon themselves to be the stewards of their own suffering and victimhood, as well as assuming representational responsibility for the collective trauma that societies have inherited. Their work prevents the historical/institutional legitimation of a past around which there has been no collective civil consensus of memory. The process of remembrance they carry out is one of 'absolute memory'—as defined by Paul Ricoeur—which is to say, a category of memory defined through personal, intimate and far-reaching experience. This mode of remembering stands opposed to the selected, mediated, legitimated and ideologically-biased nature of historical and institutional memory archives. The families of these victims must struggle to keep radical evil from being forgotten in the face of an everyday context in which everything has been made to appear as if social contracts have been restored, and normality itself has been reinstated via collective responsibility and consensus.

The authors cited in relation to the Chilean Truth and Reconciliation Commissions agree that the commitment to justice by non-political institutions is essential. This was the case in El Salvador, Chile and South Africa, where religious institutions, whether Catholic or Anglican, played a role qualitatively different to that in Argentina and Uruguay. Not only did the Church provide moral support to the families of the victims in these countries, but in Chile the (Catholic) Vicariate of Solidarity (established during the reign of Augusto Pinochet) also assisted in documenting and archiving information about victims. In countries in which civil society had no access to such institutional support, this work was left exclusively in the hands of victims' families, a heavy burden for those without such assistance and often facing a scarcity of resources (Zalaquett 1999, p. 353). It was in fact the Vicariate's archives—in conjunction with the Rettig

Report and the work done by multiple grassroots organisations—that provided the documentation and legal frameworks required to establish the warrant for Pinochet's arrest in London in 1998. This arrest would subsequently tie together a wider political, legal and sociological network at the national level that later extended into the arena of international law, facilitating the prosecution of other political leaders accused of human rights violations around the globe (Roht-Arriaza 2005).

In the cultural and symbolic realm, the fact that most of these movements have been led by women has had a fundamental impact on the ways in which women and the role of mothers has come to be understood in South America. This is particularly relevant in the case of the 'Madres de Plaza de Mayo' ('Mothers and Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo') in Argentina. A lack of wider institutional support during the dictatorial era forced this organisation to work not within the confinement and relative protection of offices and institutions (as in the case of Chilean organisations), but instead to occupy fully public spaces, engaging with the wider populace in instances of what Diana Taylor has described as 'performative acts'. Taylor states:

> the performance of mothers as activists challenged traditional maternal roles and called attention to the fact that motherhood was a social, not just a biological, construct. … [T]he demonstrations offered the women a way of coping with their grief and channelling it to life-affirming action. Rather than trivialize or eclipse their loss, the performative nature of their demonstrations gave the women a way of dealing with it. Much as in the case of mourning rites, aesthetic distancing is an enabling response to pain, not its negation. For another, the ritualistic and 'restored' nature of their demonstrations succeeded in drawing much needed public attention to their cause, both nationally and internationally. (Taylor 2001, p. 107)[vii]

This use of performative, public acts as a means of addressing trauma and mourning has also been evident in much of the political media created in Chile since the end of the dictatorship. This period has seen the production of a significant number of documentary films, for instance, that set out to enact a meticulous process of investigation of past events, which I have elsewhere designated as 'forensic memory' (Pino-Ojeda 2013). I use this term in reference to the search for and analysis of human remains in order to determine the circumstances and physical trauma that led to their deaths. My use of this term also suggests a metaphorical approach that argues for a perspective that sees documentaries dealing with physical remains and those examining victims' memories as ultimately comprising part of the same wider project of forensic labour. In other words, forensic memory designates those projects established with the goal of examining trauma—be it that suffered by the bodies (and their remains) or the psyches of subjects (and so their memories).

The film that inaugurated this line of work in Chile was *Fernando ha vuelto* (*Fernando Has Returned*, Silvio Caiozzi, 1998. Employing journalistic aesthetics and methods of cinematography and editing, this film relates the return of the skeletal remains of Fernando Olivares Mori—a disappeared victim of state terrorism—to his wife, Agave Díaz. In one sequence the forensic specialists in charge of Fernando's investigation explain the causes of his violent death to his wife through the use of bodily evidence. At the same time that the camera captures this presentation of factual information, it simultaneously and carefully documents the affective reactions of his wife as she receives this horrific information. By combining an artistic documentary medium, forensic scientific language, and paying attention to the psychological responses to the violence created by state terrorism, this film attempts to deal with past atrocities and the efforts to overcome the traumas resulting from such socio-political upheaval.

More recently, we may consider *Nostalgia for the Light*, a feature film produced by Patricio Guzmán—undoubtedly the most internationally renowned Chilean documentarian of traumatic memory. Guzmán's recent work suggests that what matters is no longer simply 'what is said' on a factual level, but rather what aspect of this conflict he focuses on, and how it is explored—all with the ultimate goal of confronting historical catastrophe in both its personal and collective dimension, and in order to overcome past atrocity. In this sense, I argue that the many filmic texts that compose Guzmán's documentary work—from the third volume of *The Battle of Chile, Popular Power,* up to *Nostalgia for the Light*—all comprise different stages of an intimate and communal process of social mourning. I maintain that *Nostalgia for the Light* is the work that can be seen to bring closure to Guzmán's process of mourning. It incorporates a poeticism built around the union of astronomy, archaeology and the psychological work of bereavement.

This film suggests a close parallel between the longing for knowledge and truth that leads astronomers to seek the origins of the universe, and the anguish of those that seek to know the circumstances of their loved one's disappearance or death. Implicit is the notion of nostalgia evoked by Milan Kundera: 'the pain of ignorance, of not knowing. You are far away, and I don't know what has become of you' (2002, p. 3). While Guzmán's former lyrical films make use of a non-representative mimesis to enact experiences of pain and trauma, in *Nostalgia for the Light,* he instead enacts what Jean Epstein has described as 'photogénie', utilising a uniquely filmic language to prioritise 'any aspect of things, beings or souls whose moral character is enhanced by filmic reproduction' (Epstein 1988, p. 314). In this documentary, this juxtapositional technique is enriched through the conglomeration of ethics with aesthetics, accomplished through the construction of a filmic discourse which shifts seamlessly between the realms of astronomy and psychology, the astral and the terrestrial, and the private and the collective. Through the use of montage and parallel imagery, our view of distant galaxies and astral bodies may be

interpolated with that of desert scenery, or the fused joints of a cranium, all united by a lens that both unifies and magnifies our perspective, rendering floating airborne dust motes as if they were the same massive celestial star-scapes in which our world resides. All these dimensions of physical and psychic reality collude to produce the culminating assertion that 'the present does not exist', only the past is real. It is easy to understand, when viewing this film, why both Guzmán and the women of Calama continue to insist upon the past.[viii] While the former searches for memories in the depths of the human mind, the latter do so in the vast Atacama Desert—immense like the cosmos—rummaging for the bodily remnants of their disappeared relatives. It is in this search that the possibility of an answer may be found. It is here, in this vastness, that they may seek both the cypher and the answers that will transform the loss of the present into an instance that transcends ephemeral existence.

Given the unrelenting persistence of time, what remains are its traces. The absence of answers with regard to such abject losses as these women have experienced has led to an unresolved state of mourning in which the only true closure, made possible in the film's perspective, may be found within the realm of the cosmos. Here the calcium of the disappeared victims' bodies, strewn throughout the desert as it is, is united with that carried within the stars. This (aesthetic) closure doesn't imply that such killings or the atrocities that led to them should be simply accepted. Rather, what is suggested is that the process of coming to terms with such extreme loss derives from one's realisation of the ephemeral nature of life, and indeed of the existence of life itself, and even that of stars and galaxies. This is a closure reached through the acceptance that, given the impossibility of the present, our entire existence in fact resides within memory, within those remains of time that orient us in history. We do not overcome the past, because we live both from it and within it. In this way, those who seek out the past, without knowing it perhaps, may be the ones who truly experience a 'real' sense of time and its relationship to life.

As evidenced in the popular political action taken since May 2011, Chile appears to have begun to surmount the 40 years of fear that its past has engendered. One of the more defiant slogans announced by the ongoing civil movement, spearheaded by the student population, explicitly states: 'They fear us because we have no fear!' This transformation of civic behaviour—from fear to performed/articulated fearlessness—comprises a pre-meditated process of what I have described as 'discursive insurgency' (Pino-Ojeda 2014). Upon the return to institutional democracy in Chile, the affective bonds created to destabilise the dictatorial regime were ameliorated when civil society granted political elites the task of mending the social fabric and of instituting democratic judicial institutions. As already indicated, this politics of reconciliation established the framework for an emotive behaviour organised around a notion of responsibility understood as politically pragmatic and the associated civic need to build consensus. The reasons for this are understandable, but only up to the point at which collective emotions (the desire for answers and answerability,

for example) became hostage to a politics of (responsible) 'governability' in which difference was seen as a menace to democratic coexistence. More importantly, affective responses started to be channelled within the marketplace—towards pleasures satisfied by the immediacy of consumption in which all products and social services are evaluated as commodities. All of this was and is subject, of course, to financial status, and achieved within the limited parameters of individualism. It is in this way that financial transactions have come to occupy the space previously reserved for the fulfilment earned through collaboration, companionship and daily affective exchanges. The political elites of the post-authoritarian government, entrusted with managing the emotional life of civil society, did so less through a quelling mediation of collective passions, but rather through a reorientation of affective priorities towards interactions engaged predominantly with the open circulation of merchandise, now converted into a surrogate for collective ideological and social aspirations. This is the way in which the recovery of communal order in post-authoritarian Chile has achieved the redirection of passions—and thus, political priorities—from the ephemeral individual realm toward the sphere of long-lasting communal endeavours cemented in monetary exchange.

The social movement led by Chilean students has sparked the search for other ideological paradigms. This has been expressed not through the reiteration of common political slogans, but through critical reflection and attention to the realm of affective relationships. The rhetoric of the student leaders—which has prompted an immediate response in the civil population—denies the validity and legitimacy of the discursive architecture that was imposed by the dictatorship and later normalised by democratic political elites. The students' approach has drawn attention to the fact that what we are dealing with in the current Chilean social structure is a logical obscenity that confuses the means with the ends: what prevails is the imperative to generate profit in all types of exchanges of service—even essential social services such as education. The students' exposure constitutes a discursive insurgency, with the movement refusing to interact or integrate with the logical principles structuring this kind of communication. Their attitude has broken through the veil of normalcy that has previously hidden an ongoing ethical duplicity and the absurd logic that underpins current/neoliberal socio-economic politics and practices. In this way, it goes beyond revealing a strictly institutional and systemic corruption to expose the fraudulent reasoning and ethical foundation of neoliberal doctrine and practice as a whole. It is for this reason that this movement represents the most radical schism to have yet stemmed from Chile's transitional democracy. It refuses to engage in dialogue within the established parameters of imagination, logic and affect set up during the period of transitional democracy.

The Periphery Gone Global

If September 11, 1973 set the stage for the introduction and spread of neoliberalism from the margin to the heart of global capitalism, the 'other' September 11, in 2001, represents a massive erosion in the current global political-economic system, enacted dramatically in the very centre of its power. The predominant effects of the neoliberal doctrines that I have studied within the Chilean context have been twofold. On the one hand, neoliberalism has created a persistent state of social unease that has not been abolished by the return of institutional democracy, but has simply re-centred the collective terror of authoritarianism onto fears of social and economic exclusion from capitalist frameworks. Secondly, at an international level, as within the context of Latin America, the consolidation of neoliberalism as an overarching ideology has established a rhetorical double standard in which, on the one hand, neoliberal political and industrial sectors frame the state as an obstacle to the opening of economies, while at the same time relying upon it as a safety net for their inevitable commercial misadventures—as can be observed in the case of the North American financial downfall of 2008.[ix] Although the collapse of the Twin Towers—those physical symbols of the United States' economic might—has been attributed to external terrorist agents, the same cannot be said of the intellectual architecture that sustains its economy. The aversion to scrutiny of the system that has generated this crisis, even within the reinstated administration of Democrats led by Barack Obama, has been maintained and facilitated through the reliable strategy of privatising collective responsibilities, attributing blame for economic failures to the gluttony of CEOs and the exacerbation of investment speculation—something which itself was carried out within the legal confines of its own economic model, be it ethical or not. In all such arguments, 'excess' is targeted as the root of such abuses, leaving the structural trade systems that allow for these excesses to take place free of guilt, as if such mishandlings were alien, and not intrinsic components of these systems. In certain ways, the worldwide economic crisis post-2008 has only served to excuse and normalise economic inequalities, and as there has been no response by the global hegemonic elites to rectify the structural causes of this crisis, local peripheral economic actors (such as Chile) see even less reason to tackle such inconsistencies. While the centre and much of the periphery continue to debate the superficial aspects of neoliberal implementation, the basic tenets of the model itself are never scrutinised.

The fact that neoliberalism was imposed in South America under dictatorial regimes sheds light upon the close relationship between political and economic repression. This marriage has in turn compelled peripheral actors in South America to continuously search for alternatives to the 'model'. This search is one that remains to be seen enacted in any substantive way by political elites and civic society in Western metropoles, which are currently also feeling the full brunt of the negative effects of neoliberal politics. It fell on Latin America to be the testing ground of neoliberalism, and it has likewise

been here that the system has demonstrated the first traces of its own failure, as seen in the Argentine financial collapse of December 2001, the effects of which can still be clearly observed. Along with neoliberalism itself, the peripheral and seemingly distant traumatic experiences of post-authoritarian Latin America have become global, as have its political and social responses. Although well-established democratic states have been exempt from institutional terror, fear has now become a worldwide reality, expressed among other things in the war on terror, the war on drugs, the fear of health pandemics, the very material reality of massive unemployment, and last but not least global environmental degradation exacerbated by a way of living built on ever-expanding consumption. Radical evil and banality of thought, as articulated by Hannah Arendt in relation to European totalitarianism, is not a thing of the past. Rather than manifesting itself through authoritarian political coercion, it does so through the socio-economic architecture already set in place. While we cannot speak of a specific individual and/or collective guilt for such current social and ecological disasters, the common responsibility to address them remains. For this reason, I fully subscribe to the Chilean student movement's agenda of restoring critical judgement so as to challenge the inversion of terms that have led to the perversion of social agendas, in order to reorient wider debates and shared responsibilities.

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Notes

[i] There seem to be three main factors that determine current challenges faced by Argentina in overcoming its dictatorial past: The Falklands War; the massive number of children stolen from detained parents; and the deep

external debt contracted during the military regime and further accentuated during the fiscal policies of the Menem administration. These three factors still dominate most of Argentina's current social and political sphere, as indicated, for instance, by the loan repayment default declared by Argentina in late 2014.

[ii] Numerous civil groups emerged during the 1970s and 80s, most of them formed by the families of the victims of the coup and subsequent dictatorship, as well as others formed by professionals from the legal and mental health sectors. Among the most emblematic are: the Association of Relatives of the Disappeared (AFDD), created in 1975; the Association of Victims of Political Executions (AFEP), created in 1978; the Corporation for the Promotion and Defence of People's Rights (CODEPU), created in 1980; and the Latin American Institute of Mental Health and Human Rights (ILAS), founded in 1988. Social and cultural workers who have joined these movements include journalists and photojournalists, judges, forensic professionals and artists: filmmakers, musicians, muralists, painters and photographers, among others. More information can be found at:

http://www.derechoschile.com/ONG/ong.html

[iii] The intimate relationship between state terrorism and neoliberalism, and the subsequent difficulties these have created in overcoming past atrocities are the subject of my book *Noche y Niebla: Neoliberalismo, memoria y trauma en el Chile postautoritario (Night and Fog: Neoliberalism, Memory and Trauma in Post-authoritarian Chile)*.

[iv] In this respect Neil Kritz recalls that in a conversation with the Argentinean president Raúl Alfonsín in Austria in March 1992, he pointed out the similarities between the Argentinean and Greek transitional processes: 'Alfonsín was intrigued by the parallels between these two cases, but confirmed that, as he and his advisors grappled with these difficult questions in the transition from repressive rule, they had no such information to draw upon; they 'invented' their approach from nothing. … [H]aving material regarding the Greek experience on the table would have been extremely valuable in helping them to frame the issues and the options' (1995, pp. xxx-xxxi).

[v] One of the most salient 'authoritarian enclaves' (to use the concept introduced by Garretón cited earlier) was created with the last minute nomination carried out by Pinochet of high-ranking judges who supported the authoritarian regime. This required waiting until the end of their terms in order to advance judicial cases involving the Armed Forces.

[vi] In the philosophical field, essential works are Jacques Derrida's *Specters of Marx* (1993), *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness* (2005), and *The Work of Mourning* (2001). In the psychosocial context, the text edited by Cathy Caruth in 1995, as well as her volume from 1996, put the case of the Holocaust as a paradigm for trauma, especially when analysing the existence of potential witnesses—something that illuminates the South American cases I am concerned about. In Chile, ILAS (Latin American Institute of Mental Health and Human Rights) has conducted psychosocial analyses of the effects of state terrorism; its many publications include *Reparación, derechos humanos y salud mental* (1996). This was followed by volumes such as *Derechos humanos y reparación: Una discusión pendiente* (2005), and

Derechos humanos, pedagogía de la memoria y políticas culturales (2011). Working from a perspective that combines historical with psychosocial analysis, the trilogy published by Lira and Loveman occupies a central place: *Las suaves cenizas del olvido* (1999), *Las ardientes cenizas del olvido* (2000), and *El espejismo de la reconciliación política ica* (2002). In the field of cultural analysis, various volumes edited by Nelly Richard stand out: *Pensar en/la postdictadura* (with Alberto Moreiras, 2001) and *Utopía(s)* (2004), as well as those she has authored herself: *Residuos y Metáforas* (1998), *Políticas y estéticas de la memoria* (2000) and *Crítica de la memoria* (2010).

[vii] For more on Taylor's analysis of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo, see: 'Performing Gender: Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo' (1994) and *Disappearing Acts* (1997). It is interesting to note that the Madres of Plaza de Mayo have attracted considerable scholarly attention, which is not the case for the Association of Family Members of Disappeared Detainees in Chile. Hernán Vidal's volume *Dar la vida por la vida* (1983/1996) is the only one solely dedicated to this institution, and pays attention to both the political and performative nature of their activities.

[viii] 'The women of Calama' are the families of political prisoners taken from this mining town on October 19 1973 by the military regime in the operation called 'The Caravan of Death'. Since then, the women of Calama have been searching for their loved-ones' remains in the vastness of the Atacama Desert. This operation has been extensively documented by Patricia Verdugo in *Los zarpazos del puma*: *La caravana de la muerte* (2001), translated to English as *Chile, Pinochet, and the Caravan of Death* (2001).

[ix] This is the core subject developed in Panitch and Gindin's aforementioned volume *The Making of Global Capitalism: The Political Economy of American Empire* (2012).

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