

**Diasporic Chilean and Argentinian narratives in the UK: The
traces of second generation postmemory**

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Declaration of originality.

I, Alejandra Serpente confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Signed:

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Date:

Abstract

This thesis analyses the interrelated concepts of diasporic postmemory and how they apply to the oral narratives of a small group of second generation Chileans and Argentineans living in the UK, whose parents were political exiles and economic migrants linked to the Chilean (1973-1990), and Argentinean (1976-1983) dictatorships. Diasporic postmemory as a ‘multidirectional’ theory is used to discuss these narratives in a ‘delocalised’ context where it is argued that two central memory fields overlap: the first being the field of the ‘politics of memory’ in the Southern Cone, and the second the ‘diaspora field’. It will be argued that these narratives occupy a mobile and situated diasporic ‘in-between’ space, indicative of ‘translocational positionalities’ that shift between a UK context and abroad. By presenting these postmemory narratives together, we can come to explore how the legacies of the dictatorships in Chile and Argentina continue to have resonances beyond the stable boundaries of the field of the politics of memory in those countries. As such, they hold the possibility to move beyond the direct victims of state terrorism and their kin, encompassing a wider ‘affective community’ of diasporic positionalities and subjectivities tied to wider societal responses to the legacy of state terrorism and trauma. Furthermore, I will also discuss how in this diaspora space, the positionalities of the researcher and interviewees are intertwined, and form part of subjectivities that can become ethical and reflexive subjects of postmemory, in mutually articulating alternative possibilities for more diversified and collective forms of multidirectional memories to emerge.

For Stephen

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The idea for this thesis first occurred to me at the beginning of 2005 after reading the novel *Una Vez Argentina* by the Argentinean/Spanish writer Andrés Neuman, first published in Spain in 2003. In the novel, the protagonist Andrés takes us on a diasporic journey back and forth between Argentina and Spain, tracing the arrival to Argentina in the late 1890s to 1910s of the first generation of European immigrants in his family and detailing a century later, the departure of the authors' own immediate family to Spain in the early 1990s. The underlying thread of the novel becomes this transatlantic journey between continents and shared by generations, a journey which is continually recreated and reconstructed from the viewpoint of the author's own diasporic positionality. From the point of view of the diaspora, Neumann evokes the Argentina of his youth that he left behind, and juxtaposes his memories with key historical events in Argentinean history, continually shifting from the personal to the collective, from the private sphere to the public one. Behind this task, lies a personal need to rescue the memories of his own past from oblivion. But in doing so, Neuman realises that his memories do not exist apart on their own, but rather are constituted by familial threads linked to the histories of his predecessors, as well as, a wider framework of national collective memory, interconnecting varying experiences of different historical contexts.

In my reading, Neuman is appealing to us to take notice of the diaspora space from where he is reimagining Argentina. During the novel, he creatively converges the stories of several groups who, as himself, have left Argentina whether as exiles or economic migrants (such as his aunt, uncle and cousins), whose lives were all impacted

upon by the dictatorship, and then move abroad in search of a better future in completely unknown new territories, which similarly to the first waves of immigrants to Argentina, have never returned again. It is through this historical and autobiographical journey of connection and displacement between generations that Neuman can claim the diaspora space from which to put himself in the shoes of his predecessors from a distance. Accordingly, he describes with great detail and imagination, the arrival of his great-grandparents to urban Buenos Aires in the early twentieth century, through to the more recent experiences of his parents during the military dictatorships of the first *de facto* regime of Juan Carlos Onganía in 1966-1970, and later that of the junta led by Jorge Rafael Videla of 1976-1983.

As someone who also left Argentina from a young age, I identified greatly with Neuman's coming to terms of his family's displacement to Europe through the joint retelling of his family history alongside the more recent events of Argentina's history. I found resonances in Neuman's writing with my own immediate experiences of feeling a sense of loss in terms of trying to remember the Argentina I had known, trying to recall the memories of my childhood, the people and places we left behind after moving to Europe in 1988. The additional collated imaginings of Argentina in the novel supplemented my own memories, cunningly becoming a mixture of the real and the imaginary. The novel then signalled a kind of departure for my reflections on what it means to identify within a diasporic landscape, where began to question the kinds of stories and memories that circulated around my own family in relation to my parent's histories. Similarly to *Una Vez*, when trying to recollect specific times and moments when I had first heard those stories, I had an underlying feeling as though they had

somehow always been with me— about my parents courtship during high school (that had been banned by certain members of my family), their struggle to work and study at the same time, and my uncle’s detainment for three months during the dictatorship, as well as wider ongoing political struggles (my father being a member of the Argentinean Communist Party) in an increasing climate of fear and violence, among many others – that had impacted on my parents and those around them. However, on reading the novel several times now, I have never felt nostalgia for Argentina. Instead, it has reinforced a feeling of ‘in-betweenness’ where I belong to both Argentina and the UK, thus indicating a diasporic positionality from which to feel at ease with that uneasiness.

One key chapter of *Una Vez* in particular struck me in a very poignant and forceful way in terms of articulating this ‘in-betweenness’. In this chapter, Neuman recounts a nightmare he claims he had one night in 1989, on the same day that President Carlos Menem officially pardons the military junta and guerrilla forces for the crimes they committed during the 1976 dictatorship. Andrés recalls:

Se escapaba volando el año 89. La noche que le siguió al indulto definitivo a las juntas militares, tuve un sueño. Un sueño que fue un recuerdo. Un recuerdo que yo no podía tener, un recuerdo inventado. Pero allí estaba: moviéndose en mi mente, tan nítido que no podía ser mentira.¹

The year 89 was flying by. The night that followed the definitive pardon of the military juntas, I had a dream. A dream that was a memory. A memory that I could not have had, an invented memory in fact. But there it was: moving in my mind, so vividly that it could not be a lie.

¹ Andrés, Neuman. 2003. *Una Vez Argentina* (Barcelona: Editorial Anagrama):195. All translations from the novel are my own.

That night in October 1989, Neuman dreams that he is a ‘subversive’ a ‘Montonero’ or a militant of the ERP,² and two men have detained him and begin to torture him whilst blindfolded, in an unknown location. One of them suddenly turns to Neuman and shouts: “*Cantá, judío de mierda.*” (Sing, you Jewish piece of shit.) While he is being tortured and tormented by his captors he is asked to reveal information about a school friend, “*el gordo Cesarini*”. Andrés says:

Como en tantas otras ocasiones, primero imaginé al gordo Cesarini, mi compañero, saltando por la ventana de su casa. Después me lo figuré corriendo con una agilidad que él nunca había tenido, con una mochila escolar al hombro; y después lo vi sentado dentro de un avión, y enseguida vi el avión perdiéndose entre las nubes, y las nubes confundirse con el vapor que yo respiraba.³

Like on many other occasions, I first imagined *gordo Cesarini*, my friend, jumping through the window of his house. After I imagined him running with an agility that he never had, with a school rucksack on his back; and then I saw him sitting inside an aeroplane, and straight away I saw the plane losing itself between the clouds, and the clouds became confused with the vapour that I was breathing out.

While Andrés tries to imagine that his friend has got away (perhaps into exile?), the captors intensify the torture and begin to run the *picana* (an electric cattle prod) on his testicles, causing him to faint. When he awakes, he becomes aware of a man they call *el padre*, observing the torture. As if responding to his presence, the two men intensify

² The Montoneros and the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (ERP) were militant guerrilla organisations of the 1960s and 1970s in Argentina that mounted armed resistance against the military governments previous to and in the run-up to the military coup of 1976. These organisations were heavily targeted by military and intelligence forces so their numbers were dwindled by the time of the coup. See, Paul H, Lewis. 2002. *Guerrillas and Generals: The "Dirty War" in Argentina* (Westport, Conn.; London: Praeger).

³ Neuman, 2003:197.

their threats by shouting the name “¡Cesarini!” and begin to run a Gillette razor blade on the soles of Neuman’s feet, the name of the brand which Andrés mistakenly confuses for another militant he wrongly believes his captors also want information on. This causes Andrés so much pain, that “(...) against my pride, against the cause, against memory, against my name. I hear myself bawling out until I lose my voice: “¡Militaba! ¡Militaba! ¡Militaba!” His captors then ask, “are you sure that he was a militant as well?” To which he replies, “yes”. “Very well”, they say, “you can tell him to his face”.⁴ They remove his blindfolds, and he sees his friend Cesarini tied up next to him, beaten, cut up, sweaty, disfigured. In despair, Andrés calls out to him, and regrets that he has not managed to escape on an aeroplane. As Andrés attempts to communicate with Cesarini, his captors force him to kick his friend while they howl behind him in excitement. At this moment, Andrés recounts a scene from the past:

Nos habíamos reecontrado hacía unos años, en una marcha de estudiantes o algo así. Él llevaba un tambor y una mochila con libros y panfletos. Nos habíamos abrazado, muertos de risa. Nos habíamos divertido recordando los tiempos de la escuela. Teníamos no sé qué edad. Desde entonces habíamos vuelto a ser amigos.⁵

We had met again a few years back in a student march or something like that. He carried a drum and a rucksack with books and flyers. We had hugged and laughed so hard. We had enjoyed ourselves remembering our school times. I don’t know how old we were. From that point on we became friends again.

⁴ Ibid: 198-199.

⁵ Ibid: 200.

But then, as he forces himself to kick Cesarini even harder in the stomach, Andrés suddenly wakes up in a panic, where drenched in sweat, he slowly begins to recognise the shadows in his bedroom, except that: “it wasn’t a lie: I was still there”.⁶

This nightmarish scene that Neuman describes above, cleverly juxtaposes current debates surrounding the political and personal legacies of the militant generation of the 1970s in Argentina, a move concurrently led by the sons and daughters of the detained-disappeared and others not directly affected by bloodline links to the victims of state terrorism. This very engagement then with the legacy of the 1970s and the dictatorial past is presented in this violent scene where Andrés dreams that he is taking the place of the leftist militant under torture. Nevertheless, through his exclamation as he wakes up that, “it wasn’t a lie: I was still there”, Andrés not only refers to this nightmarish approximation to the dictatorial past that he never lived, but the more recent past of the 1980s which he has directly experience. Specifically, he is also referring to the events of 1986, and to the complete feeling of helplessness that they young Neuman and others had in being unable to react (hence the nightmare) to the total conditions of impunity imposed by the then Argentinean government, with its roots in the repression of the 1970s.⁷ Thus, in his nightmare Andrés is expressing a deep generational frustration of attempting to approximate the legacy of leftist political militancy, at a time when the nation is coming to terms with its own political complacency towards memory, truth, and justice.

⁶ Ibid: 201.

⁷ As described to me by the author during a personal interview carried out on June 8, 2012.

Through this juxtaposition of the violent aftereffects of the practices of torture and disappearance characteristic of state repression of the 1970s and his retelling of the *indultos*, Neuman is capturing the interconnectedness of these two different historical periods in the late 1980s and early 1990s, where citizens were being actively encouraged to forget the past while perpetrators went on unpunished. Rather than evoking this interconnectedness of the period ‘in-between’ the 1970s and the Amnesty Laws of the 1980s-1990s from Argentina, Neuman is doing so from a diasporic ‘in-between’ space of Argentina and Spain, as part of a second generation which Neuman belongs to from afar.

Neuman’s subtle intermingling of past and present experiences in this nightmare scene therefore constitutes the departing point for the development of this thesis. Neuman’s constantly shifting diasporic positionality and reflexivity in the novel influenced my own efforts to make connections between different historical moments and cultural memory landscapes, and highlight the continuing presence of the Chilean and Argentinean diasporas in the UK. In this way, I identify *Una Vez Argentina* as a diasporic postmemory work that functions as a trigger for any second generation subject, whether from Argentina or not, attempting to make sense of a difficult past. It does so, by engaging those individuals to move beyond a personal necessity for reconnection within a familial sphere, towards more affective and collective processes of imagination, and resignification.

As such, I am grateful to the novel for propelling the subsequent questions of the thesis about the Chilean and Argentinean second generation in the UK, to ask if

children of political exiles and economic migrants also feel as the protagonist Andrés does, as positioned in-between a new memory landscape between the field of the politics of memory from the Southern Cone and the diaspora field. A diasporic landscape which I will go on to argue in the case of this thesis, not only promotes the search for links between different generations from the same family, but additionally, between different social actors not all descendants of the direct victims of state terrorism.

Since the early 1990s the concept of postmemory as originally devised by its main proponent Marianne Hirsch, has become emblematic within the discipline of memory studies and beyond to describe the process of intergenerational memory transmission between the first generation of survivors of the Holocaust and the second generation.⁸ In more recent year, this concept has been translated to other historical contexts outside of the Holocaust context (a shift actively encouraged by Hirsch), such as the Southern Cone military dictatorships of Brazil, Chile, Uruguay and Argentina in the twentieth-century. In looking at the ‘travelling’⁹ specificities of postmemory in relation to different historical and traumatic legacies, this thesis will further scrutinise postmemory in order to reveal the lesser-known diasporic oral narratives of second generation Chileans and Argentineans living in the UK. In this respect, this thesis does not just simply confirm the simple applicability of postmemory into a different historical temporality, but pushes forward the debate to discuss how it can be deployed to speak in reference to a ‘mobile’ and ‘situated’ diasporic condition belonging to the second generation. Therefore, the oral narratives that are explored in this thesis can be located as continually travelling and shifting across the space between two related cultural

⁸ See especially: Marianne, Hirsch. 1992. “Family Pictures: *Maus*, Mourning, and Post-Memory”, *Discourse*, 15:3-29; 1996. ‘Past Lives: Postmemories in Exile’, *Poetics Today*, 17: 659-686; 1997. *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press).

⁹ I borrow here Astrid Erll’s definition of ‘travelling memory’ within what she identifies as a growing sub-discipline of transcultural memory studies, as an umbrella term encompassing the concept of postmemory: an approach which she argues challenges the notion of “single memory cultures”, and “(...) which is directed towards mnemonic processes unfolding across and beyond cultures.” Astrid, Erll. 2011. ‘Travelling Memory’, *Parallax*, 17:9.

memory fields: the field of the ‘politics of memory’¹⁰ in the Southern Cone pertaining to the cultural memory of the Chilean and Argentinean dictatorships, and the field of the ‘diaspora space’ established by the arrival of the first generation of Chilean and Argentinean political exiles and economic migrants and their kin. Thus constituting a new diasporic ‘in-between’¹¹ landscape of postmemory continually under-construction by first and second generation diasporic subjects.

In order to understand the complex historical and theoretical background of the research carried out in this thesis, particular attention will be given to describe the emergence of the field of the politics of memory in Chile and Argentina, where certain dominant narratives exist that have prioritised the continued cultural, political, and historical legacy and memory of the dictatorships based on ‘direct’ links to the past. This link has tended to prioritise the experiences of those families or individuals who suffered directly at the hands of the military regimes and especially, those who were

¹⁰ I am referring here to the Argentinean sociologist Elizabeth Jelin’s notion of the ‘politics of memory’ to describe the emerging field of human rights organisations and social actors since the 1970s in Argentina that have pursued truth and justice on behalf of the disappeared and other victims of state terrorism in the public arena. See, Elizabeth, Jelin. 1994. ‘The Politics of Memory: The Human Rights Movement and the Construction of Democracy in Argentina’, *Latin American Perspectives*, 21:38-58. Jelin’s definition of the ‘politics of memory’ in Argentina refers both to the public and political (institutionalised) spheres in which human rights activists and organisations that have systematically documented the abuses of the military regime have operated in even previous to the period in the 1970s and have continually expanded a societal demand for the right to the truth about the crimes committed by the regime and the right to justice to punish the perpetrators of violence. She states that, “during all this time, the movement has been torn between its political and institutional role, expressed in the demand for justice, and it’s symbolic role in the construction of a historical memory, actively promoting the need not to forget and developing in different ways and in a variety of settings the symbols and events that would foster the preservation of the vivid memory of the lived traumatic experience”. Jelin, 1994:39.

¹¹ This is a concept formulated by the cultural theorist Hommi Bhabha to describe the spatial/temporal postcolonial and poststructural contexts from the twentieth century onwards, within which processes of cultural difference and identification create new diasporic subjectivities, the idea of which will be elaborated further in Chapter 1. Homi, Bhabha. 2004 [1994]. *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge).

detained-disappeared. While this thesis does not question the historical and judicial redress of familial bonds that were violently destroyed by the violence of the dictatorships, what it does argue for instead, is a questioning of the automatic applicability of ‘biological’ links that in turn excludes other interpretations of the past and modes of affiliation promoting alternative attachments to traumatic legacies. In this way, by presenting previously untold diasporic narratives this thesis seeks to encourage a more open but still critical stance towards joint processes of connection, based on collective ‘affiliative’ bonds that can arise out of private familial contexts.

From this basis, this thesis aims to reposition the gaze of the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone towards the field of the Chilean and Argentinean diaspora space, in order to draw attention to the interconnectedness of these two fields: and in this case to the long-standing groups of forced/unforced Latin American migrants in the UK.¹² This diasporic ‘community’, while numerically representing a smaller and more disperse group of people when compared with more recent waves of Latin American migrants¹³ (as well as the UK being a less well-known destination for political

¹² The term ‘forced-migration’ in the UK has traditionally described four categories of migrants: refugees; people given Exceptional Leave to Remain (ELR); people granted temporary protection status, and asylum seekers. See Alyson, Bloch. *The Migration and Settlement of Refugees in Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave). For the purpose of this thesis, the term forced-migration refers to the first generation of Chilean or Argentinean exiles forced to leave their countries due to the threat or direct subjection of violence. Whereas, unforced first and second generation migrants refers to the experience of leaving Chile or Argentina in a postdictatorship period characterised by the lack of economic and professional opportunities.

¹³ See for example the works that have focused on the issue of discrimination facing much larger and current waves of Latin American migrants tied to their status as ‘undocumented’ workers: Frances, Carlisle. 2006. ‘Marginalisation and Ideas of Community among Latin American Migrants to the UK’, *Gender and Development*, 14:235-245; Cathy, McIlwaine. 2005. *Coping Practises Among Colombian Migrants in London* (London: Queen Mary University).

exiles from the Southern Cone in the 1970s-1980s), nevertheless has had an important and continuing presence in the diaspora.¹⁴

What this process allows, is a discussion of the extension of the concept of postmemory to speak about a wider diasporic ‘postgeneration’, not just by simply comparing the Chilean and Argentinean narratives relating to two interconnected but different historical events, but by demonstrating their shared ‘situated’ positioning within a postmemory ‘mobile’ landscape. This is again done in order to critically discuss how the concept of postmemory can be used to argue for a move beyond ‘direct’ familial ties connected to traumatic events, to include the condition of diaspora, a connection which is evident within the narratives discussed here.¹⁵ This comparative analysis will further cement the need for researchers working in cultural memory studies, to analyse the ‘in-between’ spaces created between different cultural memory fields, where in the case of the UK, both Chilean and Argentinean diasporic and ‘hybrid’¹⁶ subjectivities and positionalities can be seen to have emerged.

¹⁴ For an analysis of the important links between the longstanding presence of the Chilean exile community in the UK since the 1970s, and their relationship to more recent arrivals of Latin American migrants, see, Carolina, Ramírez Cabrera. 2011. ‘Why Do They Count?’ Small Long-Settled Latin American ‘Communities’ within the UK’, In *Runnymede Perspectives: New Directions, New Voices: Emerging Research on Race and Ethnicity* (eds.) Claire, Alexander, and James, Malcolm (London: Runnymede): 22-24.

¹⁵ For a recent work that had also compared the Chilean and Argentinean exile diaspora from the context of the U.S. see, Benedetta, Calandra. 2013. ‘Exile and Diaspora in an Atypical Context: Chileans and Argentineans in the United States (1973-2005)’, *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, [published online January 2013]: 1-14.

¹⁶ The use of the term ‘hybrid’ in this thesis comes from its use in postcolonial and cultural studies, to describe how processes of globalisation have generated new cultural identities based on the intermixture of different local and global influences. See, Keri E., Iyall Smith and Patricia, Leavy. 2008. *Hybrid Identities: Theoretical and Empirical Examinations*, (Chicago, Illinois: Haymarket Books). Much more will be said about hybrid diasporic identities and its relation to the concept of postmemory in Chapter 1.

I will argue for example that the existence and formation of a diasporic ‘in-between’ space was cemented during key moments such as the arrest of General Augusto Pinochet in London in 1998. The previous arrival of Chilean exiles in the diaspora was a key aspect of the wider transnational network of human rights activists who have historically denounced the crimes against humanity committed during the dictatorship, and the continuing impunity of the ex-dictator since the commencement of the postdictatorship period in 1990. With their efforts, the campaign against Pinochet reminded the world of the presence of the Chilean exiles as part of a wider Latin American exile diaspora that had not returned to Chile since the early 1990s, but was still living abroad. As such, this thesis demonstrates how key events that have taken place in the diasporic space ‘in-between’ also represent new convergences where the first generation of political exiles re-established their longstanding political subjectivities together with the second generation, in turn keen to approximate the traumatic dictatorial past experienced by their families, and as such becoming political subjects in their own right. These key diasporic encounters have signalled a significant shift from the exposition of private memory within the familial sphere into the public sphere that incorporated the second generation’s own lived realities and preoccupations of dealing with those private legacies of the past within new collective memory landscapes.

All in all, this transferal between the world of private memories of the past contained in the familial sphere to a more collective sphere of mutual recognition between second generation social actors and others in the diasporic ‘in-between’ space as evident during the Pinochet detention, also shows how the concept of postmemory is

a vital part of what Michael Rothberg has formulated as ‘multidirectional memory’. As he defines it, “the model of multidirectional memory posits collective memory as partially disengaged from exclusive versions of cultural identity and acknowledges how remembrance both cuts across and binds together diverse spatial, temporal, and cultural ties”.¹⁷ In this way, this thesis argues that postmemory is one such ‘multidirectional’ concept with which to speak about the ways in which the narratives included in this thesis ‘travel’ between different historical contexts, without allowing one history to dominate, but rather are constantly under re-interpretation and at play with one another. This is a crucial function of the ‘in-between’ space, where oral history is deployed by the underrepresented living on the margins of the diaspora to present their experiences since they have been partially obscured in official versions of the dictatorial past in Chile and Argentina, tending to favour more dominant, located, and ‘direct’ experiences of state violence.

Crucially, this thesis shows that these second generation diasporic subjects have the possibility of creating other socio-politically determined ‘affective communities’¹⁸ in the diaspora space, where the sharing of affective bonds among different social actors is not just defined on the basis of a shared trauma and a bloodline attachment to the

¹⁷ Michael, Rothberg. 2009. *Multidirectional Memory Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*. (California: Stanford University Press): 11. In this thesis, I take ‘collective memory’ to refer to Maurice Halbwachs’ classic definition of the term, as encompassing the transformation and reconstitution of individual memory in settings and contexts where people come together to remember, in turn forming a crucial aspect of the ‘social’ formations of memory for a group, but without assuming as Halbwachs did, that collective identity always precedes memory. See, Barbara, A. Misztal. 2003. *Theories of Social Remembering* (Maidenhead: Open University Press).

¹⁸ This is a term taken from Ann Cvetkovich’s work in the US on the emergence of lesbian public cultures. See, Ann, Cvetkovich. 2003. *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures*, (Durham, NC; London: Duke University Press).

previous generation of direct victims, but through a personal alignment with other historical events and experiences that incorporate other stories, projects and losses not exclusively tied to a dictatorial past. In this vein, this ‘affective community’ is not exclusively constituted by the diasporic subjectivities of the individuals interviewed here within the diaspora space, but by their ‘affective’ interactions with other social actors, and their movements back and forth between the two fields. Including, how the interview space itself comprises a diasporic space of interchange where postmemory narratives between participants and researchers are creatively shared, in turn promoting a diasporic ‘consciousness’ and ‘reflexivity’ on the part of all those involved towards the construction and bargaining of individual and collective positionalities. Once again by drawing attention to the diasporic space ‘in-between’ that the concept of postmemory allows us to draw out, we can assess the possibility for new collective affective lineages and linkages between individuals that can transcend personal loss, and be shared among participants.

Finally, this thesis provides a vital contribution towards existing and ongoing debates on what ‘multidirectional landscapes of postmemory’ can come to represent, by showing how the ‘mobile’ oral narratives of the second generation Chileans and Argentineans interviewed here continually disarticulate the ‘bounded’ limits of cultural memory across all fields, while claiming a specific ‘situated’ space of diasporic recognition and affiliation.

The emergence of the field of the politics of memory in Argentina and Chile

As we have seen, one of the main proposals of this thesis is that through the expanded use of the concept of postmemory in a diasporic context we can investigate how the narratives belonging to the Chilean and Argentinean second generation interviewed here, stem from an in-between space two interrelated cultural memory fields; that of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone, and the diaspora space. For the purposes of this thesis, the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone represents a wide body of knowledge that has scarcely dealt with its globalising effects. In particular, with the ongoing presence and involvement in and out of that field of social actors who were touched by the legacy of the dictatorships still living in the diaspora. In this regard, although recent attempts to include accounts of exile, displacement and diaspora within that developing historiography have been made, very few works have begun to identify the intersubjective articulations of contemporary postmemory narratives belonging to the second generation in the diaspora,¹⁹ as part of a slowly emerging historiography of exile.²⁰ Often the research on second generation exile

¹⁹ See, Alejandra, Serpente. 2011. 'The Traces of "Postmemory" in Second-Generation Chilean and Argentinean Identities', In, Francesca, Lessa and Vincent Druliolle, *The Memory of State Terrorism in the Southern Cone: Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan): 133-156. One important collection that presents the narratives of a wider generation of second generation subjects in Argentina including exiles but which does not use the concept of postmemory, was first published from abroad in the UK and is, Andrés, Jaroslavsky. 2004. *The Future of Memory: Children of the Dictatorship in Argentina Speak* (London: Latin America Bureau).

²⁰ See also the works in the case of Chile, Thomas C., Wright, and Rody Oñate. 1998. *Flight from Chile: Voices of exile* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press); José, del Pozo Artigas. 2006. *Exiliados, Emigrados y Retornados: Chilenos en América y Europa, 1973-2004* (Santiago de Chile: RIL Editores). For Argentina and the emerging experiences of the second generation in exile see; Roberto, Aruj, and Estela, González. 2007. *El Retorno de los Hijos del Exilio: Una Nueva Comunidad de Inmigrantes* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo Libros); Daniel, Korinfeld. 2008. *Experiencias del Exilio: Avatares Subjetivos de Jóvenes Militantes Argentinos durante la Década del Setenta* (Buenos Aires: Del Estante Editorial); Diana, Guelar, Vera, Jarach, and Beatriz, Ruiz. 2002. *Los Chicos del Exilio: Argentina 1975-1984* (Buenos Aires: País de Nomeolvides).

subjects has tended to focus on those residing in the Southern Cone, where for example Loreto Rebolledo from Chile has argued in the case of Chile the memory of many second generation children of exiles born in the diaspora has been characterised by, “(...) sentiments of rage and impotence, since they always knew that their parent’s project was to return, but they never imagined that this return would alter their own lives in such profound ways.”²¹

Part of the reason why researchers within the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone have neglected the field’s diasporic reaches is twofold. Firstly, the majority of the studies that have looked at the experiences of exile, displacement and diaspora from the point of view of the first and second generations, have come from the margins of that field, carried out by researchers who were exiled or have lived in the diaspora for a significant amount of time, in the case of Argentina for example, with researchers such as Silvina Jensen,²² Pablo Yankelevich,²³ and Marina Franco.²⁴ In Chile, the work of Rebolledo²⁵ stands out in relation to her focus on Chilean exiles and

²¹ Loreto, Rebolledo. 2006b. ‘Memorias del Des/Exilo’, In (ed.) José, del Pozo Artigas, *Exiliados, Emigrados y Retornados: Chilenos en América y Europa, 1973-2004* (Santiago de Chile: RIL Editores): 167-192.

²² Silvina, Jensen. 2010. *Los Exiliados. La Lucha por los Derechos Humanos Durante la Dictadura*. (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana).

²³ Pablo, Yankelevich. 2009. *Ráfagas de un Exilio. Argentinos en México, 1974-1983*. (México, El Colegio de México).

²⁴ Marina, Franco. 2008. *El Exilio: Argentinos en Francia Durante la Dictadura*. (Buenos Aires: Siglo Veintiuno Editores).

²⁵ Loreto, Rebolledo. 2006a. *Memorias del Desarraigo: Testimonios de Exilio y Retorno de Hombres y Mujeres de Chile* (Santiago: Catalonia).

returnees, or works produced by first generation exiles and academics relating their own personal experiences of displacement.²⁶

Secondly, in the postdictatorial contexts of Argentina from 1983 and Chile from 1990 (and similarly for other Latin American postdictatorship contexts), the diaspora has not necessarily been associated with the presence of longstanding exiles and as such, has not figured so extensively in a region dominated by a powerful dichotomy that has pervaded subsequent cultural memory discourses stemming from the early days of the truth commissions in response to the violence of the military regimes.²⁷ In such circumstances, the victims of state terrorism have always tended to be associated with the detained-disappeared and their extended families on one side of the divide, with the perpetrators of state violence on the other, whereby the rest of civil society has been positioned in the schism between the two, with 'ordinary' citizens absolved of any moral responsibility towards the more recent past.²⁸ In this scenario, the 'duty to remember' and act on the injustices of the past has been imbricated within a restricted demand for truth and justice, which has aimed to involved the rest of society but dominated by groups of individuals coming together through their shared grief and loss, largely contained within various human rights groups. This simplistic division between the

²⁶ For testimonies of exile related to the UK context see for example, the accounts contained in the volume: Jeremy, Seabrook. 2009. *The Refuge and the Fortress: Britain and the Flight from Tyranny* (London: Palgrave MacMillan); Marta Raquel, Zabaleta. 2003. 'Exile', *Feminist Review*, 73: 19–38; Helia, López Zarzosa. 1998. 'Internal Exile, Exile and Return: A Gendered View', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 11:189-198.

²⁷ See, Jensen, Silvina. 2003. "'Nadie Habrá Visto Esas Imágenes, Pero Existen" A Propósito de las Memorias del Exilio en la Argentina Actual", *América Latina Hoy*, 34:107.

²⁸ See the case of Peru for example in, Paulo, Drinot. 2009. 'For Whom the Eye Cries: Memory, Monumentality, and the Ontologies of Violence in Peru', *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, 18:15–32.

victims of state terrorism in Chile and Argentina and those on the side of the perpetrators (including institutions like the Catholic Church in Argentina, and the growing middle-class ‘technocrats’ in Chile, and their economic allies who hugely benefitted from the military being in power), was largely constituted by the military regimes’ own attempts to make distinctions between proper citizens and ‘subversives’ viewed as enemies of the state. Both military regimes depicted the events of the dictatorships and in the periods after as a ‘war’ against subversion in order to justify their actions as part of their patriotic duty in defending the nation of a growing internal ‘Marxist’ ideology. Therefore, anyone considered to belong to the political left was seen as ‘degenerate’ and a threat to Western Christian civilisation, which the armed forces had no choice but to eradicate thus founding the notion of an inevitable war between ‘two evils’ as a powerful narrative that went on to be maintained to some degree by subsequent truth commissions in both countries.²⁹

Over the course of time, if the events of the past were defined in terms of a ‘conflict’ between two opposite politically divided sides, so were the emerging memory discourses in the wider field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone pertaining to different groups. These groups were staking their claims and demands for civil society to uphold their version of the truth of the dictatorial past, in contexts where the state had not fully acknowledged and addressed the violence committed by previous military regimes. However, the Uruguayan sociologist Gabriel Gatti has identified that the emergence of the notion of the ‘two-devils’ of the 1970s had its roots in a much

²⁹ For a more detailed definition of the historical discourses and terminologies employed by the military regimes and the human rights movement see, Francesca, Lessa. 2013. *Memory and Transitional Justice in Argentina and Uruguay: Against Impunity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan).

earlier period, that of the period of modernisation in Latin America in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries (with special emphasis on the Southern Cone). He has argued that the aim of the positivist rationality driving the ruling classes as exponents of biologically reductive discourses such as eugenics (Gatti here is following the theories of Foucault), was to ‘police’ and control the growing urban masses as well as, argue for the creation of a Latin American ‘civilisatory subject’. The rise of the hugely symbolic figure of the detained-disappeared subject from the 1970s was already therefore according to Gatti, contained in this modernising process of state formation. Here, the creation of a civilised political subject with aspirations to change society, would in the advent of the military regimes of the 1960s-1970s be violently destroyed by the authoritative powers of their nation states.³⁰ The forced disappearance of a politically engaged citizenry capable of challenging the authority of the state, as Gatti argues, created a catastrophic situation where: “the perfect products of modernity were the ones who were going to be torn apart by the machinery that was their condition of possibility”³¹ – forming the future basis for the restitution of those detained-disappeared subjects on the grounds of familial but more specifically, bloodline bonds.³² It is

³⁰ See, Gabriel, Gatti. 2012. ‘Imposing Identity against Social Catastrophes. The Strategies of (Re) Generation of Meaning of the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Argentina)’, *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, (31): 354. Although Gatti is mainly discussing the Argentinean case, I take the main basis for the historical construction of the figure of the detained-disappeared to apply equally in the case of Chile and Uruguay, despite different contexts.

³¹ Gatti, 2012: 355.

³² I am also using Gabriel Gatti’s extension of that field in Argentina (and Uruguay) in which he identifies the centrality of the figure of the detained-disappeared in that field in which he states that: “like all fields, it has its own genealogy, let’s say its own small history, which in this case is the history of the detained-disappeared, which firstly did not *exist* –in effect, in the 70s, not even the families of those who would eventually be called the “disappeared” used that term (...)”. My own translation taken from Gabriel, Gatti. 2008. *El Detenido-Desaparecido: Narrativas Posibles para una Catástrofe de la identidad* (Montevideo: Ediciones Trilce): 18.

therefore from this longstanding struggle to redefine the identities of the detained-disappeared from the condition of catastrophe, that Gatti identifies a dominant discourse containing so-called oppositional and competing ‘narratives of meaning’ among different social actors as part of a wider human rights movement. Narratives which he argues on the whole seek to make sense of the catastrophe, by attempting to rebuild the essence of the detained-disappeared, based on the restitution of biological bonds.³³

Consequently in Chile and Argentina, the emergence of the field of the politics of memory began in earnest during the dictatorships, where the struggle for recognition of these narratives of meaning was not only augmented by the lack of evidence (destroyed or denied) proving the crimes committed by the regime, but by the visibility of relatives amongst others, demanding to know the whereabouts of those kidnapped, imprisoned, tortured, and made to disappear, at a time when they were the only public voices of opposition against the repressive apparatus of the military juntas.³⁴ The exhaustive and often dangerous search for the whereabouts of missing relatives also had a highly gendered dimension to it, which to this day is still concerned towards the search for the

³³ He states that: “The key factor in this machinery is the idea of identity: on the one hand, because it is understood that identity is what is attacked and violated by forced disappearance; on the other, because it is believed that by reconstructing that attacked and violated good, identity, it will be possible to compensate in part for the devastating effects of that repressive practice. We are not, however, talking of any identity whatsoever; it is identity associated to old nouns such as family, origin, truth, genetics, biology..., some of them with a conservative colouring.” Gatti, 2012: 354.

³⁴ Thomas C. Wright has argued that: “despite the large numbers of victims of human rights violations, a majority of the citizens of the countries that experienced state terrorism had not lost family members or close friends; most had not undergone arbitrary arrest and torture. Many of the same persons who had hidden behind a feigned ignorance of the human rights violations occurring around them during the period of repression continued to be disengaged, perhaps shamed by the reminders of their earlier denial of reality”. Thomas C. Wright. 2007: *State Terrorism in Latin America: Chile, Argentina, and International Human Rights* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield):36.

bodily remains of the detained-disappeared.³⁵ The erosion by the regimes of all forms of democratic, political or social institutions in the public sphere (the closure of political parties, organisations, trade unions etc.), predominantly tended to affect men, and limited any possible widespread resistance by civil society towards the brutality of the regimes. In contrast, women's traditional roles as mothers, wives and carers, were under threat through the violent intrusions of the armed and security forces into the sphere of the home to kidnap individuals. As family members began to disappear, the destruction of familial bonds provoked some women to cross the threshold between the private familial space and the public sphere, in search for their missing relatives. It is not by coincidence then, that the most visible groups that emerged in Argentina at the time were: Familiares de Detenidos y Desaparecidos por Razones Políticas (Relatives of the Detained and Disappeared for Political Reasons founded in 1976); the Madres de Plaza de Mayo; and the Asociación de Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Association of Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo founded in 1977 searching for their missing grandchildren born in detention camps).³⁶ As such, the rise of the most well-known

³⁵ See for example the recent documentary film by Patricio, Guzmán. 2010. *Nostalgia for the Light* (France and Spain: Icarus Films). Parts of the film detail the longstanding search in the Atacama Desert by a group of women for the remains of their relatives who were detained-disappeared during the Chilean military dictatorship.

³⁶ These organisations based on kinship ties were also supported by other more longstanding and institutionalised human rights groups such as the: Asamblea Permanente de Derechos Humanos (Permanent Assembly for Human Rights), Liga Argentina de los Derechos del Hombre (The Argentine League for the Rights of Man), Servicio de Paz y Justicia Peace and Justice Service), Movimiento Ecueménico de Derechos Humanos (Ecumenical Movement for Human Rights), and the Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales- CELS, Centre for Legal and Social Studies). Their legitimacy also grew out of their positions as key testifiers to the abuses committed during the dictatorship once a truth commission was established. Jelin, 1994.

groups such as the Madres and Abuelas³⁷ in Argentina during and after the dictatorship led them to become the figureheads of those human rights movements based on kinship ties. While in Chile, similar groups were also formed that unlike in Argentina, the majority benefitted from protection from the Catholic Church (see Chapter 3), such as: the Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos (Association for the Families of the Detained and Disappeared – AFDD) and the Agrupación de Familiares de Presos Políticos (Association for the Families of Political Prisoners –AFPP), also involved in assisting exiles abroad to obtain information on family members.

In Argentina, the expansion of a field of the politics of memory with the establishment of a widespread human rights movement was undoubtedly facilitated by the loss of the Falklands/Malvinas³⁸ conflict by the armed forces, severely questioning their ability to continue in power. The newly elected President Raul Alfonsín from the Unión Cívica Radical party (Radical Civic Union) was instrumental in decreeing the formation of the Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas – National Committee for the Disappearance of People (CONADEP), which carried out the first official state review of the crimes committed during the dictatorship, with its findings published in the ‘*Nunca Más*’ (Never Again) report of November 1984,³⁹ followed by the public trials of the leaders of the three military juntas in April 1985. For many

³⁷ For an account of the work of Abuelas see, Rita, Arditti. 1999. *Searching for Life: The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo and the Disappeared Children of Argentina* (Berkeley: University of California Press).

³⁸ For an account of this conflict see, Federico, Lorenz. 2009. *Malvinas: Una Guerra Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana).

³⁹ The report in total documented 8,960 cases of disappearance. CONADEP. 2006. *Nunca Más: Informe de la Comisión Nacional de la Desaparición de Personas*. (Buenos Aires: Eudeba).

Argentines, this was the first time that the extent of the systematic repression became known to them, since civil society had largely been shielded away from the violence inflicted on the detained-disappeared, through lack of awareness, complicity, or fear.⁴⁰

The Chilean field

In Chile the field of the politics of memory emerged under different circumstances where the legacy of the longstanding authoritarian rule of General Pinochet continued well after democracy. In fact, some have argued that rather than witnessing a clear-cut transitional period, the 1990s in Chile ushered a period of *continuismo* (continuity) where instead of fully repudiating the military regime's constitutional and political measures, the new Concertación governments focused on extending the regime's previous policies of market liberalisation and privatisation.⁴¹ From the 1980s onwards, Pinochet had worked tirelessly to extend his role as the Chief Commander of the Armed Forces into democracy, and protected himself and others from prosecution with his amendment of the 1980 Constitution, upholding Amnesty Decree Law 2191 from 1978 that established immunity for security forces for crimes committed between September 11, 1973 and March 10, 1978. He was also protected by the 1988 decree laws that became known as the 'leyes de amarre' (the anchored laws) designed to restrict the powers of any future civilian governments in opposing his

⁴⁰ See Marguerite, Feitlowitz. 1998. *A Lexicon of Terror. Argentina and the Legacies of Torture* (New York: Oxford University Press); Thomas, C. Wright. 2007. *State Terrorism in Latin America: Chile, Argentina, and International Human Rights* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield).

⁴¹ Jonathan R., Barton. 2002. 'State Continuismo and Pinochetismo: The Keys to the Chilean Transition', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 21: 358–374

continued legacy.⁴² The ability of the state to punish the crimes of the dictatorship was severely limited, since Pinochet also benefited from a highly institutionalised support network from conservative circles, including a movement of young technocrats who rose in prominence during the dictatorship –safeguarding the General and others from facing justice in Chile for many years. Despite these obstacles, the first transitional government of President Eduardo Frei had been able to set up the equivalent of the *Nunca Más* in the Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación (National Truth and Reconciliation Commission) also named the Rettig Commission that documented the detention and disappearances of thousands of individuals across Chile. By 1998 Pinochet had been declared a ‘senator for life’ but his reputation and influence was in decline after his arrest and detention in London in October of the same year, creating a renewed opportunity back in Chile to prosecute those responsible for crimes against humanity on a more significant scale.

Notwithstanding the different political circumstances of their transitional periods, both human rights movement in Chile and Argentina and the social actors that comprised it, became the official voices of the ‘truth’ as to what took place during the coups, in opposition to those voices that continued to deny what had taken place and those enduring beliefs within society that the detained-disappeared were not ‘innocent’ victims and had disappeared for a reason.⁴³ Initially, the voices of the survivors of

⁴² See, Patricio, Silva. 1999. ‘Collective Memories, Fears and Consensus: The Political Psychology of the Chilean Transition’, In *Societies of Fear: The Legacy of Civil War, Violence and Terror in Latin America* (eds.) Kees, Koonings, and Dirk, Kruijt (London: Zed Books): 171-96.

⁴³ See Jelin, 1994, in the case of Argentina. In addition, see also the birth of the ‘Complete Memory’ associations which since 2005 in Argentina have promoted a new historical memory in opposition to, but copying the tactics of, the traditional human rights discourse to commemorate the lives of military

detention had featured highly in the public arena providing ‘living’ testament to the extent of the repressive apparatus of the dictatorships. Nonetheless, over time as the academic Pilar Calveiro has argued in the case of Argentina (herself a survivor of a detention camp), these voices were eventually superseded by the testimonial presence of the relatives in search of the detained-disappeared who were ‘biologically’ cementing their links to the past.⁴⁴ As such, intensifying a notion of victimhood based on an immediate bloodline link to the detained-disappeared, where surviving families had also directly suffered and witnessed the irrevocable loss of their loved ones.⁴⁵ In this context, Ari Gandsman has argued that:

Privileging biological relationships as a mode of organization—a necessary event in the evolution of these groups during the dictatorship—has led to a performative paradox in which groups need to avoid the perception of engaging in political activities even while they are explicitly engaged in such political activities.⁴⁶

personnel killed by ‘subversion’. Valentina, Salvi. 2011. ‘The Slogan “Complete Memory”: A Reactive “Re)-signification of the Memory of the Disappeared in Argentina’, In, Francesca, Lessa and Vincent Druliolle, *The Memory of State Terrorism in the Southern Cone: Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan): 43-61.

⁴⁴ Calveiro has argued that although the survivors of detention camps in Argentina had lived under tremendously horrendous conditions in situations where they were witnessing friends and loved ones die, on the return of democracy, the testimonies of the relatives gained much more recognition, with the figure of the detained-disappeared political militant towering over all figures of victims. She states that this was partly the case because survivors were treated with suspicion, even more so within the left, since their very survival was evidence for some of their possible compliance with their captors while imprisoned that therefore had guaranteed their release. While this may have been the case for a small number of individuals, the work of Calveiro and others demonstrates how repression affected victims differently in how they dealt with the conditions of detainment and torture, and therefore call for a refusal to categorise levels of suffering trivialising the effects of that violence upon those who survived and those who did not. Pilar, Calveiro. 2007. La Experiencia Concentracionaria, In, *Argentina 1976: Estudios en Torno al Golpe de Estado*, eds. Clara E. Lida, Horacio Crespo, and Pablo Yankelevich (Buenos Aires: El Colegio de México): 187-204.

⁴⁵ Jelin, 2009.

⁴⁶ Ari, Gandsman. 2012. ‘The Limits of Kinship Mobilizations and the (A)politics of Human Rights in Argentina’, *The Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, 17: 195. Like Gatti, Gandsman here is mainly referring to the bloodline groups in Argentina that have gained the most prominence, and

For Gandsman, the pursuit by these groups of ‘biological’ bonds to the past, have rested on their ability to balance on the one hand, their wish to be seen as apolitical, and on the other, their growing political and institutionalised demands on the state, in order to preserve a state of ‘victimhood’ affording them visibility and legitimacy to speak on behalf of the detained-disappeared. In this hierarchy of victimhood, Gandsman highlights for example how other groups of relatives (interestingly mainly women) made up of the widows, girlfriends, and ex-partners of the detained-disappeared have remained largely ignored, despite their ‘familial’ but not sanguine links to the detained-disappeared.

Slowly however, the legitimacy of the relatives and of human rights groups in Argentina and Chile to speak about the dictatorial past has been changing partly due to the expansion of new narratives. In Argentina, under the administrations of Néstor Kirchner (2003-2007) and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (2007-2011 and since 2011), the state has symbolically forged new links with the human rights movement. For example, during the 2004 anniversary of the dictatorship, on the re-opening of the ex-detention site of the ESMA (Escuela Superior de Mecánica de la Armada- the Navy Mechanics School) in Buenos Aires, a notorious detention site during the dictatorship, president Néstor Kirchner publically identified during the opening ceremony as a *compañero* of the detained-disappeared, aligning himself with the militant generation of

have become institutionalised entities through their closer ties to recent governments starting with the traditional groups such as the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, the Madres (both the Linea Fundadora and Hebe de Bonafini’s Asociación), followed by others such as H.I.J.O.S. (the children of the detained-disappeared), Familiares (the families of the detained-disappeared), and Hermanos (the brothers and sisters of the detained-disappeared).

the 1970s and claiming that they too (along with Cristina), were the sons and daughters of the Madres Plaza de Mayo⁴⁷ (“somos todos hijos de las Madres Plaza de Mayo” – “we are all the sons and daughters of the Madres Plaza de Mayo”).⁴⁸ This open recognition by the state of the legacy of the human rights movement was similarly echoed in Chile, when the last centre-left Concertación government of Michele Bachelet (2006-2010) was also much more directly in favour of supporting human rights issues, having herself alongside her mother been imprisoned and tortured during the coup, and her father General Alberto Bachelet detained, tortured and murdered for opposing the regime. One of Bachelet’s symbolic acts on leaving office in 2010 was to inaugurate a new national ‘Museum of Memory’ open to all Chileans to learn about the events of the coup.⁴⁹

Despite these recent changes and attempts to expand the field of the politics of memory to include all citizens, the prominent memory scholar Elizabeth Jelin has continued to argue that in the case of Argentina:

⁴⁷ The human rights group Madres de Plaza de Mayo (eventually divided into two groups, Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo, and the Línea Fundadora) was formed in 1977 during the dictatorship by a group of women who went to look for their missing children and relatives. They subsequently initiated a form of public protest by gathering every Thursday to march around the Plaza de Mayo square in front of the Casa Rosada (the Presidential Palace in the centre of Buenos Aires), which they continue to do to this day. See, Fernando, J. Bosco. 2001. ‘Place, Space, Networks, and the Sustainability of Collective Action: The *Madres de Plaza de Mayo*, *Global Networks*, 1: 307-329; Marguerite Guzman Bouvard. 1994. *Revolutionizing Motherhood: The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc.)

⁴⁸ See, Elizabeth, Jelin. 2009. Victims, Relatives, and Citizens in Argentina: Whose Voice is Legitimate enough? In *Humanitarianism and Suffering: The Mobilization of Empathy through Narrative*, ed. Richard A. Wilson and Richard D. Brown, 177-201. New York: Cambridge University Press.

⁴⁹ Katherine, Hite, and Cath, Collins. 2009. ‘Memorial Fragments, Monumental Silences and Reawakenings in 21st-Century Chile’, *Journal of International Studies*, 38: 379–400.

Those who have suffered directly or through their immediate relatives define themselves as the bearers of pain and memory. By this very fact, they unwillingly claim a type of symbolic authority and power based on their “monopoly” of meanings of truth and memory. Such power may, in turn, obliterate the mechanism of intergenerational transmission of memory, preventing the new generations from reinterpreting the transmitted experiences in terms of their own historical circumstances.⁵⁰

Jelin clearly identifies that the expansion of the field of the politics of memory in Argentina and elsewhere, based on a contest for sociopolitical recognition has neglected to foresee how these battles for recognition have negatively impacted upon intergenerational transmissions of memory, and ignored how subsequent generations have responded based on their specific ‘historical circumstances’. In relation to this crucial point, what this thesis will argue in relation to the construction of the field of the politics of memory in Chile and Argentina then, is that much more research still needs to be done on the mobility of its borders, and how various ‘competing’ memory discourses have travelled outwards and have had an impact on (and are also impacted by) other related cultural memory fields, such as those stemming from the diaspora space. While it is acknowledged that the majority of protests, initiatives, commemorations, and memory projects to do with the dictatorships have a ‘grounding’ in that field in Chile and Argentina largely enacted by social actors who reside in those countries, this thesis constitutes a radical step towards looking at the traces of those ‘memory works’ in the diaspora space and vice versa within the narratives of the second generation. Succinctly, it aims to recognise a critical multidirectional diasporic reflexivity away from the field of the politics of memory, questioning the dominance of ‘competing’ memory

⁵⁰ Jelin, 1994: 53.

discourses, by pointing towards transnational points of convergence and interchange that acknowledge the multiple voices of the second generation as key carriers and articulators of ‘fluid’ and multidirectional diasporic subjectivities straddling two cultural memory fields.

New linkages and affiliations

Similarly to Jelin, the Chilean theorist Nelly Richard has also discussed the emergence of certain memory discourses in her country, in particular, two main overriding tropes of historical and cultural memory that have dominated the landscape of the field of the politics of memory also headed by the relatives of the victims of state terrorism.⁵¹ The first trope Richard labels as ‘memory as monument’, and the second as ‘memory as document’.⁵² The ‘memory as monument’ trope for Richard concerns the ritualisation of memory in the form of official commemorative practices and public events surrounding key anniversaries related to the coup such as September 11; or linked to the opening of previous detention centres, such as at the Corporación Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi in Santiago (the site of one of the biggest detention centres in Chile – Villa Grimaldi Park for Peace Corporation); as well as, the creation of national monuments and sites to commemorate the lives of the disappeared.⁵³ The second dominant trope that Richard identifies is ‘memory as document’, relating to the

⁵¹ See the articles by Elizabeth, Jelin. 1998. ‘The Minefield of Memory’, *NACLA Report on the Americas*, 32: 23-29; and Nelly, Richard. 2000. ‘The Reconfigurations of Post-Dictatorship in Critical Thought’, *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, 9: 273-282.

⁵² Richard, 2000: 275.

⁵³ In the case of Chile see, Hite & Collins, 2009.

institutionalisation of archival records documenting the events and testimonial evidence on the Chilean dictatorship, gathered by such groups as the Vicaría de la Solidaridad in Santiago Chile, or the Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (Center for Legal and Social Studies-CELS) in Buenos Aires; both organisations that worked tirelessly to compile the lists of names and information on the disappeared.

In the last two decades however, the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone has witnessed a renewed questioning of these basic organisational tropes, and the historical construction of the figure of the detained-disappeared based on a biological determinism that alongside the discourse of the ‘two devils’, has resulted in the exclusion of a wider societal response and sense of responsibility towards the dictatorial past. On the periphery of the dominant ‘narratives of meaning’ that have tended to homogenise the political beliefs and projects of detained-disappeared persons, Richard has argued in the case of Chile, stand ‘non-institutionalised’ commemorative practices of remembrance challenging narrow definitions of the dictatorial past. These challenges have largely stemmed from the creative practices of art, film, and literature, where she explains that, “(...) it is thanks to their polysignifying and irruptive labour on forms (images, stories and narratives) that the aesthetic gesture is able to intensify memory as a battle of symbolizations”.⁵⁴ It is interesting to note that similarly to Gatti, Richard explains these ‘irruptive’ memory contestations in Chile as taking place as a ‘battle of symbolizations’ between different historical memory signifiers – in the space in-between her opposing tropes of official commemorative practices of ‘monument’ and

⁵⁴ Richard, 2000: 275.

‘document’. For her, in that alternative space, “it is not only a matter of sharing mourning with those in grief but also of committing the subject of historical mourning to the labour of *resignification*”.⁵⁵ Nevertheless these practices of resignification according to Jelin continue to be under threat as she has stated that there is, “a double historical danger; oblivion and void fostered by politics and its complement, ritualized repetition of the traumatic and sinister story, of tragedy reappearing constantly without the chance for new subjectivities to emerge”.⁵⁶

Correspondingly to Richard in Chile, Gatti has also distinguished the formation of other forms of historical and cultural memory ‘irruptive’ narratives from the early 1990s onwards, radically engaging with the emptiness of the catastrophic void from which they have emerged, in order to forge new affiliative connections from personal experiences of loss and mourning. For Gatti, these pertain to what he calls the ‘narratives of the absence of meaning’:

[...] Narratives that make it explicit that, this one and no other – the catastrophe – is the place of enunciation from which they constitute themselves and that assume that, even if it is a difficult place to name, from it, it is possible to speak, and an identity can be constructed from it.⁵⁷

These radical narratives often have their roots in the familial terrain, since they have most visibly pertained to the second generation children of the detained-disappeared in Chile and Argentina. In contrast to the dominant narratives of meaning, the second

⁵⁵ Ibid: 275.

⁵⁶ Jelin, 1994: 53.

⁵⁷ My own translation. Gatti, 2008: 112.

generation individuals involved in the expansion of their own narratives have increasingly come to engage others to jointly question the legacies of their parent's generation as political militants and heroic figures, rather than revere them. For Gatti, these subjects have ventured beyond the realm of those familial biological bonds to actively pursue new collective affiliations that extend the work of resignification of a traumatic past as Richard has pointed out, towards a wider societal frame of identification and social responsibility.

As we will see in more detail in Chapter 1, it is this radical outward extension of the field of the politics of memory which I argue has provided the potential for these narratives to identify and align themselves (as well as vice versa), with other diasporic 'narratives of the absence of meaning', as symbolic of marginal experiences tied to the legacies of the dictatorships in Chile and Argentina existing in the transnational periphery of both fields. To be more precise, it is exactly in the experimental zones of contact in the spaces in-between the field of the politics of memory of the Southern Cone, and the diaspora field, where we can see just how far those narratives have travelled, and come to share an alternative landscape of postmemory belonging to the second generation Chileans and Argentineans living in the UK.

Postmemory: Looking out towards the borders

In order to see how the narratives of second generation of Chileans and Argentineans in the UK interviewed here relate to these more recent 'narratives of the absence of meaning' coming from the field of the politics of memory, I will briefly

introduce why the concept of postmemory as a ‘travelling’ theory is so critical for this thesis in order to identify new spaces of connection between the two fields.

Postmemory is a theoretical concept first outlined by the U.S. scholar Marianne Hirsch in the early 1990s in the fields of Holocaust and trauma studies as influenced by feminist theory.⁵⁸ In these fields from the 1990s onwards, one central recurring question has been how cultural memory is passed on from one generation to the next in the case of traumatic historical contexts from survivors to subsequent generations – a question that introduced the issue of the ‘guardianship’ of the Holocaust.⁵⁹ Hirsch’s and others contention in relation to this traumatic memory is that the post-war second generation that followed the survivors, grew-up away from the settings of that trauma, and it is in those new spatial and temporal diasporic contexts that they have been influenced by their own unearthing of the remnants of partial stories and mediated encounters with the trauma of the past.⁶⁰ These traces of memory have been experienced through direct and indirect encounters with survivors either in the family or beyond, with material objects such as photographs, or personal belongings, and mediated through the reading or viewing of books, films, and art; leaving individuals with a deep sense of approximation to that past, despite not having directly experienced the traumas of the Holocaust.⁶¹ The

⁵⁸ See her insightful account detailing the personal and professional history of how she arrived at formulating this concept, in the Introduction to, Marianne, Hirsch. 2012. *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press).

⁵⁹ Hirsch, 2012.

⁶⁰ Hirsch, 1996.

⁶¹ In speaking about the ‘traces’ of postmemory I have chosen to keep in mind the work of the author Eva Hoffman. While Hoffman does not talk about her memories of what her parents transmitted to her as ‘postmemory’, she emphasises the vivid encounters of the second generation with incomplete fragments of memories that incorporate intergenerational transmission, and the social and political conditions of

theoretical framework of postmemory therefore represents a significant shift away from the experiences of Holocaust survivors as the ‘first generation’, to the second generation as ‘secondary’ witnesses to the afterlife of trauma on those who lived it, and consequently on how that second generation relates to the process of intergenerational transmission of cultural memory.

Since its origins, postmemory has also been used to speak about other traumatic historical contexts most notably, the Southern Cone military dictatorships of the 1970s-1990s.⁶² This theoretical displacement between different historical events has not gone unnoticed. The Argentinean sociologist Beatriz Sarlo for example, aside from claiming that there is no difference between ordinary memory and ‘postmemory’, has argued that there is a lack of clarity in the applicability of the concept in Argentina in defining exactly who the second generation is, since many victims of the dictatorship were also children at the time, and therefore in her opinion could not qualify as ‘secondary’ witnesses but as rather belonging to the ‘first’ category of victims and survivors.⁶³ Despite Sarlo’s many other objections to the concept’s use in the Argentinean context, postmemory as we will see in Chapter 1, is still a theory that has found currency, especially in relation to Hirsch’s insistence of its use as a traveling concept to explain

those interchanges as interpreted by those subjects. Hoffman will be discussed at greater length in the next chapter. Eva, Hoffman. 2005. *After Such Knowledge* (London: Vintage).

⁶² See for example another important historical context in which the concept of postmemory has been applied to with the second generation of French Algerians and the legacy of the Algerian War of Independence. See Jane, Hiddleston. 2003. ‘Cultural Memory and Amnesia: The Algerian War and “Second-Generation” Immigrant Literature in France’, *Journal of Romance Studies*, 3: 59–71.

⁶³ Beatriz, Sarlo. 2005. *Tiempo Pasado: Cultura de la Memoria y Giro Subjetivo, Una Discusión* (Buenos Aires: Siglo Veintiuno Editores).

the current participation of a wider ‘affiliative postgeneration’ of social actors beyond the direct victims of state terrorism. Viewed in this way as one of Rothberg’s multidirectional theories, postmemory has the potential to address the same concerns as Gatti’s narratives of the absence of meaning in the Southern Cone, which are closely associated with the second generation and with the children of the detained-disappeared and their contemporaries. Its multidirectional focus means that in the case of this thesis, the use of this concept represents a crucial strategy in bringing the field of the politics of memory together with the diaspora field. In particular, in exposing the vital connections between different second generation narratives in both fields that despite their different historical specificities– share a positionality that is rooted, but not entirely determined by, the absence of meaning left by the catastrophic void and after-effects of state terrorism.

On the whole then, this thesis critically departs from existing research by critically applying the multidirectional concept of postmemory to a new cultural and historical diasporic memory landscape. It readdresses the need to acknowledge the diasporic components of that theory by presenting narratives of displacement, directly impacted by the lesser-known violent and repressive practices of state terrorism initiated by the military juntas in Chile and Argentina such as political exile. Where it also, allows us to acknowledge how the implementation of neoliberal economic models from the 1970s onwards by various military regimes in the Southern Cone also led to a process of ‘unforced’ migration, with many families and individuals leaving their countries as economic migrants, in some cases, unable to reconcile themselves with the countries they or their parents left behind.

The diaspora space: Bridging the two fields in a new global context

This thesis argues that by bringing the two concepts of postmemory and the diaspora space together, we can reveal how the diasporic space ‘in-between’ the field of the politics of memory and the diaspora field represents a landscape of critical distance and alterity from the two fields. This new diasporic landscape opens up the discussion of the ‘translocational positionality’⁶⁴ of the second generation, evoking a ‘reflexive’ awareness in relation to the converging conditions of dictatorship, exile, displacement, migration and diaspora that come together in the ‘in-between’ space. Therefore, not only does the multidirectional theoretical framework of postmemory used here look at the mobile connections between different cultural memory fields, but how the situatedness of the oral narratives presented here speak about the diaspora field, “(...) where the concept of *diaspora space* (as opposed to that of diaspora) includes the entanglement of genealogies of dispersion with those of ‘staying put.’”⁶⁵ In the conjuncture between cultural memory fields, there is a force at play, one that both situates and destabilises subjects, so that in the ‘in-between’ space: “the ‘past-present’ becomes part of the necessity, not the nostalgia of living.”⁶⁶ It will be argued then, that the translocational positionality of the ‘in-between’ space forged by the meeting of cultural memory fields, allows the narratives and diasporic subjectivities of the second generation Chileans and Argentineans living in the UK to emerge, producing a decentring of historical, social

⁶⁴ Floya, Anthias. 2006. ‘Belonging in a Globalising and Unequal World: Rethinking Translocations’, in *The Situated Politics of Belonging*, eds., Nira Yuval-Davis, Kalpana Kannabiran and Ulrike Vieten (London: Sage): 17-31.

⁶⁵ Avtar, Brah. 1996. *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (London: Routledge): 181.

⁶⁶ Bhabha, 1994: 10.

and political genealogies of the dictatorial past. A wider variety of dispersed and shifting genealogies which echoing Avtar Brah, make us aware of new kinds of ways of relating to a traumatic past, from the positionality of the diasporic present.

The contribution and situatedness of this thesis on connecting the two fields

In putting forward a creative and interdisciplinary approach that focuses on new ways of conceptualising the afterlife of the legacy of the Southern Cone dictatorships from the point of view of the second generation, this thesis contributes to existing research on the concept of ‘diasporic postmemory’ in a number of ways. Firstly, this thesis is positioned within a growing body of work in the discipline of cultural memory studies looking into previously unknown experiences of displacement, migration, diaspora and exile, which is increasingly viewing the cultural memory landscape of the Southern Cone dictatorships as a ‘travelling’ one. Secondly, this thesis specifically focuses on the untold narratives of the second generation Chileans and Argentineans whose families are at ‘home’⁶⁷ in the UK and who inhabit the borderland of the diasporic ‘in-between’ space. This second contribution forms part of a current trend of analysis that is contributing to wider research on the Latin American diaspora in the UK as a whole, and the longstanding presence of those communities dating back to the context of the military dictatorships of the 1970s. As such, it will extend the contribution made by previous researchers such as Mia Flores-Bórquez who in 2000 interviewed forty-six children of Chilean families living in the UK, and identified the arrest of

⁶⁷ According to Brah: “the concept of diaspora places the discourse of ‘home’ and ‘dispersion’ in creative tension, *inscribing a homing desire while simultaneously critiquing discourses of fixed origins.*” Brah, 1996: 192-193.

Pinochet in London in 1998 as a momentous event for the second generation that highlighted the specific long-term issues faced by the children of exiles and political refugees.⁶⁸ By connecting the different historical contexts of the Chilean and Argentinean dictatorships through the narratives of the Chilean and Argentinean second generation in the UK, this thesis opens up new insights into the complex convergence of multidirectional postmemories in the diaspora space that decentre more well-established historical accounts of that traumatic past. In that connection, these narratives are not only used to discuss the postmemory of the past of the military dictatorships that contributed to the conditions of exile and displacement for the first generation (from the point of view of the second generation); but how those events are subsequently reinterpreted by the second.

As anticipated, from a methodological basis not only are the oral narratives gathered from semi-structured interviews considered to be diasporic, but the relationship that develops between the researcher and the interviewees is also viewed as a 'postmemory encounter'. In other words, this emergent relationship and its findings are also considered to be a part of the diasporic postmemory landscape where the interview process exposes not only the narratives of the participants but of the researcher. Additionally, carrying out oral history interviews allows the researcher to focus on very

⁶⁸ While this study has been very useful for this thesis in providing an early analysis of the specificities of the Chilean second generation experience in the UK and their own issues surrounding the different processes of long-term settlement linked to their parent's needs to return, I do not necessarily agree with the author's framing of these experiences as purely on the grounds of the, "sense of abandonment and rejection experienced by both parents and children". In my view, this framing tends to victimise both generations, and promote the notion of traumatic continuation, which reduces the subjectivities of the second generation as mere recipients of traumatic memory, and not as critical subjects who are actively engaging with that legacy of the dictatorial past. See, Mia, Flores-Bórquez. 2000. 'Children of Protracted Exile: Where do we belong?' In *Abandoned Children* (eds.) Catherine, Panter-Brick, and Malcolm, T. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press): 213-223.

specific life moments that the participants remember and re-create in the interview itself, highlighting how postmemories continually shift and travel, and are moulded and reshaped to fit for different audiences. Even if the second generation narratives featured here only represent partial stories, their value lies in their ability to speak of the mobile and situated connections between different historical timeframes. In this way, highlighting how the study of the cultural memory of the Southern Cone dictatorships is evolving to include a critical analysis of the convergence of the field of the politics of memory with its diasporic ‘multidirectional’ margins.

Outline of chapters

Chapter 1 will proceed from the introduction of a diasporic postmemory landscape, by presenting the relevant theories that are at the core of this thesis: the diaspora space and postmemory, discussed with the use of various interrelated disciplines of sociology, memory studies and cultural studies. It begins by introducing the concept of diaspora space, alongside the key notion of the space ‘in-between’, as well as, the theories of ‘hybrid’ subjectivities and diasporic ‘consciousness’, that serve to highlight the presence of diasporic subjects in the UK, and the formation of diasporic identities for the second generation. It will go on to discuss how the concept of postmemory arose out of feminist and Holocaust studies concerns with the preservation and continuation of oral testimonies pertaining to the first generation of Holocaust survivors, and the role of the second generation as the direct recipients of those testimonies, who go on to construct their own memories and identities in the face of such a traumatic legacy. It will look at how this concept was then expanded to explain

other traumatic historical events, chiefly that of the Southern Cone military dictatorships, and especially the relationship of the second generation sons and daughters of the detained-disappeared in relation to the memory of the past and the previous generation. Subsequently, a key move in this chapter is to highlight the innovative and multidirectional connections of the concepts of the diaspora space and postmemory, to argue for the centrality of the 'in-between' space for the second generation living in the diaspora. In doing so, the thesis will go on to identify a more expansive 'affective community' of reflexive subjects whose hybrid identities and translocational positionalities allow us to see how the afterlife of the Southern Cone military dictatorships in Chile and Argentina, extends beyond its geographical confines to include unknown cultural memory narratives belonging to a diasporic landscape.

Chapter 2 presents the methodological concerns of the thesis in relation to the use of semi-structured interviews, and the key research considerations that arose out of that process. It assesses these considerations with the use of oral history and feminist theory research to explain the value of oral narratives and how this data is then analysed in relation to the interconnected theories of postmemory and diaspora. Some of these considerations include the emerging themes that arise out of the interview process, including topics of gender, language, as well as, assessing the role of the researcher carrying out fieldwork at 'home'. It will present the idea that the interview setting itself constitutes a postmemorial encounter between the researcher and the interviewees, both investing in that moment of exchange as second generation subjects.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 contain the narratives of Chilean and Argentinean second generation diasporic postmemory, where the main focus of the first two chapters (3 and 4) is to present and discuss the more individual and familial dimensions of diasporic postmemory. Chapter 3 begins by presenting a chronological and historical timeline detailing the events of the Chilean military coup, including the exile of the first generation of political refugees to the UK, by interweaving first and second generation narratives. The chapter then goes on to explore the second generation's own experience of return to Chile in the wake of the reestablishment of democracy in 1990 with the narratives of two female participants. These two narratives are used to discuss both the familial and affiliative dimensions of diasporic postmemory when two individuals are confronted with their parent's expectations of return, as well as their own personal needs to be recognised in their parent's eyes and by the Chilean society they encounter.

Chapter 4 follows on from Chapter 3 by looking at second generation Argentinean diasporic postmemory narratives that detail the historical context of the most recent military coup in Argentina, and the subsequent flight into exile and economic migration of the individuals featured and their families. In contrast to Chapter 3, Chapter 4 highlights the wider effects of the Argentinean military coup in the sense that these narratives are not all representative of children of exiles, but coming from families who were impacted in more diverse ways by the dictatorship and by their subsequent migration to the UK.

Chapter 5 brings the Chilean and Argentinean narratives together to discuss the conjunction between the private and public aspects of diasporic postmemory that this

chapter argues constitutes a new affiliative landscape of cultural memory linking the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone, to the diaspora field. It will chart this hitherto unexplored link between these two fields from the point of view of the second generation by looking at how key historical moments such as the arrest of General Pinochet in London in 1998, the Falkands/Malvinas conflict in 1982, and other events have influenced the second generation. It is interested in discussing how the second generation came-of-age and was influenced by key interrelated developments in the field of the politics of memory and the diaspora field in the late 1980s-2000s to constitute a new affective diasporic community, bridging their own diasporic experiences with an ongoing and changing legacy of a traumatic past.

Finally, the Conclusion re-establishes the key contention of the thesis that seeks to argue that the diasporic postmemory narratives of the second generation Chileans and Argentineans are articulated within a space 'in-between' two key fields: the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone, and the diasporic field that these subjects inhabit. It will not only seek to reiterate the importance of the research carried out in this thesis, but to also discuss potential avenues for further research. It will address how the thesis fits in a growing body of work in the multidisciplinary discipline of cultural memory studies, including an assessment of other multidirectional theories that could be used to further expand the diasporic characteristics of the concept of postmemory. Especially, it will reiterate how the narratives presented here belong to subjects whose own narratives of postmemory expand new linkages beyond traumatic and familial bloodlines, ultimately contesting fixed and dominant reinterpretations of a dictatorial past.

Introduction

This chapter will begin by expanding on the concept of the diaspora space to present the cultural memory landscape inhabited by the second generation Chileans and Argentineans living in the UK, in relation to the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone. It will go on to explore the concept of postmemory which Rothberg has identified as a type of multidirectional memory capable of describing how diasporic subjects become connected to different historical events by imaginatively investing in new bonds of identification with trauma beyond their own personal experiences. In examining the development of postmemory from its origins primarily in the fields of Holocaust studies and memory studies, this chapter will also look at how this concept has ‘travelled’ and been used in the context of the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone. It will argue that as a multidirectional concept, postmemory allows us to approximate what Gatti has identified in the previous chapter as the emerging ‘narratives of the absence of meaning’ belonging to members of the second generation in Argentina and Chile, with the diasporic narratives of the second generation of Chileans and Argentineans living in the UK. All in all, by bringing together the concepts of the diaspora space and postmemory, this chapter presents how this move allows us to discuss second generation oral narratives and how they address the complex overlap and connectedness of the diaspora space and the field of the politics of memory, and the networks of people and ideas that travel between the two.

Theorising diaspora

In the social sciences, the contemporary definition of the notion of diaspora dates back to a post-World War II period where the influx of mass migrations to the industrialised West signalled the growing presence of immigrant communities in those nation-states. The increasing movement of migrants worldwide was explained alongside a 'triadic' model that identified the relationship between subjects, the nation-state and the homeland.⁶⁹ Subsequently, postcolonialist, poststructural and feminist theory defined the presence of Third-World diasporas in the West as partly evident of a radical rupturing of a period of modernism where the notion of fixed cultural spaces was now being challenged. Not only was it argued that the boundaries of nation-states were becoming more fragmented, but a deeper questioning of the assumed dominance of the Eurocentre as the nucleus of the western world was being established.⁷⁰ The concept of diaspora therefore, has become a potent signifier of the presence of the 'other'⁷¹ across deterritorialised and globalised transnational spaces, a presence that nowadays is associated with the breakdown of the idea that identities are fixed, and that individuals including migrants, have a predetermined sense of belonging.

⁶⁹ Steven, Vertovec. 2001. 'Transnationalism and Identity', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 27: 573-82.

⁷⁰ Smadar, Lavie, and Ted, Swedenburg. 1996. "Introduction: Displacement, Diaspora, and Geographies of Identity." In, *Displacement, Diaspora, and Geographies of Identity*, (eds.) Smadar, Lavie and Ted Swedenburg (London: Duke University Press): 1-25.

⁷¹ Avtar Brah best describes the role that the concept of the 'Other' has played historically in the creation of a dominant Western identity as she states: "It is now widely accepted that the creation of 'European man' as the universal subject in Western social and political thought was realised by defining 'him' against a plethora of 'Others' –women, gays and lesbians, 'natives', 'coloured people', the 'lower order', and so on. This centring on the figure of European man constructed these various 'Other's in complex hierarchical relations *vis-à-vis* one another". Brah, 1996: 215.

Traditionally, research on diaspora has tended to follow two broad fields: with standard research focusing on straightforward classifications and locations of global diasporas on the one hand; and on the other, more recent works that have treated diaspora as a ‘fluid social process’ and as a politicised space of belonging. For Kalra, Raminder and Hutnyk:

There are consequences in this division for both main theoretical approaches to diaspora, where one approach is more interested in categorization and the *post hoc* implications of this, while the other finds diaspora as a way to critique the categories and essentialisms involved.⁷²

Within these two distinct categories Steven Vertovec has mapped out three further subdivisions of analysis.⁷³ The first subdivision he identifies treats diaspora as a *social form* which has been engaged in identifying the historical routes and localities of well-known diasporas, such as the Jewish one that has become an archetypal model for all other communities⁷⁴ of diasporas, where groups tend to be valued in terms of size and visibility.⁷⁵

⁷² Virinder S, Kalra, Raminder, Kaur, and John, Hutnyk. 2005. *Diaspora and hybridity* (London: Sage):3.

⁷³ It is important to note that as Vertovec has noted transnational connections across a diaspora “affect the construction, maintainment and negotiation of collective identities”, so that diasporic subjects feel that they simultaneously belong both ‘here’ and ‘there’. Vertovec, 2001.

⁷⁴ For recent research on the concept of ‘connected communities’ in the UK see the report by, Jayani, Bonnerjee, Alison, Blunt, Cathy, McIlwaine, and Clifford, Pereira. 2012. *Connected Communities: Diaspora and Transnationality* (Queen Mary: University of London).

⁷⁵ Two of the most classic studies produced within this tendency in the 1990s belong to, William, Safran. 1991. ‘Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return’, *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1:83-99; and Robin, Cohen. 1997. *Global Diasporas: An Introduction* (London: UCL Press Ltd). According to Safran and Cohen, diasporas are identified by fitting in to one or several of these categories:1) a dispersal and scattering from the homeland; 2) a collective trauma in the homeland responsible for dispersal; 3) a sustained collective memory and myth of the homeland; 4) support in the host nation for a return to the homeland; 5) an ethnic group consciousness creating a sense of community; 6) a history of tension between the community and the host society; 7) solidarity towards other ethnic

The other subdivision, belongs to the body of research that defines diaspora as a *fluid social process*, containing two further sub-categories; one that categorises diaspora as a *type of consciousness*;⁷⁶ and secondly, one that frames the cultural practices of diasporas as *mode[s] of cultural production*. Out of these, the ones that typifies the type of research carried out in this thesis firstly belongs to diaspora as a *fluid social process*, and secondly, the formation of a diasporic ‘consciousness’, that seeks to explain how migrants are involved in complex intersubjective processes of identity construction within the diaspora space. In moving away from the diaspora as a ‘social form’ tendency, authors such as James Clifford have proposed the ability of migrant subjects to sustain much more fluid social relations in their everyday lives and cultural practices that do not conform to traditional notions of diaspora.⁷⁷ This important notion of ‘fluidity’ has paved the way for the use of the concept of diaspora space, which has also served to analyse the displacement of smaller and less visible groups, for example in this case, to identify the presence of Latin American migrants to the UK whose countries

groups; and 8) the presence of cultural community practises that sustain a group identity within the host society.

⁷⁶ The concept of a diasporic ‘consciousness’ stems from the notion of ‘double consciousness’ developed by early twentieth Century African-American writers such as W. E. B Du Bois (one of the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People –NAACP in the U.S.) to describe the process through which Black subjects are positioned in-between two cultural spaces and come to embody two identities. The aim of Black activists such as Du Bois was to promote a new pan-African identity to achieve solidarity among Blacks living in a ‘White’ world, where, “this dialect of consciousness, under favourable circumstances, fosters creativity and personal freedom, while it also enhances an understanding of collective experiences that in turn inform an enlightened perspective on the ethics of living”. Smith and Leavy, 2008:43.

⁷⁷ James, Clifford. 1994. "Diasporas", *Cultural Anthropology*, 9:302-338.

were not necessarily directly shaped by British colonialism, but by other historical events more fluidly connected to the UK.⁷⁸

The diaspora space

In this research context the use of the concept of diaspora as a process taking place in a fluid space rather than within specific localities, belongs to a broader postmodern and poststructuralist approach where according to Gupta and Ferguson:

In the pulverized space of postmodernity, space has not become irrelevant: it has been *reterritorialized* in a way that does not conform to the experience of space that characterized the era of high modernity. It is this that forces us to reconceptualize fundamentally the politics of community, solidarity, identity, and cultural difference.⁷⁹

This expansion of Avtar Brah's concept of the diaspora space has allowed researchers to investigate the interrelations between the, "ongoing political, economic, social and cultural ties between multiple institutionalized spaces that characterize diaspora".⁸⁰ In this thesis, by relating the diaspora space to the concept of postmemory we can identify how both concepts function in 'process' together, and allow us to identify an emergent in-between and hybrid space of belonging for the second generation of Chileans and Argentineans living in the UK, whose families were both directly and indirectly affected by state terrorism in the Southern Cone.

⁷⁸ Rebecca, Walsh. 2003. "Global Diasporas: Introduction", *Interventions*, 5:1-11.

⁷⁹ Akhil, Gupta, and James, Ferguson. 1992. 'Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference', *Cultural Anthropology*, 7: 9.

⁸⁰ Kalra, *et al*, 2005: 3.

Coming back to the concept of the diaspora space in the UK, it was pivotal in charting the arrival from the 1950s onwards of new migrant communities after World War II from the ex-British colonies in the Caribbean, Africa and Asia, signalling a radical alteration in the make-up of the 'British' nation-state. It has been argued that these diasporic subjects have historically not only been able to keep in touch with social and political events back home, but create new diasporic sociopolitical spaces where a 'multiplicity' of fluid belongings have resisted experiences of exclusion and racism in the host nation.⁸¹ The experiences of new migrant communities in the UK within the diaspora space were also crucial therefore in informing the emerging disciplines of postcolonial, feminist, and cultural studies from the 1970s onwards, in relation to the new social movements that were responding to increasing anti-immigration policies in Britain.⁸² Brah summarises this period in the UK well when she states that:

The New Right constructed the essence of being British to be white, without explicitly proclaiming to do so, by deploying the language of 'immigrants' and 'swamping' which, in an earlier phase during the post-war period, had become a code for people of African and Asian descent. These groups had already been described by Enoch Powell as social collectivities who could be 'in Britain' but not 'of Britain'. The use of the metaphors of 'nation', 'family' and the 'British way of life', in the New Right ideology resonated with a long history of racialized exclusions as a centrepiece of British identity.⁸³

⁸¹ See, Avtar, Brah. 1999. 'The Scent of Memory: Strangers, Our Own and Others', *Feminist Review*, 61: 4-26.

⁸² See, Gaurav, Desai, and Supriya, Nair. 2005. *Postcolonialisms: An Anthology of Cultural Theory and Criticism* (Oxford: Berg); Stephen, Spencer. 2006. *Race and Ethnicity: Culture, Identity and Representation* (London: Routledge).

⁸³ Avtar, Brah. 1993. "Re-Framing Europe: En-Gendered Racisms, Ethnicities and Nationalisms in Contemporary Europe", *Feminist Review*, 45:18.

In this context, for seminal theorists such as Stuart Hall one of the most prominent cultural studies theorists in the UK, the nation-state itself became transformed into a 'postcolonial' territory. Here, the opening of the diaspora space created the possibility for new 'enunciations', constituting new forms of cultural practices,⁸⁴ and the formation of 'reflexive' subjects, including; the researcher's capabilities to critically examine their own privileged positions *vis-à-vis* the subjects they were investigating.⁸⁵

New positionalities in a British diaspora space

By the 1970s and 1980s the assertion of a new kind of dual British identity belonging to second generation British Asians and Blacks was evident. Brah articulates this shift in identity politics from the first generation to the second as:

Britain 'turned a different colour' in a million senses of this phrase, as Powellian constructions of 'whiteness'— British = White— were publicly interrogated, challenged, and decentred: a gesture that wordlessly, but not silently, declared 'we are not just "in Britain" but rather are "of Britain", and we don't even care whether or not you agree.'⁸⁶

Hall also recognised the importance of this shift in his prominent essay titled '*New Ethnicities*', where he describes a crucial interchange between two key phases in Black cultural politics in the UK: "from a struggle over the relations of representation to a

⁸⁴ Stuart, Hall. 1990. 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora', In, *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, (ed.) Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart): 222-237.

⁸⁵ Brian, Alleyne. 2002. "An Idea of Community and Its Discontents: Towards a More Reflexive Sense of Belonging in Multicultural Britain", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 25: 607-27; Gayatri, Chakravorty Spivak. 1999. *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press).

⁸⁶ Brah, 1999: 17.

politics of representation itself”.⁸⁷ These contestations and articulations of cultural difference within the diaspora space in the UK are part of what Hall identified as a “process of cultural *diaspora-ization*”.⁸⁸ This shift he argues, came about through the politicisation of diasporic subjects marginalised on the outside of the dominant Western discursive practices of cultural representation, where the second generation in particular, was able to draw symbolic strength from their positioning within marginal spaces, first occupied by first generation migrant subjects.⁸⁹

The cultural theorist Paul Gilroy has also shown how the process of diaspora-ization had much earlier roots in other diasporic flows such as the Slave Trade that preceded the presence of Black migrant subjects within the Eurocentre.⁹⁰ By making connections between these two seemingly disconnected historical periods of Black migration, we can say that Gilroy’s work is an example of a multidirectional theory, historically linking the emerging diasporic Black consciousness of the 1970s-1980s, with the forced displacement of Black subjects in previous centuries, and the appropriation, production and commodification of Black culture ever since. Of importance for this thesis, is Gilroy’s and Hall’s identification of new diasporic cultural

⁸⁷ Stuart, Hall. 1996a. ‘New Ethnicities’, In *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies* (eds.) David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (London: Routledge): 441-449.

⁸⁸ Ibid: 447.

⁸⁹ According to Hall: “This analysis was predicated on the marginalization of the black experience in British culture: not fortuitously occurring at the margins, but placed, positioned at the margins, as the consequence of a set of quite specific political and cultural practises which regulated, governed and ‘normalized’ the representational and discursive spaces of English society. These formed the conditions of existence of a cultural politics designed to challenge, resist and, where possible, to transform the dominant regimes of representation –first in music and style, later in literary, visual and cinematic forms. In these spaces blacks have been typically the objects, but rarely the subjects, of the practises of representation.” Hall, 1996a: 441-442.

⁹⁰ Paul, Gilroy. 1993. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London: Routledge).

spaces of interchange. Spaces that have acknowledged a previously hidden but nevertheless important tradition of Black ‘countermemories’ contesting dominant Enlightenment historical narratives, and the subjugation of Black culture by Western ‘White’ culture, as a highly significant challenge to modernity’s monolithic demarcation of distinct spaces and visions.⁹¹

What the seminal works of Brah, Hall and Gilroy have initiated among others, is a tradition in British cultural studies in exposing the longstanding but previously hidden histories of Black subjects, as subjectivities that have been historically defined by processes of forced displacement. In doing so, they have identified the construction of a specific political identity, one that characterises a multiplicity of positionalities that have also stood up against the New Right politics of the 1970s-1980s targeting migrant communities. As a result, this research is also linked to Vertovec’s category of diaspora as a *mode of cultural production* – a space where diasporic ‘hybrid’ subjectivities function within, “(...) myriad, [and] dislocated sites of contestation to the hegemonic, homogenizing forces of globalization,”⁹² even despite the fact that, “the Eurocenter most successfully controls the marginal and the subaltern through the global political economy”.⁹³

The impact of British cultural studies for Braziel and Mannur has meant that subsequent authors, “(...) are also rethinking earlier notions of diaspora as grounded in

⁹¹ For a critical account of the connected processes between modernism and postmodernism, see David, Harvey. 1990. *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell).

⁹² Jana, Evans Braziel and Anita, Mannur. 2003. *Theorizing diaspora* (London: Blackwell Publishing):7.

⁹³ Lavie and Swedenburg, 1996: 5.

the fixed or metaphysical geographical foundations of home, identity, and exile,”⁹⁴ at a time when, “such models [continue to] privilege the geographical, political, cultural, and subjective spaces of the home-nation as an authentic space of belonging and civic participation, while devaluing and bastardizing the states of displacement or dislocation, rendering them inauthentic places of residence.”⁹⁵

In prioritising the in-betweenness of diasporic spaces at the same time as they represent spaces of belonging, this thesis aligns itself with those works that have identified the diaspora space in the UK of Black British culture as one constituted by a multiplicity of counter-memories of past historical traumas. It is this potential of the diaspora space to generate a different type of ‘hybrid’ identity and multidirectional consciousness capable of incorporating different historical events that I argue also brings into play, the crucial juncture between the field of the politics of memory and the diaspora field in the UK. A space where different legacies of trauma from the Southern Cone military dictatorships become intertwined with older postcolonial experiences of migration and long-term settlement by earlier communities of Black and Asian migrants from the 1950s onwards in the UK. This diaspora space therefore, is continually exposed to new articulations of cultural differences and cultural memories as a process that constitutes new hybrid subjectivities and positionalities in relation to the histories of longstanding communities and more recent waves of forced and unforced migrants. Crucially, as a space of hybridity then, it exposes the various historical legacies of trauma together in the same space, where second generation Chileans and Argentines,

⁹⁴ Braziel and Mannur, 2003:6.

⁹⁵ Ibid, 6.

have not just been influenced by the legacy of state terrorism in the Southern Cone, but also by the legacy of British colonialism, which they share with Black, Asian, and other diasporic British subjects.

Hybrid identities

As previously discussed, the formation of a diaspora space has also witnessed for researchers the formation of new diasporic hybrid identities, where they have argued that the concept of ‘hybridity’ has emerged, “as a category that defies borders” where, “the creation of hybrid identities is evidence that borders are shifting, reforming, and being created.”⁹⁶ The embodiment of multiple and fluid hybrid identities from the positionality of the diaspora space is especially significant for this thesis, since as we will go on to see, postmemory is also concept that speaks about a certain kind of positionality occurring from spaces on the margins, as a reflexive and ongoing relationship with the past from the point of view of the present.

As a theoretical concept working in tandem with the concept of diaspora, the term hybridity has its roots in eighteenth century natural sciences (in the disciplines of botany and genetics) to describe a cross between two separate species of plants or animals. Subsequently, the term was appropriated by postcolonial and cultural studies theorists to conceptualise the intermixing of two cultures within the identities of diasporic subjects living in an ever-globalised world.⁹⁷ The prominent cultural theorist Homi Bhabha for

⁹⁶ Smith & Leavy, 2008: 6.

⁹⁷ See, Avtar, Brah, and Annie, E. Coombes. 2000. *Hybridity and Its Discontents: Politics, Science, Culture* (London: Routledge); and Robert, J. C. Young. 1995. *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Culture, Theory, and Race* (London: Routledge). Hybridity is a highly contested term in relation to its essentialist

example has argued that hybrid identities are forged within the in-betweenness of the diaspora space – or has he has also termed it the ‘third-space’⁹⁸ –an in-between space where:

Bhabha attempts to demonstrate the emergence of agency in the twist of displacement. It is not a form of agency which is either free floating in a state of transcendence or whose autonomy abstracts and attenuates the very points of conflict, but one which is effected by and grounded in the mobility, contingency and partiality of resistance and negotiation.⁹⁹

Bhabha himself states that:

What is theoretically innovative, and politically crucial, is the need to think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities and to focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences. These ‘in-between’ spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood – singular or communal – that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself.¹⁰⁰

As such, I would argue that Bhabha’s exposition of diasporic hybrid subjectivities in the space in-between has a lot in common with Hirsch’s concept of postmemory, in the sense that they are both theories that attempt to move beyond what Bhabha calls ‘narratives of originary and initial subjectivities’. By bringing them together, this thesis argues that the second generation postmemory narratives belonging to Chileans and

roots in racialised discourses of evolutionism and eugenics which Young argues undermines the potential of the concept as a resisting force against essentialist notions of identity.

⁹⁸ Bhabha, 2004[1994].

⁹⁹ Nikos, Papastergiadis. 1998. *Dialogues in the Diasporas: Essays and Conversations on Cultural Identity* (London: Rivers Oram Press): 46.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid: 2.

Argentines living in the diaspora space of the UK are themselves produced in the boundaries between the field of the politics of memory and the diaspora field. Secondly, they are interconnected to and in dialogue with those ‘narratives of the absence of meaning’ stemming from the Southern Cone identified by Gatti that together, share a commitment in forging new connections to the legacy of state terrorism in challenging their own essentialist constructions of familialism.

Nevertheless, as much as the concept of hybridity describes the positive capacity of diasporic subjects to challenge the bounded nature of cultural and nation-state¹⁰¹ boundaries where, “diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference”,¹⁰² others have argued that use of this concept should not neglect located struggles over cultural identity in supposed ‘multicultural’ terrains.¹⁰³ As Lisa Lowe explains in relation to Asian-American diasporic communities in the US:

Hybridization is not the “free” oscillation between or among chosen identities. It is the uneven process through which immigrant communities encounter the violences of the US state, and the capital imperatives served by the United States and by the Asian states from which they come, and the

¹⁰¹ According to Axel, diaspora represents a form of national interruption for the nation-state because it views the cultural difference inherent within it as a threat, but it also simultaneously desires to incorporate and dilute these differences within multicultural visions of social cohesion. Brian, Keith Axel. 2002. ‘The Diasporic Imaginary’, *Public Culture*, 14: 411-428.

¹⁰² Hall, 1990: 235.

¹⁰³ Discourses of multiculturalism began to develop in the 1980s as part of an approach favoured by many Western nations to promote social cohesion and integration of new immigrants into their plural societies. In the UK multicultural policies and practises were partly adopted as a way of managing the diversity of diasporic communities present in British society. See, Spencer, 2006. From a UK perspective, this approach has been critiqued for continuing to promote only one ‘British’ identity that all diasporic communities should aspire to. On this point see, Gupta & Ferguson, 1992.

process through which they survive those violences by living, inventing, and reproducing different cultural alternatives.¹⁰⁴

Here, Lowe is arguing for the need to contextualise the emergence of diaspora spaces and the hybrid identities within them as part of ongoing processes of negotiation for socio-political recognition, belonging to marginalised and excluded ethnic minorities, not privileged diasporic ones. Her contribution without necessarily being a feminist one, highlights longstanding feminist concerns in recognising the interlinked effects of the everyday lived realities and experiences of hybrid migrants in the process of identity formation for these groups.¹⁰⁵ In particular, feminist research has been crucial in demonstrating the importance of identifying the ‘grounded’ political dimensions of the localities and historical contexts of the diaspora space, and the ‘intersectionality’ of factors that affect the movement of diasporic communities such as those of gender, class, race, and ethnicity.¹⁰⁶ It is here that Floya Anthias’ model of ‘translocational positionality’¹⁰⁷ comes into play which dually questions the ease through which diasporic subjects can actually physically and emotionally travel in-between borders and

¹⁰⁴ Lisa, Lowe. 2003. "Heterogeneity, Hybridity, Multiplicity: Making Asian-American Differences." In, *Theorizing diaspora*, (eds.) Jana Evans, Braziel and Anita, Mannur (London: Blackwell Publishing): 151.

¹⁰⁵ As Kalra *et al*, have pointed out; “recognition and tolerance of difference implies a notion of the norm, of the centre. Even a decentred centre, one that is also a margin, the margin of the margins, retains the centre as the privileged site from which tolerance is deployed and difference is defined. Diaspora and hybridity recognize the disruption of that privilege, but do not offer the means to displace it, and the massive military-legalistic forces that ensure its continuity”. Kalra *et al*, 2003:137.

¹⁰⁶ Nira, Yuval-Davis, Kalpana, Kannabiran, and Ulrike, Vieten. 2006. *The Situated Politics of Belonging* (London; Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage).

¹⁰⁷ Anthias, 2006; Floya, Anthias. 2008. ‘Thinking Through the Lens of Translocational Positionality: An Intersectionality Frame for Understanding Identity and Belonging’, *Translocations: Migration and Social Change*, 4: 5-20.

cultural fields, without denying the transformative aspects of identity construction within ‘unbounded’ in-between spaces. It is therefore crucial to remember as Brah reminds us that, “what is particular about the present moment is that many of the groups who were previously racialised outside Europe are now in Europe”,¹⁰⁸ where minority diasporic groups still continue to be racialised as Other and excluded from dominant constructions of what British society should be.

Diaspora and hybridity

As we have seen in the first part of this chapter the theorisation of diaspora as a fluid social process, argues for the potential of diasporic subjects to interrupt the rigid structural formations of Western nation-states as supranational entities.¹⁰⁹ In doing so, authors have argued that the increased presence of diasporic subjects in the UK has destabilised rigid notions of identity and opened up new spaces of cultural exchange, which as this also thesis argues, constitute new multidirectional in-between spaces of postmemory, for the second generation Chilean and Argentineans featured here.

It is within this theoretical questioning and tendency in British cultural studies of viewing concepts such as diaspora, and hybrid identities in ‘process’ in different socio-cultural contexts, which I argue, critically ties these theories to the theoretical underpinnings of the main concept utilised in the thesis of postmemory. As I have discussed, theorists of diaspora and hybridity not only share a concern with exposing the

¹⁰⁸ Brah, 1993: 21.

¹⁰⁹ See also, Stuart, Hall. 2005. ‘Thinking the Diaspora: Home Thoughts from Abroad’ In, *Postcolonialisms: An Anthology of Cultural Theory and Criticism*, (eds.) Gaurav, Desai and Nair, Supriya (Oxford: Berg): 543-60.

current presence of diasporic subject in the West, but also to contextually mark the emergence of those subjectivities often constituted by personal traumas in relation to previously hidden or denied histories of colonialism or repression that reside within the boundaries of the diasporic in-between spaces of the nation-state. In addition, by taking into account British cultural studies debates on the concept of the diaspora space, this thesis also takes into account how this concept might potentially apply to newer diasporic communities, whose cultural links to Britain have been less obvious. Thus, by connecting those previous postcolonial migrations with the emergence of more recent Latin American diasporas from the 1970s onwards, this thesis is able to focus in on the hybrid experiences of second generation Chileans and Argentineans as the descendants of political exiles and migrants, giving space to a smaller but still significant diaspora.

I will now turn to expand the concept of postmemory as a multidirectional theory that exposes the conjunctions between different historical contexts and subjectivities, taking place in the in-between space of the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone and the diaspora field I have just described.

Memory studies and the legacy of the Holocaust

The related disciplines of memory studies and Holocaust studies that emerged from the early 1980s and 1990s in the social sciences in Europe and the U.S. were preoccupied with issues of representation of the Holocaust and the continuation of cultural and historical memory in the advent of subsequent historical traumatic events.¹¹⁰ This ‘turn to memory’ in these combined disciplines was associated with a broader

¹¹⁰ Misztal, 2003.

intellectual postmodernist and poststructuralist influenced ‘subjective turn’ that put into question the dominance of grand or ‘meta’¹¹¹ historical narratives, in favour of smaller previously hidden ‘micro’ narratives, focusing on the everyday lived experiences of ordinary individuals as hitherto unexplored sites of historical and subjective knowledge.¹¹² However, in this shift between meta narratives to micro accounts, Holocaust testimonies on the part of the survivors did not emerge straightaway but permeated the public consciousness slowly over two decades after the Second World War.¹¹³ It was this gradual mediated presence in the public sphere that according to Sarlo, turned these Holocaust testimonial accounts into ‘icons of truth’ pertaining to the Jewish experience of the Holocaust.¹¹⁴ For example, according to Estelle Tarica during the dictatorship in Argentina and in the immediate period after, the ‘imagery’ of the Holocaust had a big impact on an intelligentsia that drew comparisons with the fate of the Jews in Europe with the violence unleashed by the dictatorship, partly to draw international attention to what was taking place there.¹¹⁵ For Tarica, the case of the

¹¹¹ See, Jean-François, Lyotard. 1984. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, translation from the French by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi; foreword by Fredric Jameson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).

¹¹² Susannah, Radstone. 2007. Trauma Theory: Contexts, Politics, Ethics, *Paragraph*, 30: 9-29; Sarlo, 2005.

¹¹³ Didier, Fassin, and Richard, Rechtman. 2009. *The Empire of Trauma: An Enquiry into the Condition of Victimhood* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press); Hoffman, 2005.

¹¹⁴ Sarlo, 2005. See also, Andreas, Huyssen. 2000. ‘Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia’, *Public Culture*, 12: 21-38; Sarlo, 2005.

¹¹⁵ Estelle Tarica claims that, “while it is undeniable that there were some commonalities between Argentine state security forces and the Nazis in terms of their methods of repression— including the infamous “Nacht und Nebel” technique of making victims disappear completely, which originated in Occupied France—Argentina’s military rulers shared no common goals with the Nazis with regard to the Jews.” Estelle, Tarica. 2012. ‘The Holocaust Again? Dispatches from the Jewish “Internal Front” in Dictatorship Argentina’, *Journal of Jewish Identities*, 5:91. See also, Edy, Kaufman. 1989. ‘Jewish Victims of Repression in Argentina under Military Rule (1976-1983)’, *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 4:479-499.

famous Argentinean journalist and publisher Jacobo Timerman,¹¹⁶ demonstrates the impact of Holocaust testimonies in the Southern Cone, where as a member of the Jewish community, his own strategic comparison of the Holocaust to the *Proceso* served to publically denounce the violent practices of state terrorism which certain societal sectors would go on to deny for many years.¹¹⁷

This transplantation of the Holocaust model to speak about other contexts has been the backdrop for how the concept of postmemory slowly began to be applied in the case of the Southern Cone military dictatorships of the 1970s. While commentators such as Sarlo in Argentina have criticised this shift for trivialising both historical contexts, I argue that for this thesis, the merging of postmemory and the diaspora space actually serve to highlight the multidirectional and travelling aspects of both these concepts. Where, we can still acknowledge the historical precedent of the Holocaust model in drawing out the process of intergenerational transmission, while charting its emergence as a tool with which to analyse the legacy of other traumatic historical contexts. As a multidirectional concept, the legacy of the Holocaust for postmemory therefore reminds us not to view it as a ‘one size fits all’ model with which to categorise and compare different traumatic experiences, but to argue for the importance of intersubjective and intergenerational connections in the transmission of cultural memory that shape the formation of future political subjectivities following traumatic events.

¹¹⁶ As the director of the leftist *La Opinión* newspaper, Timerman was critical of the dictatorship and published accounts of human rights violations, resulting in his arrest, detention and torture in 1977. See his account, Jacobo, Timerman. 1981. *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press).

¹¹⁷ Tarica, 2012: 93.

Spectacular trauma and the guardianship of the Holocaust in memory studies

One important critique in Britain of Holocaust representations and its influence on other traumatic events has come from Susannah Radstone, who has argued that there has been a ‘Manichean tendency’ in the field of memory studies of favouring the status of victims, which alongside wider cultural representations of trauma have focused almost exclusively on ‘spectacular’ instances of personal suffering.¹¹⁸ The effects of this dominant tendency for Radstone come back to the Holocaust becoming a paradigmatic model, first established according to her with the appearance of two canonical texts in the early 1990s in the U.S., the first being Cathy Caruth’s ‘*Trauma: Explorations in Memory*’ and the second Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub’s ‘*Crisis of Witnessing in Literature and Psychoanalysis*’. For Radstone, these texts lay the foundational ground from which an academic fascination in memory studies and beyond with cases of ‘pure victimhood’ arose where a shift took place, “(...) to mobilize a dialogics of witnessing to testimonies of trauma – to the overwhelming and well-nigh unrepresentable experiences of *innocent* victimhood.”¹¹⁹

As a concept so strongly tied to the Holocaust model then, it is unlikely that the proponents of postmemory were not themselves influenced by this global ascent of first-person testimonial accounts within memory studies and Holocaust and trauma discourse seeking to elate those cases of ‘innocent’ victimhood. As a result, Radstone has argued

¹¹⁸ Susannah, Radstone. 2001. Social Bonds and Psychical Order: Testimonies. *Cultural Values* 5: 59-78. Memory research for Radstone has, “coined a wealth of concepts to describe memory that exceeds the personal” where testimonial witnessing often through confessional autobiographical works, dominate popular culture and our sense of how we fit into contemporary traumas in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Susannah, Radstone. 2008. Memory Studies: For and Against. *Memory Studies* 1: 33.

¹¹⁹ Radstone, 2007: 61.

that recent works have tended to overgeneralise the links between the personal and the political, and have avoided reflecting upon some of the more ambiguous facets of traumatic experience not only associated with negative experiences, but the experiences of subjectivities beyond victimhood.¹²⁰ Partly as a response and resistance to these developments and following Astrid Erll, Radstone suggests that future memory studies work should pay closer attention to joint processes of movement and locatedness impacting on the use of certain terms and concepts to describe cultural and historical memories, and how they are in turn altered by these deployments in other locations and contexts:

For even when (and if) memory travels, it is only ever instantiated locally, in a specific place and at a particular time. It is to this precise ‘event’ of memory’s instantiation, as well as to the relations between such events, that memory research can address itself. And in order to engage with these memory events, we, as researchers need to understand, if not be a part of, the culture – however hybridized, complex, multiform – within which that memory event is taking place.¹²¹

As such this thesis departs from this advice, in the sense that it seeks to readdress how the joint deployment of the concepts of postmemory and the diaspora space, acknowledges the translocational positionality of second generation narratives that not only speak about a particular kind of diasporic subjectivity, but of their legacy stemming from first generation testimonial accounts that have previously been denied or gone unheard – transmitted as traces of human affective knowledge that testify to a certain

¹²⁰ Radstone, 2008.

¹²¹ Susannah, Radstone. 2011. ‘What Place Is This? Transcultural Memory and the Locations of Memory Studies’, *Parallax*, 17: 117-118.

type of diasporic consciousness, aware of its own positioning in relation to the space in-between. In this way, it argues for the multidirectional basis of postmemory as a concept that critically engages with its own universal application, while allowing us to focus on the interactions between the different cultural and historical specificities of the UK diasporic context and the field of the politics of memory, putting into question the fixity and rootedness of cultural memories interacting in the space in-between. Thus, it is the case that in order to acknowledge both the locatedness and fluidity of the process of intergenerational transmission in the diasporic in-between space, postmemory's origins within the private familial space need to be problematised. This is so that they not only speak about the relationship between the 'direct' victims as survivors of trauma and their kin, but expose other variants of complex familial scenes where often as has been the case with the Southern Cone military dictatorships, family members continue to be detained-disappeared.

We will see that, identifying postmemory narratives within the diasporic fluid social process of the space in-between, allows us to move beyond Hirsch's longstanding concern with the 'guardianship' of the Holocaust, to define other social actors concerned with traumatic legacies from the point-of-view of the diaspora space. One such example that highlights the relationship between postmemory and the diaspora space in the UK is the account of Victor Seidler writing on his experiences of growing up in 1950s Britain as a child of Jewish immigrants. Seidler argues that his parent's and their generation's concern was that, "they allowed you to focus on the future so that you did not have to

deal with the past.”¹²² According to him, for his parents and their contemporaries trying to adapt to a new life in post-war Britain, “it was also that ‘we’, as second generation children, were to be different from all those Jews, all those uncles, aunts, grandparents, brothers, and sisters who had died in the camps.”¹²³ For Seidler, there was some uneasiness about being a child of survivors when he states that, “sometimes it was difficult to voice our experience within our families without feeling that we were unsettling a precarious balance.”¹²⁴ This ‘precarious balance’ was also linked to the sense growing-up that, “our parents looked to us to redeem their histories. We were to provide the validation for their survival. At the same time we owed it to them to be happy and to be ‘like everyone else’.”¹²⁵ Seidler’s own experience therefore thoroughly describes the emergence of a space in-between belonging to the second generation that is both ‘conscious’ about the dynamics of intergenerational transmissions, and about their positionalities in relation to a traumatic past from the space of the diasporic present. In alignment with the experiences of the Black diaspora in the UK as highlighted by key British cultural studies theorists, Seidler’s experience raises a significant aspect of this diasporic consciousness containing a need to balance a Jewish heritage, with an ‘English’ identity in order to be accepted by society. As such, accounts such as Seidler’s remind us of the multiplicity of narratives contained in the diaspora

¹²² Victor, Jeleniewski Seidler. 2000. *Shadows of the Shoah: Jewish Identity and Belonging* (London: Berg): 5.

¹²³ Seidler, 2000: 5.

¹²⁴ Ibid: 25.

¹²⁵ Ibid: 25.

space not just historically constituted by a Black British diasporic experience, but by a Jewish one, and other subsequent migrations that came to Britain in the post-war period.

It is by paying attention to memory's 'instantiation' as Radstone has urged, as part of the 'diasporization' of postmemory in the diaspora space, that we can see how the narratives in this thesis are not just influenced by the field of the politics of memory from the Southern Cone, but by extension, by the legacies of migrant Black British and Jewish subjectivities (among many others), previous to the arrival of Latin American political refugees. The question here for Radstone in relation to the positionality of the second generation in relation to these shared testimonial legacies continues to be:

Whether this witnesser is understood as reader/listener/spectator or as a construct internal to testimonial texts or discourses, it is witnessing that enables testimony, though what is witnessed may be the sheer impossibility of representing that which struggles towards, but refuses representation.¹²⁶

I want to argue that it is precisely this 'sheer impossibility' of representing the Holocaust and other traumatic events that we have seen Seidler's account describe, as a constant critical uneasiness experienced by the second generation in relation to the complexities of intergenerational processes of transmission between generations. However, this uneasiness should not be viewed as a negative process. Instead, it precisely highlights an unproblematic association with 'easy victimhood', where subjects' roles as active 'readers/listeners/spectators' in the diasporic spaces of translation and contestation of intergenerational memory can come to question how,

¹²⁶ Radstone, 2001: 62.

“this academic ‘witnessing’ understands the difficulties of its task in relation to the ‘unrepresentability’ of the very sufferings that it seeks to redeem”.¹²⁷

This thesis then, acknowledges the complex evolution of the concept of postmemory from the testimonial legacy of the Holocaust model, as well as, its more recent applicability in other contexts incorporating different traumatic legacies, where second generation social actors are continually occupied in the task of interrogating their roles as the custodians of cultural memory.

Postmemory and the intergenerational transfer of traumatic memory

The concept of postmemory was first proposed by Marianne Hirsch in the early 1990s, with her latest volume bringing all of her essays together titled, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust*.¹²⁸ The foundations for Hirsch’s development of her concept are rooted in her own personal family background as the daughter of Holocaust survivors who ended up in the United States. It was her coming across photographs of lost family members and places together with her parent’s stories that inspired her definition of postmemory, as well as, her research in literary and cultural studies at The School of Criticism and Theory at Dartmouth College in the late 1980s, paving the way for generational feminist discussions and reflections surrounding the legacy of the Holocaust, particularly in relation to Claude Lanzmann’s film ‘*Shoah*’, Art Spiegelman’s ‘*Maus*’¹²⁹ comic book volumes, and Toni Morrison’s novel ‘*Beloved*’.

¹²⁷ Ibid: 62.

¹²⁸ Hirsch, 2012.

¹²⁹ See, Hirsch, 1992.

From this combination of personal and professional preoccupations with issues of gender, family narratives, visual media, literary text, memory and loss, Hirsch first establishes the familial space as a primary intergenerational terrain, where: “postmemory characterizes the experiences of those who grow up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are evacuated by the stories of the previous generation shaped by traumatic events that can be neither understood nor recreated”.¹³⁰ Thus she argues that while the children of Holocaust survivors did not directly experience the traumas of the Holocaust, they nevertheless grew up under its shadow and were exposed to mediated fragments and traces of stories, images, and objects pertaining to that past, where for her: “these “not memories” communicated in “flashes of imagery”, and “broken refrains,” transmitted through, “the language of the body,” are precisely the stuff of *postmemory*”,¹³¹ and where, “images and narratives thus constitute its instruments and its very medium, extending well into subsequent generations”.¹³² She continues that:

To grow up with overwhelming inherited memories, to be dominated by narratives that preceded one’s birth or one’s consciousness, is to risk having one’s life stories displaced, even evacuated, by our ancestors. It is to be shaped, however indirectly, by traumatic fragments of events that still defy narrative reconstruction and exceed comprehension. These events happened in the past, but their effects continue into the present.¹³³

¹³⁰ Hirsch, 1997: 22.

¹³¹ Marianne, Hirsch. 2008. The Generation of Postmemory, *Poetics Today*, 29:109.

¹³² Hirsch, 2008: 22.

¹³³ Hirsch, 2012: 5.

This statement is one of Hirsch's most prophetic, where she aims to demonstrate the "affective force" of postmemory beyond an immediate generation to the next. At face value, she seems to be describing a rather pessimistic reality for the second generation, 'dominated' and 'evacuated' by memories that preceded them, and 'shaped' by 'traumatic fragments' that (echoing Radstone's earlier argument about 'incomprehensibility'), 'defy narrative construction and exceed comprehension'. More recently however, perhaps in an attempt to counteract claims that her concept could undermine the agency of the second generation, she has insisted that: "postmemory—often obsessive and relentless—need not be absent or evacuated: it is as full and as empty, certainly as constructed, as memory itself."¹³⁴ In fact for Hirsch:

(...)Postmemory is distinguished from memory by generational distance and from history by deep personal connection. Postmemory is a very powerful and very particular form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through an imaginative investment and creation. This is not to say that memory itself is unmediated, but that it is more directly connected to the past.¹³⁵

The key distinctions here for Hirsch are firstly that, postmemory represents an act of 'imaginative investment' with the past, and secondly, by bringing together different generational concerns to do with the continuation and survival of memories and identities which were previously destroyed and denied, it is constituted through 'deep personal [intersubjective] connections' distinct from pure historical knowledge. I would argue that postmemory functions as a 'hybrid' creative living force, emerging from the

¹³⁴ Ibid: 22.

¹³⁵ Ibid: 22.

fluid space of the margins, a fluid form of subjectivity shaped but not overwhelmed by transgenerational memories that have travelled in the process of active transmission to the diaspora space.¹³⁶

In the texts *'Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory'* and *'The Generation of Postmemory'*, Hirsch turns to the analysis of visual (image) and textual (narrative) constructions of postmemory contained within works pertaining to second generation artists who, "(...) interact to produce a more permeable and multiple text that may recast the problematics of Holocaust representation and definitively eradicate any clear-cut distinction between documentary and aesthetic."¹³⁷ Yet, it is in creating this archive of postmemory works that Radstone has precisely criticised Hirsch for only being interested in an 'ethical aesthetics of postmemory', and ignoring the more 'fantasy laden' and uneasy identifications with perpetrators of violence present in some other second generation works of art and literature. In this case, Radstone is arguing for a more expansive definition of postmemory and other similar concepts where, "if history is not to repeat itself, the task of witnessing and remembering the sufferings of others ought not to be separated from the difficult acknowledgement of testimonial witnessing's darker side".¹³⁸ If we also think back on the dichotomy that has presided over the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone related to how the events of the dictatorships have been presented as a struggle between 'two evils', Radstone is proposing a critical stance towards all terms of 'innocence' and 'evil', and calls us to

¹³⁶ Karein, Goertz. 1998. Transgenerational Representations of the Holocaust: From Memory to "Post-Memory." *World Literature Today* 72:33-38.

¹³⁷ Hirsch, 1997: 25.

¹³⁸ Radstone, 2001: 61.

take into account the more ambiguous aspects of victimhood including the experiences of those responsible for violent crimes.

Some other problematic aspects of the concept have arisen when interpretations of postmemory have focused on its direct applicability to speak from the position of individual experience, towards collective experience. For example, in a 2006 issue of the journal *Poetics Today*, the Dutch literary critic and theorist Ernst van Alphen¹³⁹ decries postmemory's 'implied victimhood' when he argues that: "one might expect the experiences and memories of Holocaust survivors and of their children to be fundamentally different, but the expression "second generation" seems to bridge that divide and to introduce the idea of continuity between the generations."¹⁴⁰ For him, a process of 'transmission' of memory is also fundamentally flawed because:

In the case of the children of survivors, the indexical relationship that defines memory has never existed. Their relationship to the past events is based on fundamentally different semiotic principles. It is only confusing to speak of memory in this context, because memories are missing, by definition. That does not mean that the generation of the children has no knowledge of their family's past. That knowledge is, however, the result of a process of conveying, of combining historical knowledge and the memories of others. And importantly for constructing, it is the result of a strong identification with (the past of) the parents, of projecting historical, familial knowledge of a past one is disconnected from onto one's life history.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ Ernst, van Alphen. 2006. 'Second-Generation Testimony, Transmission of Trauma, and Postmemory', *Poetics Today*, 27: 473-488.

¹⁴⁰ van Alphen, 2006: 474.

¹⁴¹ Ibid: 486.

I do not agree with Van Alphen's assertion that 'memories are missing' for the children of survivors, where "the indexical relationship that defines memory has never existed".¹⁴² Hirsch's own answer to this has been:

Nothing could be truer or more accurate: of course we do not have literal "memories" of others' experiences, of course different semiotic principles are at work, of course no degree of monumentality can transform one person's lived memories into another's. Postmemory is not identical to memory: it is "post," but at the same time, it approximates memory in its affective force.¹⁴³

Hirsch is not referring to the direct transmission of memory, which the second generation unproblematically take up as their own. In fact, is actually rather interesting that in his rejection of the concept, van Alphen gives an almost perfect description of its 'affective force', in noting the emergence of a subjective 'process' of 'conveying' and 'combining' the second generation's own 'historical knowledge' with the 'memories of others'. Hirsch has also defended her use of the prefix 'post', when she states that, "like the other "posts," "postmemory" reflects an uneasy oscillation between continuity and rupture."¹⁴⁴ Thus, unlike van Alphen's claims, postmemory is more than a literal description of a process of identification without reflection, but where the 'post' signals a critical moment when the second generation 'consciously' engages with the past, by focusing on the *act* of transmission, rather than the authenticity of actual memories.

¹⁴² See also Gary Weissman's claim in relation to postmemory that, "no degree of power or monumentality can transform one person's lived memories into another's". Gary, Weissman. 2004. *Fantasies of Witnessing: Postwar Efforts to Experience the Holocaust* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press): 17.

¹⁴³ Ibid: 109.

¹⁴⁴ Hirsch, 2012: 5-6.

However, there is one concern that I share with van Alphen in relation to Hirsch's contention that postmemory promotes an 'embodied' and 'psychical' connection within: "the language of family, the language of the body: nonverbal and noncognitive acts of transfer [that] occur most clearly within a familial space, often in the form of *symptoms*".¹⁴⁵ It is this reference to symptomatology that van Alphen is also disturbed by, even though Hirsch herself later acknowledges that, "it is perhaps the descriptions of this symptomatology that have made it appear as though the postgeneration wanted to assert its own victimhood alongside that of the parents".¹⁴⁶ For van Alphen, the symptomatic nature of the corporality of postmemory in his opinion, is more indicative of a misplaced desire on the part of the second generation:

The term postmemory risks, I think, becoming unwittingly symptomatic of the desire of the generation of survivors' children to connect to the past of their parents, a desire that remains frustrated. This desire is so strong because of the radical dis-connection with that past, because of "absent memory." To describe this situation of disconnection by means of a term that implies connection may not ultimately help to understand the specificity of the problems of children of survivors and of the special dynamics between survivor parents and children.¹⁴⁷

Nevertheless, while van Alphen finds postmemory to be 'symptomatic' of a 'desire that remains frustrated', indicating the potential for trauma itself to be passed on, I would suggest that the actual issue is about the uneasiness that the second generation feels towards the act of transmission itself, which van Alphen identifies as a struggle to

¹⁴⁵ My emphasis. Hirsch, 2008: 112.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid: 112.

¹⁴⁷ van Alphen 2006: 487-488.

connect with the past from the point of disconnection. In contexts where trauma casts a long shadow, it is precisely the second generation that as Gatti's 'narratives of the absence of meaning' make clear, choose to deal with their positionality within the catastrophic void established by the period of state terrorism. It is often this very desire on the part of some of the second generation to attempt to connect from 'disconnected' spaces, which encapsulates postmemory's most useful insight in terms of expressing the uncertainty and ambiguity inherent in processes of approximation to traumatic events. Once again, it is important to reiterate the point that in the case of the field of the politics of memory in Argentina, the second generation subjectivities that Gatti describes are attempting to radically reposition the terms of mourning the loss of their parents (and other family members) as detained-disappeared subjects, in situations where the familial context was so drastically and violently altered. Therefore, memory is constituted by the voids left behind by the loss of those familial bonds, and the memory of the collective and social will on the part of the second generation, to define their political subjectivities beyond that familial sphere. As such, they share this uneasy desire as I term it wherever they are located, to be involved in the process of 'resignification' of the past, where far from becoming mere spectators to their parents' and previous generations' trauma, they are challenging the political orthodoxies of past generations. It is for this very reason, that Hirsch's concept of postmemory is important for this thesis because it is a theory that points towards the construction of an ethical subject in post-traumatic contexts where instead of reverence for the past, second generation subjects aim to build new bonds and associations with the past moving beyond limited notions of trauma.

Furthermore, I argue that it is the diaspora's in-between space which also facilitates the emergence of a different kind of second generation hybrid 'consciousness'. In her book *'After Such Knowledge'*¹⁴⁸, Eva Hoffman describes this process clearly:

I do not want to exaggerate. The Holocaust *was not* on my mind most of the time (...). For me, it was emigration itself that was the seismic quake, occluding the delayed reverberations from the greater cataclysm. Emigration, after all, happened to me, the losses it brought me were things I had actually known.¹⁴⁹

The point here made by Hoffman as a second generation diasporic subject is that, rather than the Holocaust being the central theme of her life, it was actually the process of emigration that she found to be more significant for her in shaping her relationship to past events. As a child and teenager growing up in Canada, Hoffman describes her awareness of already having a 'dual' identity in contrast to her parents, where it was not just the overwhelming facts of the Holocaust that propelled her to question her parent's experiences of this event, but her own experiences of displacement and loss. This is what facilitated her connection to her parents' past, describing that, "in a strange way, I used to value my parent's sadness, for it seemed to put me in touch with basic human experience"¹⁵⁰. Hoffman's experiences in the diaspora space add another dimension to the concept of postmemory, where her own experiences of loss permit the emergence of an empathetic affectivity with her parents, in turn connecting her with other's suffering

¹⁴⁸ Hoffman, 2005.

¹⁴⁹ My emphasis. Ibid: 93.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid: 93.

beyond the limits of the familial space, as the only site of trauma. Consequently, Hoffman's experiences resonate with those of Seidler's in 1950s post-war Britain, in the sense that they both demonstrate a diasporic consciousness of their parents' desire to shield their children from the burden of the traumatic past, in order for them to succeed in the diaspora. It is this very desire of the first generation *not* to burden their children with the trauma of the past alongside other mediated factors, which also influences the second generation to find out more about the past without becoming traumatised themselves. For Hoffman and Seidler then, what makes their accounts so significant is that evoking those familial contexts goes hand-in-hand with evoking their own experiences of their translocated positionalities in the diasporic in-between space.

The postgeneration

Subsequently, Hirsch has discussed that postmemory is, "(...) *not* an identity position but a *generational* structure of transmission embedded in multiple forms of mediation",¹⁵¹ where it is neither, "(...) a movement, method or idea; I see it, rather, as a *structure* of inter-and trans-generational transmission of traumatic knowledge and experience. It is a *consequence* of traumatic recall but (unlike post-traumatic stress disorder) at a generational remove".¹⁵² While she attempts to map out a 'generational structure' of transmission that acknowledges how postmemory is socially constructed, her continued use of notions of 'consequence' to describe 'traumatic recall' at a 'generational remove' are still problematic. This in my view implies two things: the first is that postmemory is always a given, and the second that the transmission of memory

¹⁵¹ Hirsch, 2012: 35.

¹⁵² Hirsch, 2008: 106.

only occurs one way. While Hirsch has contended that postmemory could be more than just about ‘direct’ familial links in her definition of a wider ‘affiliative’ framework of connection between different social actors belonging to the ‘postgeneration’, she somehow has struggled to move away from a language of ‘symptomatology’, once again, recalling Radstone’s comment about the dominance in memory studies of the ‘spectacular’ instances of trauma. Similarly to Hoffman’s own consideration of second generation memory, I will go on to discuss the ways in which the notions of ‘transmission’ and ‘inherited memories’ in the concept of postmemory must be problematised to look at other socially constructed processes that shape it, such as the process of displacement of diasporic subjects.

While I also principally agree with Hirsch’s argument that postmemory accounts for both a foundational *vertical* line of intergenerational identification between survivors and their kin, as well as an *horizontal* line of affiliative identification between second generation social actors, on the basis of, “(...) the power of the *idea* of family, by the pervasiveness of the familial gaze, and by the forms of mutual *recognition* that define family images and narratives”,¹⁵³: I also wish to question the kinds of familial arrangements that she might be referring to. For example, is a foundational framework of familial ties always have to be about parents and their children? What about other kinship ties that might be just as relevant? And what about the privileging of heteronormative bonds as the primary sites of the transmission of cultural memory in the context of postmemory? Or can postmemory (as Hirsch claims it can) really be used as a

¹⁵³ Hirsch, 2012: 35.

theoretical concept that can help to illuminate discussions on how transgenerational inheritances that are not biologically determined, as some have argued in the case of Argentina, come to constitute ‘queer’ bonds of affiliation between different social actors engaged in the definition of new political subjectivities?¹⁵⁴ This thesis endorses Hirsch’s argument that “*familial* structures of mediation and representation facilitate the *affiliative* acts of the postgeneration”¹⁵⁵, but repositions this postmemory framework in a diasporic in-between space belonging to second generation Chileans and Argentines, to show that a British diaspora space can also contribute to the construction of affiliative acts of postmemory beyond the Southern Cone. By acknowledging Hirsch’s statement that, “(...) the break in transmission resulting from traumatic historical events necessitates forms of remembrance that reconnect and re-embodiment an intergenerational memorial fabric that has been severed by catastrophe”,¹⁵⁶ this thesis explores how the diasporic space in-between reconfigures those lines of inter and intra generational affiliation, recognising the translocational positionality of subjects when they become engaged in collective acts of resignification. Without completely dismissing the familial origins of postmemory, this concept in this thesis is positioned within a multidirectional diasporic space of connection open to alternative multilateral channels of transmission for the postgeneration, seeking to question the continuation of a bloodline symptomatology of trauma, to a radical repositioning of the ‘familial’, creatively open to

¹⁵⁴ See, Cecilia, Sosa. 2011. *Queering Acts of Mourning in the Aftermath of Argentina’s Dictatorship: The Mothers of Plaza de Mayo and Los Rubios*, In Francesca, Lessa, and Vincent, Druliolle (eds.) *The Memory of State Terrorism in the Southern Cone: Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan): 63-85.

¹⁵⁵ Hirsch, 2012: 39.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid*: 110.

interpretation and to contestation. In fact, it re-explores the diasporic foundations of postmemory that Hirsch identified in one of her earlier essays when she claims that: “the children of exiled survivors, although they have not themselves lived through the trauma of banishment and the destruction of home, remain always marginal or exiled, always in the diaspora”,¹⁵⁷ acknowledging that, “this condition of exile from the space of identity, this diasporic experience, is characteristic of postmemory.”¹⁵⁸

Living connections from the space of disconnection

In this thesis therefore, rather than fully adopt a model of postmemory that only looks at transmission as a one-way process, I would like to maintain an engagement with Hirsch’s notion of a *living connection* (also influenced by Hoffman) – based on the view that what is being evoked by the second generation, are the conditions and the contexts of transmission and not just memory itself. I argue that there are both *connective* and *disconnective* processes of affiliation moving between different intergenerational social actors, creating different temporalities and positionalities, which force us to focus on the different narratological and sociocultural contexts of transmission, in this case, how the diaspora space alters postmemory. This further promotes a theoretical questioning which as the cultural theorist James E. Young has argued, moves beyond the ‘facts’ of memory, to the meaning created by the specific contexts and places of transmission that the second generation finds important,¹⁵⁹ as

¹⁵⁷ Hirsch, 1996: 662.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid: 662.

¹⁵⁹ James, E. Young. 2000. *At Memory’s Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press).

well as the political significance involved in remembering from different but mutual positionalities. In this way, the process of postmemory according to Young is shaped by a process of ‘hypermediation’, where the second generation’s own memories are collectively attached to what he calls a ‘vicarious’ past.¹⁶⁰ Similarly to Hirsch, Young identifies this vicarious connection in the work of some German second generation artists whose works deal with Holocaust representation, where their work, “(...) remains an unfinished, ephemeral process, not a means towards definitive answers to impossible questions”¹⁶¹. He goes on to argue that:

Not only does this generation of artists intuitively grasp its inability to know the history of the Holocaust outside of the ways it has been passed down, but it sees history itself as a composite record of both events and these events’ transmission to the next generation.¹⁶²

The use of postmemory in this thesis then is not concerned with the valid recreation of historical ‘truth’, but the uncertainties and the uneasiness that propel creative engagements for the second generation in the diaspora space when it is confronted with difficult scenarios tied to a traumatic and complicated past. This affective force of postmemory will be utilised to expand the concept to a new context where: 1) It will continue to be discussed as a theory that moves beyond the dominant model of the Holocaust, 2) It will be used to discuss how the concept can be extended beyond the traumatic familial frame, and 3) the concept will be used to dispel the idea that the second generation are passive agents and receivers of traumatic memory but instead are

¹⁶⁰ Young, 2000.

¹⁶¹ Ibid: 2.

¹⁶² Ibid: 2.

creatively positioned in relation to it in their own definitions of their political subjectivities.

It is time now to turn our attention to look at how the concept of postmemory has been used by researchers in the context of the Southern Cone military dictatorships and how the field of the politics of memory in both Argentina and Chile, has played out in the diversification of that theoretical concept.

Postmemory in a new terrain: The second generation in Argentina and Chile

Because of its significance as a process of intergenerational connection and transmission, postmemory has expanded beyond the founding context of the Holocaust to speak about other historical events, such the military dictatorships of the Southern Cone.¹⁶³ In Argentina, Susana Kaiser used this concept when she interviewed a large number of second generation Argentineans about their mediated memories of the dictatorship.¹⁶⁴ Although Kaiser uses the concept in a prescriptive way and therefore does not enter into any kind of expanded theoretical discussion surrounding its applicability, one of the most interesting proposals of her work is that rather than just focusing on second generation actors directly impacted by state terrorism, she amasses a wider variety of oral narratives that show different degrees of connection to the past. As

¹⁶³ Hirsch, 2008; Leslie, Morris. 2002. 'Postmemory, Postmemoir' In, *Unlikely Story: The Changing German-Jewish Symbiosis, 1945-2000*, (eds.) Leslie, Morris and Jack, D. Zipes (New York: Palgrave): 291-306. See also, the discussion on the concepts of postmemory and secondary witnessing, in his analysis of the debates surrounding the monumentalisation of the ESMA in Argentina as a memory site and "museum". Jens, Anderman. 'Returning to the Site of Horror: On the Reclaiming of Clandestine Concentration Camps in Argentina', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 29:76-98.

¹⁶⁴ Susana, Kaiser. 2005. *Postmemories of Terror: A New Generation Copes with the Legacy of the "Dirty War"* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan).

an alternative to focusing on the traditional ‘victims’ of the coup, she identifies those who also consider themselves as victims from a different positionality, for example, individuals whose parents belonged to security forces previous to and during the dictatorship and were killed by guerrilla groups.¹⁶⁵ As such, Kaiser’s work shifts the analysis away from a ‘competing’ field of memories, to a multiplicity of discourses (juridical, political, social, and familial) affecting the second generation. Other uses of the concept of postmemory in sociology and cultural studies in Argentina and Chile,¹⁶⁶ have tended to follow Hirsch’s lead in identifying second generation postmemory works mainly of young visual artists, often represented by the children of detained-disappeared parents, survivors, and exiles, who have been involved in the productions of first-person accounts in the shape of documentary films, photography, theatre, art and writing.

The extension of kinship ties: The children of the detained-disappeared as other voices of postmemory

The early 1990s in Argentina, Chile (and Uruguay), signalled the arrival of a new wave of second generation social actors in the public sphere, many participating in

¹⁶⁵ These stories are not directly associated with the traditional figures of the victims of state terrorism belonging to human rights groups and those directly linked to the dominant figure of the detained-disappeared, but rather, families that also consider themselves to be the ‘victims’ of ‘terrorism’ killed by armed guerrilla organisations that clashed with the civil/military governments previous to the start of the coup in 1976. Kaiser, 2005.

¹⁶⁶ For a discussion of the concept of postmemory in Uruguay with the case of individuals who were political prisoners as young children alongside their parents see, Cara, Levey. 2010. ‘Chronicle of a Childhood in Captivity: *Niños En Cautiverio Político* and the (Re)Construction of Memory in Contemporary Uruguay’, *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies*, 9: 368–376.

social movements for the first time. In Argentina for example, the children of detained-disappeared parents emerged from the long-established chain of familial relatives struggling for truth and justice since the 1970s. In 1996, Hijos por la Identidad y la Justicia Contra el Olvido y el Silencio - H.I.J.O.S. (Children for Identity and Justice Against Forgetting and Silence) was formed, with umbrella groups all over Argentina and other countries in Europe. This group became one of the most highly visible in taking on the responsibility of constituting a new public memory, departing from the public protests initiated in the 1970s-1980s by groups such as Madres and Abuelas.

One key strategy for the group was to initiate a new form of public protest called *escraches*, with the aim of turning the lens back on to civil society and engage a wider audience in recuperating a sense of social responsibility when facing past collective culpability and complicity with the crimes committed by the junta.¹⁶⁷ The *escrache* therefore, became a symbolic denunciation of the political and social vacuum existing in relation to the promotion of human rights at a time when known repressors were being pardoned by the state. It then also functioned as a wake-up call, by unveiling the presence of past repressors and perpetrators of that violence in neighbourhoods and cities where citizens had no idea or who they were living next to. In doing so, H.I.J.O.S. highlighted the historical continuity of those crimes whose reverberations were being felt through the consolidation of a neoliberal political and economic order established by the military forces back in the 1970s. Eventually, the protests were complemented by new initiatives to preserve and recover the sites of known ex-detention centres as

¹⁶⁷ Susana, Kaiser. 2002. *Escraches: Demonstrations, Communication and Political Memory in Post-Dictatorial Argentina*, *Media, Culture & Society*, 24:499-516.

memory museums,¹⁶⁸ and the creation of national archives of testimonies and documents pertaining to the individuals and groups affected by the events of the coup.¹⁶⁹ In Chile, the equivalent of the *escraches* in Argentina came in the form of *funas* first organised by the *Hijos* of the detained-disappeared (Acción Verdad y Justicia Hijos-Chile – Chilean Children for Truth and Justice Action), who began to organise street exhibits and protests in 1999, according to Stern as a result of the ‘catalysing effect’ of the arrest of Pinochet in London in the previous year.¹⁷⁰ For Stern, the second generation in Chile needed to, “go beyond forms of struggle chartered by elders”, who felt a, “need to place their own stamp on memory”, in responding to a similar culture of impunity pervading the Chilean state. He argues that:

New actions were needed to break down walls – the social distance between distinct kinds of maximal victims (relatives of the disappeared versus those of the executed); the politico-cultural tendency to reduce a multi-layered history of repression to one set of maximal victims; the assumption by perpetrators of torture including civilians that they could live free of accountability.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ See for example the long-running collaborations to turn the site of the ESMA into a memory space and museum. Mario, di Paolantonio. 2008. 'A Site of Struggle, A site of Conflicting Pedagogical Proposals: The Debates over Suitable Commemorative Form and Content for ESMA', *Journal of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies*, 6: 25-42.

¹⁶⁹ See for example in Argentina the collective groups such as Memoria Abierta, and the Instituto Espacio para la Memoria comprising of different human rights organisations that have come together to preserve testimonial accounts, to preserve the sites of detention camps as sites of memory, and to raise awareness about ongoing human rights trials (see www.memoriaabierta.org.ar and www.institutomemoria.org.ar).

¹⁷⁰ Steve, J. Stern. 2010. *Reckoning with Pinochet: The Memory Question on Democratic Chile, 1989-2006* (London: Duke University Press): 232.

¹⁷¹ Stern, 2010: 233.

Despite these new memory making initiatives in the late 1990s by the second generation led by the sons and daughter of the detained-disappeared in Argentina and Chile, observers such as Jelin have been more sceptical of this process:

This symbolic and political dominance of “familism” and more recently the identification of the second-generations with their parent’s political activism and militancy of the 1970s, leaves relatively little if any room for other and broader societal voices –for example, those based on citizenship or a universal perspective on the human condition –in the public discussion of the meaning of the recent violent past and in the discussion about policies regarding that past.¹⁷²

On the whole though, I would argue that the second generation in Argentina and Chile has displayed a much more complex relation towards the legacy of the dictatorships than Jelin expresses, in their attempts to collectively question their parents generations’ political projects and militancy of the 1970s. Ana Ros explains this new critical positionality which she finds in the work of the second generation Argentinean artist Lucila Quieto, as such:

Past and present do not eclipse each other, nor do they merge –they interact and create new compositions. One can infer that this process helped the children understand that in spite of not having access to either their own memories or the times in which their parents made decisive choices, they are part of that history, and that history in turn shapes their present.¹⁷³

¹⁷² Jelin, 2009: 177.

¹⁷³ Ana, Ros. 2012. *The Post-Dictatorship Generation in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan): 33. Ros does not use the concept of postmemory to describe the proliferation of memory work in the Southern Cone belonging to the second generation. Instead, she follows Jelin’s discussion of Todorov’s categories of ‘literal’ and ‘exemplary’ memory, with literal memory belonging to the first generation of memory activists that is mostly non-transferable, and exemplary memory belonging more to the second generation whose modes of active transmission among themselves and connections with the first generation allow for more collective memory projects to be established beyond bloodline links.

The political struggles of groups like H.I.J.O.S. in Argentina and their counterparts in Chile have therefore been complemented by new artistic interventions as postmemory works that as Ros has pointed out, acknowledge how the second generation continues to be a 'part of that history' by establishing new alternative kinship spaces available to all those committed to the resignification of a difficult but shared past.

One of the most well-known examples and most cited work in relation to this second generation attempt to radically move beyond bloodline bonds to the past, has been the documentary film '*Los Rubios*' (2003) by the Argentinean filmmaker Albertina Carri, whose work has served as the exemplar model for the concept of postmemory. The film details Carri's personal search for her identity as a child of detained-disappeared parents, and her attempts to find out more about who they were. Throughout the film, we see Carri (played by another actress) attempting to retrieve pieces of information that would give her clues as to her parents' identities by interviewing various individuals who knew them and had been detained with them, and visiting the places where her parents had lived before they were kidnapped. As it turns out Carri ends up transmitting to the audience, her own uncertainties and uneasiness about this process, and the impossibility of making any solid conclusions about who they were and ultimately, who she is. In her analysis of the film, Janis Breckenridge argues that:

While it has become somewhat commonplace to discuss disappearance as the dissolution of the identity of the *desaparecido* (thus the concerted efforts of artists and human rights activists to individualize the missing through photographs, personal narratives, and specific naming), Carri, in contrast, enthusiastically embraces the postmodern rejection of a unified subject. Not only does she find herself unable to produce a viable and satisfactory

depiction of her parents, she is unable (or unwilling) to depict herself from the narrative position of a stable “I.”¹⁷⁴

Carri’s constant refusal to pinpoint her own subjectivity and that of her parents becomes a central feature of her narrative, turning into an act of defiance and solidarity which she all wants us to partake in. This is manifested in the last sequence of the film which shows the whole group of filmmakers, actors, and producers donning blond wigs (in reference to her parent’s neighbours’ earlier claim in the film that her parents had blond hair, when in reality they had brown hair), and skip together towards a sunset in the countryside where Carri and her sister grew up. As a highly experimental and provocative film, *Los Rubios* proposes a new collective refusal to accept normative and dominant definitions and representations of the detained-disappeared, and to resist traditional expectations as to which citizens are more responsible than others for remembering. According to Cecilia Sosa, the symbolic wigs in the film, “(...) appear as a fetishized object that draws the figure of a new community beyond familial inscriptions”, that she argues, “while extending the legitimacy of loss to a variety of kinship forms, the blond heads draw a more extensive idea of “us” for postdictatorial Argentina.”¹⁷⁵ *Los Rubios* therefore has become emblematic of this new shift where second generation artists have found new collective expressions for loss as, “their projects work against facile, closed narrative forms, revealing the fictions bound up in nonreflexive first-person narratives, as well as the gaps and fissures that characterize

¹⁷⁴ Janis, Breckenridge. 2008. “Performing Memory and Identity: Albertina Carri’s *Los Rubios*”, *Letras Femeninas*, 34: 19-20.

¹⁷⁵ Sosa, 2011: 78.

any narrative of experience”.¹⁷⁶ As a leading example of postmemory political art, Carri’s film represents a widening of the field of the politics of memory in Argentina as part of the ‘narratives of the absence of meaning’ that Gatti has identified, in that, “without rejecting them altogether, the movie alters the roles sanctified by the prevalent discourses of memory, taking apart their commonplaces and questioning the identity principle that feeds them”.¹⁷⁷

In the case of Chile, we see a similar identification of a second generation postmemory aesthetic emerge, where Elizabeth Ramírez has also applied the concept of postmemory in her analysis of the documentary films of Tiziana Panizza and René Ballesteros. She states that:

From a questioning of identity as fixed, they set out as subjects in transit, confused and perplexed in the middle of an interconnected world and the transformations that contemporary Chilean society lives who have to coexist in between the ruins of the past and the progress that threatens to cover them forever at a vertiginous rate. In order not to forget, these documentary filmmakers draw attention precisely, to the impossibility of being able to do it. This is how these narrations configure themselves from the margins and from this impossibility, away from the binary discourses over forgetting and memory, without idealising the past as monument, away from commemorative practises and closer to the ruins, further away from a discourse of progress and from the advantage of living in a world “without boundaries”.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ Michael J. Lazzara. 2009. ‘Filming Loss: (Post-)Memory, Subjectivity, and the Performance of Failure in Recent Argentine Documentary Films’, *Latin American Perspectives*, 36: 149.

¹⁷⁷ Gabriela, Nouzeilles. 2005. ‘Postmemory Cinema and the Future of the Past in Albertina Carri’s *Los Rubios*,’ *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, 14: 266.

¹⁷⁸ My own translation. Elizabeth, Ramírez. 2010. ‘Estrategias Para (No) Olvidar : Notas Sobre Dos Documentales Chilenos De La Post-dictadura’, *Aisthesis*, 47: 62.

Also reflecting on these postmemory works by second generation artists who as Ramirez states are living, “in between the ruins of the past and the progress that threatens to cover them forever”, Ana Amado has also added that:

Therefore expressing themselves from an affected familial condition, they postulate a new legitimacy for bodies and affects, through statements that attempt to decipher through trauma the elaboration of a private pain. But if every history seeks a singular cause, they simultaneously manage to establish, separately or in conjunction, a profound relation with the present from collective experience.¹⁷⁹

It is within and around these reflections that the concept of postmemory has been mainly been deployed in the field of the politics of memory to analyse the critical interventions carried out by second generation artists, as part of the growing ‘narratives of the absence of meaning’, which this thesis argues, are more closely allied to the diasporic second generation postmemory narratives of the Chileans and Argentineans presented here.

Conclusion: The hybrid ‘grey-zones’ of diasporic postmemory

As discussed previously in the first part of this chapter, in the field of British cultural studies, the writings of authors such as Stuart Hall, Paul Gilroy, Homi Bhabha, and Avtar Brah have played a central part in illuminating certain aspects of the Black African/Caribbean and Asian experience of migration to the UK. What they have jointly described is the formation of a new diaspora space, a space ‘in-between’ where ‘hybrid’ subjectivities and identities have emerged, and that challenges dominant Eurocentric

¹⁷⁹ My own translation. Ana, Amado. 2004. ‘Órdenes de la Memoria y Desórdenes de la Ficción’, In, Ana, Amado, and Nora, Domínguez, *Lazos de Familia: Herencias, Cuerpos, Ficciones* (Buenos Aires: Paídos): 47-48.

models of historicizing the ‘Other’. As it has been argued, by repositioning the concept of postmemory in the diaspora space, we can come to identify a wider cultural memory field that can help to illuminate previously unknown experiences of displacement, exile, and migration belonging to a second generation that has grown-up away from the field of the politics of memory in Chile and Argentina. The notion of ‘hybrid’ narratives and subjectivities recall Bhabha’s words when he states that:

Hybrid agencies find their voice in a dialectic that does not seek cultural supremacy or sovereignty. They deploy the partial culture from which they emerge to construct versions of history memory, that give narrative form to the minority positions they occupy; the outside of the inside: the part in the whole.¹⁸⁰

This chapter has shown that the partial ‘history memories’ that Bhabha argues are being evoked by hybrid and diasporic agencies, form a part of both the emerging ‘narratives of the absence of meaning’ stemming from the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone, and the diaspora field of the UK. The hitherto untold oral narratives and subjectivities in this thesis provoke us to think about the in-between spaces of memory that emerge when the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone, and the diasporic field in the UK combine together, and how they jointly extend the reaches of the concept of postmemory from its familial origins to its conception of an affiliative postgeneration. In doing so, it critically positions all of these fields and concepts within a diasporic cultural memory landscape ‘in motion’, which following Hall, is putting

¹⁸⁰ Homi K., Bhabha. 1996. ‘Culture’s in-Between’, In *Questions of Cultural Identity*, (eds.) Stuart, Hall and Paul, du Gay (London: Sage): 58.

these concepts ‘under-erasure’,¹⁸¹ while still being attentive to the situatedness of specific historical and national contexts and how they impact upon cultural memory narratives.

In acknowledging this new opening and extension of the field of the politics of memory towards its boundaries, we need to move beyond the aesthetic of postmemory and add to the debate the combined rise of new societal voices who are also confronting the continuing issues of witnessing and transmission of memory within a new memory landscape. In the case of Argentina, Vikki Bell and Mario di Paolantonio have identified the emergence of a new social body (what they term as the *nomos*); constituted through shared social, political, and legal civic engagements with a traumatic past, which they argue have been translated into new political and social forms of activism by new social actors.¹⁸² As they define it, it is the same ghostly presence of the figure of the detained-disappeared, first conjured by their direct relatives, that is now giving the *nomos* its *raison d’être*, resignifying new social and psychic bonds beyond biological ties.¹⁸³ I would like to propose that this new social body of the *nomos* in the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone, is also historically constituted by the displacement of millions of exiles and migrants into the wider diaspora tied to all of the military

¹⁸¹ Himself following Derrida. Stuart, Hall. 1996b. ‘Introduction: Who Needs ‘Identity’? In, Stuart, Hall, and Paul du Gay *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London: Sage): 2.

¹⁸² Vikki, Bell, and Mario, Di Paolantonio. 2009. ‘The Haunted Nomos: Activist-Artists and the (Im)Possible Politics of Memory in Transitional Argentina’, *Cultural Politics*, 5: 149-78.

¹⁸³ “In these relations between the absent bodies of the disappeared, the desires of the “social” body, and the abstract regulative body of the law, it is in the “liveliness” of the haunted *nomos* that there remains hope that in conjuring with ghosts, people will continue to contest, to propose, and to reconsider their commitments in pursuit of justice”. Bell & Paolantino, 2009:172.

dictatorships of the Southern Cone. The longstanding presence of Chilean and Argentinean exiles (including all other Southern Cone exiles) in the diaspora space, and their transnational connections and struggles to defy their respective regimes from abroad, led to the successful arrest of General Pinochet in London in 1998, at a time when those nation-states were reluctant to pursue trials, and encouraged their citizens to move on from the past. In addition, It is this very current extension of the diasporic reaches of the field of the politics of memory that in addition to a familial legacy of exile had also influenced the second generation in their coming-of-age in the diaspora space, at a time when the subjects interviewed here began to question their own relationships to a traumatic past present in different ways within their own family backgrounds.

By exposing the connections between past and present political responsibilities of social actors in the space in-between the field of the politics of memory and the diaspora field; we can begin to think about the different kinds of positionalities that this conjuncture produces. This form of analysis follows on from Radstone's call to document 'testimonial witnessing's darker side', as an 'ethics of witnessing' capable of identifying what she labels as the 'grey-zones' of traumatic memory.¹⁸⁴ As such, rather than simply presenting the second generation narratives explored here as continuations of trauma, this thesis will go on to how they critically engage with dominant notions of victimhood within their own positionalities, and how they speak about other histories, not directly associated with their own direct experiences. In this respect they, "work

¹⁸⁴ Radstone, 2001.

against the grain of identifications with ‘pure’ victimhood”,¹⁸⁵ where as Pascal Bos argues, there is a, “great need to investigate and theorise further the “lines of relation and identification” involved in the process of postmemory”, in terms of, “both for those with and those without familial postmemory, since I believe that not doing so might lead to an appropriation that can become purely personal and sentimental, whereby “context, specificity, responsibility, history” become unclear”.¹⁸⁶

In identifying the grey-zones of diasporic postmemory, I would like to depart from Gatti’s argument that the field of the politics of memory: “is a terribly complex field, undergoing construction, full of agents in full struggle for a legitimate space for enunciation, fighting to impose the historical truth, the real memory”¹⁸⁷, and instead reiterate Rothberg’s claim that:

(...) the misrecognition of collective memory as a zero-sum game –instead of an open-ended field of articulation and struggle—as one of the stumbling blocks for a more inclusive renarration of the history of memory and a harnessing of the legacies of violence in the interests of a more egalitarian future.¹⁸⁸

As an alternative to a competing field of memory narratives I would like to propose that that the coming together of the fields of the politics of memory and the diaspora space, allow us to expand on the multidirectional aspects of the concept of postmemory which

¹⁸⁵ Radstone, 2001: 65.

¹⁸⁶ Pascale, Bos. 2003. ‘Positionality and Postmemory in Scholarship on the Holocaust’, *Women in German Yearbook*, 19: 61.

¹⁸⁷ My own translation. Gatti, 2008: 19.

¹⁸⁸ Rothberg, 2009: 21.

as Rothberg advocates, form part of more inclusive interlinked landscapes of cultural memory. In this space in-between, the connection between the diasporic narratives belonging to second generation Chileans and Argentineans and the ‘narratives of the absence of meaning’, collectively articulate new affiliative bonds that in turn, depart but at the same time question, their bloodline links to the past. Thus, it is argued here that the positing of postmemory in a diasporic in-between context involves processes of identification and of translation, where:

(...) Translation is also a way of imitating, but in a mischievous, displacing sense –imitating an original in such a way that the priority of the original is not reinforced but by the very fact that it *can* be simulated, copied, transferred, transformed, made into a simulacrum and so on: the ‘original’ is never finished or completed in itself. The ‘originary’ is always open to translation so that it can never be said to have a totalised prior moment of being or meaning – an essence.¹⁸⁹

In this sense, the in-between space commits these different narratives to hybrid processes of translation where, “the process of cultural hybridity gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognisable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation.”¹⁹⁰ They in turn, disrupt the originary site of the familial space by putting it in motion and promoting new locations of belonging where the formation of future affective communities can emerge from the spaces at the margins of traumatic resignification. Following Cvetkovich’s notion of affective communities, this thesis follows her advice to attempt to, “(...) move beyond narratives of assimilation or

¹⁸⁹ Homi, K. Bhabha. 1990. ‘The Third Space: Interview with Homi Bhabha’ In, *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, (ed.) Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart):210.

¹⁹⁰ Bhabha, 1990: 211.

national belonging that demand feelings of unambivalent patriotism or that restrict the language of loss to sentimental forms of nostalgia”,¹⁹¹ to look at how the narratives of the second generation of Chileans and Argentineans living in the UK, intermix experiences of loss and trauma, with experiences of survival, defiance, resilience and ultimately, of joy. Rather than viewing these narratives of postmemory in terms of sorrow, for the memory research involved: “here, creativity rests on engaging with the traumatic event without reification”,¹⁹² where:

(...) cultural memories, identities, and practises [that] do not flow simply or predictably from one generation to the next or from the homeland to the diasporic people, but paradoxically in both directions. That is, certain memories and traditions and rituals flourish in the diaspora in ways that they never did in the homeland.¹⁹³

In subsequent chapters I will go on to show how the traces of postmemory in the narratives of second generation Chileans and Argentineans have travelled back and forth between different cultural memory fields but irrupt within a particular diasporic in-between space, which expresses collective articulations *and* disarticulations of traumatic memory, questioning the contexts of familial transmission from which they emerge. This space in-between, allows us to explore further the complexities of the concepts of postmemory and the diaspora space, by acknowledging the ‘living connection’ that the

¹⁹¹ Cvetkovich, 2003: 119.

¹⁹² Nerea, Arruti. 2007. ‘Trauma, Therapy and Representation: Theory and Critical Reflection’, *Paragraph*, 30: 6.

¹⁹³ Alison, Landsberg. 2004. *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press):10.

second generation feels towards the past, that in turn, facilitate wider affiliative bonds with other second generation actors tied to different historical and cultural contexts.

Introduction

As detailed previously in Chapter 1, the main theoretical framework of this thesis interlinks the field of the politics of memory from the Southern Cone and the diasporic field, to discuss how the concepts of postmemory and the diaspora space can shed light on the second generation narratives of the Chileans and Argentineans subjects that occupy the space in-between those two fields. Chapter 2 will depart from this theoretical framework, by considering the methodological outline of the thesis and detailing the specificities of the interview process, and subsequent oral history and feminist theory approaches used to frame the narratives discussed in upcoming chapters. An additional aspect of this chapter is to also present the role of the researcher as a key component of the research background, whose intentions, positionality and reflexivity cannot be ignored in terms of approaching a subject matter and field that is intimately linked to the researcher's own background. In that sense, the methodology not only reflects a process of knowledge foundation on diasporic postmemory, but how it also forms part of a process of becoming a reflexive researcher. The positionality of the researcher within this framework becomes crucial in how these narratives are unveiled, so we can not only observe the familial and affiliative components of postmemory, but question the power dynamics of the interviews as a joint process of memory construction between researcher and interviewee. Besides, within the interview space these private familial memories and identities also speak of their potential to become public memories, with the capacity to be shared among different social actors and encompass a collective and multidirectional memory landscape.

Narrating postmemory

Crucial for the approach followed in this thesis so far, has been the work of British cultural studies theorists and the overarching discussions over the fluidity of hybrid identities present in a shifting diaspora space, which this thesis argues are important interacting factors that influence the formation of second generation postmemory. It therefore follows that, the oral narratives here are viewed as discursive constructs that are just as fragmented and unfixed as identity, and carry a multiplicity of meanings, that have the capacity to tell different stories to different audiences. In the article titled, '*Narrating the Self*'¹⁹⁴ by Elionor Ochs and Lisa Capps they identify the various forms that narratives can take and how authors and researchers across various disciplines in the social sciences have framed narratives as verbalised, visualised and embodied constructions. They argue that since narratives are primarily drawn from personal experience, the choice of theoretical framework by researchers in how they present and explain those narratives is necessarily also tied to the development of what they call an 'unfolding reflective awareness' in how we, "come to know ourselves as we use narrative to apprehend experiences and navigate relationships with others".¹⁹⁵ They argue that, "personal narratives shape how we attend to and feel about events. They are partial representations and evocations of the world as we know it".¹⁹⁶ They also explain that narratives unfold in a relationship between unstable and situated selves, as a shared act of unveiling partial stories. They state that:

¹⁹⁴ Elionor, Ochs, and Lisa, Capps. 1996. 'Narrating the Self', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 25:19-43.

¹⁹⁵ Ochs & Capps, 1996: 21.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid*: 21.

We use narrative as a tool for probing and forging connections between our unstable, situated selves. Narrative activity places narrators and listener/readers in the paradoxical position of creating coherence out of lived experience while at the same time reckoning with its impossibility.”¹⁹⁷

As it were, their observations also recall the relationship between researcher and interviewees, to acknowledge how the interview space itself constitutes an interlinking space of exchange of narratives and positionalities that have to be negotiated, in the production of a main narrative to establish between the narrator and listener/reader/viewer. In this case, the multiplicity of memories and experiences present in second generation Chilean and Argentinean postmemory narratives in the UK highlight another component of narrative: that of the spatiality of the diasporic in-between space where both researcher and interviewees engage in a reflexive process of memory construction. The interview transcripts and notes that are produced after the interviews are carried out, display the results of collaboration where narratives are jointly constructed between the researcher and interviewees.¹⁹⁸ In this way, the formation of postmemory within the interview space melds the past with the present where, “reflexivity encourages an ironic sense of the ‘said before’: the feeling that one cannot invent anything new but merely play with the already existent”.¹⁹⁹

The use of oral narratives in this thesis therefore takes into account the ‘multi-sited’ ways of revealing the complex dimensions of diasporic postmemory, which are

¹⁹⁷ Ibid: 29.

¹⁹⁸ Patricia, Leavy. 2011. *Oral History: Understanding Qualitative Research* (New York: Oxford University Press).

¹⁹⁹ Chris, Barker. 2008. *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice* (London: Sage):201.

located beyond the traditional boundaries of testimonial accounts of a dictatorial past in the Southern Cone. It is for this reason that the use of oral narratives become so crucial since they reveal how the concept of diaspora space is interrelated with the notion of 'hybrid' identities that are continually in a process of translation in the diasporic in-between space, and that allows diasporic subjects to be aware of cultural differences in forging multiple identities, capable of deploying simultaneous expressions of belonging.²⁰⁰ Therefore, the methodological framework adopted here treats the narratives belonging to the Chilean and Argentinean second generation as being continually in process, as hybrid subjectivities that function within the situatedness of an alternative diasporic postmemory landscape that travels, and is tied to Gatti's 'narratives of the absence of meaning' in their joint reflexive ability to creatively question the fixed meanings attached to a dictatorial past.

By drawing upon semi-structured interviews carried out with Chilean and Argentinean descendants of exiles and economic migrants, this thesis also seeks to qualitatively highlight the situatedness of the diaspora space and continuing presence of long-standing groups of Latin Americans in the UK that came over as political exiles from the 1970s onwards, by drawing attention to the current postmemory landscape inhabited by the second generation. In this landscape, it will be shown that intergenerational memory transmissions originating in the familial space also feature experiences that denote more affiliative modes of connection between different social

²⁰⁰ Kalra *et al.*, argue that, "It is by recognizing difference rather than denying it in an attempt to be part of a homogenous whole that diasporic consciousness may emerge". 2003: 30.

actors living in the diaspora, therefore expanding the concept of postmemory as a multidirectional theory in memory studies.

Research background and preparation

In order to argue for the complex theoretical overlaps of the two cultural memory fields; that of the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone and that of the diaspora space, this thesis carried out detailed, semi-structured qualitative interviews, over a period of three years (2009-2011), with fifteen interviewees of different ages and social backgrounds, that were all of Chilean or Argentinean descent and living in the UK. In total, two first generation Chilean female exiles were interviewed (the mothers of three of my interviewees); and out of thirteen second generation interviewees, seven were the children of Chilean exiles born in the UK (two females and five males), five were children of Argentinean exiles or economic migrants (two females and three males); and one interviewee went into exile with her parents fleeing both the Chilean and Argentinean dictatorships. All the interviewees lived in London at the time of interview except for one who lived in the north of England, and their ages varied (from young adults to people in their fifties and sixties). Table 1 below shows the pseudonyms given to each interviewee (all interviewees are anonymous), participant's details, and the date of interview.

Table 1.

Names	Participant's details	Date of Interview
Sofia	First generation Chilean/Argentinean political exile. Mother of Elena and Mauricio	4/03/2009
María	First generation Chilean political exile, mother of Amelia.	2/12/2008
Alicia	Second generation daughter of Chilean political exiles. Born in the UK.	9/02/2009
Emilio	Second generation son of Chilean political exiles. Born in the UK.	29/06/2009
Luis	Second generation son of Chilean political exile (Chilean father and British mother). Born in the UK.	18/02/2009
Amelia	Second generation Chilean daughter of María. Born in the UK.	23/10/2010
Gabriela	Second generation Argentinean daughter of political prisoner. Born in Bolivia and living in the UK.	18/10/2010
Felipe	Second generation son of Argentinean political exiles. Born in exile in Panama.	2/10/2011
Ana	Second generation Argentinean daughter of Argentinean-Jewish exiles. Born in Israel.	21/04/2009
Miguel	Second generation Argentinean son of economic migrants to the UK. Born in Argentina.	9/03/2009
Elena	Second generation daughter of Chilean/Argentinean political exiles (Sofia). Born in Chile and exiled alongside her parents. Sister of Mauricio	2/03/2009
Mauricio	Second generation son of Chilean/Argentinean political exiles (Sofia) and younger brother of Elena. Born in Scotland.	16/03/2009
Jose and Alberto	Second generation sons of Chilean political exile. Born in the UK.	25/09/2011
Juan	Second generation Argentinean son of disappeared father. Born in Argentina and living in the UK.	22/10/2011

The main criteria for selecting interviewees involved a range of different factors usually according to which country their families originated from. The majority of second generation Chilean interviewees for example, were selected by approaching the first

generation, or by directly contacting individuals. I did this when I attended specific academic or cultural events tied to Latin America, such as the vigil outside the Chilean Embassy held every year by Chilean exiles in London on September 11 to commemorate the start of the coup, or at other academic events where I knew Chilean exiles were likely to be present. I introduced myself and explained my research, and whether they would mind being interviewed anonymously for the research project. This approach proved to be very successful with my Chilean interviewees as I very easily identified a core group of people happy to participate in the research.

A slightly different approach was used in contacting my second generation Argentinean interviewees since most of them compared to my Chilean interviewees were not the children of exiles coming from families of political activists with a longstanding presence in the British public eye, so they were harder to identify. Here, I had two strands of establishing contacts, one was secured by approaching the Argentinean Embassy that holds events for Argentineans studying or living in the UK who put me in touch with professionals (doctors, lawyers, academics) who then contacted me and expressed an interest in taking part. The second approach was to use my existing networks of Argentinean friends and acquaintances who also put me in touch with people to interview who were resident in the UK.

As it turned out, the ways through which I contacted my interviewees and the people I identified would have an impact on the research in terms of the scope and the background of the people featured in this thesis, since they all tended to be from professional families from what would be considered middle-class backgrounds, defined

by the fact that most parents and children completed or were in the process of completing a basic secondary education, had an university degree, or at the time of interview were studying at university. Interestingly some of my interviewees for example, were also similarly to me the children of scientists, with one interviewee being the daughter of an ex-colleague of my father's, who I had known as a child but had lost touch with in subsequent years. This particular encounter proved to be insightful as I had to deal with the unexpected situation of interviewing someone I had known in the past, and balancing this with carrying out a formal interview.

All interviews were digitally recorded and lasted between forty five minutes to an hour and a half. In terms of briefly explaining my research to my interviewees before their interviews, because my second generation Chilean participants were all children of political exiles, these individuals on the whole tended to approach the subject matter more directly from the start of their interviews, and seemed to be prepared about the types of questions they were likely to be asked. On the other hand, with some of the Argentinean interviewees, in some instances I was not sure on the specific details of each person's background, so I had to be more aware of how I negotiated my way around the first types of questions I would ask in order to try and gauge individual relations to the dictatorial past, in some cases where those connections were not so clear or direct. Overall, I found that all of the interviewees were very keen to tell me their stories and were interested in the type of research carried out here which I briefly

introduced to each person before the start of the recording and assured them on their anonymity throughout.²⁰¹

When the interviews were finished, the participants were given the opportunity to ask any other questions, supply additional information, or let me know if there was any sensitive information they did not want to feature in the transcripts or thesis. As a researcher, I found these post-interview conversations to be very productive, both in the sense that they offered the interviewees a chance to ask any additional questions about the research process, about my reasons for carrying out the research, and for me to be able to thank individuals for their participation.

The interview questions and key themes of postmemory

The in-depth interviews that were carried out adopted a semi-structured framework, which meant that beforehand, a series of core questions were drawn up that would be supplemented by additional ones during the interview. All the questions aimed to follow a chronological order in relation to each participant's lives, to be able to establish important life moments and periods relevant to the research.

My key areas of questioning for the second generation were based on identifying key life story themes of: establishing place of birth and where each person grew up; circumstances of arrival to the UK (through exile, economic migration etc.); family history in relation to each case e.g. if the family had been exiled, what did the interviewee know or remember about this period; what particular stories did they remember being told as a child in relation to the dictatorships, or what memories did

²⁰¹ For the interview process, I followed the practical and ethical guidelines in: Donald, A. Ritchie. 2003. *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide* (New York: Oxford University Press).

they have in relation to specific contexts or places where their parents told them about the past; their experiences at school and with friends; language and growing up with two different cultures; travel and relationship with their country of origin and extended family; future plans and hopes; and specific moments that might have affected certain individuals and their families as related to the dictatorships, such as, the detention of Pinochet in London in 1998 that affected most of my Chilean interviewees.

In the interviews, identifying key life story themes was crucial in establishing how familial narratives unravelled, whether individuals and their families discussed or did not discuss the dictatorial past, the importance of the past in everyday life, and identifying different modes of intergenerational transmission other than through direct conversations. In turn, the questions were also designed to observe: how these narratives would become more or less significant as time went by, or whether certain historical or familial episodes triggered other memories yet to emerge. Again, the overall approach was primarily targeted at identifying the transmission of oral narratives, but also other types of transmissions, such as bodily gestures, as well as encounters with material objects, the formation of other spaces of transmission outside the familial sphere, and even of silences. Silences here largely refer to the feelings on the part of the second generation about what was not being directly said, when they perceived that their parents or others around them in past instances were keeping things about the past from them, often in situations where some memories were too painful to share. But as we will see later on, this process of silence is often tied to the first generation's need to preserve a private protective space as a copying mechanism in the face of past traumas, and as noted with Seidler and Hoffmann, to unburden the second generation of the past, but

which is still somehow passed on to them through bodily gestures and other forms of transmission.

Questions were also asked about the extent to which each participant outside of the familial space, found out more about the periods of the dictatorships on their own, through the mediums of films, television, books, music, art and so forth. This last is in line with establishing Hirsch's most basic mediated components of postmemory, in her case experienced mainly through contact with family photographs and personal mementos in the familial sphere, but also in relation to what happens to individuals when they come into contact with these objects or narratives outside of the family, such as when going to art galleries, watching a film, or reading a book.²⁰²

In addition to the private dimensions of diasporic postmemory, I was interested in how the periods of childhood and adolescence in particular were important, in terms of how the interviewees began to identify both within and outside of the family frame, in relation to other external events that influenced family life from the outside in a diasporic context. The interconnections here between the field of the politics of memory and the diaspora fields as we shall see in further chapters, is also extremely significant for this thesis, since many of the participants featured here spoke about their experiences of living in-between these two fields; in terms of speaking different languages, attending schools in different countries, identifying as Chilean, Argentinean or British, and their travel between the two countries and interest in Latin American culture, politics and current affairs.

²⁰² Hirsch, 1997.

After each interview, transcripts were produced following a preliminary data analysis format.²⁰³ Overall, what this preliminary data analysis method allowed was an ordering of the interview material by identifying emerging themes in the narratives, and to be able to select key excerpts to substantiate the argument being made. As such, this process revealed the key decision-making skills needed when dealing with such material in the sense that due to the specificity of the questions that I asked the interviewees, not all interviewees and interview material gathered went on to feature in the thesis. For example, one key decision was to omit two interview narratives as they did not address the specific research areas and discussed other material that had no relevance for the project. In addition, part of the research process includes making a decision about what material to use and what to leave out, therefore certain portions of that material remained unused, with the researcher having to strike a balance between providing enough data and theoretical discussion throughout different chapters.

The question of language

On a practical note, the interviews tended to be carried out in English with some in Spanish, and in some cases, a mixture of the two. This very much depended on the individual person and their level of language competence, where it was left to the interviewees what choice of language they felt more comfortable talking in (see the Appendices section for all transcriptions of quotes used in the text from Spanish to English). There were differences between countries, for example, the Chilean

²⁰³ This research format was taken from, Carol, Grbich. 2007. *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Introduction* (London: Sage).

interviewees who had been born in the UK tended to feel more comfortable speaking in English, and the Argentinean interviewees tended to use Spanish.

The use and relevance of language therefore did become an important factor during the interviews since most people spoke in the language they felt more comfortable expressing themselves in, on some occasions mixing the two together (a common practice for those born in the UK and whether one or more parents spoke Spanish), or using certain words or expression in Spanish or English to make a point. When it was discussed openly during the interviews, many of those born in the UK lamented their lack of Spanish speaking competence which they linked to their travels to Chile or Argentina and being unable to fully communicate with family and friends. Some even expressed anxiety in this regard, recalling how when they were growing up in the UK, they resented their parents for speaking to them in Spanish since this was an indicator that they were 'different' to the rest of society around them. In general, for those interviewees who had mainly learnt Spanish from their parents, there was a clear distinction between their lives at home where they were exposed to a different language and other Chilean or Argentinean cultural influences, and their lives outside the home (in negotiating 'British' or 'English' culture at school for example). Language then is one indicative factor of the second generation's hybrid positioning in-between two upbringings, two cultures, and two different historical and sociopolitical contexts as part of their coming-of-age in the diaspora space. This was especially when language was discussed in relation to the concept of identity and whether interviewees saw themselves as either being 'Chilean', 'Argentinean', 'British', or a bit of both. The ability to be bilingual, and to speak Spanish in particular, once again contributed to the idea of

‘fitting in’, and the often repeated experience of feeling like a ‘fish out of water’ if family members in Chile and Argentina thought of them as being more ‘English’, but themselves identifying more as Chilean or Argentinean, especially when living in the UK.

The second generation

One important categorical distinction that I have purposely not treated in the previous chapter but that I will discuss here is the use of the term ‘second generation’ and what it means in this thesis. As we have seen, the term second generation is highly contested, especially when applied in the context of the Southern Cone military dictatorships when so many children of detained-disappeared parents or relatives were also for example, incarcerated alongside their families, born in captivity, or witnessed their parents disappearance, meaning that they themselves were directly impacted upon by state-terrorism. However, the way in which I define the use of the term second generation in this thesis is rather different to its literal meaning and comprises two key aspects. On the one hand, I do make use of it as a descriptive term to encompass a generational group whom the majority did not live under the dictatorships, but were born either during, or directly after in the periods of transition to democracy in Chile and Argentina, who would have been too young to remember anything specific about those periods on their own terms. On the other hand, I use the term second generation in relation to the concept of postmemory as devised by Hirsch, to identify a ‘generational distance’ between different temporal and spatial frameworks of affiliation to the past. In this sense, the narratives that I present here are tied to the experiences of growing-up and coming-of-age in a diaspora space, which is a different experience from that of the

first generation that lived under the dictatorship as adults. Of course, as I will show in further chapters, in some cases the line between first and second generation becomes extremely blurred for some of the interviewees featured here, complicating the lines of intergenerational transmission and postmemory. For example, while the majority of my Chilean interviewees were born in the UK, some of my Argentinean interviewees were born in the 1970s and were young children during the dictatorship, and a few were made exiles alongside their parents, despite not remembering a great deal about this period. Nevertheless, unlike the use of the term the ‘1.5 generation’²⁰⁴ by some theorists to precisely describe this in-between generation that experienced trauma from a young age, I will stick with the use of ‘second generation’ because I believe it is important, despite some obvious crossovers, to preserve the second generation’s distinct positioning to the previous generation (both in the field of the politics of memory and the diaspora).

Rather than using second generation to denote a strict category of legitimacy from which to speak about the past as the generation following that of the victims of state terrorism, I wish to use this category to draw upon the different types of subjectivities following on from a traumatic past that are influenced in making that past an important aspect of their present identities and narratives. For this thesis, following Young’s observations about the second generation, what is crucial is how this positionality signposts a different relational affiliation to a traumatic past, where individuals cannot come to know that past outside of the context of ‘inter’ and ‘intra’

²⁰⁴ See, Susan, Rubin Suleiman. 2002. The 1.5 Generation: Thinking About Child Survivors and the Holocaust, *American Imago*, 59: 277.295.

generational transmissions.²⁰⁵ What the second generation is evoking are the conditions of those transmissions, not only what memories are being transmitted belonging to the first generation, but what new memories are created from those encounters. Here, the timing of this awareness is also crucial. Without dismissing the traumatic experiences of some individuals as children, second generation postmemory here is shaped by the process of displacement as well as other mediated factors that invite a connection to an unresolved past at a moment in time when that generation is coming-of-age.²⁰⁶

Thus, as we will come to see in further chapters, the category of second generation is treated as very heterogeneous, and speaks of a multiplicity of experiences. Starting with my second generation Chilean interviewees, all of them are children of at least one or two parents who came over to the UK in the 1970s as political exiles, and as a result the majority were born in the UK. In terms of thinking about how the concept of postmemory applies to this group, they tend to represent in different ways, experiences that are often characterised by smaller family units that escaped political persecution. These interviewees therefore shared similarities in terms of the ways in which the state terrorism of the Chilean regime impacted on their families through the practices of kidnap, imprisonment, torture and exile, and how those families were then able to escape as political refugees, and resettle in the UK. Those that had grown up in the UK had carried out the majority of their schooling there with some exceptions. The majority from an early age, also travelled to Chile regularly to visit their extended families, and also as they grew older went on to undertake these trips individually without their

²⁰⁵ Young, 2000.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

parents or siblings. As we will see in Chapter 3, two of my interviewees shared the experience of living in Chile in the mid to late 1990s and going to school there. Aside from the shared familial dimensions of the experience of exile, all of the second generation interviewees had also taken part in varying degrees (as small children or young adults) in the pickets held against Pinochet during his arrest in London in 1998, which as discussed in Chapter 5 represented a turning point for them in terms of finding out more about their family histories, and why they had come to be in the UK in the first place. Therefore at this time, the irruption of private familial memories in the public sphere had consequences for the construction of a diasporic in-between space for the Chilean second generation in this thesis.

In contrast, the Argentinean interviewees had very mixed family backgrounds and reasons why they had to leave Argentina in comparison to their Chilean counterparts, ranging from exile to a worsening economic situation. In the Argentinean group, none were born in the UK, but had all at the time of interview, lived there for a significant amount of time, some since childhood in the 1980s, others more recently having emigrated in search of work in the late 1990s and early 2000s and having remained ever since. To give an indication of the different reasons for arrival to the UK: one of the interviewees was a child of a detained-disappeared parent, one had been born in exile and lived in various other South American countries before moving back to Argentina and then the UK, and another had a parent who had been imprisoned during the regime and was now living in London with her partner and son. A characteristic of displacement that they did share was that they all ended up in the UK as a result of the economic instability of the country since the 1980s, especially with the economic crash

of 2000-2001. On the whole then in relation to the concept of postmemory, the Argentinean second generation narratives represent another dimension of the diasporic second generation experience than that from the Chilean interviewees, since the majority were not the children of political exiles, but their narratives did contain traces of the dictatorial past in relation to the installation of a future neoliberal economic model impacting on families' decisions to leave.

Finally, the category of second generation was problematised by two of my interviewees who were siblings, since their parents not only escape the Chilean dictatorship but the Argentinean one as well. The older sister was born in Chile in the year of the coup and is the daughter of an Argentinean mother and a Chilean father who was exiled alongside her parents, from Chile to Argentina, and then from Argentina to the UK, where her younger brother was born in exile in Scotland. Due to the particular circumstances of their case, their narratives are exemplar of the ways in which despite historical differences, the Chilean and Argentinean narratives in this thesis reveal that the diasporic in-between inhabited by the second generation displays a plethora of experiences tied to the dictatorships that are not solely based on my interviewees' direct links as victims, but rather as a generation that claims a diasporic awareness of how those past events have shaped their present lives.

Intersectionality of individual narratives versus 'community'

By intersecting these Chilean and Argentinean narratives together and acknowledging their mutual differences as well as their commonalities, there is an intergenerational component of postmemory at play here that allows a more collective

and affiliative aspect of that transmission to be acknowledged. In order to explore more deeply these connected familial and affiliative facets of the concept of diasporic postmemory, the decision was made to select a smaller sample of participants, in order to be able to focus more clearly on each individual narrative. Also in turn, to be able to analyse how they translate into more collective and affiliative postgeneration narratives, constituting an ‘affective [mobile] community’ as Cvetkovich has labelled it. This thesis therefore contributes to the wider literature on Latin American diasporas in the UK, where these works have emphasised the wider social transnational fields²⁰⁷ shaping the lives of Latin American migrants to the UK but generally by focusing on big quantitative samples on interviews. This type of research has looked at what researchers such as Patria Roman-Velasquez have identified as the ‘dislocated’ social and cultural practices of those migrants since the 1990s, who have transformed certain corners of London into Latin American locales.²⁰⁸

Following on from this research, by bringing the field of the politics of memory together with the diaspora field, this thesis does indeed recognise the historical trajectory of the Chilean and Argentinean political exiles and migrants to a British diasporic context, where the narratives of the second generation makes us aware of the presence of those longstanding Latin American diasporas in Europe and the UK. Alternatively, it crucially draws out the connections and disconnections between generations in relation to the application of the concept of postmemory in a new

²⁰⁷ See Peggy, Levitt. 2001. ‘Transnational Migration: Taking Stock and Future Directions’, *Global Network*, 1: 195-216.

²⁰⁸ Patria, Roman Velasquez. *The Making of Latin London: Salsa Music, Place, and Identity* (Aldershot: Ahsgate 1999).

diasporic setting, and in the aftermath of a traumatic event. In defining a diasporic in-between space, this thesis keeps in mind the ‘lived experience of locality’,²⁰⁹ where the spatiality and situatedness of that space is configured by intersecting factors of gender, class, race, ethnicity, and sexuality affecting all diasporas.²¹⁰ With this in mind, the links between the first waves of Latin American political exiles from the 1970s onwards (not just made up of Chileans), and their legacy and impact on the second generation living in the UK are acknowledged, and how they might relate to current structures of inequality that more recent waves of Latin American migrants are currently facing. In order to establish the longstanding presence of the Chilean exile diaspora, two first generation female Chilean political exiles were interviewed, to highlight the specific process of arrival and settlement in the UK, which in turn, has shaped the emergence of the diasporic in-between space for the second generation.

To summarise, the narratives in this thesis do not constitute any kind of fixed ‘Chilean’ or ‘Argentinean’ community, but rather they inhabit a collective in-between fluid space of connection on the part of the second generation that is not tied to specific localities as such, but is situated in a diasporic in-between space continually in movement between different cultural memory landscapes.²¹¹

²⁰⁹ Brah, 1996.

²¹⁰ Yuval-Davis *et al*, 2006.

²¹¹ Anthias, 2006.

A first generation gendered experience of exile and some research challenges

As already indicated, one of the first steps in this thesis, was to establish the emergence of a mobile diasporic in-between space in the UK, to contextualise the second generation interviews. Two first generation exiled Chilean women living in London were interviewed, firstly, in order to gain a glimpse into the historical background of the Chilean exile experience in the UK from the perspective of these women, and secondly, to use this material as a springboard towards the second generation narratives in terms of future interview questions. This technique also allowed me to access other interviewees, where for example I was able to interview the children of these first generation women and therefore, gain a deeper understanding of the intergenerational connections in the familial terrain that are so inherent to the foundations of postmemory. Interviewing family members also brought about a whole set of new considerations in terms of the ethical implications of dealing with material where individuals referred directly to each other, or even to other families that they might have known from the past. The way I dealt with this was to treat the material with due care, and to be attentive to not revealing information that might prove too sensitive while not losing a critical distance from what was being revealed in terms of utilising the correct narrative material. In this sense, I took note of feminist oral history debates on ethics where carrying out interviews, in particular, of Carrie Hamilton's work on this aspect of feminist research, in contexts where researchers dealing with oral testimonies (and the practice of witnessing the unravelling of that testimony) are assumed to

immediately empathise with their interviewees.²¹² These kinds of complexities about the interview process made me more aware of the process of connecting with my interviewees on the basis of sharing the same in-between generational space, where I had to concede that this did not mean that I or my interviewees would necessarily relate to one another, or them with the type of research I was doing and the ways in which I was theoretically framing their experiences and narratives. Speaking firstly to these two first generation women then, gave me time to identify some important and underlying dimensions to the interrelated concepts of postmemory and diaspora together, to identify the kinds of questions I would go on to ask the second generation, and to signpost any problematic facets of interviewing victims of state terrorism and their kin.

However, this initial part of the interview process did not just highlight the presence of Chilean political exiles in the UK, but revealed a gendered outlook on the political militancy of these women in Chile during the 1960s and 1970s and their exile, as feminist academics. As a result, I consider that not only were these interviews fundamental in establishing certain gendered aspects of the everyday lived-realities of these two women's lives in the diaspora space of the UK, but that the process of interviewing them also established the beginnings of a postmemorial encounter, where they imparted on to me as a second generation subject, their ongoing political projects and ideals, moving between past and present, deeply moulded by their feminist identities.

²¹² Carrie, Hamilton. 2008. 'On Being a 'Good' Interviewer: Empathy, Ethics and the Politics of Oral History', *Oral History*, 36: 35-43.

It was no means any coincidence that I approached these first generation female Chilean exiles, since I repeatedly came across one of them during various academic events at the time of my fieldwork, and because they had maintained visible political identities in relation to bringing to light their gendered experiences of exile in the UK. María and Sofia whose voices I present at the beginning of Chapter 3 shared very similar trajectories since they had both belonged to the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (Revolutionary Leftist Movement – MIR) during the time of Salvador Allende’s presidency in Chile between 1970 and 1973.²¹³ They also had partners at the time involved within the same political organisation that had been arrested, held in various prisons and detention centres and tortured. As a result, they shared a similar experience in their quests to locate their partners after they had been kidnapped, fight to get permission for their release, and with the educational grants they secured through the World University Service (WUS), were able to come to the UK. With the WUS scholarships of which their partners had been the only recipients, they subsequently became involved with the Chile Solidarity Movement and other groups. Over time, both raised their children in the UK, became separated from their partners, went on to study in UK universities, are currently academics and consider themselves to be feminists.

Over the course of listening to their interviews, it became clear that both women had developed a ‘gendered script’ through which to relate their difficult experiences to others about their past lives as militants and their difficulties of arrival and integration in

²¹³ Neither of them initially revealed during their interviews that they had belonged to this group, but only did so after they were asked whether it was the MIR they were referring to. One of the women had told me that she still felt that saying the name was a taboo, since at the time of her exile, identifying as a member of the MIR could have put her life at risk.

the UK. During my interviews with them, they revealed their multiple roles in the diaspora space through their various positionalities as mothers, academics, feminists and partners, and how their political subjectivities as a result of their experiences of trauma changed over time. They revealed a growing awareness of the patriarchal factors shaping their lives as women between their past lives in Chile and their current lives in the UK, an analysis that has enabled them to understand the links between the world of the family and the public sphere in terms of the links between institutions, the welfare state, and the organisations of Chilean exiles that defined their roles as women and political refugees.

I have highlighted this preliminary aspect of my main interviews here, because it was through my encounters with these two women that the thesis took on board, if not a direct gendered analysis of the narratives themselves, a definite gendered 'lens' through which to think about the positionality of my interviewees. In particular, without losing a critical distance, I was reminded of the political significance of enabling those first generation narratives a space from which to mark their presence as a previously marginalised first generation, which gave me a specific departure point and sense of urgency from which to make the intergenerational connections of postmemory clearer. This is an affective connection when dealing with traumatic memories that Hirsch herself as a feminist researcher acknowledges in her work, for example, when identifying a specific mother/daughter dynamic between generations of Holocaust survivors and their kin, and the dynamic between feminist theory and cultural memory in bringing these connections to light. Where she argues, that the specificities of intergenerational transmissions do not constitute identity positions as such, but

experiences that generate an, “(...) affiliative space of remembrance, available to other subjects external to the immediate family”.²¹⁴

These first generation narratives then were very useful in also complementing data that was acquired from archival documents pertaining to the organisations that worked to help Chilean and Argentinean political refugees here in the UK (such as the WUS, and the Joint Working Group), and in Chile working for the returnees, the Fundación de Ayuda Social de las Iglesias Cristianas (Social Aid Foundation of the Christian Churches – FASIC).²¹⁵

Political militancy and background of the first generation Chilean exiles

One important research background aspect to take into account was that the majority of the second generation interviewees came from middle-class backgrounds, with most at the time of interview either having previously completed or about to complete a postgraduate education, or had a professional working status. This is significant because for example, for the Chilean interviewees the majority of their parents had come to the UK as exiles with the WUS programme for Chilean academics, where the first generation had had experience in political militancy belonging to various leftist groups at the time of Allende’s government, and belonged to a well-established middle class. In the case of the Argentinean second generation, their parents in Argentina had also been well-educated and tended to come from middle-class

²¹⁴ Hirsch, 2012: 93.

²¹⁵ These documents formed a part of the archives of the library of the Institute of the Study of the Americas, which at the time of consultation (2007-2009) were housed in Tavistock Square, London (now belonging to Senate House Library).

backgrounds, but where the majority had left Argentina for economic reasons, with only a few experiencing direct political persecution.

In terms of the Chilean interviewees, most of the individuals I spoke to had parents who had militated in the MIR during the years leading up to the coup, where due to the radical militancy of this group, they did not officially belong to the leftist coalition of the Unidad Popular government, and individuals faced some of the heaviest repression – with over 50% of the victims of the coup according to the Rettig report belonging to the Socialist, Communist parties and the MIR.²¹⁶ For this reason, it was important to bear in mind that some of my second generation interviewees were apprehensive about what they revealed in their interviews since their parents had suffered a great deal.²¹⁷ A few interviewees for example, expressed some residual fear passed on to them by their parents connected to the simple act of even naming the MIR in public during the interview. Not just due to past repression, but also, due to the threat of repression in the diaspora during the dictatorship and the past political tensions between different political parties and individuals, indicating the level of emotions tied to the variety of positionalities involved in the Chilean diaspora. The profile of the MIR, similar to that of another smaller political group the MAPU (Movimiento de Acción Popular Unitaria – Movement for Unified Popular Action) is known to have been predominantly made-up of middle-class and well-educated young men and women

²¹⁶ See, Verónica, Valdivia Ortiz de Zárate. 2003. 'Terrorism and Political Violence during the Pinochet Years: Chile, 1973-1989', *Radical History Review*, 85-182-190.

²¹⁷ For a personal account of her MIR militancy, see the interview with the Chilean exile and documentary filmmaker, Carmen Castillo, partner of Miguel Enríquez, one of the leading members of the MIR, killed by the regime in 1974. Michael, James Lazzara. 2012. 'Militancy Then and Now: A Conversation with Carmen Castillo', *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, 21:1-14.

whose base of activism was formed at universities across Chile in the 1960s and early 1970s.²¹⁸ Therefore this is of high importance when noting that the exiles that did manage to gain a WUS scholarship would have required a good level of education and professional skills, which in turn in comparison to more working-class families, would have afforded them with slightly better chances of finding employment in similar academic vocations that they had been used to back home. In relation to this thesis then, this legacy of educated political militancy on the part of the first generation forms only one facet of the wider Chilean exile experience and diaspora in the UK, where the other contains aspects of working-class militancy which this thesis does not touch upon.

Despite this, the narratives present here unravel the little-known and forgotten experiences of the second generation existing in the juncture between the field of the politics of memory and the diaspora field, as accounts that have so far not featured so readily in the official historiography of the Argentinean and Chilean dictatorships from the point of view of the diaspora.

The interview process: An oral history approach

According to the noted oral historian Alessandro Portelli, one of the most important features of oral history, “(...) is that it tells us less about *events* than about their *meaning*”²¹⁹; where the same could be said of the postmemory narratives in this thesis. In discussing the role of memory in oral history, Portelli argues that: “(...) what is really important is that memory is not a passive depository of facts, but an active

²¹⁸ Alan, Angell. 2007. *Democracy After Pinochet: Politics, Parties and Elections in Chile* (London: Institute for the Study of the Americas).

²¹⁹ Alessandro, Portelli. 1998. ‘What Makes Oral History Different’, In *The Oral History Reader* (eds.) Robert, Perks, and Alistair, Thomson (London: Routledge): 67.

process of creation of meanings”,²²⁰ and that, “oral history has no unified subject: it is told from a multitude of points of view, and the impartiality traditionally claimed by historians is replaced by the partiality of the narrator”.²²¹ In this respect, I argue that the concept of postmemory in memory studies also derives from this oral history tradition that favours the voices on the periphery, where this qualitative method of interview is attentive to the ways in which, “meaning is not “out there” waiting to be revealed; rather, meaning emerges throughout the collaborative oral history process”.²²² Both the researcher and the interviewees therefore jointly hold the conditions for connection and ‘collaborative exchange’, creating a postmemory narrative produced from the in-between space of the interview. I was very struck for example, by how one Chilean interviewee Mauricio, was particularly attentive to describing the process of mutual cooperation during the interview, telling me that:

I still feel that I’m kind of very unrealised and in limbo in a sense of coming to terms with a lot of stuff myself and understanding my own identity and you know, my family and the history, our history, which is why I think your study is going to be good for this whole, I don’t know what the expression is...it’s going to be good for everyone basically, to help anyone that’s going to have a read of it. It’s good to study these things and to help move things forward and to understand things. Without sounding too simplistic, I think it’s a process that everyone’s engaged in one way or another, it needs to be continued, you know.²²³

²²⁰ Portelli, 1998: 69.

²²¹ Ibid: 73.

²²² Leavy, 2011: 9.

²²³ Interview with Mauricio carried out on 16/03.2009.

In this manner, an oral history approach recognises these reflexive moments of cooperation and engagement, and allows us to see how reuniting the concepts of postmemory and diaspora highlights a second generation awareness and consciousness in sharing their experiences. As such, Mauricio's understanding of the research process goes beyond its purely academic purpose, in reminding us of other affective processes of connection that recall mutual embodied feelings and emotions between second generation subjects, and between researchers and interviewees.

The concept of postmemory akin to the practice of oral history, is also concerned with the active context of remembering, where both reveal the connective social bonds between researchers and interviewees, mutually engaged in a process of sharing and giving meaning to a previously hidden history that is important to both.²²⁴ In '*Family Secrets*', Annette Kuhn for example discusses the process of uncovering of family stories as much more illuminating than the actual memories themselves.²²⁵ For Kuhn, in relation to the opening of the familial space:

Bringing the secrets and the shadows into the open allows the deeper meanings of the family drama's mythic aspects to be reflected upon, confronted and understood at all levels. This in turn helps in coming to terms with the feelings of the present, and so in living more fully in the present.²²⁶

This reflexive process of 'living more fully in the present' by 'bringing the secrets and shadows into the open' is concerned with the task of valuing the interplay between

²²⁴ The work of Paul Thompson is very influential in this respect. See, Paul, Thompson. 2000. *The Voice of the Past*, third edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

²²⁵ Annette, Kuhn. 2002. *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination* (London: Verso).

²²⁶ Kuhn, 2002: 7.

different emerging micro-narratives, taking into account the partiality of everyday life.²²⁷ This approach takes its influence from postmodernism, where according to Mats Alvesson, “postmodernism means an effort to refuse using categories in a straightforward and ‘progressive’ way”, where, “major categories in the area of study call for unpacking –problematization, deconstruction –rather than development and instrumental use”.²²⁸ Uncovering family micro-narratives is not only a process of revelation, but of developing a reflexive collective awareness where, the interviewees become active protagonists of their own narratives.²²⁹ It is not only through the interview process that interviewees reveal aspects of their private selves in relation to familial postmemory, but they also come to collectively share an affiliative space of enunciation and recognition in between the field of the politics of memory and the diaspora field, in a UK context that so far has not been fully investigated.

Fieldwork at ‘home’

For the researcher, arguing for the fluidity and mobility of diasporic narratives and hybrid subjectivities in relation to both the situatedness and mobility of the space in-between poses certain challenges; in particular, in establishing that the narratives presented here are simultaneously positioned between two interconnected memory fields. In the introduction to the volume titled “*Constructing the Field*”, Vered Amit

²²⁷ See, Grbich, 2007.

²²⁸ Matt, Alvesson. 2003. *Postmodernism and Social Research, Understanding Social Research* (Buckingham: Open University Press): 91.

²²⁹ Here I am influenced by the ethnographic work of Javier Auyero who has looked at how two Argentinean women have made sense of their own lives as protestors in popular revolts in the 2000s, and who jointly recognises how his role as researcher influenced this process of collective reflexivity. Javier, Auyero. 2003. *Contentious Lives: Two Argentine Women, Two Protests, and the Quest for Recognition* (Durham and London: Duke University Press).

precisely identifies this issue in that “episodic, occasional, partial and ephemeral social links pose particular challenges for ethnographic fieldwork”,²³⁰ especially when that fieldwork happens to be taking place in a space shared by researchers and interviewees. The Argentinean anthropologist Anahí Viladrich, has looked at this phenomenon, when she studied the everyday lived realities of Argentinean migrants living in New York, and her own privileged diasporic positioning in the U.S., a process that made her aware of her dual identity as both an insider and outsider in the diaspora space.²³¹ Identifying the fieldwork and home connections makes diasporic researchers aware of the polyvalent connections of the concepts they employ within different memory coming together in the diasporic space in-between. However, Caroline Knowles notes that caution must be maintained towards those processes of connection between our personal autobiographies and our places of fieldwork since they do not always hold the same meaning. She warns us that the very same ‘emotional’ and ‘political’ connections that researchers establish between the two are always also complex and ‘partial’,²³² therefore reminding us that the interview space as a postmemory encounter is not apolitical but loaded with different expectations and stances.

As a result, for Knowles our research should also contain a reflection of how the process of identifying our fields of research directly puts the researcher’s own intentions and life story under investigation as part of that enquiry. This approach she states,

²³⁰Vered, Amit. 2000. ‘Introduction: Constructing the Field’, In *Constructing the Field: Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World* (London: Routledge):14.

²³¹ Anahí, Viladrich. 2005. “You Just Belong to Us”: Tales of Identity and Difference With Populations to Which the Ethnographer Belongs’, *Cultural Studies <=> Critical Methodologies*, 5: 391.

²³² Caroline, Knowles. 2000. ‘Here and There: Doing Transnational Fieldwork’ In, *Constructing the Field: Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World* (ed.) Vered, Amit (London: Routledge): 54-70.

“sustains the possibility of alternate senses of belonging and self, deftly buried in conceptions of work and intellectual enterprise”, that could otherwise go unnoticed.²³³ This reflexive approach therefore allows researchers to, “anchor the self in a moving landscape”,²³⁴ as an in-between space that in this case is shared between the researcher and interviewees, where, “the process of revealing the other also brings the self clearly into view as not the other”.²³⁵ All in all, maintaining that the study of diasporic postmemory’s conceptual reach includes a critical reflection of the researcher’s positionality as a ‘knowing’ self.

A feminist methodology of the ‘knowing-self’

As we have seen so far in this methodology chapter, the discussion of a diasporic postmemory that is investigated within the narratives of the second generation Chileans and Argentineans living in the UK, also takes the interview space into account as a shared postmemorial space, which following feminist oral history and cultural studies approaches: “the socially constituted knowing self is always partially grounded by the specificities of its existence”.²³⁶ The principle of a reflexive knowing self also stems from feminist theory that has also greatly influenced and vice versa, the discipline of oral history, where: “rather than relating a ‘fact’ that simply connects their experience to some real structure, context or underlying relationship, the [feminist] author cannot

²³³ Knowles, 2000: 60.

²³⁴ Ibid: 60.

²³⁵ Ibid: 61.

²³⁶ Caroline, Ramazanoğlu, and Janet, Holland. 2002. *Feminist Methodology* (London: Sage): 125.

escape expressing their story in a particular language, style, and set of assumptions, and addressing it to a particular audience”²³⁷.

This critical exposition of the knowing feminist self can be located within the debates of Feminist Standpoint Theory from the 1970s and 1980s that aimed to define a specific feminist epistemology, positioning personal and collective experience as valid sources of knowledge on social reality in opposition to Western Cartesian dualism.²³⁸ Within this theoretical approach, Donna Haraway has argued that feminist research can be attentive to both structural and gendered power matrixes that shape women’s lives, where in her own words:

The split and contradictory self is the one who can interrogate positionings and be accountable, the one who can construct and join rational conversations and fantastic imaginings that change history. Splitting, not being, is the privileged image for feminist epistemologies of scientific knowledge.²³⁹

Thus, alongside the established call from second wave feminists to legitimise the experiences of women as ‘real’ sources of knowledge, Haraway has also insisted that as part of this project, feminists should not abandon the deconstruction of binary categories that continue to oppress women.²⁴⁰ The influence of these feminist debates and oral history approaches on this thesis are clear. While the combined concepts of diasporic postmemory destabilise the roots of the fields of the politics of memory and the diaspora

²³⁷ Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002: 129.

²³⁸ See, Harding, Sandra (ed). 2004. *The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader: Intellectual and Political Controversies* (London, Routledge).

²³⁹ Donna, Haraway. 1988. 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective', *Feminist Studies*, 14: 586.

²⁴⁰ For an analysis of feminist methodological approaches in qualitative research related to Standpoint Theory, see Sara, O’Shaughnessy, and Naomi T. Krogman. 2012. ‘A Revolution Reconsidered? Examining the Practice of Qualitative Research in Feminist Scholarship’, *Signs*, 37, 493–520.

space to argue for a mobile in-between landscape of multidirectional cultural memory, they also acknowledge the situatedness of familial and affiliative processes of intergenerational transmission, revealing a plurality of previously hidden identifications with the military dictatorships in Argentina and Chile by the second generation in the UK.

The combined approaches of a feminist oral history methodology, place those concepts of postmemory and the diaspora space under scrutiny, by incorporating the reflexive translocational positionality of the researcher, at the same time as that of the interviewees. For instance, the diasporic feminist U.S. and Chilean scholar Inés Gómez's whose work has dealt with the presence of Chilean women refugees in her home state of California since the 1970s, has identified the processes of 'deterritorialization and specificity' affecting these women's lives, where, "viewed in this way, the spatial-temporal tension of their accounts can be examined as sites both of marginality and of resistance."²⁴¹ Predating Viladrich's more recent ethnographic experiences, Gómez also inadvertently began to look into her own diasporic positionality, when as a visiting student in the U.S. in 1973 she suddenly found herself unable to return home, as she had supported the MIR in her youth.²⁴² When she was approached to volunteer for various support organisations, Gómez began to come face to face with Chilean women refugees, where she began to question her own 'privileged' positionality as a feminist academic. Through this unexpected encounter in the diaspora

²⁴¹Inés, Gómez. 1999. 'A Space for Remembering: Home Pedagogy and Exilic Latina Women's Identities', In *Engendering Forced Migration*, (ed.) Doreen, Indra (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books): 201.

²⁴² This was detailed to me in a personal conversation with Inés Gómez on 27/05/2012.

space, a new landscape for self-reflection opened up, where, she states that, “motivated by their social-cultural milieu and socioeconomic constraints, the participants of this study project a diasporic conscience that has forced me to reconceptualize the politics of remembering, selfhood, and cultural identities operating through their narratives of displacement.”²⁴³ Crucially, what Gómez’s account of her research brings is a reminder that a reflexive awareness of a diasporic positionality not only melds the narratives of the subjects we study, but our own selves as researchers who also belong to the same dislocated in-between space of postmemory.

Conclusion

Over the following chapters, by presenting the narratives of my participants in a way that traces and questions the interchangeability of postmemory from the field of the Holocaust to the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone, and back again within a diasporic field in the UK, this thesis will show how the concept of postmemory can be used to reconfigure traumatic legacies within the context of the everyday lived realities of individuals who share the same diasporic in-between space. I will show how my second generation Chilean and Argentinean interviewees have transformed the stories and memories transmitted to them by their parents, articulated them to fit their own lives, and transformed them into something new, while acknowledging the specificity and positionality of the space in-between of the diaspora space that makes the UK case so significant for this thesis.

²⁴³ Gómez, 1999: 201-202.

Introduction

The aim of this chapter, is to present some of the oral narratives of the second generation Chileans interviewees in order to explore the familial dimensions of postmemory that are: a) related to the lives of the participant's families' in Chile before exile, b) discuss some of the key periods of the dictatorship in Chile that directly affected their families, c) detail the personal circumstances behind exile and their families arrival to the UK, d) reveal the general family dynamics and the stories and narratives to do with the past while growing up, and e) highlight shared experiences of return and living in Chile. As a way of introducing these narratives, Chapter 3 begins by briefly presenting the first generation narratives of two exiled women that I interviewed previous to the second generation, who helped me to establish the historical context of the Chilean dictatorship (1973-1990), as well as the specific circumstances behind the arrival of political refugees to the UK. I do so in order to acknowledge the intergenerational links between the conditions of arrival into exile for the first generation, and the appearance of the second generation as diasporic subjects in their own right. This chapter will therefore argue that these second generation subjects, rather than mere spectators to their family's traumatic past, have utilised and transformed intergenerational shared memories in the construction of their own present memories and lived realities beyond the realm of the familial sphere.

“Ya veíamos que esto se veía venir”

These are the words of María, a sociology lecturer at the time of Salvador Allende’s government in Chile, who came over to the UK as a political refugee, translating as, “we could see this was coming”.²⁴⁴ Despite the sense of imminent danger that María described to me among her peers in relation to the political instability of the time, people in Chile were not prepared for the level of violence and repression that would be unleashed by the armed forces against the civilian population.

The Chile of María’s youth was shaped by wider regionalised developments in terms of the advent of various authoritarian military regimes across Latin America from the 1950s-1960s onwards, partly staged in response to the increasing social and political mobilisations of certain sectors of society (in the shape of highly politicised peasantries, the trade unions, the new middle-classes, and the working class and student movements) who collectively stood against powerful oligarchies that had traditionally maintained political and economic control. The Cuban revolution of 1959 had proved to be a catalyst for popular insurrection all over Latin America and a warning sign for those elites. The important figure of one of the charismatic leaders of the revolution, the Argentine Ernesto “Che” Guevara as a militant intellectual went on to inspire subsequent waves of armed militant groups in the region from the late 1960s onwards. Many of these groups in Chile and Argentina were formed by middle-class students in

²⁴⁴ Interview with María carried out on the 2/12/2008, all translations my own.

universities who like Guevara had felt increasingly disaffected by the existing social and political hierarchies which they felt no longer represented their needs and aspirations.²⁴⁵

It was during this time that in Chile, President Salvador Allende's (1970-1973) Unidad Popular coalition became the first socialist government of its time to be elected by democratic vote, and represented a popular support in favour of the implementation of mass socio-political changes and the nationalisation of major industries.²⁴⁶ This new political project however, faced deeply entrenched social and political divisions already brewing in previous decades that would prove to be determinant for the organisation of a military coup. For example, the strongest opposition to the government's socialist aims came from the conservative right and their supporters, representing the interests of the longstanding and powerful socio-economic landowning elites that were becoming increasingly alarmed by the level of politicisation among the rest of civil society.²⁴⁷

Sofia, another first generation exile (originally from Argentina) who came to the UK as a political refugee fleeing firstly the Chilean regime to Argentina in 1973, and

²⁴⁵ Lewis, 2002.

²⁴⁶ Some examples of this was the nationalisation of all of the major industries and banks in Chile, the main industry affected being copper; and further intensifying agrarian reforms in the countryside to reclaim more agricultural estates for peasants, farmers and the indigenous populations; with an increase in state public spending and welfare provisions for the poor. See, Pilar, Vergara. 1986. 'Changes in the Economic Functions of the Chilean State Under the Military Regime', In *Military Rule in Chile: Dictatorship and Oppositions*, (eds.) Julio, Samuel Valenzuela, and Arturo, Valenzuela (London: The Johns Hopkins University Press): 85-116.

²⁴⁷ Mattelerat argues that it was middle and upper-class conservative women in particular, who were very vocal in their demonstrations in the early 1970s against Allende, forming the powerful lobbying group *El Poder Feminino* (Feminine Power – EPF), who were successful in publically provoking the armed forces and goaded them to take over. See, Michele, Mattelerat. 1980. 'Chile: The Feminine Version of the Coup d'Etat', In *Sex and Class in Latin America: Women's Perspective's on Politics, Economics and the Family in the Third World*, (eds) J. Nash and H. Safa Icken (South Hadley, Mass.: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, Inc.): 279-301.

then the Argentinean dictatorship in 1976, described to me the time of Allende during which she taught Economics at the University of Concepción:

It was an exciting life, joyful, entertaining, bah! Difficult and hard in many ways because the police didn't leave us one minute in peace. But because the Popular Unity government were not, let's say, very radical. They did everything very slowly, between the Congress... In Congress everything went badly because they did not have the majority. We didn't have any patience. When I say "we", we are the group that I belonged to. And where I was, they were the majority... No? In the University of Concepción. It was glorious! Because they were...they were youngsters. And I was always hanging out with so many young men and young women!²⁴⁸

One important aspect of María and Sofía's narratives is the growing political participation of young women and men during the UP years belonging to different political parties, organisations, and institutions, which as both of these women indicated, combined their academic endeavours with a strong moral commitment of social justice. During their interviews, both María and Sofía expressed their political involvement at that time as part of a broader intellectual responsibility to work alongside the working-class, indigenous groups and other disenfranchised people, to educate the masses in leftist political theory to empower themselves, whether in demanding more political representation, more equal rights, or for example, to forcefully seize back agricultural and ancestral lands belonging to the Mapuche community.

The day of the coup: September 11, 1973

On September 11, 1973 the armed forces led by General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, and with the support of the state police the *Carabineros*, declared a state of

²⁴⁸ Interview with Sofía carried out on the 4/03/2009, my own translation. See Appendix 1 for the original quote in Spanish.

siege and troops occupied all major cities.²⁴⁹ Through a series of official radio declarations (*bandos*) the military government imposed a permanent curfew and declared the suspension of all civil liberties, the closure of the senate and judiciary, and the immediate purging of all UP government members and other leftist organisations.²⁵⁰ Political parties were banned, the media was heavily censored, and national borders were sealed-off for eleven days to prevent people from leaving the country.²⁵¹ Very soon, foreign embassies, (such as the French, Mexican, Argentinean, and Swedish ones) were aiding political refugees seeking refuge from capture on the streets. Some people fearing arrest managed to escape clandestinely over the border to Peru or Argentina, many believing they would be able to return.

María's narrative captures the uncertainty of the time when she told me that:

We never thought this was going to take a long time, there was going to be a coup, but really neither as political scientists nor as militants in our party, not even as a woman! Did we visualise how big this problem would be that could happen. In spite of us knowing that a coup was coming we had it all very clear! Intellectualised! But we never thought what the consequences could be! So we carried on working, carrying on with our normal party life, saying... "The coup is coming! The coup is coming!" But we were not doing anything in practice. There was never any paramilitary formation or anything like that. Only a very tiny group.²⁵²

²⁴⁹ See, Wright & Oñate. 1998.

²⁵⁰ Arturo, Valenzuela. 1995. 'The Military in Power: The Consolidation of One-Man Rule.' In *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile*, edited by P. W., Drake and I, Jaksic (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press): 21-72.

²⁵¹ Julio, Samuel Valenzuela, and Arturo, Valenzuela. 1986. *Military Rule in Chile: Dictatorship and Oppositions* (Baltimore, Md.; London: Johns Hopkins University Press); Wright & Oñate, 1998.

²⁵² My own translation, please see Appendix 2 for the original quote in Spanish.

The ‘very tiny group’ or ‘grupito pequeño’ which María refers to and the ‘nosotros’ that Sofia mentioned earlier, were the MIR.²⁵³

Secret detentions, torture and disappearance

By June 1974, the regime had a secret service fronted by Colonel Manuel Contreras named the Dirección Nacional de Inteligencia (National Directorate of Intelligence – DINA),²⁵⁴ in charge of kidnapping, torturing and disappearing leftist activists, with thousands more held in prisons or clandestine detention camps.²⁵⁵ Villa Grimaldi,²⁵⁶ a mansion house on the outskirts of the capital Santiago, was the DINA’s headquarters until 1977, and was one of the most notorious detention centres alongside

²⁵³ Unlike in Argentina, Chile did not have the same number of organised leftist guerrilla groups such as the Montoneros and ERP capable of mounting pockets of armed resistance. The only armed group capable of doing so was the MIR but a larger majority of its members were directly targeted in the early days of the coup, with many going into hiding, and the rest fleeing into exile. In fact, 50.2% of victims during the coup were Socialist, Communist, or MIR party members according to Ortiz de Zárate, directly quoting figures from the Rettig Report. Ortiz de Zárate, 2003.

²⁵⁴ The DINA was made up of a blend of military officers and right-wing civilians including former members of the fascist group Patria y Libertad, whose main task was to carry out surveillance on suspected leftist militants, kidnap them, torture and make their bodies disappear. The main targets of the DINA were Socialist, Communist, and MIR members who the regime claimed had died during “armed confrontations”. See, Valenzuela, 1995.

²⁵⁵ In her pivotal book ‘*Chile, Pinochet and the Caravan of Death*’, the Chilean journalist Patricia Verdugo uncovered vital information surrounding the notorious ‘Caravan of Death’, a paramilitary mission headed by General Sergio Arellano Stark who had been personally appointed and instructed by Pinochet in the first months of the coup to tour various military outposts in Chile by helicopter and execute political prisoners held in detention sites. In total, the Caravan of Death was responsible for the death of seventy five political prisoners, an early intervention which Verdugo argues gave Pinochet the authority to unite his forces in carrying out the regime’s worst violence, with anyone who disagreed or objected to these methods either forced to retire, removed from their posts or even tortured and killed. Patricia, Verdugo. 2001. *Chile, Pinochet, and the Caravan of Death* (Coral Gables: North-South Center Press).

²⁵⁶ For more information on Villa Grimaldi see Mario, I. Aguilar. 2003. ‘The Ethnography of the Villa Grimaldi in Pinochet’s Chile: From Public Landscape to Secret Detention Centre (1973-1980)’, In paper delivered at the 2003 Meeting of the Latin American Studies Association. Dallas, Texas.

the Estadio Nacional, the national sports stadium in Santiago also used to detain political prisoners. Torture at these detention sites became the primary method through which to supposedly extract information and inflict terror over those deemed to be the enemies of the regime. In Villa Grimaldi as many other detention sites, conditions for political prisoners were squalid and hunger and disease were common, and in total it has been estimated that 5, 0000 prisoners were held there during the time of the coup. Many survived their detainment, and others were killed and made to disappear with their bodies buried in unmarked graves or thrown into the sea.²⁵⁷

As the regime intensified its mission to eradicate any political opposition, María described to me the complete sense of helplessness she felt, especially after her own brother was detained, her sister's boyfriend was disappeared, and her husband also ended up in the hands of the DINA:

I was left alone after...because it was like a kidnapping, in other words, men armed to the teeth detaining my husband. Taking him away...I didn't know what was happening to my sister's boyfriend still disappeared...all this accumulation of a terrible experience! But I used to say, "Oh my God!" "What is this? What is happening?" It was like a reality...you could not absorb this hard reality. He was detained, I carried on working. I was the wife of a political prisoner. Very stigmatised, followed and pursued. I had new students in my classes that I noticed were older men who were DINA agents at that time. They followed me every day, they would go to my house. They used to defecate outside the front door to say, "We were here last night!" They would tap the windows at four in the morning. Sometimes I had to open the door. They used to undress me. They made me parade in front of them, they would trace their weapons on different parts of my body. They used to

²⁵⁷ The regime was also responsible for establishing a new 'neoconservative' economic model that was dependent on the support of a group of young technocrats—dubbed the 'Chicago Boys'—responsible for helping to introduce a neoliberal economic model to Chile. The regime's main aim was to completely reverse all of the UP's achievements in increasing state participation and improving the welfare of all Chileans, and instead promote the complete economic, political and ideological control of all social institutions alongside the mass depoliticisation of individuals impoverished by these measures. See, Vergara, 1986.

bring me letters from my husband who wrote, “I’m fine don’t worry,” I don’t know, the price I used to pay for those letters was horrific. And in the morning I had to leave the house all made up, all dressed up, to do my classes as if nothing was happening. So I could see as a woman, I could see that they took advantage of this dominant machismo ideology – “this woman is vulnerable,” Yes? Not only to control her but also to coerce them, do you understand? To degrade them to the lowest point because they couldn’t stand to see me still working and I was teaching and everything as normal.²⁵⁸

María’s account not only testifies to the regime’s daily practices of intimidation and humiliation towards her including acts of sexual violence, but also contains her own reflexive analysis of her experience on ‘gendered’ terms, and how as a woman she was expected to carry on maintaining a normal daily routine while trying to locate various missing relatives.

The long road to exile

On November 6, 1973, the junta put forward Decree Law number 81, allowing them to expel individuals under the state of siege, and to declare the death penalty on anyone who returned to clandestinely Chile.²⁵⁹ One year after the coup, the junta responded to increasing international pressure to improve its human rights record by continuing to expel thousands of political prisoners already held in prison into exile, who had also received the assistance of various non-governmental organisations (NGOs).²⁶⁰ Therefore, the practice of forcing thousands of Chileans into exile became a key strategy employed by the regime to continue to eradicate any potential political

²⁵⁸ My own translation (see Appendix 3 for original quote in Spanish).

²⁵⁹Rebolledo, 2006a.

²⁶⁰Decree Law number 604 issued on the 10th of August 1974, also added those who publicly opposed the dictatorship while abroad, on the long list of those barred from coming back to Chile. Ibid.

opposition to Pinochet's rule and cement his authoritative power into the future.²⁶¹ As we have already seen with the case of the MIR, (see also the testimonies in Wright & Oñate, 2007), it was a strategy that severely quashed any possibilities for armed resistance inside Chile, with anyone who had managed to survive struggling to live clandestinely.²⁶²

In light of this and the growing climate of violence, organisations began to spring up to provide urgent help and assistance to the families of political prisoners and disappeared persons searching for their loved ones. These organisations were instrumental in documenting the extent of the human rights abuses committed by the regime, as well as, coordinate assistance to exiles and political refugees. One of the first groups to be formed was the Catholic Church led Comité Pro Paz²⁶³ that began to produce and present to the judiciary, the first requests of *habeas corpus* on behalf of

²⁶¹ See, Thomas C., Wright, and Rody, Oñate Zúñiga. 2007. 'Chilean Political Exile', *Latin American Perspectives*, 34:31-49.

²⁶² The practice of internal exile for political activists had also been under way, as a group of high-profile UP Leaders were banished to Dawson Island on the Strait of Mallagan, in order to make clear the intentions of the military government in isolating any potential political opposition. Wright & Oñate, 1998.

²⁶³ The *Comité Pro Paz* was formed on October 9, 1973 as was originally known as the Committee of Cooperation for Peace (COPACHI) set up by Lutheran Bishop Helmut Frenz and Catholic Bishop Fernando Ariztía, with Cardinal Silva Henríquez of the Archdiocese of Santiago as its chairman, to provide legal and economic assistance to political prisoners and the families of disappeared relatives. See, Mario, I. Aguilar. 2001. 'The Vicaría de la Solidaridad and the Pinochet Regime (1973-1980): Religion and Politics in 20th Century Chile', *Ibero-Americana. Nordic Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 31:101-115; Brian, Smith. 1986. 'Old Allies, New Enemies: The Catholic Church as Opposition to Military Rule in Chile, 1973-1979', In *Military Rule in Chile: Dictatorship and Oppositions*, (eds.) Julio, Samuel Valenzuela, and Arturo, Valenzuela (London: The Johns Hopkins University Press): 270-303.

families of disappeared victims.²⁶⁴ After 1975, due to the continued harassment from the regime, the Comité split into two organisations: the Vicaría de la Solidaridad and FASIC.²⁶⁵ Both of these organisations were heavily involved in getting people out of Chile by obtaining identity papers, passports, and scholarships to be able to study abroad but also coordinated efforts to supply the international community with information about human rights abuses. At the same time the Vicaría began to publish the lists of the names of the disappeared, culminating in the public circulation of seven volumes by 1979 titled ‘¿Donde Están?’ (Where Are They?).²⁶⁶ Following on from these organisations, the families of the detained-disappeared formed their own groups, such as the AFDD for the families of the detained-disappeared and the AFPP for the political prisoners (see the Introduction), who also assisted exiles abroad to obtain information on family members. FASIC and the Vicaría formed part of a growing international network of organisations offering support for victims and exiles namely the Organización Internacional para las Migraciones (International Organisation for Migration– OIM), the Red Cross, The United Nation’s High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR), and the WUS.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁴ By 1974 the United Nations had already established a working group looking into the human rights situation in Chile and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights had also visited Chile for the first time. Wright & Oñate, 2007.

²⁶⁵ In fact, within a month of the coup Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox and Jewish leaders had already formed an ecumenical joint organisation named the Comité Nacional de Ayuda a los Refugiados (National Committee to Aid Refugees - CONAR). This group assisted people in finding safe places to stay, and to eventual leave the country, and by 1974 it had assisted over 5,000 people to go into exile abroad. Smith, 1986.

²⁶⁶ The work of the Vicaría went on until 1992 when it was officially closed down but the archives are still accessible and in use today. Aguilar, 2001.

²⁶⁷ Wright & Oñate, 1998.

By 1976, there were already a large number of Chilean exiles living in neighbouring Argentina, Peru, Uruguay, Brazil and Mexico, where in the case of Argentina many exiles had also been supported by various organisations helping political refugees to settle down.²⁶⁸ Nevertheless, by that time the political situation in Argentina had also worsened, and many Chilean and Uruguayan exiles disappeared abroad through Operation Condor,²⁶⁹ a mission that brought together different intelligence units from various Latin American regimes to coordinate the disappearances of political targets such as the 1974 assassination of Chilean ex-army Commander Carlos Prats and his wife in Buenos Aires who opposed the Chilean regime.²⁷⁰ While international pressure was mounting towards the regime after the assassination of Orlando Letelier in Washington²⁷¹ in 1976 (Allende's Chilean Ambassador to the U.S.),

²⁶⁸ See for example CAREF, La Comisión Argentina para los Refugiados, (the Argentine Committee for Refugees), that was a small evangelical church organisation set up to assist Chilean and Uruguayan refugees in Argentina, to resettle exiles and provide economic and social assistance, as well as, helping refugees to obtain visas to leave Argentina when the political situation worsened. CAREF. 1986. *CAREF: 13 Years of Service to Refugees: The Testimony of María Amelia Sosa* (Buenos Aires: CAREF).

²⁶⁹ Operation Condor was a regional intelligence task-force created to eradicate potential exiled opponents from abroad across the borders of Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia and Brazil and even further afield. These task forces granted each other permission to carry out kidnappings, assassinations and tortures of exiles on foreign soil. In Argentina, exiles were also under threat from the Triple A (the Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance) Argentina's own right-wing secret police, where, "condor operations against international targets were intermingled with and often indistinguishable from the massive repression inside each country to defeat domestic opponents of each military government". John, Dinges. 2004. *The Condor Years: How Pinochet and his Allies Brought Terrorism to Three Continents* (London: New Press): 4.

²⁷⁰ DINA's reach also went as far as Europe with the attempted assassination of Christian Democrat politician Bernardo Leighton in Rome in 1978. For Collier and Satter, this strongly indicated Pinochet's desire to thwart the possible creation of a *de-facto* Chilean exiled government capable of opposing the regime from abroad. Simon, Collier, and William, F. Sater. 2004. *A History of Chile, 1808-2002* (2nd. ed, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

²⁷¹ The 'Letelier Affair' as it became known and the involvement of the U.S. government in investigating the case put pressure on Pinochet to dissolve the DINA which he did in 1977. By August 1977 the DINA

by 1978 Pinochet had declared an Amnesty Law that protected military officers and other agents from ever being prosecuted for human rights abuses committed previous to March 10, 1978. This Amnesty Law was tied to Pinochet's restructuring of the national Constitution²⁷² in 1980, a move that guaranteed a 'protected' democracy that would ensure the continuity his authoritarian regime.²⁷³ At the end of his term as the head of the military government, Pinochet's plan was to hold on to his post as Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces for as long as possible and dually put himself up as a presidential candidate in following elections, a decision that would either be ratified or rejected by a plebiscite.²⁷⁴

The Chilean dictatorship according to the second generation

I began my interviews with the Chilean second generation interviewees, by asking them what they knew about Chile at the time of Allende and the coup in 1973, and to describe the circumstances behind their families' arrival to the UK. These questions helped to reveal the intergenerational process of transmission of memories in a familial setting. Amelia was born in London in 1984, and is María's second daughter from her relationship with her second partner. She explained to me her mother's background as such:

became the Centro Nacional de Informaciones (National Information Centre – CNI). Wright & Oñate, 2007.

²⁷² Other amendments to the constitution included further restrictions to the Senate and Congress, with one-third of the Senators being nominated personally for the role by Pinochet rather than elected, as well as increasing the number of military statues to ensure continued military influence over future governments and institutions. Collier & Sater, 2004.

²⁷³ Ibid: 2004.

²⁷⁴ Angell, 2007;Valenzuela, 1995.

Well, my mum is Chilean, (...) and she was...she is still, of an ideology that you could say is from the left. And she supported Allende, the president...that it is said was a Socialist president but more than anything a progressive president. Who was voted, he was democratically elected and because this was a threat to the plan that the United States had against communism at the time of the Cold War. They did everything possible for the arrival of...to put another president. And he was called Pinochet and he was...the coup was on the eleventh of September 1973. And my mum because she was so involved in all those progressive movements that existed at that time. And it looks like, I don't remember exactly, but it looked like she was a 'member' of...one of those leftist parties. And her brother as well, but her brother was much more militant. Well, her and her husband that she had at the time were being pursued by the regime. And he was detained and put in jail. My mum as well...her life was super...not only because of this thing with her husband but because of all the other things she was living with her family, because her nuclear family was leftist as well. The *milicos*²⁷⁵ were looking for her brother, and they took, detained and disappeared her sister's fiancée. It looks like she lost her job...her work was very...as a sociologist her topic was also half from the left so obviously it wasn't the same thing under a dictatorship from the right.²⁷⁶

Amelia's narrative of her mother's life during the Allende years affirms the graveness of the situation faced by María and her family, and also recognises the sense of urgency that she must have felt in trying to avoid the same fate as the men in the family, as a political activist and a sociology teacher who was forced out of her job. In her efforts to construct a linear narrative of events, Amelia's postmemory narrative reveals a critical understanding of the different interconnected historical moments that have affected her mother's life. Her own reconstruction of the past blends her mother's memories with that of her own, that in turn speaks about an intricate web of multidirectional memories that link the coup in Chile with the role of the U.S. in its subsequent involvement in the

²⁷⁵ The term *milico* is a derogatory term used in Latin America to refer to the military.

²⁷⁶ My own translation, see Appendix 4 for original quote in Spanish. Interview with Amelia carried out on the 23/10/2010.

coup. Amelia's ability to do this also interlinks her father's heritage who María met after she had arrived in the UK:

My father is from the United States. He was born in California. And he also came from a family that was very...politically speaking very radical. My grandmother and my grandfather, both of them were members of the Communist party in the United States. I don't know if they were...well they were...when the Cold War came and there was this 'witch-hunt' inside the country, not only outside the country. And my grandparents refused to swear the 'McCarthy Oath' which was to... [raises her voice] "pledge allegiance to the United States and I reject anything communist" and all of that. And because they were from that inclination they refused to, they refused to declare it. So they were 'blacklisted' and they had to go about a bit...a bit in hiding, but not for very long. So, in the end my grandfather found a job here in a university in England, so they were able to come here. This was in the...my dad was fifteen, sixteen years old. They also wanted to leave the United States because of the Vietnam War because they did not want that their children be drafted into military service. And well, that's how my parents got here and my father has lived in London all his life. Well, they spoke from the time they met, my mum also arrived in London. And because my father was really involved with the Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign, Cuba Solidarity Campaign, Chile Solidarity Campaign, he was in the Latin American circle that was also here. [There were] a lot of exiles in those times in the seventies. And he met my mother at a party, and well, that's where they met.²⁷⁷

In her charting of her parents' joint trajectories to the UK, Amelia mutually recognises the links between the repression her mother suffered in Chile in the early 1970s, and that of her father's family, her paternal grandparents living in the U.S. as communists during the 1950s up until the intensification of the Vietnam war in the 1960s which the family consciously object to and eventually leave for the UK. However, Amelia's postmemory account of her family's interconnected and multidirectional past does not contain the

²⁷⁷ My own translation, see Appendix 5 for original quote in Spanish.

exact facts about the historical periods she describes. Instead, Amelia's narrative evokes the diasporic in-between space which she occupies and from which she is able to recount and weave these different historical timeframes together, that not only connect her to the history of the field of the politics of memory in Chile, but to that of the U.S. and the wider geopolitical events of the Cold War.

As such, Amelia's narrative indicates an ability to both amalgamate different translocated positionalities and historical conjectures, and to reconfigure them in relation to how they have been passed down to her by her family, in a way that makes sense to her own experiences. In doing so, she is re-affirming her family's history and creating new subjective meanings and imaginings that do not disavow historical objectivity altogether. Rather, they draw out the emotive and affective components of those stories and of the intergenerational process of transmission and of postmemory, where the second generation is capable of creatively incorporating and deploying different historical epochs. This multidirectional component of postmemory finds resonances with the narratives that Gatti has identified as coming from the space of the traumatic catastrophe of the Southern Cone military dictatorships contained in the 'narratives of the absence of meaning', as reciprocally forming radical new positionings from which individuals have questioned notions of traumatic lineage. In turn, Amelia's narrative is exemplary of the potential formations of the new alliances across borders encouraging collective and affiliative identifications between individuals towards these events that should be the concern of all, not just the direct victims of state terrorism.

In Amelia's case, and as we will see with other narratives further on, I argue that the concept of postmemory allows us to see how second generation individuals depart from a notion of fixed 'truth' tied to the testimonies of the first generation of Chilean political exiles in the UK, and problematise the notion of a traumatic familial heritage, through the articulation of complex ways of identifying with the past incorporating lived experiences and memories. Rather than simply reproducing their parents' memories, the postmemories of second generation Chileans in this thesis are continually re-defining what it means for them to remember the dictatorship and the processes of exile and displacement from the viewpoint of a diasporic in-between landscape that induces a reworking of a dictatorial past within a diasporic present.

Moving on from this, I went on to ask my interviewees, how much they knew about their parents political activities in Chile in the 1970s. Alicia was born in London in 1984 after her parents arrived as exiles, but then due to her parents separation spent her childhood and adolescence living between both parents. When she was younger together with her mother she spent some time living in Colombia, and between the ages of fifteen and twenty she lived with her father in Chile, when she later decided to come back to London to start her university degree. Alicia's mum and dad came from Valparaiso and Viña del Mar, two Pacific coastal cities where she told me they met as teenagers. They came to the UK as exiles in 1976, and firstly arrived in Swansea in Wales, where they lived for five years before moving down to London. When I asked her about her father's life in Chile during the coup she replied:

All right, OK. [All] that I know of is that it's a bit of a taboo but still. My father was a student in the Catholic University of Valparaiso and he was

studying mathematics at the time and obviously there was a lot of political influence at the time and he decided with some other colleagues from university to start up doing propaganda against what was occurring at the time. And of course he never found out exactly what had happened, but because he obviously took precautions and straightaway he, for example he, burnt most of his books that were like you know books from Marx or any other type of socialist or communist theories were burnt. Both of my family's side but maybe from my father's side their political view was left-wing, but what was happening at the time was there was a lot of, how can I explain it... a lot of pressure. So the military would come and obviously interrogate you and you had to give names because otherwise your family could be jeopardised and in one of those occasions, one of the next door neighbours had found out that my father had a type-machine where he was doing propagandas, and the [youngest] of my uncles, he's about 40 now... He obviously tried to get rid of it before the military came over to the house, so they didn't actually find any evidence. And my father decided to hide for about three months.²⁷⁸

From the beginning of her account, Alicia indicates that the information she is sharing is with me is still considered 'taboo' within her family, because as she revealed to me later on, she grew up in an environment where her father did not talk very often about what had happened to him. What her narrative above reveals, is a tension between justifying and contextualising her father's experience within a framework where the choices for his actions were shaped by his left-wing inclination as well as living under intensifying political 'pressure' and 'influence', whereby she believes that he had no other choice as she explains to, "start doing propaganda against what was occurring at the time". It reveals the certain uneasiness I mentioned on the part of the second generation in Chapter 1, where individuals such as Alicia are counterbalancing their parent's political

²⁷⁸ Interview with Alicia carried out on 9/02/2009.

militancy, against an oppository ‘military’ presence, that forced him to take ‘precautions’ and burn his Marxist books. Alicia reveals that even after taking precautions it was her father’s neighbours that revealed to the military authorities his and his brother’s whereabouts when they spotted the typewriter that they used to produce ‘propagandas’ against the regime, and led to their house being searched and her father going into hiding. This sense of uneasiness which I identify in Alicia’s narrative towards her father’s political militancy continued when I asked her whether her father had been a political activist she stated:

Not necessarily. I would say he was a student with political views and ideologies. I think sadly, everyone was put in the same sack. I think you weren’t allowed to express your views at the time, it was a dictatorship so even if you weren’t in favour of what was occurring, you were considered to be as someone to be of the opposite side. So it was quite extremist and I think my father obviously disagreed, and therefore he felt that he was a target.

This account above has two interrelated strands. In one, Alicia frames her father’s activism and political ‘views’ in relation to a much wider ‘student’ collective without naming any particular party or organisation, perhaps due to her father’s young age at the time. In the other, she also identifies the dominant repressive state apparatus of the military regime that in her view targeted all leftist political subjects in the same manner, a logic which she identifies as ‘extremist’ since to her dismay, “everyone was put in the same sack”. Alicia’s response therefore is uneasy with promoting the dominant discourse of the figure of the male rebel militant in particular, which obscures the plurality of political positionings in the UP years. In doing so, she is also acknowledging her father’s involvement in Chile’s history both before and during the dictatorship,

where the process of delegitimising the left was not just a feature of the 1970s but of earlier periods.²⁷⁹ In my original question, I had intended to find out about the specific political party or organisation that Alicia's father had belonged to. Instead, Alicia's indirect answer reveals a much more nuanced awareness on her part of the socio-political shifts taking place during the dictatorship, where the regime pitted itself against certain sectors of civil society, and where Alicia draws our attention to another neglected aspect of political militancy not necessarily always visible when discussing this period – that of the politicisation of very young people during the Allende years, as another important element of the militancy of her parent's generation.

Finally, in Alicia's supposed inability to specifically describe her father's leftist identity, she is also keeping something to herself, a private space for her and her father's memory, protecting him from a revelation which potentially could serve as an easy justification as to why he ended up being a political target. Alicia's partial silence is not denying her father's political subjectivity, but rather she is resisting a reductive view that frames all the targets of the military during the dictatorship as left-wing militants (which they were not), and which seeks to rationalise the levels of violence inflicted on citizens as a necessary response to the growing polarisation of Chilean society. Her account also begins to hint towards the emergence of a specific father-daughter dynamic of intergenerational memory that, as we will see later on, she discusses at greater length in relation to her return to Chile to live with her father.

²⁷⁹ For an excellent account of related practices of social control and repression on the part of the Chilean state on the citizenry previous to the 1973 dictatorship discussing the historical and violent contestations between different social classes in Chile, see, Elizabeth, Lira. 2011. 'Chile: Dilemmas of Memory', In *The Memory of State Terrorism in the Southern Cone: Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay* (eds.) Francesca, Lessa, and Vincent, Druliolle (New York: Palgrave Macmillan):107-132.

The arrival of the Chilean diaspora in Britain

From 1973 onwards, there were many organisations in Chile and abroad that supported the flight of political exiles. At the time, many of those exiles depended on whether they had been granted refugee status from the UNHCR to ensure safe passage and entry into host countries.²⁸⁰ Accepting refugee status was not a straightforward process, as María and Sofia described to me, the title of refugee often carried stigma with it where often individuals felt they were treated differently despite guaranteed protection in countries that accepted political exiles. Sofia recalls that after having escaped the coup in Chile and arriving in Argentina, she was faced with contemplating what she called a second exile:

They told me that they were going to send us to various countries, to Germany, to France, anywhere where they didn't speak Spanish, the *milicos* told me. "Because that's the first sentence we want to impose on you, not to be able to speak."²⁸¹

Exiles was systematically used by the military government as a violent form of exclusion alongside other practices of detainment, torture and disappearance, to silence and suppress the Chilean population, and deny exiles the right to remain in their own country. Chosen political prisoners were expelled directly abroad from prisons and

²⁸⁰ In 1974, the UNCHR supported the Programa de Reunificación Familiar (Family Reunification Programme) to reunite separated families, and in 1976 continued this work with FASIC to reunite socially disadvantaged families, in situations where male political prisoners had been expelled from the country under decree number 81 and were unable to fund their family's trip to join them in exile. Rebolledo, 2006a.

²⁸¹ My own translation.

detention centres, while others found their own means to escape.²⁸² Alicia explained to me her parent's route into exile as such:

What happened was that they were looking for my father and my mother had nothing better to do than to put my dad in a *bodega* [wine cellar], the downstairs bit of the household of my great-grandma and hid him there for a couple of months. But the military got very impatient and they raided my grandmother's house from my father's side and they took all the men from my father's side and sadly two of them were taken prisoner and I know one of them was tortured quite severely. So they were going to... I don't know exactly what the intentions of the military were but I think they were going to kill all the men from my father's side if he didn't give himself in. So then my father had no option and he gave himself in knowing what he was going to go into.

Then he was disappeared for two years, no one had any records of his whereabouts 'cause at the time I know the German Red Cross was coming over cause even all the international flights were not coming in to Chile no longer and there was a whole state control. So there were some lists saying obviously certain prisoners were in certain refugee camps or in prisons. My father wasn't in any of them and my family were told and my mother, that he probably was dead and he couldn't be found. He first arrived to the National Stadium, and then from the National Stadium he was taken to some other refugee camp and from there he was taken to one of the main jails which is still opened today, *Capuchinos* in Santiago de Chile.

Alicia describes how the military mounted a search for her father after he had gone into hiding and kidnapped his brothers in order to force him to give himself up. He eventually turned himself in, and as a result was disappeared for two years, during which time his family and Alicia's mother searched for him since his name did not

²⁸² Between the years 1973-1976 the military regime granted 11,000 people safe-conduct out of Chile, many of whom had been sheltering in foreign embassies. Six hundred prisoners were released under the condition that they would leave Chile, and another eight hundred people were condemned through military tribunals using the Supreme Court Decree number 504 to expel them out of the country. According to diplomatic sources around 20,000 Chileans left under supervision from NGOs, but these figures only consider those officially forced to leave, and not those families that left out of their own means. Rebolledo, 2006a.

appear in any official lists of prisoners. All the while, Alicia described to me the international pressure growing on the regime with organisations such as the Red Cross visiting Chile, and the military government being forced to produce lists of prisoners to prove to the NGOs they were not disappearing people. Her father went on to spend time at both the National Stadium and *Capuchinos* prison in Santiago. She continues that:

By that time I think my mother, sadly my mother was very humble at the time so she didn't have much money to move around...she hitchhiked to Santiago, in those days it must have been about a three-hour ride. And she arrived to the prison and she stayed there for quite some time and did a bit of like a hunger strike or something caus my mum was a hippy back in those days, and by accident she met a lady who was queuing to go inside who was an ex-colleague from school and she was dating a General who was guarding the jail on that day. So she pleaded with him to see if he was in there and they allowed her to go in and she saw my father after two years. My father was given the option through the United Nations to be exiled and come to England. My parents at the time... my mother was eighteen and they were not married so therefore the only way that she could leave the country was to get married so they were allowed to get married inside the jail. My father left, and six months later my mother came to England, well to Swansea at the time.

Alicia's narrative demonstrates the sheer determination of her mother to find and save her father after the chance meeting she had with an ex-school mate who gave her access to the General visiting the jail, and allowed her to save her partner's life. By forcing them to get married, the military forces exerted their last authority on the couple, and only then were they allowed to leave Chile with the assistance of the United Nations and come to the UK.²⁸³

²⁸³ Exact figures on numbers of Chilean exiles are difficult to establish, for example: Wright & Oñate estimate that in the few years following the coup, roughly two per cent of Chile's population in 1973 (about 200,000 people) left the country as exiles. Wright & Oñate, 2007. While the historian Carmen

Luis, another second generation interviewee was born in Brixton Hill in 1984 and he told me that he remembered that as a child he had attended a nursery in Stockwell in London run by Latin Americans called *Mafalda* after a well-known children's comic character.²⁸⁴ Many like Luis' father were self-imposed exiles who would not have necessarily featured in official accounts and figures of political refugees, since he left Chile on his own accord as soon as he perceived that his life was under threat. Luis explained to me that:

Ok, well it's actually my dad's Chilean and my mum's English so my dad came here and met my mum here. And he came because of the coup because he's a communist. But he came, I mean he was a self-exile in a way, he wasn't ever arrested or persecuted but he knew that it was dangerous to stay in the country. Like I know for example on the day of the coup and the few days after my family spent the time trying to kind of, they basically burned all of his books but tried to do kind of obviously do it at night and stuff so... But yeah, it was dangerous for him to stay there basically. And he was a sociology teacher, he was teaching in Antofagasta, I can't remember the full details, but he did get in kind of a bit of trouble by somehow, I can't remember specifically what it was but I imagine it was... you know he was with some kind of group making a denouncement, basically anyone who was opposing. So I think again you know, I think he wanted to oppose but basically he had to leave because it was dangerous if he did that.

Norambuena alongside the Vicaría de la Solidaridad estimate that double the amount of people left (408,000 people) taking into account exiles alongside their families, and The National Office of Return estimates this figure to be between 400,000 and 600,000. Carmen, Norambuena. 2000. 'Exilio y Retorno. Chile 1973–1994', In Mario, D. Garcés, Pedro, Milos, Myriam, Olguín, Julio, Pinto, María Teresa, Rojas, and Miguel, Urrutia (eds.) *Memoria para un Nuevo Siglo. Chile, Miradas a la Segunda Mitad del Siglo XX* (Santiago: LOM Ediciones):173–187.

²⁸⁴ Interview with Luis carried out on 18/02/2009.

Luis' father supported the Communist party and echoing Alicia's narrative about her father, he was also forced to burn his books, and left Chile when it became too dangerous to publically defy the regime where according to Luis, "anyone who was opposing" was threatened. In Europe the countries that received the most Chilean exiles were Sweden, Italy, France, Spain and the UK, with countries like the Soviet Union welcoming communist exiles to go to Moscow, and socialist activists most likely to travel to destination such as the German Democratic Republic, and MIR activists heading to countries such as France and Cuba.²⁸⁵ Worldwide and especially within Europe, the UK then was not an obvious choice for Chilean exiles. During the 1970s, the large majority of refugees to the UK came from places with historical colonial links such as Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Cyprus, Iran, and even Vietnam.²⁸⁶ When I asked Emilio how much he knew about the details of his parent's flight to the UK, he told me that:

Emilio: In detail not that much, basically I know that they were offered to go to Canada and Britain, and they chose Britain, I don't know the exact mechanism that was done. But I know that my dad, he was in the Venezuelan embassy in Chile and from there was taken out of the country, but I don't know exactly how my mum was taken out.

Alejandra: And when they came to the UK did they come to London?

²⁸⁵ Wright & Oñate, 1998.

²⁸⁶ According to Wright & Oñate between a third and half of all Chilean exiles ended up in Western Europe, with Sweden being home to the largest community of 30,000. Wright & Oñate, 1998. Home Office Asylum statistics from 1991 quoted in '*Credit to the Nation: Refugee Contributions to the UK*', between 1973 and 1979 approximately only 3,000 Chileans in the UK qualified as refugees, compared to 24,000 Vietnamese refugees, and 42,000 from Uganda. The Refugee Council. 2002. *Credit to the Nation: Refugee Contributions to the UK* (London: Eaveswood Colour). The Joint Working Group estimated that fifty per cent of all Chilean exiles in the UK were WUS students. Joint Working Group for Refugees from Chile in Britain. 1975. *Refugees from Chile: Joint Working Group Interim Report* (London: Joint Working Group for Refugees from Chile in Britain).

Emilio: They came to London, yeah, South London and they had to change from being medical students to scientists and my dad studied at UCL, and my mum studied, I can't remember where. But they both became scientists, did their PhD's here and carried on the job and their academic careers.

In addition, as we can see from Emilio's parents' case, exiles were restricted in their choice of destination. In the UK by 1974 the Labour government and trade unions (with Prime Ministers Harold Wilson from 1974-1976, and James Callaghan from 1976-1979), had been sympathetic to the plight of the Chilean exiles, and the Chile Solidarity Campaign and other initiatives such as the Chile Committee for Human Rights, the British Refugee Council and others, had gained great momentum in raising awareness of the situation in Chile, support arriving exiles, and mount political pressure on Pinochet's regime from abroad.²⁸⁷

The Joint Working Group and the World University Service

By July 1974 a 'Joint Working Group for Refugees from Chile in Britain' (JWG) was also formed to assist Chilean political exiles.²⁸⁸ When exiles reached the UK, they were greeted directly at the airport by volunteers and taken to reception centres in cities such as London and Birmingham. At these centres, smaller local committees would support arriving exiles in receiving medical care, free language lessons, and liaise with local authorities to house individuals and families. Due to limited funds, exiles were

²⁸⁷ Michael, D. Wilkinson. 1992. 'The Chile Solidarity Campaign and British Government Policy Towards Chile, 1973-1990', *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 52: 57-74.

²⁸⁸ The Joint Working Group was made up of many smaller organisations such as the British Council for Aid for Refugees, the Chile Committee for Human Rights, the Chile Solidarity Campaign, Christian Aid, Ockenden Venture, and the WUS. Joint Working Group for Refugees from Chile in Britain, 1975.

only allowed to remain at the reception centres for up to four months, after which, people were expected to take care of themselves.²⁸⁹ The WUS, which was directly involved in assisting students from Chile, Argentina and Uruguay, provided scholarships for Chilean exiles to come to various educational institutions in Europe.²⁹⁰ Priority was given to students who were in the gravest danger and their families were also assisted to come with them abroad. Luis' father and Amelia's mother (and her partner) were themselves recipients of the WUS scholarship to come to the UK:

Luis: It was 1976, 75, 76, I'm pretty sure it was 76, and he got a World University Service grant to...it was to be [in] the University of Nottingham. But I think it kinda shows it by the fact that he didn't speak any English and failed that Master's 'cause he didn't have a clue what was going on. I mean he got the grant to get out of Chile basically it wasn't you know, he wasn't really going to be able to study. I mean, ideally he would have been but it was just to get him out basically.

Amelia: Well her life was constantly changing and she and her husband had to look at how to get out of Chile and they left through the World University Service and they managed to get posts to study masters here in England. So she arrived here and it looks like she went to the Institute of Education to do that. I don't remember well, it's not very clear to me. She doesn't tell me much...in other words...she tells me but out of the blue!

The WUS scholarships were limited in the sense that they were primarily designed to get recipients out of Chile as soon as possible and offered a limited choice of disciplines

²⁸⁹ Ibid. The report of 1975 details the difficulties that the group had in providing assistance to Chilean refugees. Although they received funding from the British government, the group was unable to predict how many refugees would arrive each month, so the report describes how often the centres were extremely busy and not everyone would be able to receive the psychological support that they needed after spending time in jail in Chile.

²⁹⁰World University Service (UK). 1977. *Chile, Argentina, Uruguay: An Outline of Conditions in 1977* (London: World University Service).

to study at the time, giving exiles a helping hand in re-establishing their academic educations and careers as close as possible to what they had been used to back home. Of course, as Luis explains, re-establishing previous academic positions was not always easy:

Well he didn't pass that Master's which wasn't surprising really! What did he do? Uhm, he did kinda bits and bobs and different things, but he did go to Essex and did do a master's, I think it was in Latin American politics, yeah I'm pretty sure, yeah it was at that department as well. So he then did do the Master's but it was a few years later once he had learnt English.

Amelia's mum similarly went from teaching sociology to university students in Chile, to having to take a Master's course to be able to work professionally in the UK, with many exiles having to completely begin their lives from scratch, and training in disciplines and environments that they were not familiar with.²⁹¹ Another obstacle faced by many women such as Amelia's mother who had been students and academics in Chile, was their exclusion from the WUS scholarships (they were mostly granted to male recipients), even though it was often the women who risked their lives looking for their partners and were the ones to apply for the scholarships on behalf of their partners.²⁹² It is under this particular scenario alongside other factors faced by exiles on

²⁹¹ The WUS also coordinated joint seminars with different European research teams working with Latin American exiles and their families. World University Service. 1979. *Seminar on Mental Health and Exile: Chile* (London: World University Service). This seminar on mental health and exile held in London in 1979, was an example in how these professionals were already discussing the particular problems affecting Latin American exile communities, by looking at the psychosomatic stress related illnesses and symptoms that exiles were developing, and how all of this was also impacting on their children, in order to also be able to secure further funds and government support to further assist the exile persons under their care.

²⁹² Marta Raquel Zabaleta describes her experience of how her and her husband were greeted and treated by such organisations as the Latin American Council for Social Sciences (CLASCO), and the WUS on

arrival that as we will see shortly, contributed towards many familial relationships being tested and eventually breaking down, as women such as María and Sofia described to me that they were often treated as the dependant ‘partners’ of male political exiles by the organisations meant to help them.

The beginnings of the Chilean exile experience

In the UK context, one of the first and most extensive studies on Chilean exiles was carried out by Diana Kay with research that she conducted in Western Scotland in the 1980s, a destination that received one of the biggest communities of Chilean exiles.²⁹³ Her study encapsulates an analysis of how these exiles continued to keep up-to-date with ongoing events in Chile in the 1970s, as well as eventually settling in Britain. Kay’s Marxist analysis identified different gender and class framed experiences of the Allende years, including a look at how different families and individuals coped on the inside and outside of the exile community. For Kay, one of the biggest defining features of this community of exiles were the strong political identities of individuals, both in terms of individual political identity and activity during the Allende years, and the determination of exiles not to be defeated by their experiences in terms of rebuilding political and social ties in the diaspora space, despite some difficulties. As Kay states:

This opening in the power structure brought about a period of political and cultural renaissance in which large numbers of ordinary people became

arrival to the UK: “The undivided attention of the non-governmental organizations, the police, the local and national government offices, the political parties and Glasgow University was showered on him. I was ignored by one and all, including my husband, with the sole exception of our daughter, who would not separate herself from me for even an instant. This attitude of the people working in solidarity movements was very shocking to me, particularly because the majority of activities and organizations were administered almost exclusively by women, many of whom were feminists”. Zabaleta, 2003: 21.

²⁹³ Diana, Kay. 1987. *Chileans in Exile: Private Struggles, Public Lives* (Basingstoke: Macmillan).

politically aware and articulate. Settled ways of thinking and doing were opened up for re-examination. There was a scope for innovation and experimentation. Old patterns of hierarchal and servile relations crumbled as distinction of rank and status were played down.²⁹⁴

Her analysis of the Chilean exile community in Scotland at the time, can be said to reflect the broader types of issues affecting a wider UK Chilean community, which despite class distinctions was made up of a highly politicised group of people with high expectations of being able to resume their political projects, albeit within a different political and social landscape and with plans to eventually return home. As she observed with the men she interviewed, their experiences of having been a '*preso politico*' (political prisoner), compelled a wider personal as well as collective drive to continue to pursue their political projects and defy the regime since she argues that, "the exiles through their personal testimonies of torture and imprisonment, brought a concreteness to the issues and made an emotional impact which further boosted the campaign".²⁹⁵

When I asked Luis if his father had joined any political organisation when he arrived to the UK he commented that:

Yeah, I can't remember if it was along party lines, but I imagine it was. I mean yeah, he was part of the Chilean exiled community and he went to all those events and I remember being taken on protests and stuff. So he was definitely a part, I can't remember if it was on a political party line, but I know the Chilean community in England they were divided still between Socialists and Communists and MIR as well, but I can't remember if he was but he was involved in all that yeah.

²⁹⁴ Kay, 1987:16.

²⁹⁵ Ibid, 74.

Longstanding political allegiances from Chile were extended while in exile, with political parties and organisations represented within the Chilean diaspora in the UK as Luis identifies it, divided between the traditional parties of the Socialists, Communists, the Christian Democrats, the Radicals and the MIR.²⁹⁶ While the men led the political organisation of exiles, the women excelled at organising the marches and *peñas* where they raised money and awareness for the solidarity campaigns by cooking *empanadas* (savoury meat pastries).²⁹⁷

Emilio's parents were both politically active during the Allende years, spent time in prison and were given asylum to come to the UK as political exiles and students in 1975. Emilio was born in Britain in 1978 and his younger sister in 1981. When I asked him how much he knew about his parent's political identities back in Chile, his answer was reminiscent of María's and Sofia's narratives as MIR militants:

A reasonable amount. They were both members of the MIR and my father was a student leader and my mother was a member of the MIR. I understand my father was more senior and he was arrested first and I think he spent about a year...he was in the National Stadium when he was released. I think he went into hiding, then they arrested my mother and I think they were looking for my father again but they couldn't find him and they released my mother. My

²⁹⁶ The European Parliament was very supportive of NGOs working in Chile as well as supporting initiatives in the diaspora to oppose Pinochet. The Socialist International and the Christian Democratic International also helped the general reorganisation of political parties from abroad leading up to the 1988 plebiscite. Angell, 2007.

²⁹⁷ The *peña* is a Chilean get together where folk music, dance and food figure prominently. The *empanada*, a South American pastry filled with meat and other ingredients became one of the symbols of the Chilean exile struggle, made by the women and sold in large quantities to raise money for the solidarity campaign. Kay, 1987.

father spent some time in the Venezuelan embassy and I think from there he was taken out of the country first and then my mother followed.²⁹⁸

At first, they managed to carry on with their studies and eventually qualified as scientists. When I asked him whether they had ever been involved in the Chilean solidarity movement, he replied:

I think so. I think they were involved but only to a certain extent. I think that the solidarity movement represented on the one hand Chilean politics... they were divided up into the Communist party, and the others. And also, they were a reflection of the British political left, the British political groups. So I think my parents were involved but not, you know, heavily involved. From what I understand they also kind of broke with the MIR to an extent that the MIR had made a call for its activists to go back and fight an armed struggle. And I think they were told to leave their kids in Cuba, but they didn't do that, so they kind of stopped being MIR.

While Emilio's narrative identifies his parent's initial involvement in Chilean exile politics at the time, where the Chile Solidarity Campaign was greatly supported by the British Labour Party, in order to lobby the British government into changing its policy towards the military government in Chile (for example in the boycott of sales of arms to the regime) he also notes his parents increasing distance from Chilean politics, especially in relation to the MIR's plan of clandestine return to Chile in 1978, which Emilio makes clear did not appeal to them at all.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁸ Interview with Emilio carried out on 29/06/2009.

²⁹⁹ For a second generation account of this project of return (Operación Retorno) initiated by MIR activists in 1979 exile while in Europe and Cuba, see the documentary film by Macarena Aguiló. 2010. *El Edificio de los Chilenos* (Chile, France, Holland, Cuba: Producciones Aplaplac; Les Films d'Ici, Instituto Cubano del Arte e Industrias Cinematográficas-ICAIC).

Intergenerational transmissions since the time of exile

According to Kay, the pressures of experiencing highly traumatic events back home, leaving for exile and the experience of resettlement saw many exiles, particularly those in close-knit families, suffering under the stresses of attempting to resume a normal family life.³⁰⁰ According to Jorge Barudy a Chilean exile from Belgium:

In the case of the Chilean family in which the father has been imprisoned, he was unaware of the reality of the new family situation. When he rejoined his family, he had to catch up with the other members; it was necessary for him to re-establish relationships and contacts and to make a place for himself in this family which had functioned without him for so long. During the period of imprisonment, for the first time in his life perhaps, he found himself in a position of dependence on his wife who was taking steps to have him freed, visiting him in prison, arranging to send him parcels, and so forth.³⁰¹

These strains in family relationships did not just affected adults, but children too. The physical and psychological scars of detainment and torture, with partners and family member spending months and years apart before they were reunited, had a significant impact on the children of exiles, some of whom had also escaped with their parents into exile and/or witnessed the detainment and disappearance of their parents. Other strains became apparent between exiles in terms of dealing with a clash of cultural and societal values, traditions and beliefs. Mauricio, the son of Sofia, who was born in Scotland in 1977, told me about the time when his parents split up:

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

³⁰¹ In this extract, Barudy is referring to one specific family case, but which he argues also applies to many other exile families. Jorge, Barudy. 1988. 'The Therapeutic Value of Solidarity and Hope' In, Diana Miserez (ed.), *Refugees –The Trauma of Exile. The Humanitarian Role of Red Cross and Red Crescent* (AD Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers): 142.

(...)Some friends decided they never wanted to see my parents again after the divorce, they didn't want to have that whatever, effect on their children and they were kind of Catholic and they didn't really want to see their children seeing divorced people or something, it was kind of this reactionary Catholic thing.

Here, Mauricio's describes how certain practices in the host country were not seen as socially acceptable for some exiles at that time, such as when his own parents were rejected by some of their close friends because they had chosen to divorce. Other tensions arose between exiles and their children. In her narrative below, Amelia reveals how she would often row with her mother, and how on some of these fraught occasions stories would resurface about her mother's struggles from the past:

My mum had a really bad time, its' as if even to this day she arrived traumatised. And she couldn't let go of it. Every time I get angry with her or she gets angry with me she will bring this up, that, "I had such a rough time coming to England!", "I was a chambermaid and a cleaner!", "I lived in one room!". In other words, she lived in a 'bed-sit' with my sister when she was small, she didn't have any money, she had to work while she studied. So, she sacrificed a lot, she sacrificed a lot. And in a foreign country, she didn't speak very well English, and at that time London was less cosmopolitan than today. I don't think she experienced things like racism or xenophobia much. But you do...say that one felt more like a 'foreigner', not like now that they are...there is such a mix and you can hear so many different languages in one day that it is not so strange to hear people speak two languages and that they are not...well, the English are not all blond with blue eyes...but it was more noticeable in those days. So she always says that "I went through a bad time" and she always uses it, it's like a trauma that she can't...she can't get over it.³⁰²

It is precisely during these times of conflict between mother and daughter that Amelia noticed how her mother would 'bring this up' about her being 'traumatised' on arrival to the UK. Amelia perceived that her mother brought up these past experiences when

³⁰²My own translation, for original quote in Spanish see Appendix 6.

arguing with each other to show her daughter how ‘she sacrificed a lot’ where Amelia expressed that, “she always uses it, it’s like a trauma that she can’t...she can’t get over it”. During her own interview, María had told me that, her arrival to the UK had been difficult on account of problems arising in her marriage, when after spending so much time apart and due to his suffering torture, she struggled with her partner to restart their relationship in a new country. She also described to me the dilemma she faced as to whether to accept refugee status, where even though it guaranteed her social security and benefits as a single mother for her and her new baby, she also felt shame in claiming state support when she had worked all her life and never relied on any assistance. These types of conflicts between exile parents and their children were not uncommon, since many first generation exiles felt alienated in a society they initially did not belong to. For women who had previously been used to living with extended family by their side, it was often the loss of these kinship networks back home that affected them the most in terms of child rearing, and balancing their careers with their home lives. Women from lower income families interviewed by Kay (often living in council estates), developed new domestic and work routines that complemented and mirrored the lives of their children, who in turn helped their parents to learn English and to adjust to their new social environments more quickly.³⁰³ In most cases according to Kay, most Chilean exile women regardless of social class encountered a British society where gender roles

³⁰³ Kay, 1987.

in general tended to be more equal to what they had been used to back in Chile, enabling them to challenge their traditional gendered roles in relation to their partners.³⁰⁴

So far, the narratives of the Chilean second generation in this chapter have shown an awareness of their parents' political identities tied to their struggles in adapting to a new political, social and economic diasporic landscape in the UK. In Mauricio's narrative below for example, he describes his own memories of the kind of solidarity between first generation exiles that he witnessed between his parents and other exiles:

I mean, one thing was I mean, really my answer is more to do with the kind of solidarity that was kind of obvious between them and their friends and that was something that has always impressed itself on me. You know you could see it, you could discern it, and also just the joy of the memories, apart from you know, this dynamic of my mum always thinking my dad should get more off his chest and him maybe not been able to or wanting to, or being reticent to do so talking [about] his experiences.

Despite the hardships faced by his parents, Mauricio witnessed for himself while growing up the solidarity between his parents and their friends and evokes the, 'joy of the memories' that 'impressed itself on me'. In doing so, Mauricio not only remembers the transmission of happy memories, but the complex relationship between his parents and a certain tension with regards to the 'dynamics' of how those memories were passed down to him and his sister, with his mother believing that his father should "get more off his chest" but his father, "being reticent to do so". Mauricio's postmemory narrative therefore contains different layers of mutual recognition, where he relates with the

³⁰⁴ Kay states that in the early days of exile, "sexual politics were not only regarded by the politicised men as being politically divisive but also as 'unChilean.' The separated women's attempts to lead more independent lives in exile were criticised by men (as well as by some women) as reflecting their absorption into Western lifestyles. 'She lives like an English woman', the men would say, or certain behaviour would be dismissed as 'very European.'" Ibid, 1987: 189.

solidarity among exiles, whilst also recognising the difficulties of maintaining those intense relationships and political subjectivities in the diaspora.

In turn, when I asked Alicia if her parents had been involved in any political activity when they first arrived to the UK, she went on to tell me about a trip to Swansea she remembered that she had been on with her parents, in order to revisit the place they had arrived to in exile. Alicia remembers that:

When I was about fourteen, I think, we went on a car ride so I could see the household they used to live in, and they were all Chileans. They lived on the top attic my two parents. They started off... none of them dominated the language so of course they did very domestic jobs... cleaning and washing in restaurants and things of the kind. When they came down to London they even cleaned in the city and my mum would tell me all the stories and she had some horrible stories of some people taking advantage, not even paying her, working in Indian restaurants washing-up plates and things of that kind. But because my father had studied at university they gave him a scholarship to study at Swansea University, but he changed from Mathematics to Economics. And 'cause the teachers and professors at the university were very aware of what was occurring, they invited also my mother to come along to university to learn and practise English. And from there it started.

As we see above in Alicia's narrative, there is also evidence of solidarity between exiles having to live and work together in order to survive. Interestingly once again, rather than telling me what I expected to hear about her parents political identities in exile, she instead details her own insertion within her parent's storyline, to detail the specific places in the diaspora space where her parents passed on their memories to her just before they separated. In Alicia's narrative, we see her retracing her parent's footsteps with them, encountering an unfamiliar territory, and making it her own. Together, the first and second generation evoke Hirsch's 'idiom of the family', facilitating within

Alicia an embodied identification with her parents stories of struggle. What Alicia's narrative contains then, is not the exact details of her parents memories, but rather, the creation of her own mobile 'intergenerational memorial fabric' emerging from the situated conditions of the diaspora space, which more importantly, also evokes the lives of the exiles her parents lived with, and of all the Chilean exiles who arrived in Swansea.

Family dynamics and stories in the Chilean diaspora

One of the key aims of this thesis is to explore how during the interview process, the exposition of a diasporic and collective postmemory unfolds through various means, such as through the direct or indirect conversations taking place between family members, or as we have seen in Alicia's case in the last section, on the types of mobile familial encounters that are then remembered by the second generation. These narratives are distinct from Hirsch's overreliance on the communication of postmemory through familial visual images and the aesthetic postmemorial work of second generation artists, since they problematise the notion of direct inheritance and the easy adoption of traumatic memory from the point-of-view of the everyday experiences of the family. In fact, most of my second generation interviewees did not talk about specific stories told to them in systematic ways but rather a more complex process of 'realisation' emerging at different moments in their lives, and the sense that something important was being transmitted to them about the past. See for example Luis' comment below about his father:

From what I can remember there were never any specific stories, like his personal stories but, and I can't remember at what age I knew or realised this.

But I always knew that he had come to England because of the coup, and you know, he would always take me to his friend's house and they were all Chilean so, yeah basically I don't know from what age but I grew up knowing that I was with a group of people who had been forced to leave their country and many of whom had been tortured, and yeah so I kinda just knew why they were there. And I think also caus he took me to the protests and stuff as well, and you'd see the anger and the passion in other people, like I said I don't know what age it was but I just grew up knowing that. And obviously they all spoke Spanish and I knew they were Chilean, I'd been to Chile so, but it wasn't that he would tell me specific stories and I mean, even now when we talk about it, he was there for three years basically of the dictatorship, but we have talked a lot about before when he went on all the marches and was really active in university and all of that kind of stuff. But he hasn't really told me, caus he was only there for three years of it so he hasn't really told me stories that much.

Here, without acknowledging 'specific stories' transmitted to him about his father's past, Luis' narrative is exemplary of what we saw Gómez term in the previous chapter as a 'diasporic conscience', or an awareness regarding Luis' remarks that, 'I just grew up knowing that', where his own presence in a British diasporic space is connected to his father's trajectory and the events of the dictatorship. Significantly, Luis did not just come to 'know' this from his own father, but rather he acknowledges an intergenerational transmission beyond bloodline links when he remembers the 'anger' and the 'passion' of other Chilean exiles he met during the protests that his father took him to, who also transmitted to him their own stories of the past. In Luis' case, the forging of a diasporic postmemory field creates the possibility for new external relations to a traumatic past, in the sense that he was able to recognise the influence of others' stories and experiences, different from his own father's. His narrative reminds us to be attentive to postmemory's processes of connection and disconnection, as well as the hybrid translation through which both direct (familial) and indirect (affiliative) lines of

transmission become intermixed. In Luis' case, as for Alicia, what is important to draw attention to are not the exact contents of their memories, but how and what they remember about the contexts of transmission and how in turn they establish a multidirectional postmemory beyond the legacy of the Chilean coup. Within the ever-changing field of diasporic postmemory, Luis shares with his father and other Chilean exiles, a space in which they can reconstruct together the time of Allende's Chile, even if Luis was not there to experience it. He recalls when I asked him whether he ever talked to his father about the past:

Yeah, loads, yeah. I've asked him what it was like under Allende and before and yeah he's just told me that, there was lots of protests like every day and yeah you just get a sense that they were just fighting for something and there was a chance, but it went. But yeah you get that sense that it was a momentous time, it was quite unique.

This powerful approximation of postmemory speaks of an open process of translation in Bhabha's terms, occurring in the in-betweenness of the diaspora space where the second generation can find a way to acknowledge the losses experienced by the first generation, but without replicating its traumatising effects in the present. In this way, Luis comes to recognise through his father's memories that Allende's Chile represented a, 'momentous and unique' time where, "you just get a sense that they were fighting for something and there was a chance, but it went." In not idealising the past, Luis manages to conjure the affective dimensions of the political ideals of the Allende years and the sense of hope and togetherness that his father experienced, without glorifying those experiences.

Returning to Alicia's narrative, she told me that soon after their trip to Swansea her parents separated and that she ended up mostly living with her mother and only seeing

her father at weekends. Eventually, her father decided to move back to Chile in the 1990s after the 'No' vote supported by the Concertación coalition party had been successful in removing Pinochet from office in the late 1980s. This had been a difficult process for her father since Alicia told me that, "(...) there were registers in the newspapers of when you were allowed to go back and so his name came up", but, "(...) it was a bit of an ordeal, it was really, really difficult. Firstly 'cause even though they were allowed back, they still had criminal records and it was really hard for him to find a job and work out there". When I went on to ask her if when growing up her parents told her a lot of stories about Chile she replied:

My mother did, my mother did quite a lot. She did, I think she's a true romantic! Sadly like I said they're no longer together, but she has not the greatest memories but she holds my dad very dearly. My father on the other hand, his character is quite different, he's a kind of person that doesn't express himself verbally or physically. He has a way of expressing himself by writing and he's never told or spoken to me about what had happened until when I was living in Chile and a new legislation came about to give reimbursements or some kind of compensation to victims. So he had to fill in all this paperwork and stuff, so my father sat down, for him it meant peanuts money (...) it was nothing for him. But it was, I don't know, some way of the state recognising what had occurred. But anyway, it was that day that we started speaking about it so many years had gone by and he didn't take it very well, and I think he's never received any kind of psychological support regarding the torture that he suffered. So I don't like to step on his tiptoes regarding those issues.

Alicia's narrative above demarcates two very different ways of relating to the past on the part of her parents. On the one hand her mother's openness in relation to talking to her daughter, and on the other, her father's difficulty in speaking about his past. Out of the two, it is precisely her relationship with her father that stands out as the most significant during her interview, since it was his leaving the family home that prompted

her need to find out more about his past in her attempt to reunite herself with him in Chile. Alicia's narrative similarly to Mauricio's case with his father identifies reluctance by her father to express his feelings 'verbally or physically' but instead revealing that, "he has a way of expressing himself by writing". By the time Alicia joins her father in Chile, he is going through the bureaucratic process of formally requesting compensation from the Chilean state as a victim of state terrorism. During this process, Alicia witnesses the uncovering of the affective dimensions of her father's memories when she realises that he has been forced to recall and then recount his experiences in writing in order to legally prove his status as a victim of state terrorism.

I continued by asking her if since that moment when she had lived with him in Chile, she had since been able to ask him about what had happened to him. She told me that, "I know lots, and I know he knows that I know". She continued:

And he tells me some things, some things even though it's tragic are funny, you know what kind of tortures he received, and also obviously his mates from... 'cause you know he's a man he looks at things very differently, women get very emotional and he obviously... I don't know... he was quite strong. And he always says to me, 'cause in Chile before it was obligatory you had to do military service, and at school depending what school you went to you, you know you had like lining up and exercises and things, so he did and many people at school thought he would take up a military role of some kind. So, sometimes I don't know if he's joking or not, he says to me, "oh you know, if it wasn't for that type of preparation mentally, physically and psychologically, I didn't think I could handle being tortured", something along those lines is what he was trying to say to me. Because I've met lots of his friends and my own uncles, they're stuck in time, they're stuck on that date and they haven't moved forwards and there's so much resentment and hate, you know and sadly enough in that aspect it did a world of good for my father to come over here and see something a little bit more brighter in some ways.

Alicia identifies her father's use of humour as a coping mechanism to make sense of his torture, which facilitated his ability to retell his traumatic experiences while trying to protect Alicia from the pain he has felt. Alicia recognises that it was more important for him to transmit to her the resilience that himself and fellow prisoners had in maintaining their sense of humour and human dignity under difficult conditions which he believes kept him alive. In inviting his daughter to share in his making fun of the rigorous training he underwent during his military service previous to the dictatorship, Alicia's father is allowing her to jointly partake in this act of defiance, when she comes to acknowledge how this prepared him, 'mentally, physically and psychologically' for torture. Similarly to Luis, during her time in Chile Alicia did not just find out about her own father's story, but was also exposed to the stories told to her by her uncles and her father's friends, all together who she identifies as being "stuck on that date" and not being able to move forward from the trauma they suffered.

Ultimately for Alicia, finding out about her father's experiences coincided with her dealing with the end of her parent's ten year relationship, where she told me that, "(...) they had what I thought was a beautiful relationship, from what my mum has told me, they met when they were...a childhood love, first love, never met anybody else and married in those circumstances it's like a love story you know." By attempting to make her father open up, Alicia was trying to create a private space of connection through which she could form a closer bond with him, because for her, "(...) even though he's very affectionate, I don't think anyone understands him." Understanding her father, also became a way to understand the dictatorial past, and a growing appreciation that their

bond would not just manifest itself in the immediate and direct ways that perhaps Alicia was seeking. She details her precarious relationship with him in this way:

Sometimes you wonder what's going through his mind, he can go into very deep thoughts. And I know he's going into deep thoughts because he can write the most beautiful letters and express himself by writing, but no other way. So our relationship's been a bit... and yeah I think I'm the only person that makes him break, so therefore I don't wanna kinda you know, take a territory that might make him feel really vulnerable. Because I've seen my dad cry and I know no one has seen him cry, so I know it's not a big thing for most people but for him it's some type of, a way of releasing I think. It's hard because I knew he received electricity through his fingers and feet and that was more the physical, but I think the worst type of torture was the psychological ones where the military thought that there was something more behind the propaganda or that he was part of some type of political thing or whatever. And sometimes he would, these things he has told me, they would put him in a dark room with no windows for days and without food. And you know they would obviously interrogate him, sometimes beat him and so forth, or he would see how they beat or interrogate another person, so I think those ones are worse than the actual physical ones to be honest, even though sadly his nails are not all very nice at all, they are *destrofiado*[damaged]?

There is a fragile living connection of postmemory in Hirsch's terms taking place here that Alicia is detailing. Alicia is herself transmitting to us, the delicate balance of treading carefully between the lines in order not to upset her father's vulnerability, whilst also expressing her desire for him to share his trauma with her, so that they can be brought closer together. In sharing these dark and painful memories of torture with her through different modes of transmission (in letters and through the use of humour), her father is forging with Alicia a private space of connection and healing as she states, "(...) I've seen my dad cry and I know no one has seen him cry". By reconnecting with her father in Chile as the site of their reunion and interconnecting with the UK as the site of his exile and her birth, father and daughter are actively interacting in a diasporic in-between space of connection. Here, Alicia has not become a dutiful guardian of fixed

memories, but a co-creator of her own postmemory shared with her father which she is then sharing in the interview space.

The process of return in the period of transition to democracy in Chile

To begin with, the Chilean exile diaspora was instrumental in campaigning against the Pinochet regime and the human rights violations committed, which also formed the basis for rebuilding the Chilean political democratic process in the run-up to the plebiscite in 1988 and the democratic elections in 1990.³⁰⁵ Part of this democratisation program from the diaspora, included the set-up of initiatives to support those exiles wishing to return to Chile.³⁰⁶ Yet, some found conditions on arrival very difficult to deal with in a Chile that had changed massively since the time of Allende, a situation that authors such as Rebolledo have labelled as a ‘double exile’ for both first and second generations.³⁰⁷

By the early 1980s, Chile had experienced an economic crisis that severely affected the potential for all future returnees of finding employment, but there was also the increasing presence of a renewed trade unionist movement and waves of social

³⁰⁵ Angell, 2007.

³⁰⁶ Almost all of the organisations that had helped Chileans to leave the country were subsequently instrumental in coordinating their return, and were joined by other such as the: Programa para la Infancia Dañada por los Estados de Emergencia (Programme for Childhoods Damaged by the States of Emergency –PIDEE); El Comité Nacional Pro Retorno de Exiliados (the Pro-Return Committee for Exiles), and the Comité de Defensa de los Derechos del Pueblo (the Committee for the Defence of the Rights of the People –Codepu). All of these groups helped returnees to secure a flight home, to find employment and housing, and access to healthcare that were so important to the process of re-insertion into Chilean society, as it had been on arrival in exile. See, Rebolledo, 2006a.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

protests that resulted in the so-called ‘national days of protest’ in 1983.³⁰⁸ Many returnees had big expectations concerning the emerging democratic conditions that facilitated their return as, “at the moment of his return the exile was hoping to reinsert himself into his militancy and political struggle, he thought that he would be welcomed back by those that had stayed behind, but many times this did not occur, which turned into a disappointment”.³⁰⁹ The renewal of social and political movements in the run-up to the plebiscite of 1988 was led by the Concertación de Partidos para el No (Concertación of Parties for the No vote) that linked fifteen centre-left parties to restore democracy to Chile.³¹⁰ The Concertación won the vote with 54% of the vote, followed by the presidential and congressional elections in December 1989.³¹¹ Within six weeks of taking office President Aylwin created the Rettig Commission to investigate the deaths and disappearances of thousands of political prisoners during the dictatorship.

³⁰⁸ At the same time, community activism was growing among the urban and rural poor while the armed forces kept up their heavy policing and brutal crackdowns on the *poblaciones*. The Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front (FPMR) stemming from the Communist Party, formed in 1984 to combat the regime, resulting in the 1985 discovery of the headless bodies of five communist activists who became known as the *degollados*. Collier & Satter, 2004.

³⁰⁹ My own translation taken from, Rebolledo, 2006b:168.

³¹⁰ For the different types of ‘historical memories’ deployed by the military government and the *Concertación* in order to convince people to vote for them, see, Carolina, García González. 2006. ‘El Peso de la Memoria en los Inicios de la Transición a la Democracia en Chile (1987-1988)’, *HISTORIA* 2:431-475.

³¹¹ Behind the scenes, the Concertación worked hard up to the 1989 elections to try to amend some statues of the 1980 constitution which had guaranteed the Senate and Congress the right to block government reforms if they saw fit. Eventually, these agreements between the government and Pinochet were labelled the *leyes de amarre* (tie-up laws) that guaranteed the dictator’s constitutional rights, and securing him as commander-in-chief of the army until 1998. See, Angell, 2007; Silva, 1999.

The government also opened the Oficina Nacional de Retorno (National Office of Return–ONR).³¹² The ONR pushed for official judicial reforms to facilitate the return of exiles,³¹³ where managed to assist around 50,000 people up to its closure in 1994.³¹⁴ In the same year, Chileans still in exile lost their international status as political refugees.³¹⁵ Many that did return faced uncertainties in a society that had changed dramatically linked to problems of citizenship (e.g., nationality, personal documents, and military service); unemployment; education (e.g., qualifications earned abroad); housing; health and money (e.g., pensions, social security, property brought abroad, and credit). These conditions created a lot of personal problems in family relationships, in the wake of having to deal with profound social, political and economic changes, but with the emotional complications of re-establishing family relations and friendships.³¹⁶ As we saw earlier on when Alicia detailed her experience of being with her father during the time that the Chilean government was officially compensating the victims of the dictatorships, the process of return forced some people to have to deal with the traumas of torture in very public ways, which generated higher levels of emotional

³¹² Rebolledo, 2006a.

³¹³ Some of these reforms included the recognition by the Ministry of Education of qualifications gained abroad to facilitate student and professional's entry into education and employment, and the priority of health assistance to those victims of human rights abuses by the Ministry of Health. Programmes to provide credit loans for exiles were not as successful, that had tended to leave people with bad debts. Ibid.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ On April, 13 1994, the UNCHR declared an end to the status of political refugee for those Chileans who had been granted that status to leave Chile in the 1970s and settle in exile abroad. Rebolledo, 2006a.

³¹⁶ See also the Programa Medico-Psiquiátrico FASIC. 1980. *Estudio Psico-Social de 25 Familias Retornadas* (Santiago de Chile: Ediciones Signos de los Tiempos). This study concluded that returnee's experiences of exile were still heavily shaped by the traumatic social, political and economic events after 1973 that had severely affected the emotional state of exiles, and that this in turn, had worsened some returnees' emotional states during the process of return.

distress and in some cases continuing psychosomatic symptoms mostly linked to anxiety and depression.³¹⁷

The psychological effects of exile and return on the second generation

As was briefly mentioned in this chapter, the experience of exile on children began to be a growing concern for those individuals and bodies working with Chilean refugees, looking into the psychological impact of forced migration. One study carried out by Ana Vasquez and Ana María Araujo in France in the 1980s, found that the children of Chilean exiles who had grown up in Chile and had gone into exile with their parents had initially found it difficult to adapt to a new schooling system in the diaspora different to the ones they had been used to back home.³¹⁸ Vasquez and Araujo's findings showed that these children had the joint difficulties of being expected to adapt quickly to their new environments, to speak a new language, and to make friends easily, whilst also coping with their own traumatic memories of witnessing and being victims of violence back home.³¹⁹ All of these factors contributed to some children of exile's initial feelings of isolation, especially for the older ones that had lived for a longer period of time in Chile, stuck between supporting their parents dealing with the loss of their homes, friends, and political projects, and having to forge new friendships and social spaces in the diaspora.

³¹⁷ Programa Medico-Psiquiátrico FASIC, 1980.

³¹⁸ Ana, Vasquez. 1980. "Quelques Problemes Psychopedagogiques des Enfants D'exiles." *International Review of Education* 26:65-76. Ana, Vasquez, and Ana Maria, Araujo. 1988. *Exils Latino-Américains: La Malédiction d'Ulysse* (Paris: CIEMI L'Harmattan).

³¹⁹ Vasquez & Araujo, 1988.

These early works on the impact of exile on political refugees and the second generation were instrumental in supporting the work of organisations like FASIC in Chile who in turn supported the children of returnees' re-insertion into Chilean society.³²⁰ It was during these types of initiatives that children of returnees could come together and discuss their experiences of their own 'exile' in Chile. One child of returnees interviewed by FASIC revealed that:

A very strong contradiction that happened to me with my parents, was that of attempting to integrate with every group of exiles, at the same time as integrating into the country, and it happened to me with my parents; I had to inherit everything that they transmitted to me culturally, and ideologically, alongside all of their thoughts and integrate in the country that I was in. This was a double task.³²¹

It's like as if you are in the middle; you don't feel totally on one side, I feel like this is my country, and that I have to live here, but anything on the level of sentiments is difficult for me. I know that I can't stay in the middle, I can't, over there I used to live to return here and here I am living to return over there.³²²

Many children of exiles that had grown up listening to idealised stories of Chile were suddenly faced with a very different reality to the homeland of their parent's memories, and as a result, they resented their parents for forcing them to move back to a country that they could not easily identify with, in situations where they had had no say in the

³²⁰ FASIC. 1986. *Exilio 1986-1978* (Santiago, Chile: Amerinda Ediciones).

³²¹ FASIC, 1986: 40. My own translation.

³²² Ibid: 41. My own translation.

decision to return.³²³ According to FASIC, the second generation that did return to Chile was facing their own complex problems in terms of having grown up under a legacy of exile, where they were hugely influenced by their parent's memories of the traumatic past:

In the adolescent returnees the election of a political project presents difficulties. In the majority of them, it was possible to observe that an historical legacy exists of assuming the role in which their parent's failed in their political projects. An historical legacy has been transmitted through hearing conversations, of perceiving things, of situations not spoken about, of fears, of pains and of silences.³²⁴

As a result, there is a sense in the literature on returnees that the needs of the second generation were not really taken into account by the majority of parents and families.³²⁵ For the second generation of returnees who had absorbed these 'myths' of their parent's homeland and the legacy of their political identities, problems arose especially when their 'dual' identities were questioned by those around them.³²⁶ Where once the second generation that had been born in Chile had struggled to adapt to schooling abroad, those that had been born in the diaspora were now struggling to adapt to schooling in Chile, often within very strict and conservative environments.³²⁷ This sense of 'double loss' as Rebolledo has argued, was more acutely felt by the returnee second generation, who did

³²³ Loreto, Rebolledo, and Maria Elena, Acuña. 2001. "Narrativas del Exilio Chileno", *Anales Nueva Época*, 3-4:223-241.

³²⁴ My own translation, FASIC, 1986: 43.

³²⁵ Loreto, Rebolledo, and Maria, Elena Acuña. 2001. 'Narrativas Del Exilio Chileno', *Anales Nueva Época* 15: 223-41.

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ Rebolledo, 2006b.

not immediately feel 'at home' in Chile, but still grappled with their parent's need to go back.

Amelia and Alicia's experiences of return

During her interview, Alicia told me that even as young as fourteen she had already been thinking about leaving home since she was determined to experience living with both parents separately. She told me:

And so I remember I wrote a letter to my dad, he took about three months to respond, and he said to me "Ok *Chinita*, come along". And I arrived, and sadly our relationship wasn't great and I came back after eight months, and then I gave it a second try. 'Cause it was personal and intimate issues between us that's why we weren't getting along. But the whole experience of going to Chile was difficult because I had a really good education here in London, and so Chile's education's totally and completely different. I went to about four schools and wasn't able to adapt in any. Arts schools, girl's schools, or mixed school. And then I went to a private school and that private school was an ex-military school so all the children there were sons and daughters of ex-militaries. So they didn't have any objections of me going but they didn't know my background so I had to keep quiet for the four years I was there. So that was a bit awkward, lying about who my parents were. And obviously I didn't say they were exiles and I just said my father went to study up there and my mother was English, I just thought that was the best option.

Alicia's narrative encapsulates her second generation experience as a returnee in her own right and her determination, despite the initial first failed attempt at living with her father for eight months, to make that relationship work. On her own return, she encountered problems fitting in until she ended-up in an 'ex-military school', where she had to keep her identity quiet.

In addition to her experiences of reuniting with her father and going to secondary school in Chile, Alicia also told me about getting to know her extended family. I asked

her if while in Chile, she had had any interest in finding out about her family history and she told me that:

I did. I heard the accounts of my uncles. I met my uncles from Argentina for the first time when I visited. They also told me their stories. I also realised I didn't need to speak. I didn't need to ask questions. But one of my uncles hasn't clinically been told he has a mental issue, but he gets...he talks about it all the time, it's just amazing, and you know we just let him be 'cause sadly he was tortured so I don't think he's ever left that day onwards. My family, oh that's an interesting part! The thing is I left the country when the first judgement was given, and then obviously that failed and when Pinochet was sent back to Chile, and I arrived just when in Chile they were deciding whether to take away his immunity so he could be tried in Chile. So of course by the time that came along, I was in this right-wing school and yeah, it was weird because one of the mothers from my class was like a personal assistant of the General Secretary of the Pinochet Foundation, so the whole school was completely overtaken by propaganda, the television was there, you know the whole school was taken over and was pro-Pinochet. And I just felt, how could my dad put me through this? It was really, really weird, it was all contrary to what I had lived here in London and I had to keep silent.

This reinsertion into a wider familial world that Alicia had never experienced before, brought her into contact with other extended family members such as her uncle, where she, '(...) also realised I didn't need to speak', since he was happy to talk openly about his past. Despite his willingness to talk to her, Alicia still compared her uncle to her father who was also, "(...) stuck on that date and they haven't moved forwards and there's so much resentment and hate." For her, coming across other familial narratives of torture made her aware of her father's and her uncles ongoing struggles to make sense of and communicate their experiences to her, while being able to maintain a critical distance from the trauma that she realised so clearly continued to affect them.

Within her own experience of return, Alicia's time that she spent between London and Santiago was also marked by the detention of Pinochet in London in 1998-

1999, his return to Chile in 2000, and his subsequent indictments for his involvement in human rights abuses such as the Caravan of Death, and the assassination of General Carlos Prats in 2004, until his death in 2006 when Alicia was visiting family in Argentina. When Alicia returned to Chile, she began to attend a private school primarily catering to the children of middle to upper class sectors of Santiago including those of military officers, where the mother of one child in her class happened to be the personal assistant of the General Secretary of the Pinochet Foundation. Over time, Alicia described to me how she found that she could not adapt to life at this school. It was ‘contrary’ to what she had lived in London, and could not understand her father’s decision to send her there. In particular, she talked about how fellow students and staff would openly speak in a negative way in front of her on purpose about the victims of the dictatorship, recalling that they would say, “oh you know, ‘those communists they deserved to die’”, and “they deserved to be wiped out”, or “they deserved to be flown away”. Over a period of four years, everyone in the school knew that she was the child of exile parents, despite her best attempt to not tell anyone:

I remember my history teacher. I think my history teacher wasn’t daft, he wasn’t. And I used to sit in the front row and that’s one thing I always used to do ‘cause I needed to keep my ears open because all that noise behind me was too much to take. And he used to look at me [with] these eyes like knowing who I was but wouldn’t say it, that I was a child on an exile. And he would say, “oh all those who were exiled have come back and now they’re filthy rich, I don’t know what they’re complaining about” and things of that kind.

Not only did Alicia have to contend with bullying from fellow classmates, but even certain teachers would openly use her presence to make a point about exiled returnees,

signalling the ways in which they were identified by some as having profited from their time in exile. She continued by telling me that:

Because I know some children say they're paranoid that their teachers have a go at them or pick at them, but you could see it in their eyes I mean, you could see that they knew who I was. And it was not until my last year at school, a boy made a comment regarding what had happened and I just couldn't take it and I had to say something back and everyone went quiet, in the IT room when we were doing a class. And then it broke out that I was. But then I wasn't ashamed, I don't know why caus I kinda felt ashamed for a while, not ashamed, how can I explain it. Yeah, 'cause I didn't adapt that's the problem, I didn't adapt with these people sadly enough and so obviously when the news broke out, I know I was the talk of the town and my father got called in and so on.

Alicia describes above the complex and contradicting feeling of uneasiness and shame when the gaze of other children was fixed on her containing their collective resentment towards her as the daughter of exiles. Alicia's explanation for this uneasiness was initially attributed to her inability to blend in, which she then turned on its head by confronting a boy in her class that taunted her, "and then it broke out that I was". She told me that:

(...) I remember we were taking a civic class and I said to my dad, "look dad", 'cause I didn't know how to read or write when I first arrived to Chile so I taught myself and then my dad started teaching me about the history of Chile because they weren't teaching it at school. And then obviously I would put my points of view across in class and my teacher disliked it at first, but then he allowed it and he allowed open discussion and then I saw more of a humane part of people because I used to put across, like simplify things to them? I would say to them you know, "are you Catholic?" and she would say "yes", and I would know there was a Jehovah's Witness in my class. I said, "look you believe in the same thing, maybe progress or whatever or religious beliefs or anything, but this person just has a slightly different view of the same approach to yours, would you kill him for that?" And then they would look at each other and they both liked each other, they were friends, and they would say, "of course not". So I said, "why can't people tolerate other ideologies or other ways instead of harshly"...How you say, "governing over

them what they should think and so forth”. And so just with simply things like that so tinny, they were able to open their views and then I remember that all my girlfriends from school they were like “oh my god! You know my father’s a General he’s in the marines, am I still allowed to go to your house, will your father have any problems with me going to your house?” My house had a swimming pool so all the girls would come and I was like “no not at all”. And you know it was weird for two reasons ‘cause my father, I think I helped him in some ways, I know it sounds silly, I think I helped him to recover from having this really bad hate against people in uniform, because most of the drivers or if it wasn’t a driver it was the dad, they all went in uniform to take their children to school. And you know at first my father would say swearing words you know and after a while he would even let them pass, things like tinny little things.

Despite her problems at school, Alicia managed to get her father to teach her about the history of Chile, information that she used to challenge the official version of history being taught at her school. This allowed her to present an alternative historical viewpoint and befriend other girls whose fathers were in the military, while still attempting to get closer to her own father, intimately linking her private sphere she shared with him with her public one at school. However, this was shortly to be tested when Alicia describes that:

And then did the worst thing for my family, I dated a military and oh that was awful, that was really bad! My father, that’s when he exploded and I was like the betrayal of the family ‘cause I dated a military, he was a marine, and he was my first love and he really just let out. He said not very nice things to him, as if he were present even though he hadn’t been born yet at that time. And that relationship had to end and it did and then I realised my dad’s soul and heart had appeared to have forgiven and forgotten, but not really.

Overall, Alicia’s own experience and narrative as a returnee, reveals two complex sides to her postmemory. The first has been a need to personally reconcile herself with her father at a time when her parent’s separation had impacted on her greatly. A deeply

complex relationship unfolded with the young Alicia continually testing her links with her father at a time when he was also facing his own issues as an exile returnee and as a victim of torture. The second aspect of her journey has been her own displacement back and forth in-between the field of the politics of memory in Chile and the diaspora space in the UK, where she was suddenly confronted with her own exclusion and discrimination in relation to the stigma she faced by being the child of political refugees and exiles. Both aspects not only connected Alicia with her father, but with the post-dictatorial after-effects for the second generation living in-between the diaspora and Chile. Despite having gone through a largely turbulent time in Chile, Alicia told me that:

(...) And this is one thing that because I haven't lived there I am able or I think I am able to see the two sides of the same coin. So I understand the right-wing's point of view and I do understand the left-wing point of view, I am not here to judge either. But the thing is what happens I think in all situations when there's these historical moments is that children repeat exactly what their parents say, they're not thinking they're not rationalising their own views on a point and I think that has a lot to do with education. And sadly in school, at least the schools that I have seen they usually teach you until 1973 and then you have a module in your last year which is called [civic] and then you're able to see how the governments are formed and the three branches of government and so forth. And so many people are kept ignorant in some ways or another regarding the political situation or the history of Chile. And that was hard for me because I like to read quite a lot and I was able to read both sides of the story, and some of things they said [to me] were a bit brutal.

In her own words, Alicia's own displacement has given her the opportunity to experience the, 'two sides of the same coin', and unlike the other students of the school she attended in Chile – to be able to 'read both sides of the story'. In this way, her postmemory has given her an understanding of her changing positionality making her aware of different but still connected historical processes and how they have impacted

on her family life. From the diasporic in-between space, Alicia has moved beyond the time when the Chilean history books in her school stopped in 1973, and inserted her own subsequent life story and that of her parents and other exiles from the viewpoint of the diaspora, presenting a lesser-known historical narrative while critically aware not to 'repeat' everything her parents have transmitted to her.

“(...) I think they knew that I was the daughter of a refugee”: Amelia’s story of return

If Alicia’s experience of return to Chile signalled a complex adaptation to new social and political circumstances in a country that had lived under military rule for seventeen years, then Amelia’s own experience of return shares a lot of similarities with Alicia’s. Before even setting foot in Chile, as a young child Amelia had already moved between various schools in London, and returned to Chile in 1992 alongside her parents when she was seven and a half years of age and her older sister was thirteen. Amelia largely attributed the decision to go back to her mother’s desire to reunite herself with her family and her country, which was combined with a need to find her sister a new school after a difficult period in her London secondary school, which had not involved her opinion at all:

I think my mum was kind of desperate. Just desperate to end this whole situation with my sister. So she took the decision to move to Chile, and you know my dad agreed to and we were just kind of taken. We weren’t asked. But I suppose you wouldn’t really do that, you don’t ask a seven year old if it wants to move country, ‘cause it doesn’t really know.

Once there, while her sister adapted to her new school very well, Amelia had a less satisfactory experience. She eventually ended up in a private English school in the city of Concepción run by a headmaster she called an ‘eccentric English man’. Amelia hated it from the start:

But I didn’t tell anyone. And I didn’t tell my mum that I was being bullied for three and a half years. Because, and I remember this very clearly, the night that I broke down, and I said, “I can’t take this anymore”, and I said to her, “I didn’t want to ruin your experience to be back in Chile”. Because I knew how much it meant to her, to be back there. And in a way I kind of thought like I was going to paradise but not because they told me it was paradise, just because that’s the way that I’d imagined it in my kind of seven year old head. (...) And, what I did try and do though was change schools. And the night that I broke down was the night that I found out I didn’t get into this other school, so that I knew I was going to be stuck there. And I was like, “I can’t take this” and that’s when I told them.

As a young child, Amelia learnt to internalise her problems and kept quiet about the bullying she was experiencing, “because I knew how much it meant to her [her mother], to be back there”. While growing up in the UK, Amelia had been impressed by the images transmitted to her by her mother of Chile as ‘paradise’, and once in Chile this image was not to be tainted by her subsequent negative experiences at school. When Amelia learned that she could not move schools, she broke down in front of her parents and told them that, “I can’t take this anymore”. Nevertheless, she told me, “(...) I didn’t tell them why it was. I didn’t tell them that it was because I was being bullied to the point of suicide or of wanting to end my life.” Recounting this period in her life, Amelia’s narrative expresses a growing anxiety which ended up with her suffering from depression, as she slowly internalised her own pain in order to not interfere with her

parent's attempts at a new life, especially with her mother's complicated return from exile.

At school, Amelia told me she could sense an underlying 'macho' competitive attitude displayed by some of the boys in her class, who were always trying to show-off, and would pick on her. Likewise to Alicia who described feeling 'branded' by those around her due to her identity as a child of exiles, Amelia similarly describes how she was made to feel isolated by those around her:

Because Chile was...*is* [her emphasis] such a politicised country, these eight year olds knew that I was a...*I think* they knew that I was the daughter of a refugee. Which meant that my parents were probably left-wing and private schools in those days, were you know... probably 85-90% of the kids there came from right-wing families. Because, you know, it goes along ideologically, if you believe in private education you believe in the privatisation of services which were previously public services, and that was one of the major things that Pinochet did. He privatised pretty much every single public service, health, education, pensions, everything.

What is striking about Amelia's description of the Chile that she encountered is her awareness of the continuing and deepening social divisions inherent in the Chile of her mother's generation, which was in Amelia's eyes strengthened during the dictatorship and beyond in the neoliberal democracy. Because of their reticence to fully understand the changes that Chile had undergone since the 1970s, according to Amelia her parents "(...) never made such a big mistake in their lives. With me anyway, because they should have known that these kids would have been just coming from very different families, very, very different families" to her own.

As it turns out, Amelia discovered that she was not the only child of exiled parents at her school. Another boy who had come from Sweden had also arrived at the school in 1992, “but no one ever bothered him. I think because he was male. Because he was really good at sport, and there was a huge emphasis placed on sport in the school. If you were good at sport you were like, you know, just amazing!” Not being good at sport herself and describing herself as overweight, Amelia quickly became depressed. She stated that: “I’d skip more and more gym lessons and one of the main emphases they put for girls was to do gymnastics. And I was rubbish! Absolutely rubbish! I could barely even do a forward roll without looking like a complete plonker!” Over time, she was teased for gaining weight and her class mates would continue to tease her, since in their eyes, she was the teacher’s pet, and they believed that Amelia had laughed at some of them during a music lesson. She said:

And they started doing really, really nasty things after that. Really nasty things like hiding money in my desk and accusing me of stealing it. Like physical abuse. So there was this one girl who...I can’t remember, she stepped on my foot or she whacked my foot with a wooden stick or something but, my mum actually has photo evidence of the bruise, and the swelling, and the injury to my foot after that girl did that. And I can’t even remember why it was, she just said “*toma mierda!*” That’s what I can remember. It’s like, “take this!”, “you shit!” But I don’t even remember what it was about, which is weird. Which obviously means it was probably about nothing or at least something that I hadn’t done. I dunno, I always think that I was innocent because I wasn’t malicious in any way. Or I can’t remember being malicious. So yes, school in Chile was a real struggle for me.

The crucial moment came when Amelia confronted her parents as she describes:

I clearly remember at the end of that kind of cathartic moment my mum saying, “yeah, this is it”. You know, and I know what she was thinking, “right, there are now more reasons to leave Chile than there are to stay”. And

again it was the drastic, “we can’t try and find a new school for her” or “we can’t move to Santiago”, which I think would have been probably a more reasonable thing to do at the time. But her reaction was “no! We’re going back to England!” Which you know, given that we’d sold the house...you know, it was a pretty drastic response. Almost as drastic as the one, “well my sister was being bullied in London, so, let’s move to Chile”. It was the kind of flip-side of that.

For Amelia her mother’s ‘drastic’ decision to return to England was an exact replica of the decision to return in reverse, and reveals some of the repercussions on the children of exiles also having to cope with their parent’s depression in situations where the process of return had ‘failed’. For Amelia it was clear that her mother’s depression intensified when she was unable to reinsert herself into her old profession, when she became more critical of Chilean society, and her father had also struggled to find steady employment, factors which all contributed to her parent’s decision to return to London.

Before their return to the UK one of her mother’s projects whilst in Chile had been to form a Saturday Club with other exiles for the children of returnees, which Amelia initially enjoyed going to but told me that looking back, she felt disappointed by her inability at the time to fully engage with the other children who she should have had more in common with since she was being bullied at school. She told me that:

And I don’t know if I created this as a defence mechanism because I was...I must have been a little bit disorientated by the fact that I was in Chile and I didn’t really know anyone. And then I was having a rubbish time at school as well so it made me...I think it was the classic case of the bullied then becoming the bully. And I remember on several occasions sort of insinuating that “oh, my parents have this amazing car!” Well we never had this amazing car. We had this old beaten up Volvo that was like a hundred years old. And when we were playing with these toy cars with this boy, and he was like, “of

this car is quite nice”, I was like, “Yeah my parents have got one of those.”
We never did!

Amelia admitted that she could not understand how she could have acted like that with the other children at the Saturday school, since:

(...) I'd never been arrogant like that before and I really, really despise you know, the fact that I was... You know, first of all, lied. And secondly was trying to make myself feel better than someone else, through material means which just doesn't coincide with anything that I'd been brought up with. And I wish, I really wish that I hadn't been such an idiot and I hadn't had this kind of defence mechanism or whatever it was that made me kind of look down at these other kids. Because I think that being friends with them would have really made my experience in Chile different.

While the Saturday Club should have been a space of refuge away from her problems at school, the young Amelia did not want to be associated with fellow children of returnees perhaps because they reminded her of being 'different'. Once back in London, Amelia was eventually sent to an independent international school where she told me that she finally began to feel happy. The only family member that stayed in Chile was her sister who was having a 'great time' and did not want to go back to the UK.

By 1997-1998, the family relocated to Oxford, and Amelia, by now in her late teens told me she soon began to feel upset again after leaving her new school in London, and started to get into trouble, drinking and smoking marijuana with a new group of friends outside of school. She stated:

That obviously made my depression a lot worse. And that was when the trauma was starting to come out. And I was realising the crap, I have actually got this huge trauma inside my head and I can't get rid of it. And I developed

severe depression which was kind of coupled with an eating disorder, but it wasn't an eating disorder in the sense that I wanted to look like Kate Moss. It was mostly because I wanted to shed this person that I had been which was this chubby kind of naïve ten year old girl. So I lost a lot of weight and started doing a lot of exercise. And again, I just had a really tough time, really tough time. And that took, I would say from the point of recognition when I first started going to counselling, psychologists and stuff, I think it took about seven years to finally get over all the depression and the anxiety. Even now from time to time it surfaces.

Amelia's depression and eating disorder in her view stemmed from her own trauma as a teenager linked to all the problems experienced by her family during their return since, "when I got to Chile I became really insular, retreated into myself and was incredibly anxious" and, "I talked to my parents a little bit but I wasn't very good at articulating what I was feeling so it just kind of came out as anger or as silence." We have seen that instead of articulating her unhappiness, as a young child Amelia began to suppress her anxiety in order to protect her parents, and not spoil their expectations and hopes bound in their return to Chile. This coincides with Flores-Bórquez's own research with children of exiles from the UK where she found that, "the children saw their parents struggling to recapture a lost sense of self-worth and identity and observed the effects of that struggle. At the same time, they themselves were struggling to deal with the demands of adjusting to a completely alien environment."³²⁸ For Amelia, this inability to speak directly among her family, resulted in her beginning therapy for a number of years, which she found incredibly frustrating, and she conceded at times made her feel worse.

³²⁸ Flores-Bórquez, 2000: 220.

Her sense of frustration and isolation was intensified since Amelia did not have many interests or hobbies to distract her. She expressed her opinion during her interview that her parents at the time had not done more to encourage her to develop other interests to increase her self-confidence. But as she said to me, “I think that’s because they were also depressed and they didn’t... they were having really big problems in their own lives. So it wasn’t very healthy.” She told me:

But we would discuss it and then kind of that moment would come of so “right, so we’ve talked about it, now what are we going to do about it”. And there wasn’t... I don’t know just small practical things like enjoying cooking together or enjoying gardening together or...just small things like that I think would have made a really big difference. Or helping me to volunteer, or you know, them doing some volunteering, or them doing something that was outside of you know just this whole Chile, Chile, Chile business. Because then I kind of got even more wrapped up in the fact this trauma came from Chile and that I actually started hating Chile.

It is clear from Amelia’s narrative that the process of ‘double’ return impacted greatly on everyone in her family, at a period in her life when she was becoming and adolescent, and which she told me she still believes continues to have an impact on her life now. Despite this, it is clear that Amelia was able in her narrative to clearly identify those issues she faced in relation to the particular hostile environment she encountered in her school in Chile that was not ideal, but also made her more aware of how much the country had changed since her mother had been forced to leave. One moment stuck in her mind which is that, during this time when she was suffering from depression and her eating disorder once back home in Britain, Amelia went back to Chile for a short visit. She explained:

And when I went back, and I looked completely different ‘cause this was after you know, like a year or so of the kind of eating disorder and I saw... ‘cause my friend Pamela, my one friend that I’ve spoken about earlier. She had a party just when I was there, we were visiting for like Christmas, and I went to this party and there were loads of the kids there from the school that I had known and the kids from my class. And their like “oh wow you look so different! Blah, blah, blah. And I remember that was like a small triumph for me. To see that they were kind of, not accepting me, but just to see that they...just to see their reaction was a triumph. But aside from that it wasn’t really anything else. And I just kind of felt very flat afterwards and thought...I dunno it was quite weird. Yeah.

For Amelia, returning to Chile for the first time since she had left with her parents, was ‘a triumph’, since her eating disorder had made her lose weight, and in her eyes made her feel in control of her body image to be able to manipulate the perceptions of her old bullies who were now as she claims accepting her. In the end this did not make her feel validated, but ‘very flat afterwards’ and ‘quite weird’, where rather than feeling accepted, it made Amelia more uneasy and finally realise that she did not need their approval after all.

Amelia’s narrative, like Alicia’s, collectively show the different and complex issues facing the second generation who was born in the diasporic space in-between, when they returned to Chile whether through their own choice, as in Alicia’s case, or with their parents as with Amelia, to live there for the first time, at different points in their lives; for Alicia as a teenager trying to reunite with her father after her parents separated, and for Amelia, as an eight year old child, with her mother who was desperate to reintegrate herself to the country she had been forced to flee. Overall, despite their difficult experiences of return, experiences of bullying and even of depression, both Alicia and Amelia showed great determination and bravery during their interviews to

tell their stories, and not talk about themselves as secondary victims following their parents. Regardless of their problematic and at times fraught and challenging relationships with their parents, they both communicated great affection and a deep sense of connection to their parents' stories, while still being able to account for their own experiences within their complex intergenerational postmemory narratives.

I will return to Alicia's and Amelia's narratives later on in Chapter 5. For now, we have seen in the second generation Chilean narratives presented in this chapter, a space for a particular kind of diasporic postmemory emerging, where the process of encountering the past of the Chilean dictatorship, has taken place in relation to the familial transmission of memories between generations. In addition, these narratives have also expanded to include other multidirectional memories, and what it means to connect with a 'living' legacy still being transmitted by the first generation of the Chilean political exiles in the diaspora.

Introduction

This chapter presents the narratives of second generation Argentineans living in the UK. Similarly to Chapter 3, it focuses on the foundations of these postmemory oral narratives in the familial sphere featuring some affiliative components of intergenerational memory, which will then be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5. In doing so, this chapter presents narratives that not only derive from families who were directly impacted by state terrorism through exile and disappearance, but also, those individuals who moved with their families or on their own for economic and professional reasons. The aim of this chapter is to show the variety of narratives occurring in the diasporic space in-between: those have been affected by displacement, migration and exile from the point-of-view of different individuals with varying degrees of connection to the 1976 dictatorship. As such, it argues that these narratives collectively illustrate a new landscape of cultural memory existing between the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone and the diaspora field, by presenting alternative second generation Argentinean postmemories that previously might have been excluded from official processes of memorialisation in Argentina. As such, as we have seen with the Chilean narratives in the previous chapter, they are also considered to be multidirectionally interconnected with the ‘narratives of the absence of meaning’ stemming from the Southern Cone that defy normative interpretations of the dictatorial past, in favour of more expansive critical stances towards official ways of remembering.

Guerrilla groups and armed struggle (1969-1976)

The period of the late 1960s and 1970s in Argentina was akin to Chile in the sense that it had also witnessed a growth in political activism among the urbanised working and middle-classes, centred in the foundation of populist political parties, trade union and student movements; established in the two previous decades by the first government of Juan Domingo Perón (1946-1955). If the similarities extended to increasing political and social tensions among different social classes, unlike Chile, Argentina had already experienced a number of successive military coups, as well as the appearance of a number of significant armed militant leftist groups that grew during this period, mainly made-up of young middle-class political activists influenced by the events of the *Cordobazo* in 1969,³²⁹ Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution, third-world theology, and other leftist ideologies.³³⁰ The two biggest and most well-known of these guerrilla groups to emerge at that time were the Montoneros³³¹ and the PRT-

³²⁹ For a history and the political significance during the events of the *Cordobazo* see, James, P. Brennan, and Mónica, B. Gordillo. 1994. 'Working Class Protest, Popular Revolt, and Urban Insurrection in Argentina: The 1969 *Cordobazo*, *Journal of Social History*, 27:477-498.

³³⁰ Richard, Gillespie. 1982. *Soldiers of Perón. Argentina's Montoneros* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

³³¹ The Montoneros were founded in 1968 and spent three years underground planning their guerrilla campaign until they made themselves known to the world on May 19, 1970 with the kidnap and assassination of General Aramburu, who they submitted to 'revolutionary justice' for repression on Peronist activists and for kidnapping the body of Perón's first wife Evita's in 1956. Their founding members had been influenced by Catholic Youth Organisations but also by right-wing fascist paramilitary groups such as the Tacuaras. They fused together the *foco* guerrilla ideas of Guevara and the popular Peronist struggles that they came to idealise, and the radical theology that stemmed from the Catholic Church's Second Vatican Council led by Popes John XXII and Paul VI, where "through its commitment to social justice and the popular cause, radical Catholicism drew many youths towards the Peronist Movement". Ibid: 59.

ERP,³³² who operated clandestinely in different areas of Argentina (The Montoneros mainly in urban Buenos Aires and neighbouring cities, the ERP in the industrialised northern provinces), and consisted of a tight-knit core leadership who directed other smaller cell units of militants. For a number of years between 1969 and 1973 these groups clashed against the forces of the military juntas of Juan Carlos Onganía (1966-1970), Roberto Levingston (1970-1971), and Alejandro Agustín Lanusse (1970-1973). In the face of increasing political tensions and in response to the detention and torture of political prisoners, these groups increasingly engaged in the assassinations of the military, police, and trade unionists identified as traitors, and took part in the raiding and bombings of ammunition factories and military posts, the robbing of banks, and the kidnapping of wealthy individuals for ransom. In carrying out these activities, they largely relied on a wider support network of sympathisers from local communities and neighbourhoods.³³³ Out of the two, the Montoneros were the bigger group since they counted on the support of the Peronist Youth, but both organisations, at the peak of their strength were no more than between 3,000 and 5,000 in numbers.³³⁴

By 1973, Lanusse had authorised the takeover of the Federal Police by the armed forces in order to be able to deal more directly with the guerrillas, which he followed by

³³² The Partido Revolucionario Trabajador and its armed wing the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (PRT-ERP) had its roots in the Provinces of Córdoba, Rosario and Tucumán, where the party had closer ties with the trade unions encompassing both rural and urban guerrilla activities. Whereas the Montoneros were primarily based in the Greater Buenos Aires district where they had middle-class origins and had strong links with the Peronist Youth movement active in the universities, the PRT-ERP was anti-Peronist and the political branch of the organisation had Marxist-Trotskyist roots from its activities in supporting worker's strikes. See, Lewis, 2002.

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ Gillespie, 1982; Lewis, 2002.

introducing counterterrorist tactics and installing a special federal tribunal to punish those accused of terrorist activity. Over time the military and police authorities gained more power to arrest and detain suspected ‘subversives’ and like their counterparts in Chile expanded the use of torture and disappearance of political prisoners. Soon enough, the victims of these operations not only became those involved in direct left-wing guerrilla activity, but also ordinary civilians mistaken for guerrillas, or being in the wrong place at the wrong time. With the increase of national high-scale military interventions against the guerrilla threat, by 1972-1973 both the Montoneros and the PRT-ERP suffered heavy defeats, also compounded by events such as the deaths of many key leaders in confrontations as the *Massacre of Trelew* on August 15, 1972.³³⁵ When Perón eventually returned to Argentina in 1973 after being exiled, the old leader was confronted with a new generation of political activists in the branch of the Juventud Peronista (Peronist Youth), and publically refused to support the Montoneros, who in turn felt abandoned by their leader.³³⁶

This increase in political violence in Argentina during the period of 1969-1976, was not just initiated by the confrontations between left-wing guerrillas and the police and military, but also, by the increasing violence exerted by ultra-right-wing groups³³⁷

³³⁵ The leader of the PRT-ERP Mario Roberto Santucho was part of a group of twenty five guerrillas held at Rawson military prison in Patagonia that had attempted to escape the prison. The plan to escape had been coordinated between Montonero and PRT-ERP militants, but it did not take place as expected, and a large number of guerrillas lost their lives, with only three survivors managing to give an account of the executions. Gillespie, 1982.

³³⁶ Ibid. For the relationship between Peronism and the rise of the Juventud Peronista and other groups, see Chapter 4 in, Michael, Goebel. 2011. *Argentina's Partisan Past: Nationalism and the Politics of History* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press).

³³⁷ See, Sandra, M. Deutsch. 1999. *Las Derechas: The Extreme Right in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, 1890-1939* (Stanford: Stanford University Press).

such as the Alianza Anticomunista Argentina known as La Triple A (Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance – The Triple A), led by one of Perón’s closest ministers in his second government, José López Rega.³³⁸ By the time that his widow Isabel Martínez de Perón took over as President after Perón’s death in July 1974, the increasing political instability partly caused by the government’s inability to deal with growing civilian unrest and economic turmoil, led to the return of a military government in power.

The golpe de estado: March 24, 1976

On March 24, 1976 a military junta deposed Isabel Perón, led by Lieutenant General Jorge Rafael Videla from the army, Admiral Emilio Eduardo Massera from the navy, and Brigadier General Orlando Ramón Agosti from the air force. Immediately, the Argentinean junta shut-down congress and all provincial governments, banned all political parties, student unions and trade unions, and heavily censored the press.³³⁹ All leading Peronist politicians and trade unionists were jailed, and the campaign against subversion intensified, with a ‘Military Councils of War’ handing out death sentences for all types of violent offences committed against the military government.³⁴⁰ One of many of General Videla’s declarations stated that, “a terrorist is not just someone with a gun or a bomb but also someone who spreads ideas that are contrary to Western and Christian civilization”.³⁴¹ Through what became known as the ‘Proceso de

³³⁸ Gillespie, 1982.

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ The term ‘dirty war’ was born out of the tendency to refer to the battle between the “two evils” taking place at the time, between the guerrillas and the armed forces. This was a view that was promoted by the armed forces themselves that controlled the mediatisation of a so-called ‘war’ between the security forces and its ‘subversive’ opposition, rendering the rest of society as impotent and giving it the role of innocent bystander. Wright, 2007.

³⁴¹ As quoted in, Gillespie, 1982: 229.

Reorganización Nacional' (National Process of Reorganisation), the military junta spelled out their political, social and economic objectives which following Chile, included the establishment of a free market economy and the violent suppression of thousands of individuals opposed to their plans, such as trade unionists, students, journalists, lawyers, academics, teachers, and political refugees.³⁴² As a result, it was clear that the Argentinean dictatorship had learnt a lot from the Chilean regime, resulting in their coordinated efforts to arrest, detain, and disappear thousands of political prisoners abroad through their shared Plan Condor.³⁴³ The 1976 junta then belonged to a long line of authoritarian South American regimes and *de facto* military governments that had ruled Argentina since the mid-1950s, supported by economic elites who together had become accustomed to directly intervening in democracy, and established new levels of violent repression against civil society.

The clandestine detention camps and the detained-disappeared

By 1977, the military regime was fully installed and had stepped up its repressive operations where the number of illegal kidnappings and detentions were high. Similarly to Chile with the DINA, the strategy of the regime's secret agents or *grupos de tareas* was to carry out surveillance on leftist targets and to compile lists of names of individuals suspected of illegal activity or supporting the guerrillas. Suspects were then identified and kidnapped from their homes or place of work, and taken to various secret

³⁴² Wright states that, "the apocalyptic language that laced the discourse of ranking officers – the medical references and the oft-repeated belief that Argentina was on the front line of a world war between Western Christian civilization and communism – reflected their will to mount a campaign of eradication, unfettered by limitations on the use of force or barbarity, while the armed forces held the reins". Wright, 2007: 105.

³⁴³ Dinges, 2004.

detention centres or police stations across the country.³⁴⁴ Once inside the detention centres, political prisoners were beaten up, tortured, and kept in small cramped spaces, often blindfolded. Usually, prisoners were kept alive if they provided information on fellow political activists, but a large majority were disappeared by various methods of execution, such as the infamous ‘death flights’ that took off from the ESMA in Buenos Aires, where prisoners were drugged and taken on aeroplanes to be thrown alive into the River Plate.³⁴⁵ In the same year, it was estimated that Argentina had 18,000 political prisoners across 380 detention centres but many more were believed to have been detained-disappeared.³⁴⁶ The systematic kidnap, torture and disappearance of thousands of political prisoners also culminated in the joint disappearance of hundreds of babies and small children, either kidnapped with their parents or born in detention camps, who were then given away to new families, often of military personnel.

Miguel, a second generation Argentinean living and working in the UK was born in 1979 in Argentina. He moved to the UK with his parents and sister in 1982 and lived here until 1984 when they moved back to Argentina. His family subsequently moved again to the UK in the late 1980s. Miguel told me that during dictatorship, his parents were young medical students and they had on numerous occasions reminisced with their

³⁴⁴ Wright, 2007.

³⁴⁵ For a personal account of political detention, see Alicia Partnoy’s testimony of life in a detention camp in the city of Bahía Blanca. Alicia, Partnoy. 1986. *The Little School: Tales of Disappearance and Survival* (1st ed. Pittsburgh, PA: Cleis Press).

³⁴⁶ Gillespie, 1982; Wright, 2007. Five of the largest detention centres in the country were; the ESMA, The Club Atlético, Campo de Mayo, Vesubio and La Perla.

children about a few of their close student friends who were detained-disappeared.

When I asked Miguel whether he had asked his parents about Argentina he stated that:

I think that the thing that surprises us the most and it seems a bit weird to us living here in London, is the topic of the dictatorship and growing-up in that atmosphere of fear and anger, of impotence. It's something that you can never understand unless you really live it. So, I always, always asked a lot about that. We have seen various films about the Montoneros and that type of stuff. So, yes my mum and dad they tell us quite a lot about that stuff and about the friends they lost, about the soldiers that entered their house and burned books. One of my uncles he was quite leftist during the dictatorship and they exiled him to France, he was a painter. Through him, we found out a lot of history. Always a bit from the same point of view because all of my family has that leftist tendency more than from the right, so you always have the story from one side and not from both, that's why I like to watch films and understand a bit more from the point of view of those on the right, even if I don't share their ideals, but to be able to have a more rational idea.³⁴⁷

Miguel's narrative specifically highlights the positionality of the diasporic second generation, positioned in-between not having directly lived and experienced the events of the dictatorship, but keen to approximate that past as much as possible, in his case, by asking his parents questions. Miguel's narrative also exemplifies the mediated components of postmemory where intergenerational transmission is supplanted by accessing films, books, and even connecting to other extended family members who also pass on their memories of the dictatorial past. In his opinion, all of these factors have allowed him to gain a more balanced and 'rational idea' from both sides about what happened. In the same way that Alicia in Chapter 3 who found out more about the past through her uncles' experiences of political militancy, detention and torture, Miguel's narrative displays the same multidirectional and hybrid facets of diasporic postmemory,

³⁴⁷Interview with Miguel carried out on 9/03/2009. My own translation, for original quote in Spanish see Appendix 7.

where both individuals manage to connect different strands of personal and national histories, all stemming from that generational, and at the same time transnational space in-between. From his parents Miguel also recalled some vivid memories that they have passed on to him, interspersed with his own memories where he describes:

For example, I have the image of some soldiers entering my mother's room, they found some books and some music records that they considered to be communist, and they burnt them. I have that image...I have images of the Montoneros using violence against violence...something that never seemed to be a good solution to me. And the leader of the Montoneros, which also seemed to be something strange to me, he seemed to be a fascist. I have those images more than a film of what happened in that period.

Miguel's postmemory features these strong images of violence, but they are neither his nor his mother's entirely. Rather, they are a reconstruction of the past from the point-of-view of Miguel's present, and as such, these images belong to both generations in the diasporic space in-between. They are shared between mother and son as Miguel re-signifies them with new meanings and a critical reflexivity against not only on the violence unleashed by the junta, but the violent methods chosen by groups such as the Montoneros that he identifies after having watched a film about them. In addition, Miguel's narrative forms part of a wider affiliative postgeneration living in the diaspora space, who despite not all having been directly marked by state terrorism, have formulated their own images of the past, that function as their very own 'piercing memories',³⁴⁸ not solely predicated on traditional notions of victimhood.

³⁴⁸ Lucas Bietti takes this term from Barthe's theory of the *punctum*, to refer to the process of viewing the work of the photographer Gustavo Germano, which deeply identifies with, despite never having lived during the dictatorship. In the work '*Ausencias*', Germano positions an original family portrait or family

“Since I have the use of reason I know that my father was held prisoner, was a political prisoner”: Gabriela’s story

Another second generation Argentinean interviewee Gabriela was born in 1975 on the Bolivian side of the border with Argentina, close to the town of San José de Positos in a place called Profesor Salvador Mazza in the Province of Salta, where her family lived. The coup struck a year later when Gabriela was one year old, and her family moved to Rio Tercero a town near the city of Córdoba. Gabriela’s postmemory narrative reveals her experiences of her family living under the dictatorship not in the main capital of Buenos Aires, but from the perspective of a smaller provincial town where the repression impacted on the population in different ways, by targeting the highly politicised working class and trade unions primarily found in the sugar industries close to the bigger city of Córdoba.

At the time of her interview, Gabriela had been living and working in London for five years with her Bolivian husband who was completing a Master’s degree, and her young son. Before moving to the UK, Gabriela told me that she and her husband had always looked for new places to live, as they believed that their lives in Bolivia had become too tranquil and dreary. Since moving to London, Gabriela explained she had always felt as if she has simultaneously been living in two worlds, a feeling she had never experienced back home in Argentina or Bolivia, and admitted that “(...) yo

scene taken in the 1970s, with a current one where he recreates the same scenario, landscape and people, except that whoever has been detained-disappeared no longer appears in the current photograph. Rather than taking the place of the detained-disappeared, Bietti argues that, “it is in this space between the two images that I begin to re-encounter myself in the vividness of my private memories and in the resurfacing of my experiences”, inserting himself in-between, the memory space of the past and the present. Lucas, M. Bietti. 2010. “Piercing Memories”: Empty Spaces in the Histories of Argentinean Families - Personal Reflections’, *Memory Studies*, 4: 83–87.

siempre fuí un caso extraño” (“I’ve always been a strange case”).³⁴⁹ Before moving to Bolivia, Gabriela had lived in Rio Tercero near Córdoba for twenty years, up until the time when she decided to reconnect with her mother’s Bolivian roots. Before leaving for Bolivia, at university in Córdoba Gabriela had begun to study law, in some ways following in her father’s footsteps as a lawyer. The themes of justice and human rights attracted her greatly, and she was also inspired by her father’s previous participation in party politics and her mother’s volunteering work. Living in such a small provincial town, Gabriela had felt a tremendous pressure to succeed and so she left Córdoba for Bolivia where she finished her studies, met her husband and then came to the UK.

When we began to discuss the events of the dictatorship, Gabriela told me that, “like I told you [my parents] they were living over there, at the end of the country, or at the beginning of it, however you would like to see it. It was not the same as being in Córdoba or Tucumán, even Buenos Aires or La Plata.” She detailed that her father had been involved in some kind of activity during the coup when the family lived in Salta, in the town of Profesor Salvador Mazza near Bolivia:

He was involved, I don’t know fully to this day, one day I sat him down and I asked him to explain it to me, and he told me more or less but, he said he was involved in a group that...used to draft defences...since he was a lawyer. But that is what doesn’t make sense to me. I think there is something strange there because he used to work as bit as a lawyer when he was there. He used to work in commerce, in something else, so I don’t understand the connection there. But in the end, in one way or another he was involved. He was working for a while with an accountant who is at this moment disappeared. So I think that he...I think that through him maybe he was in this group that up till now

³⁴⁹ Interview with Gabriela carried out on 18/10/2010.

he has not told me...see, the next time that I see him I will ask him. Maybe after so many years he might be able to tell me more clearly.³⁵⁰

She explained that due to her father's 'involvement' in a lawyers' 'group' that mounted 'defences' for local people in the area who might have been arrested by the local police forces and military authorities, her father had a colleague who became disappeared, and was eventually himself detained for some time by the military and held in various detention sites as a political prisoner (according to Gabriela not connected to the disappearance of his friend). Parallel to Miguel's account, Gabriela also showed a determination to find out more about the past, when she claims that "one day I sat him down and I asked him to explain it to me", indicating the ongoing process of intergenerational memory transmission as an open one. This is partly the reason why postmemory represents an unfinished process of blending different generational memories, since direct conversations (and other modes of transmission) are never final and never straightforward, but rather for a number of reasons create accounts that are partial and unclear, prompting individuals such as Gabriela to explain that, "maybe after so many years he might be able to tell me more clearly." For Gabriela the process of transmission is thus: "I don't remember it, but I do know it because my father and my mother have told me about it. Every year that passes and that I see him my father tells me a little bit more. (...) But we have been told this ever since we were very young". In the same way that Emilio and Alicia described in Chapter 3 always 'knowing' about their parents' past, Gabriela also describes this 'knowing' as encountering different

³⁵⁰ My own translation, see Appendix 8 for the original quote in Spanish. All other subsequent excerpts from Gabriela's interview are also translated from the original in Spanish.

traces of the dictatorial past, an embodied knowledge amassed over time that she has always sensed and perceived was there around her, and now unfolding in the diaspora's in-between space.

Gabriela detailed how during the dictatorship her father had been detained for a total of three months, after which time he was released and told to leave town. She said:

I know that there were other families where they didn't talk about this. In my family, no. Since I have the use of reason I know that my father was held prisoner, was a political prisoner. We always knew. It was never repressed in my family. So that's the reason why we went to live in Rio Tercero when I was one year old, from the north.

While she identifies that perhaps other families like hers would not necessarily talk about the past, with her family the complete opposite was the case. She boldly claims that since she has had 'the use of reason', she 'knew' her father had been a political prisoner declaring that in her family: 'we always knew'. Moreover, Gabriela was very clear about this consciousness during her interview, indicating a specific translocational positionality that postmemory evokes and the consciousness of diasporic subjects within those spaces from which to attempt to articulate new connections with the dictatorial past.

Gabriela was adamant for example, that one of her earliest memories – which for her indicated that she already possessed this 'consciousness' from a young age – was of witnessing the military forcing their way into her house by kicking the front door down, entering inside and, "(...) my mum says that they turned the whole house upside down, they took all the books, they took all the books." She continued:

And I don't know if they detained my father there or somewhere else, that bit I don't remember very well. But my father told me that they first took him to...Ah! My mother told me that in a town so small, everyone knew each other, so the same people that detained them, my mum and dad knew them, especially my mum who had been brought up there, she knew them. And she says that they were transformed, they were other people. Even my auntie, one of my mum's sisters was very, very good friends with someone in Tartagal which is a bigger city. He was involved, in other words he was a military, and my auntie asked him about my dad and this man was another person. He didn't answer her, it was like during the dictatorship they were all transformed, they encouraged themselves, they saw themselves with power, I don't know.

From Gabriela's postmemory narrative told from her positionality of the space in-between, we can see that she continually blends her parent's memories with that of her own, and through this process of resignification of the postdictatorial period, Gabriela is able to share a different experience of the dictatorship, from her viewpoint of growing up in a small provincial town in Argentina. Not only that, her postmemory also demonstrates the ambiguity inherent in the category of second generation, where the boundaries between different generational experiences are sometimes blurry. Gabriela shows awareness that even though she was present; she could not know and remember everything that was going on as a child, with her postmemory made up of a hybrid composite of different intergenerational memories.

In the close-knit environment of her family, Gabriela was told by her mother that during the coup, everyone knew each other and that the community around her had been 'transformed' into individualistic people, who according to Gabriela, "(...) they encouraged themselves, they saw themselves with power, I don't know", and where she believes that people took advantage of the situation to improve their own lives at the expense of others. I continued by asking Gabriela:

Alejandra: When your father was held prisoner, do you know if they tortured him?

Gabriela: He says that no. I don't know. According to him, he thinks that things up there in Salta were much less intense than in Córdoba or in Tucumán, or in other centres, because he says that he didn't see that they tortured anyone, and the fact that they held him for only three months and released him, without (...) And no it looks like it's been attested to that in Salta things were...and in later years he realised that they were not as organised as they seemed, because later on, in the year 1982, my father was offered a job in the municipality of Rio Tercero. And when he goes to work there they carry out a safety check, and they [my parents] passed a few uneasy days, because they were afraid that this would come up, but absolutely nothing was discovered. So my father says, "how can it be, I was a prisoner for three months!" But he says that he thinks that the regions, were managed within the regions so there were no...Menendez was in charge of Córdoba, there's that other one from Buenos Aires, or whatever, and there's the other one from Salta.

According to Gabriela, she learned from her father that things were different in Salta compared to the neighbouring provinces Córdoba or Tucumán, since at least in the three months during the beginning of the dictatorship when her father had been arrested, he had not been tortured, nor had witnessed anyone else being tortured. The perception that the repression had a different kind of intensity in Salta, at least in its initial stages, was later on confirmed for Gabriela's father when recent to Gabriela's interview, he had needed to obtain some identity papers, and had been relieved and surprised to find that since the time of the dictatorship, no record of his arrest and detention had been kept on his national document files. We discussed that while this could have indicated a lack of record keeping by those authorities that held him prisoner back in 1976, or the omission of information pertaining to the period of the dictatorship in current police records, it could also point to a possible intention by past military authorities to keep the details of prisoners out of official records, granting those authorities the clearance to do with

prisoners as they pleased. A number of different possibilities could have been the case, judging from Gabriela's further comments:

So they took him to this small place in the town, where for example, there they were twenty [prisoners]. And then they took them to Tartagal and there they were fifty. So they made them walk through the fields, with their hands tied here, behind their necks. And the ones that were more experienced my father told me that they told him that when the military told him to run, that he shouldn't run, because they said that they did that many times, they would shout "run!" and they would shoot at them, and then they used that as an excuse to say that they were trying to escape. So my father told me that they told him not to run.

Therefore, detention practices in small towns such as Profesor Salvador Mazza seemed to differ from those at play in bigger cities as the case of Gabriela's father's testimony when he and fellow prisoners were transported to the city of Tartagal. There the violence used by the military became much more targeted and serious. In her retelling of this event, Gabriela details a common procedure of the armed forces both in Chile and in Argentina, where prisoners were taken to unknown locations in the desert or out into fields, and made to walk together whilst blindfolded. In the confusion of not knowing where they were or where they were going, officers would shout for prisoners to run, and those that did were shot from behind, with the authorities claiming that prisoners had tried to escape.³⁵¹ Gabriela also described to me how on another occasion, her father was taken to the provincial capital Salta:

And he told me that when he arrived at the jail in Salta, they all began to look at each other, all the detainees, because they couldn't speak between each other, so they begin to look at each other and make signs, and he later on finds out that, it looks like he was very physically similar to another person

³⁵¹ See similar testimonies in the Caravan of Death case in Chile. Verdugo, 2001.

who was like a leader of a group in Salta. So he says that while he was there he learnt signs and signals like they communicated between one another.

From her father's various experiences of detention, we also learn from Gabriela that he was able alongside other prisoners to resist their imprisonment by communicating in secret. Once, he found out from other prisoners that he closely resembled a leader of another group in Salta, implying that maybe her father had been imprisoned by mistake because he looked like this other man, a common occurrence during the dictatorship.

Gabriela's mother similarly to María's story in Chapter 3, had also been forced to go out and look for her husband and finally managed to locate him and visit him in prison while pregnant with Gabriela's brother. On certain occasions, she even took Gabriela with her. Gabriela told me that:

My mum used to go and speak to them and asked them to release him, and she was pregnant, and she told me she fainted, and she said, "what am I going to do, where am I going to have my child!" So she says that they told her to have him there at the military hospital. And so with the passing of the years my mum has said what a good decision it was to have him in the same hospital in Bolivia that she had me, because she now fears that if she had had him there he would have been one of these disappeared children...well not disappeared, but who were given over to adoption by other families, stolen from their parents.

Through the retelling of this episode to Gabriela, her mother expressed to her daughter how glad she had been that she had chosen not to follow the advice of the military officers holding her husband prisoner to have her baby in the military hospital, in case her second child was stolen as was the case with hundreds of other children and babies born in detention camps in Argentina, after their parents were detained-disappeared.

Eventually, Gabriela told me that from one day to the next:

(...) They called him and told him he was free and that he should leave town, and that he should be careful. That he should be careful, that he should behave himself this and that, so that's was when they decided to move south because my father couldn't find work when he returned. No one wanted to employ him, because they were scared to have problems. So they went to Rio Tercero.

After an eventful period of three months in detention, Gabriela's father was eventually released and asked to 'behave himself' and reminded 'that he should be careful'. Her parents left their home and relocated to Rio Tercero, where in the early 1980s Gabriela's father joined the Partido Radical (Radical Party) in Córdoba that would see Raul Alfonsín win the presidency on October 30, 1983 and restore democracy to Argentina.

The end of military rule and the transition to democracy (1983-1990)

By 1980, the military junta had been facing increasing international pressure from groups such as the United Nation's Human Rights Commission that had previously visited Chile in 1978, and had set up a working group to investigate cases of forced disappearances in Argentina.³⁵² In 1981 General Roberto Viola replaced General Videla as the leader of the junta, who in turn was then replaced by General Leopoldo Galtieri. Galtieri was responsible for the invasion of the Falkland Islands (Las Malvinas) on April 2, 1982, which brought a short-lived but intense conflict with the UK ending on June 14

³⁵² The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights had also issued a report in April 1980 detailing the findings of its visit in 1979 describing the cases of torture, murder and disappearance, "and for the first time, it described the human rights violations as what they were: deliberate policy set by the junta, not just actions against the guerrillas, excesses, or mistakes". Wright, 2007: 124.

of the same year.³⁵³ Despite the initial nationalist sentiment that supported the military forces during this conflict, including support that came from some groups of exiles abroad,³⁵⁴ it was not enough to alter the gradual loss of power and prestige of the armed forces, including a lack of resolve to improve economic instability, so that eventually, mass waves of public protest against the junta returned for the first time to the streets, with General Reynaldo Bignone left in charge of drafting the junta's exit strategy.³⁵⁵ In comparison with Pinochet in Chile who was able to extend his legacy in the political arena, the last junta in Argentina fearing recrimination for the crimes they committed during the dictatorship, quickly drew up a 'Final Document' released on April 28, 1983, declaring that the actions of the armed forces taken during the period of the coup had been 'acts of service' to the nation during the 'dirty war' that they identified as a civil conflict against subversion.³⁵⁶ With democratic elections on the way, the last military junta also passed an amnesty 'Law of National Pacification' that pardoned all of the armed forces and guerrilla militants of crimes committed during the regime.³⁵⁷

When Raúl Alfonsín eventually won the elections a massive 'March of Resistance' was held by human rights groups in the Plaza de Mayo to protest the Amnesty Law of the last military junta.³⁵⁸ The newly elected government immediately

³⁵³ Ibid.

³⁵⁴ For the different internal debates both of objection and support for the invasion that took place among the exile diaspora in France, see Franco, 2008.

³⁵⁵ Wright, 2007.

³⁵⁶ Ibid.

³⁵⁷ Antonius C. G. M, Robben. 2005. *Political Violence and Trauma in Argentina* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press); Wright, 2007.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

set up the CONADEP (see the Introduction), which was instrumental in denouncing the crimes committed by the regime through the documentation of over 1,500 survivor testimonies. The publication by the CONADEP of the *Nunca Más* revealed to Argentinean society what most had chosen to ignore about the extent of the crimes and human rights abuses committed during the dictatorship.³⁵⁹ While the commission only detailed the disappearance of 8,960 people, a symbolic figure of 30,000 detained-disappeared people has always been maintained by human rights groups in order to highlight the continuing struggle to find those that are still missing.³⁶⁰

In 1985, the crimes of the regime continued to be exposed for the first time on national television during the trial of the nine junta leaders (known as Los Juicios de la Junta), and reported in the weekly newspaper *El Diario del Juicio* that presented the testimonies of eight hundred witnesses, until its verdict in December 1985.³⁶¹ While the trial found the junta leaders guilty of putting in place a systematic plan of abduction, illegal detainment, torture, disappearance, theft of property, and the theft of babies taken from their parents in detention centres, only Generals Videla and Massera were given life sentences at this trial. The objection to the trial from the armed forces put Alfonsín at risk of facing a military upheaval, so his response was to put in place the Law of Obediencia Debida (Due Obedience), a law that judged individual officer's involvement

³⁵⁹ Ibid; CONADEP, 2006.

³⁶⁰ According to Robben, “the precise figure of disappeared will never be known. Even twenty years after the dictatorship, there is substantial disagreement about the figures. The Undersecretary of Human Rights reported in September 2001 that the official count had reached fifteen thousand persons. However, the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team which has been exhuming mass graves and investigated police archives, death registers, and cemetery records has arrived at around 9,150 confirmed disappeared”. Robben, 2005: 323.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

and culpability in violent acts during the coup according to various degrees of responsibility, effectively absolving lower-ranking officers of any crimes. This law was accompanied on December 23, 1986, by the law of Punto Final (Full Stop) setting a final deadline for human right cases to be heard in the courts, effectively preventing a large number of new cases from being heard.³⁶² The limits of democracy were also compounded by various defiant acts by the military in their own barracks such as Campo de Mayo (one of the detention sites with the highest number of political prisoners) where a group of army commanders calling themselves the Carapintadas (painted faces) took part in a rebellion in 1987, later followed by an armed confrontation between military forces and ex-guerrilla fighters at La Tablada military base in 1989.³⁶³

By the late 1980s, the worsening of the economic situation in Argentina put great pressure on Alfonsín's government that was eventually replaced by his Peronist successor at the 1989 elections, Carlos Saúl Menem. Menem's position on the dictatorial past was to promote national reconciliation, and on October 7, 1989, he officially pardoned the junta members responsible for the Falklands/Malvinas conflict, the military officers involved in the recent military uprisings, and 64 former guerrilla members.³⁶⁴ By December 29, 1990, he had added to his list the ex-junta leaders Videla, Viola, Agosti, Massera, and Lambruschini, as well as, the controversial leader of the Montoneros, Mario Firmenich.

³⁶² Feitlowitz, 1998.

³⁶³ Robben, 2005.

³⁶⁴ Ibid. These laws were revoked in 2004 by the Supreme Court that declared them to be unconstitutional.

During his interview, Miguel told me that he experienced this postdictatorial period, both from the viewpoint of Argentina and the UK, since the instability of the period of the transition to democracy contributed to his parents choosing to leave Argentina:

I remember the Alfonsín era for example and I remember the danger just before we left that the dictatorship would return in 82, sorry in 86, when Alfonsín was there. And I remember going to the Plaza de Mayo and singing and shouting. I remember the Menem saga for example, all of that which I didn't live myself, being here I lived it through my family, and when we spoke to them they commented, they told us about thing. So since the 80s until now I know that history, I recognise it, and even if I was not directly following it, I more or less found out (...).³⁶⁵

From Miguel's narrative when can see that his postmemory is positioned between two connected cultural memory fields. By recalling the 'danger' he and his family felt in 1986 that the dictatorship could return, and taking part in marches to Plaza de Mayo and 'singing and shouting', Miguel is evoking the field of the politics of memory in Argentina, which his family leaves behind shortly after the return to democracy. He also evokes the diaspora field, when he 'remembers the Menem saga', which he didn't live himself, but by identifying that, 'being here I lived it through my family'. These points of convergence between these two fields meet in Miguel's multidirectional diasporic postmemory, since he believes that he has come to 'know that history, I recognise it', despite moving away from Argentina at a young age.

³⁶⁵ My own translation, for quote in Spanish see Appendix 9.

While this period of the 1980s and early 1990s that Miguel describes seemed to have indicated a stalling of the work of human rights groups in Argentina in securing their demands for truth and justice, two key loopholes existed in Menem's amnesty laws that permitted certain groups to continue their claims for justice.³⁶⁶ The first claims that continued to be heard in the law courts belonged to the Abuelas and other organisations linked to exiles abroad through their work in recovering the whereabouts and identities of their missing grandchildren, since the kidnapping of babies was a crime that had not been covered by the amnesty law.³⁶⁷ It was also this loophole in the amnesty laws which mean that prosecutors were able to investigate and take to trial General Videla for the appropriation of minors taken from political prisoners in 1998.

Argentina in exile and the field of the politics of memory

As we have already seen from some of the discussion in the Introduction regarding the field of the politics of memory, much of the debates and discussions on memory in the period of the 1980s and 1990s in Argentina continued to be dominated by various official memory narratives. One of the most significant discourses surrounding the events of the dictatorship was the so-called theory of the 'two demons' or 'two evils', a narrative that after emerging in the 1970s would continue to have a central influence in the 1980s in the preparation of the CONADEP's *Nunca Más*

³⁶⁶ Michele, D, Bonner. 2005. 'Defining Rights in Democratization: The Argentine Government and Human Rights Organizations, 1983-2003', *Latin American Politics and Society*, 47:55-76.

³⁶⁷ Bonner, 2005. See also the creation of the National Commission on the Right to Identity (CONADI) in 1992, created as a direct result of the Abuelas' growing lobbying power with the government that worked with the National Bank of Genetics Data to identify missing grandchildren.

report.³⁶⁸ This narrative as we have already discussed, (also partly expanded by the discourses of presidents Alfonsín and Menem), pitted the events prior to and during the dictatorship as a ‘war’ between the guerrillas and the armed forces. One of the consequences of this narrative in Argentina has been that it, “exonerates large sectors of society that supported, practiced, or even benefitted from ongoing violence”,³⁶⁹ during that period and beyond. Over time, as Gatti and Jelin among others have discussed, this narrative also elevated the position of those groups who established direct bloodline links to the dictatorial past and the detained-disappeared, as the sole legitimate voices of the truth in the struggle against impunity on the part of human rights groups.

According to Jensen, among all of these emerging narratives in the field of the politics of memory in Argentina, the plight of exiles was erased from the national consciousness, since the condition of exile was not tantamount to the experiences of those who had stayed behind and suffered the repression.³⁷⁰ While Argentinean exiles began to return to their country in large numbers in the early 1980s encouraged by their potential participation in a democratic project, many more people began to leave Argentina, due to the failure of the economic Plan Austral, the fear of military reprisals

³⁶⁸ Emilio, Crenzel. 2008. *La Historia Política del Nunca Más: La Memoria de los Desaparecidos en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Siglo Veintiuno Editores).

³⁶⁹ Lessa, 2013:93.

³⁷⁰ Jensen states that “from outside of the nation, the exile not only confirmed his condition of coward-deserter, but of traitor, stirring a campaign to isolate the Republic, discrediting their government and reviling the Argentine people”. My own translation, Jensen, 2003: 107.

and uprisings, and the general uncertainties of democracy,³⁷¹ factors which we have already seen contributed to Miguel's family returning to live in the UK.³⁷²

In the period of the 1980s-1990s, much of the literature on Argentinean exiles was dominated by the accounts of well-known public or political figures of exile, such as the accounts featured in the book '*La Argentina Exiliada*'.³⁷³ During the time of the first democratic elections in 1983, according to Mármora and Gurrieri, the government was not extensively preoccupied with encouraging exiles to return, other than to recover the highly qualified technocrats that had left the country in previous waves of migration dating back to the 1950s.³⁷⁴ Between the years 1983-1985, between 30,000 and 40,000 people returned to Argentina.³⁷⁵ Exiles were supported by the Office of Solidarity for Argentine Exiles (OSEA) that was set up in 1983 by human rights NGOs,³⁷⁶ and the government's National Commission for the Return of Argentines Abroad (CNREA),

³⁷¹ Guillermo, Mira Delli-Zotti. 2003. 'Voces Distantes, Otras Miradas Examinan el Círculo De Hierro. Política, Emigración y Exilio en la Declinación Argentina', *América Latina Hoy*, 34: 119-143.

³⁷² It is very difficult to find exact figures of Argentinean political exiles in the UK since it did not represent a common exile destination in comparison to other European nations such as France. Estimations taken from census figures by Susana Schkolnik in the UK puts the figure of Argentinean migrants at 8,273 for the year 1970, and 13,899 for the year 1980, presumably containing a mixture of economic and forced migrants. See, Susana, Schkolnik. 1986. 'Volumen y Características de la Emigración de Argentinos a través de los Censos Extranjeros', In *Dinámica Migratoria Argentina (1955-1984): Democratización y Retorno de Expatriados/1*, (eds.) Alfredo, E. Lattes, Enrique, Oteiza, and Jorge, Graciarena (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina):81-135.

³⁷³ See the testimonies in, Daniel, Parceró, Marcelo, Helfgot, and Diego, Dulce. 1985. *La Argentina Exiliada* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina).

³⁷⁴ Lelio, Mármora, and Jorge, Gurrieri. 1988. 'Return to Rio de la Plata: Response to the Return of Exiles to Argentina and Uruguay', In *Hemispheric Migration Project* (Washington: Hemispheric Migration Project, Center for Immigration Policy and Refugee Assistance, Georgetown University).

³⁷⁵ Mármora & Gurrieri, 1988.

³⁷⁶ Ibid. The NGOs that supported the set-up of OSEA were; the CELS, the Comisión Permanente de Defensa de la Educación (Permanent Commission for the Defence of Education), the Ecumenical Movement for Human Rights, the Peace and Justice Service, the Movement for life and Peace, the WUS, and the International Service for Amnesty in Paraguay.

even if its role was limited as more of a watchdog agency rather than directly involved in accommodating the specific needs of returnees.³⁷⁷

Much later in the late 1990s; a new series of events opened up a new space for the groups that have been struggling against the abuses of human rights by the dictatorship; with a) the recovery of some secret files of the armed forces; b) the personal confessions in the mass media of key military figures who had taken part in the disposal of the bodies of the detained-disappeared (see the Scilingo effect)³⁷⁸; c) the recuperation of detention camps; the opening of various memory sites; d) and new cases of human rights violations being tried. Among these factors, the experiences of exiles according to Jensen slowly began to gain greater recognition, as a systematic oppressive practice exercised by the armed forces during the coup.³⁷⁹

Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that in this relatively recent process of documenting the plight of Argentinean exiles in the diaspora, the momentum has largely come from academics that have worked or resided abroad (some who were exiled themselves), such as Marina Franco in France, Pablo Yankelevich in Mexico, and Guillermo Mira Delli-Zotti in Spain.³⁸⁰ These works among many others, have

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

³⁷⁸ For a discussion of this see chapter 6 of Feitlowitz, 1998. On March, 2 1995, the journalist Horacio Verbistky revealed on a television programme *Hora Clave* his recorded interviews with Retired Navy Captain Adolfo Scilingo on which the latter confessed to have taken part in the weekly ‘death flights’ from the ESMA when the bodies of the detained-disappeared were flown and dumped out onto the River Plate.

³⁷⁹ Jensen, 2003.

³⁸⁰ See, Guillermo, Mira Delli-Zotti. 2007. ‘Explorando Algunas Dimensiones del Exilio Argentino en España’, In *Memorias de la Violencia en Uruguay y Argentina: Golpes, Dictaduras, Exilios (1973-2006)* (ed.) Eduardo, Rey Tristán (Santiago de Compostela: Universidade, Servicio de Publicacións e Intercambio Científico): 163-177.

documented the role of the Argentinean exile community in opposing the regime from abroad,³⁸¹ and signalled a shift in the outlook of the field of the politics of memory towards its points of convergence with the exile diaspora. Franco for example, has documented the political activism of Argentinean exiles in France, who similarly to the Chileans in the UK, initiated solidarity groups and campaigns to denounce state terrorism and document the names of the disappeared, who were also for some time directly supported by the French government in opposing the regime's rule.³⁸² According to Franco, the Argentinean exiles in France much like their Chilean counterparts, despite rival political views and commitment among group members, were able to take advantage of a growing globalising liberal trend toward human rights issues and gain the support of the French public.³⁸³ This approach for Franco was successful in that it allowed this Argentinean exile diaspora to coordinate the work of various solidarity movements, to publicly denounce the human rights abuses of the military regime, but what's more, to dispel the myth of a 'golden exile' that identically to the

³⁸¹ The Argentinean exiled community in France and Spain for example, played a crucial role in organising boycotts against the Football World Cup in 1978 held in Argentina, and the Falklands War in 1982. In Spain, where the media (at least the less conservative circles), in general did not show a great deal of consistent interest in the activities of the Argentine exiles, was influenced by these events, and some journalists eventually did comment on the political situation in the region by providing some critical analysis on the dictatorship's human rights record (especially in the newspaper *El País* and the magazine *Triunfo*). See, Patricia, Marengi, and Laura, Pérez López. 2003. 'Prensa Española Y Dictadura Argentina (1976-1983): La Imagen Del Exilio En Abc, El País Y Triunfo', *América Latina Hoy*, 34: 49-78.

³⁸² Marina Franco estimates that between 1974 and 1983, 2,000 Argentinean political exiles arrive in France, and around 900 of them had the right to political asylum granted by the Office Français des Réfugiés et Apatrides (French Office of Refugees and Stateless People –OFPRA) that proved a major factor for many in the decision to go to France. See, Marina, Franco. 2007. 'Between Urgency and Strategy: Argentine Exiles in Paris, 1976-1983', *Latin American Perspectives*, 34: 50-67.

³⁸³ Franco, 2007.

dictatorship in Chile, was used to undermine the presence of exiles abroad.³⁸⁴ The presence of these exiles in the diaspora space allowed them to forge long-distance ties with human rights groups back home and put forward, “a discourse focused on the issue of human rights, free of any obvious political or ideological connotations, [that] offered a platform of basic agreement based on the defence of liberties and in solidarity with the victims of the repression”.³⁸⁵

The Jewish exile diaspora

Another aspect of this new exile historiography has been the recent work carried out by researchers to uncover accounts of the Argentinean Jewish exile diaspora. As discussed in Chapter 1, even if the military regime’s main aim was to target leftist political opponents, anti-Semitism was rife towards Jewish political prisoners during the dictatorship.³⁸⁶ According to Snadjer and Roniger, 1,300 Argentinean Jews disappeared during the dictatorship and between 350 and 400 managed to escape to Israel during this time, as Israel’s ‘Law of Return’ welcomed the repatriation of Jews from all around the world, providing Argentinean exiles with Israeli citizenship.³⁸⁷ Their research uncovered

³⁸⁴ See also the case in Spain and the various human rights groups and organisations that sprung up in the Argentinean exile diaspora. Guillermo, Mira Delli-Zotti, and Fernando Osvaldo Estebán. 2007. ‘La Construcción De Un Espacio Político Transnacional Iberoamericano De Defensa De Los DDHH: El Caso De La Asociación Argentina Pro Derechos Humanos De Madrid’, *Historia Actual Online*, 14, 57–66.

³⁸⁵ Ibid, 2007: 57. Argentinean exiles in Mexico who numbered approximately 9,000, according to Yankelevich, like many other exile communities suffered the problem of having internal struggles between different political outlooks to define a common identity, and to mount a collective campaign against the regime. See, Pablo, Yankelevich. 2007. ‘The COSPA. A Political Experience of the Argentine Exile in Mexico’, *Latin American Perspectives*, 34: 68-80.

³⁸⁶ See for example the testimonies in the *Nunca Más* related to instances of Anti-Semitism against political prisoners, CONADEP, 2006: 71-81.

³⁸⁷ Mario, Sznajder, and Luis Roniger. 2005. ‘From Argentina to Israel: Escape, Evacuation and Exile’, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 37:351-377.

the role of Israeli state representatives in Argentina, who despite not holding any official or diplomatic sovereignty, took great risks in securing the safe passage of Jewish Argentineans to Israel,³⁸⁸ at a time when Israel took a very ambiguous position towards the military government.³⁸⁹ They also compiled a database containing information on 230 people, the majority of whom left Argentina for Israel between the ages of 16-25 as students, university graduates or professionals mostly belonging to the well-educated Argentinean middle-class. During the course of their research they found that a great deal of these individuals had not previously been active in the Jewish Argentinean community, but had experienced some kind of political activity at school or university, or had been directly affected by the abduction or disappearance of friends and family members, where later on the experience of exile heightening their subsequent desire to find out more about their Jewish identity.

This Argentinean Jewish exile experience described above is echoed in the narrative of Ana, a second generation participant who was born in Israel in 1981 and grew up in the UK. Ana told me about how her parents departed Argentina:

Well, my parents left Argentina and originally they went to Israel and they lived there for ten years. It was partly related to the dictatorship as it was you know, a really hard time over there. My dad had to show ID juts to get into the university and you know, I think it was all quite stressful. My mum's cousin had to leave very quickly because there were rumours that they were

³⁸⁸ The Israeli representatives were often embassy staff sent out to uncover the whereabouts of Jewish detained-disappeared and if found demand their release. They were also pre-1976, involved in encouraging young Jewish political activists that were members of guerrilla armed groups such as the Montoneros, to quit the groups and go to Israel for their own safety. Snadjer & Roniger, 2005.

³⁸⁹ Ibid. Despite Israel's wish to help Argentinean Jews in any way possible, this was to be carried out as inconspicuously as possible, in order not to encourage any backlash from the armed forces and put diplomatic ties under pressure, as Israel had been selling arms to Argentina during the coup.

coming for her, kind of thing. So it was you know, a hard time and my mum decided she was going to live in Israel, and she'd already decided that when she met my dad, and then my dad was persuaded by that I suppose. And they lived there for about ten years. My dad did his PhD there and my mum did her degree and Masters there. I was born when they were still at university! And then when I was four they moved over here, they didn't want to stay in Israel. It was never the plan to stay there.³⁹⁰

As it turned out for Ana's parents, their Jewish backgrounds gave them an opportunity to leave Argentina, during a time when they both felt that their situation was becoming more and more precarious, since Ana's mother's cousin also had to leave and Ana stated that, "there were rumours that they were coming for her". I also asked her what she knew about her parent's lives during the dictatorship, and what she remembered being told about that period before her parents left for Israel:

I think it was a pretty tense time and my mum was involved in like a kind of socialist Jewish youth group and so obviously that wasn't very well looked upon either. So you know, that was a bit of a difficulty for her as well. You know it wasn't particularly radical or anything but you know, obviously socialism wasn't something they were very keen on, so! So yeah, I think it was quite a hard time and they were pleased to get out actually.

Through her participation in some kind of 'socialist Jewish youth group', Ana identifies another reason why her parents decided to leave Argentina for Israel, and eventually settled in the UK with her and her younger sister who was born a few years later. I also asked Ana if she knew whether her parents had been particularly interested in their Jewish heritage before the dictatorship, or whether their exile to Israel prompted an

³⁹⁰ Interview with Ana carried out on the 21/04/2009.

awareness of this heritage as Snadjer and Roniger have discussed with their work on Argentinean Jewish exiles. She replied:

No, not really. I mean, my grandfather was a survivor of the Holocaust and his family... They were never religious, my grandfather was completely not religious largely as a result of the things that had happened. But you know, they were very culturally Jewish I suppose. You know they would have get-togethers on the festivals and stuff like that. And in Israel my parents were and still are you know, completely secular, but quite culturally Jewish I suppose as opposed to religiously Jewish. So I think they've kind of been the same way throughout their life really, that's the way that their parents were and that's how they are.

In her narrative, Ana's family's trajectory to the UK via Israel reveals an aspect of the experience of the Argentinean exile diaspora that has seldom been analysed in terms of how the exile migration experience of the 1970s, also evokes in a multidirectional way, much earlier waves of exile and migrations, in this case of the Jewish diaspora after the Second World War. In this way, the multidirectional concept of postmemory is a valuable theoretical tool through which to show how those histories come together in the narratives of the second generation, and identify the ways in which the situatedness of the diasporic space in-between allows these different historical conjunctions to interconnect and appear together. Ana's narrative is therefore exemplary of this process, where her postmemory narrative melds together her parents' trajectory to the UK via Israel as Jewish migrants, and her grandfather's displacement (among many others who ended up in Argentina) as a survivor of the Holocaust.

Second generation Argentinean exile: The narratives of Felipe and Elena

Among my Argentinean interviewees, two directly experienced exile, Felipe who was born in exile in Panama in the late 1980s, and Elena who was born in Chile and was then exiled alongside her parents as a small child to Argentina and from

Argentina in 1976, to the UK. Interestingly their narratives coincide with a growing historiography of the Argentinean exile diaspora and experiences of return, from the point of view of the second generation who were very young at the time of the coup, such as in the collection of testimonies of the book *‘Los Chicos del Exilio’* compiled by Diana Guelar, Vera Jarach and Beatriz Ruiz,³⁹¹ and the experiences of young returnees seen in the work of Roberto Aruj and Estela González, in *‘El Retorno de los Hijos del Exilio: Una Nueva Comunidad de Inmigrantes’*.³⁹²

Felipe was born in Panama in 1985. He lived there for two years with his parents and older brother (born in Colombia), until his family moved back to Argentina in 1987, where they stayed for the rest of his childhood and adolescence, before in more recent years moving on his own to the UK to work for a large multinational company.³⁹³ His parents had fled Argentina during the dictatorship by clandestinely crossing the border into Paraguay, and subsequently also had to escape the dictatorship there, where they ended-up in various South American countries such as Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela. Felipe’s parents were political exiles and he told me that, “they had to leave because they were militants on the left”. His father was a political activist in a group which Felipe claims was called ‘El Obrero’³⁹⁴ (The Worker) in the city of Córdoba, where as we have already seen, trade unions had a large following and a historical

³⁹¹ Guelar *et al.*, 2002.

³⁹² Aruj & González, 2007.

³⁹³ Interview with Felipe carried out on 2/10/2011. My own translation.

³⁹⁴ I was not able to verify the existence of this group in official accounts so far. However, Felipe could be referring to the PRT-ERP, which would have had a number of units in both Córdoba and Buenos Aires, or other branches of smaller organisations or trade unions in the region.

background in popular movements, such as the 1969 Cordobazo, and which Felipe told me had an additional militant base in Buenos Aires. According to Felipe his mother in contrast to his father was involved in a form of political ‘anarchism’. His parents met while at university, and during the dictatorship, they lived clandestinely, until Felipe’s father began to be directly pursued by security agents who initially went to search for him at Felipe’s grandparents’ house. Very soon, the word spread throughout his extended family that the military were intensifying their search for him. As a result, Felipe’s parents decided to leave Argentina, and his uncle took them on a long journey to the frontier with Paraguay where they managed to escape.

While growing up, Felipe told me that his father, “didn’t speak too much about the details”, but only at times when Felipe asked him directly in person. For many years, Felipe stated that he wondered why he had been born in Panama and exclaimed, “why Panama?”, “It doesn’t mean anything to me Panama!” Characteristic in his opinion, of the kinds of questions he asked when he was a teenager, when he began to be more curious about his parents’ political activism and the decisions they took while in exile. A reoccurring question was: “why take the risk?” He revealed to me that most of this questioning took place during his teenage years where he became very interested in finding out more about his parent’s militancy. When he asked his mother, she told him about the guerrilla training she underwent, which he said had shocked him at the time, with him remembering that his reaction was often: “you have to ask why!”

Since Felipe had spent the majority of his youth in Argentina and not in exile, in his opinion it was his older brother who had suffered more intensely the consequences

of living away from home since according to him he still ‘lived in exile’, affected by experiences of constant displacement and fear of imprisonment in countries such as Paraguay and Peru whose military regimes did not hesitate in arresting exiles from neighbouring countries. By the time of his brother’s birth in 1980 in Colombia, Felipe’s mother had managed to find steady work in an advertising agency and for a while his parents did quite well there, as he described that they lived in a big house and were comparatively well off, but it was the constant change of houses, schools, and countries that he believed ultimately unsettled his older brother.

In addition, Felipe’s parents were uneasy with the more authoritarian educational systems in their countries of exile such as Colombia, an experience that Felipe stated added to their growing ‘physical’ and ‘emotional’ need to go back and be ‘present’ in Argentina. By the time that the family returned to Argentina in 1987, Felipe’s brother was seven years old and he was two. It is clear that over time, Felipe had attempted to talk to his brother about their experiences of exile, but while he had showed more interest in his family’s past while growing up, his brother had done less so, since Felipe said he was ‘fed-up’ with dealing with the effects of all the moving around he had done as a child. As such, the process of return from exile for Felipe’s family was not an easy feat. Up until 1987, Felipe revealed to me that, “my parents had a capture warrant on their heads that didn’t go away when democracy returned, because it was still under judicial process”, which had extended their stay in exile since they could not return until this warrant had officially been dismissed, a bureaucratic process that had taken a long time to resolve.

For Felipe therefore his postmemory of his exile, not only incorporates his own memories, but those of his parents and his brother of living in different countries, capturing his brother's resentment towards their constant displacement, all of which formed a part of his own process of re-adaptation to a country that his family and his parents had to flee as political refugees. The Argentina that Felipe and his brother returned to was therefore a foreign country to them with Felipe despite being so young, already experiencing a feeling of 'not belonging', intensified by the family conversations he would go on to have with his parents and brother. Feelings of not belonging were compounded by sensations of loss, since when talking with his family, "(...) about conversations of things that occurred in another place", he felt that, "I had lost a big part" of that past. Felipe's postmemory narrative of the periods of the late 1980s and early 1990s in Argentina are thus marked by his retelling of the types of discussions that he had together with his brother and parents about for example, the continuing dictatorship in Chile, and of his parent's re-telling of key moments and events to do with their own adolescences during the dictatorship. In particular, one event stood out in Felipe's mind, 'La Noche de Los Lapices' (the Night of the Pencils), when between the days of September 16-19, 1976, a group of secondary school students in the city of La Plata were kidnapped and tortured and some were disappeared, for having protested about the military regime's removal of a national discounted fee on public transport for students.³⁹⁵ Similarly to Miguel, Felipe told me that he remembered the "dark images" that filled his head of the type of violence and repression that his parents

³⁹⁵ See, Elizabeth, Jelin, and Federico, Guillermo, Lorenz. 2004. *Educación y Memoria: La Escuela Elabora el Pasado* (Buenos Aires: Siglo Veintiuno de Argentina Editores).

had managed to escape. Nonetheless, it would be Felipe's own lived experience of Argentina in the late 1980s and early 1990s that also added to his composite of postmemory of his own witnessing of the political tensions and militancy of those periods, shaped by events such as the Carapintadas military revolt in 1987.

One important facet of Felipe's reconnection with Argentina came through his contact with his immediate family, who similarly to the large majority of the second generation interviewees featured in this thesis, he had not grown up with. In this new familial setting, Felipe described how he remembered the stories of his grandparents, adding another dimension to his belief that a certain legacy was being passed on to him. In Argentina, Felipe found out about how during the years of his parents militancy, his grandparents on both sides had not objected to their children's political activities, rather his father's family for example understood '*la lucha*' (the struggle) undertaken by their children in the 1970s, and connected it to their own escape from persecution of Tsarist Russia as Jewish immigrants to Argentina in the early twentieth century. Despite not being practising Jews, Felipe told me that his paternal grandfather had been an important member of the Jewish community in Buenos Aires, and that one of his grandfather's sister's had also been a founding member of the Communist party in Argentina. Conversely, his mother's family were originally Spanish immigrants and Peronists – or '*Evitistas*' as Felipe described them in reference to their admiration for Peron's first wife, who had been an important symbol of the party's support for working-class struggles. When I asked him how the two families got on during the dictatorship he said:

My grandfather for a long time used to say, he remembered, "Because of Perón offering credits I managed to get this house! So I took it, and later on I

had luck, and I took on a lot of jobs at the Teatro San Martín!” Because he would design sets, he was a painter... and he would say, “and so I could pay it on time!” With a lot of appreciation for Peronism. I think that for them the left seemed too abstract, and the struggle for that type of things they found too abstract. Especially since my mother was not involved in anything more reasonable like with something more working-class but with anarchism, something more extreme. That was more detached than they thought. So I think that between the two families, they got on well. They were united by misfortune!³⁹⁶

Despite the supposed approval of their children’s militancy, Felipe describes how his grandfather found it difficult to reconcile his traditional Peronist principles with that of his daughter’s and her generations’ more ‘extreme’ beliefs based on her political participation in school and university. In connecting with his grandparents in Argentina, Felipe’s narrative shows how postmemory blends different temporal and historical contexts together, creating a more multidirectional relation to the dictatorial past, that does not view events in isolation, but how they interconnect different generations of the same family, in this case the historical periods of Peronism in the -1940s-1950s and the youth militancy of the 1970s.

During this process of explaining in his interview all of these family stories and memories of his childhood, Felipe also described how he had begun to realise that in comparison to his mother who had reinserted herself into Argentinean society without any major issues, it was in fact his father who had been struggling with his return from exile the most. His father had confessed to Felipe that he had felt as if while in exile, “que había abandonado la lucha” (that he had abandoned the struggle), a sentiment that

³⁹⁶ My own translation, for original quote in Spanish see Appendix 10.

had plagued him with guilt ever since leaving Argentina. In total, his parents had spent thirteen years away from their homeland, returning to an Argentina that had completely changed. In turn, his mother was more pragmatic about her period in exile since Felipe claimed that she had simply viewed it as another ‘phase’ in her life. In the 1980s-1990s, Felipe’s father chose not to get back into politics, but after his parent’s separation in 2001, he travelled to Venezuela in 2002 and became a hardened ‘*Chavista*’ supporter. For Felipe, his father, “volvió a su esencia”, (he returned to his essence) where, “somehow, he returned to twenty years of age, he’s happy, he’s found himself”.

In turn for Felipe, during his adolescence the period of the late 1990s and 2000s was spent coming to terms with the Argentina of ‘*Menenismo*’, and, ‘going to Tribunales to hear protests’, seeing the *jubilados* (pensioners) protesting about their pensions, and the general ‘noise on the street’. I will return to Felipe’s postmemory narrative in Chapter 5, where I will look in more depth at his ‘awakening’ during the 2001 economic crisis which he discusses in relation to recent events in the UK, a period in Argentina that he described to me as “un año al pensar en el otro” (a year in which to think about others).

Elena’s narrative of exile

Related to Felipe’s postmemory narrative of exile is Elena’s experience of exile. Elena was born in Chile in 1973 and was eight months old when the coup took place on September 11, 1973. During that time, her mother Sofia had been detained by the regime. A month later when she was nine months old, she escapes Chile with her

parents to Argentina.³⁹⁷ Three months after her third birthday, on March 24, 1976, the Argentinean armed forces declare a coup, and her father was disappeared for a period of eight months, after which the family was expelled from Argentina. Elena's mum had secured a research fellow WUS grant for her husband. Elena told me that, "I've got a few memories of Argentina but obviously I wasn't even four years old at the time that we left, so there's very little that I actually remember myself, there's more that I'm aware of because of mum and dad having told me": echoing the majority of the experiences of other interviewees whose own postmemories display this intergenerational blend of memories.³⁹⁸ Elena began by telling me what she remembered about Argentina:

From Argentina a little bit but the memories are actually very mixed up because I was so little. I remember being on the plane from Argentina and being terribly impressed cause my dad was speaking in English to the cabin crew, although he probably didn't say very much more than "yes" or "no", I was terribly impressed by this. But that's also all jumbled up with memories about the birthday cake that I'd had which was at a completely different time of the year, it was the cake that they had made me in nursery. I remember...there are a couple of things that I remember when I was in Argentina. One of them was that when I was little I had a stick and that was my transitional object. I mean I also had blankets and teddies like other kids do, but I also had my stick, and this is what I informed people I was going to use to defend my mum and my nanny if the army came to get us. I'm not sure I was going to do a lot, and actually if you look at the stick now it's a bit like a twig basically! But I've still got it, it's still in a box at mum's house (...).

Most of Elena's memories of leaving for exile in her own words are all 'jumbled up', but she still remembers key events such as the time the family boarded the plane for

³⁹⁷ Elena is the daughter of Sofia, whose first-generation narrative of the dictatorship in Chile featured in Chapter 3.

³⁹⁸ Interview with Elena carried out on 2/03/2009.

exile, which was also the first time that she had seen her father after a number of months, where she remembers being ‘terribly impressed’ at seeing him speaking in English to the cabin crew. Another key memory was the last birthday cake given to her at her nursery; and most strikingly the ‘stick’ she still has in a box in her mum’s house which was her ‘transitional object’ that she carried around her, “(...) to use to defend my mum and my nanny if the army came to get us”. As such, these memories over time have become more potent, since they represent a difficult moment of transition that the young Elena at the time could not fully comprehend, but somehow became crucial components in her postmemory of her short life in Argentina and the significance for a child of leaving for exile.

Much the same as Gabriela’s narrative earlier on in this chapter, Elena also detailed in her interview the process of visiting with her mother the jail where her father was being held in Buenos Aires. She stated that:

The other thing I remember was that mum took me once to go and see dad after, he was disappeared for a while and after they’d located him we went to see him in the concentration camp and I remember that. I just remember being really scared and unhappy and needing to pee and being thirsty and all sorts of things like that, just general discomfort, and apparently I said afterwards please never take me there again! Because it was horrible. I remember seeing my dad and him trying to give me some orange juice and some biscuits that they’d found somewhere. But on the whole the memory of actually being there was not a happy one. I don’t have any particular recollection about how I felt seeing him, just about the circumstances. But again it’s hard to say whether that’s actually my own memory of stuff that I remember or from it being told to me by other people.

Elena’s narrative of her visit to her father, after he had been located by her mother in a ‘concentration camp’, details the effects of this traumatic event on her as a child, since

she particularly remembers feeling very scared and unhappy about being there. In this way, her narrative is indicative of the embodied and affective traces of trauma in postmemory, where despite her young age Elena is still able to describe her own physical symptoms of anxiety manifested in her feeling thirsty and needing to urinate. Even after her father tried to give her some orange juice and biscuits to make her feel better, Elena still vividly remembers that ‘the memory of actually being there was not a happy one’, where others had apparently told her that she had cried out, ‘please never take me there again!’ In Elena’s retelling of this event and others, it is clear how her postmemory continually moulds her own memories to that of her parents, in particular her mother’s, in how they jointly interlink from the diasporic in-between space, their own traumatic memories that affected each family member in different ways.

During her interview, Elena was also able to tell me about her memories of her family’s arrival to the UK. From Argentina, they first arrived in London, and then were moved on to Glasgow, as part of the early wave of Chilean political refugees to Scotland that was detailed by Kay in Chapter 3. She described what her mother told her about their arrival to Glasgow:

I don’t recall so much about actually arriving here, again it was in November so it would have been cold and dark and that’s certainly what mum’s told me that you know, she was appalled and she felt “oh my god! What’s this, where are we! It’s a cold and dark and horrible place!”

Elena also spoke about another ‘transitional’ object that she had to protect her from the cold weather which she became very attached to: her red jumper given to her by her mother:

(...), I'd been given a red jumper to wear and it wasn't part of the uniform so the teachers called me up on this and I think I was quite difficult at school. I don't think I quite participated in the way that the teachers wanted me to or, I don't know if it was because I was used to a different system of education or whether it was partly a language thing or just the uniform, or the cold. They used to give you a carton of milk and it was cold and I wanted my milk hot, and they tried to heat it up by putting in on top of a radiator one day and it was even worse so I stopped complaining about the cold milk after that! So yeah, I mean basically my memories from that time are about not, I don't know if it was not fitting in at school, but not really getting what they were asking, so I didn't see the problem with me having a red jumper caus my mum had told me that "this jumper will keep you warm" sort of thing, whereas they wanted you to wear the proper grey school jumper. And silly little things like that.

The red jumper, like the 'transitional' stick that Elena wielded in Argentina to ward off the army, are material objects that gained huge symbolic importance for her as a young child; where the jumper in an unfamiliar place, literally enveloped her in her mother's promise of warmth and safety. Unable to immediately recognise the language of her new home, and the expectations of her teachers and fellow pupils when she claims that she was, 'not really getting what they were asking', Elena continued to partake in small acts of defiance. Firstly, by not wearing the regulation school uniform, and then by refusing to drink cold milk. As such, Elena's hybrid postmemory narrative transcends the boundaries between Argentina and Glasgow/London, where these past acts from the past become interconnected in the present in-between space of the diaspora.

Meanwhile, Elena's younger brother Mauricio was born in Glasgow in 1977, and by 1978 Elena's family relocate to London. Despite her young age, she had grown attached to Glasgow, since:

(...) When I knew that we were moving down to Essex I apparently announced to one of my mum and dad's friends that I didn't want to lose my

Scottish accent, that I didn't want to speak like an English person. And of course within seconds of crossing the border the accent was lost forever! So there was obviously some fondness and just hanging around educational institutions because when we were in Glasgow my dad was studying for a Master's I think it was at Glasgow University. So we had a flat in halls caus I think they could give that to dad (...) And so we'd sometimes go and have our meals in the refectories or in the canteens. And every so often the smell of institutional refectory kinda gives me this big kind of nostalgia for remembering Scotland because it was the first place we lived for those couple of years.

Once again, Elena recounted another act of defiance, in not wanting to move so as to not lose her Scottish accent. Memories of these acts also evoke familiar smells of the educational institutions that accommodated her and her parents while her father carried out his Master's degree, where 'every so often the smell of institutional refectory' has given Elena, 'this big kind of nostalgia for remembering Scotland' as a place that sheltered her family at a very difficult and stressful time in their lives.

Family dynamics

From a closer reading of Elena's narrative, it is clear that her experiences as a second generation exile alongside her parents, and the close bond she developed with her mother at a time in her childhood during the dictatorship in Argentina when her father was a political prisoner, influenced her relationship with them in terms of how she communicated with each one on different terms about the past. I asked her:

Alejandra: What kind of things did you ask your parents about while you were growing up, did you become more inquisitive about what had happened to them as time went by?

Elena: Mum talks a lot quite openly anyways, so I don't know that I necessarily asked a lot of questions because the topic would come up so we would talk about it a lot anyway. Dad's spoken about it less so it kind of has

more of an impact when he does. When he does bring up something. But I get the sense because he's not so open about it, I kinda feel slightly more reticent about asking him anything, whereas with my mum I think it would be a lot easier. Yeah, dad's told us, dad came to meet me for lunch a few years ago one day, and he'd found this picture and he was really emotional about it, and it was a picture that I'd drawn I think that day that I got taken to see him when he was incarcerated still in Argentina. And it was a picture of some rainbows and hands around it and yeah, he brought it along and showed me and started telling me about it and it meant a great deal to him and he was obviously really pleased to have found this and to bring it and show it to me, which as I said took me a bit by surprise because he's not the sort of person that I'd ever expected to talk so openly about that sort of thing, which is funny actually considering we were all living in the same house for so many years.

Here, we can see that Elena's narrative shares some similarities with Alicia's experience in Chapter 3, in terms of their mother's openness to talk about the past, in contrast to their father's reluctance to do so in such a direct way, partly due to their experiences of having been detained and tortured before their exiles. Elena describes above how in a recent meeting with her father who has been separated from her mother for a number of years, he handed over to her a drawing she had made for him while in prison in Argentina. At this meeting, Elena said he became very 'emotional' when he described to Elena how she had given him the same drawing on the same day that she described to me when she visited him with her mother in prison. This more recent encounter took Elena by surprise since she pronounced that he is, 'not the sort of person that I'd ever expected to talk so openly about that sort of thing'. Instead, by showing her the drawing that she could see 'meant a great deal to him', Elena's father connected with his daughter in an unexpected way in the diasporic in-between space. By presenting to Elena a less traumatic alternative to their joint past experience in prison, her father was

able to transmit to her the importance of this drawing that with its ‘rainbows and hands around it’ had comforted him during his detainment.

In relation to the ways in which her mother communicated about the past with her Elena told me that:

I remember her telling stories about the circumstances surrounding the coup and the expectations that they knew that there was something coming but not necessarily how suddenly in Chile. What happened when she tried to go to work on the day of the coup I think, before it was announced that jobs were suspended essentially. The help that she got from my dad’s dad in kind of taking us somewhere safe before she went and handed herself in, and ended up in the stadium in Concepcion with some other people that they knew. The circumstances under which we actually then left Chile for Argentina, after the curfew under armed guard presumably you know, in a big old bus thing that they drove us across the Andes with, and I know some of the people that were there at the same time that are some friends that mum and dad are still in touch with. In Argentina, I’ve heard about how dad was disappeared, the circumstances under which mum found out where he was and some of the steps that she took in going to I think it was the Casa Rosada or whichever I think it was, to go and ask questions and ask that he’d be released and the negotiations to get him a place outside, something to go to so they would allow him to leave the country and how we ended up in Glasgow essentially. So I’ve heard all those stories in varying degrees of detail a lot of times, so there’s certain things that are kind of clearer than others, but it’s so easy especially talking to mum you learn about different aspects of things at different times.

For Elena, her connection to her mother and her father forged during their shared experiences of exile from Chile and then Argentina, has meant that her postmemory contains links between her own parent’s stories of living under state terrorism, and Elena’s own memories of displacement and remembering that jointly emerge from the diasporic in-between space they inhabit.

In this chapter we have seen how the Argentinean second generation narratives featured here, not only show the interconnected facets of familial postmemory that contain a joint multidirectional collective recognition and modes of affiliative identification linked to the Chilean narratives in the previous chapter. They also remind us that beyond the immediacy of oral narratives that are mainly conveying transmissions in the form of conversations, we also need to be attentive to the ‘imagery’ of postmemory that these narratives evoke, as well as ‘objects’ of postmemory that were also displaced with individuals or are ‘re-discovered’ and shared between generations, where as we have just seen with Elena’s example, come to gain additional meanings in the diaspora space.

Following in Chapter 5, I will go on to discuss the departure of these second generation narratives from their foundations in the familial landscape, to discuss present postmemory’s more affiliative dimensions in the diaspora space of the UK, one which is tied to specific events that have shaped the Chilean and Argentinean diasporas in the space in-between the field of the politics of memory from the Southern Cone and the diaspora space.

Introduction

Departing from the sphere of the familial dimensions of postmemory as discussed in chapters 3 and 4, Chapter 5 focuses on the collective aspects of the second generation narratives of the Chilean and Argentinean interviewees in this thesis; by presenting some important events that exemplify the conjunction and interconnectedness of the field of the politics of memory from the Southern Cone, and the diaspora field they inhabit.

The first key event that will be discussed is the arrest and detention of General Pinochet in London in 1998 until 2000. I will look at how this decisive moment for the Chilean exile diaspora in the UK that coordinated and raised awareness worldwide of the transnational effort to bring the dictator to justice, not only had an impact on political and judicial processes back in Chile, but on Chilean second generation that came of age at this time. During Pinochet's arrest, the majority of the second generation interviewees were either young children or young adults, and attended the protests and pickets organised at the sites where Pinochet was under house arrest alongside their families and wider members of the Chilean exile diaspora. The publicity generated by the case put the traumatic past of the Chilean dictatorship back under the spotlight, which extended the concern towards the legacy of the past beyond the direct victims of state terrorism belonging to the first generation of Chilean political exiles, to a wider British public joining in solidarity with the picket. In particular, it will be argued that the second generation was able to approach that painful past which had been forced out into

the open by inserting their own postmemory narratives into the timeline of their presence in the diaspora.

I will then move on to presenting the narratives of the Argentinean second generation in relation to events such as the Falklands/Malvinas conflict in 1982, and the period of the mid to late 1990s when the field of the politics of memory witnessed new human rights social actors entering the field. It was during this time that groups such as H.I.J.O.S. began to extend the legacy of dominant familial organisations such as Madres and Abuelas to incorporate broader sociopolitical concerns belonging to a wider postgeneration. This chapter will then end with a mixture of Chilean and Argentinean narratives that explore common themes of identity, memory and political subjectivity to do with the positionality of the second generation within the in-between space of the diaspora.

All in all, by presenting these narratives of postmemory belonging to the Chilean and Argentinean second generation in terms of important events taking place in a diasporic in-between landscape, this chapter aims to contribute to an area of research that has not been identified, namely, the fluid connections between the familial and affective components of postmemory in a new diasporic context. By positioning these narratives together, this thesis demonstrates that there is a wider spectrum of personal accounts related to the legacy of the dictatorships from previously unheard voices in the diaspora, that have yet to be fully acknowledged by the literature.

From the personal to the collective: The arrest of Pinochet

As discussed earlier on in Chapter 3 in relation to the arrival of the Chilean first generation of political exiles to the UK from the early 1970s, the persistence of old political ties and affiliations³⁹⁹ as well as the protests generated against the regime whilst in exile by the Chilean diaspora worldwide, would prove to be extremely important for the eventual arrest of Pinochet in 1998. By the time of his arrest on home soil, this event for the Chilean diaspora in the UK reignited old political identities and highlighted the presence of those families and individuals who had not returned to Chile. Some of those families include that of Amelia, who we saw attempted to return but eventually came back to the UK. The presence of Chilean exiles in the diaspora therefore became important to document in the 1990s since they had formed a part of a wider historical opposition movement that was initiated from the early days of exile to rival the authoritarian rule of Pinochet,⁴⁰⁰ and which supported the Concertación coalition that contested the 1988 plebiscite formed by the biggest parties that had been present in Chile since before the coup – the Christian Democrats, the Socialists, the Radicals, and other smaller parties.

³⁹⁹ For a more comprehensive look at the role of the Chilean political parties in exile, see Angell, 1996; Alan, Angell, and Susan, Carstairs. 1987. 'The Exile Question in Chilean Politics', *Third World Quarterly*, 9: 148-67; Wright & Oñate, 2007.

⁴⁰⁰ During the regime, the opposition to Pinochet's rule in Chile began in the law courts, where lawyers from the PDC and the Radical Party worked closely with the Vicaría and the Pro-Peace Committee to bring human rights abuses to light. The Communist party did not form a part of the Concertación, but from the mid-1980s the Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front was engaging in armed confrontations with the armed forces. In 1991, they assassinated the leader of the Gremialista movement, Jaime Guzmán that represented the interests of technocrats and civilian supporters of the regime, who also founded the right-wing UDI party (Independent Democratic Union) in 1983. See, Carlos, Huneeus. 2007. *The Pinochet Regime* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers).

When a decade later in March 1998 Pinochet steps down as head of the Armed Forces and is sworn as a ‘Senator for life’, on a visit to London for back treatment he is arrested October 16 by Scotland Yard acting on a request from Spanish Judge Baltasar Garzón while recovering from surgery at The Clinic. Judge Garzón from the Spanish National High Court was himself acting under petition from lawyer Joan Garcés attempting to have the ex-dictator extradited to Spain to be tried for crimes against humanity that included charges of terrorism, torture and genocide.⁴⁰¹ Pinochet’s detention ended up lasting a total of 503 days coinciding with presidential elections in Chile. The position of the Chilean Concertación government headed by Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle which had three ministers, who had themselves been victims of the regime,⁴⁰² was to request the return of Pinochet to Chile as an ex-head of state, who they argued should face justice in his own country.⁴⁰³ The decision whether to extradite or to allow Pinochet to return home was based on whether a head of state accused of human rights abuses should be protected by immunity laws conferred on sovereigns heads of state under British law, or face International Human Rights Law as governed by the Geneva, and rested in the hands of the Labour government of Prime Minister Tony

⁴⁰¹ Carlos, Huneus. 2003. *Chile, Un País Dividido: La Actualidad Del Pasado* (1 ed. Providencia, Santiago de Chile: Catalonia). For extended analysis of the case in the UK in relation to other judicial processes initiated in Spain, Argentina and Chile also see, Naomi, Roht-Arriaza. 2005. *The Pinochet Effect: Transnational Justice in the Age of Human Rights* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press).

⁴⁰² Minister of External Relations José Miguel Insulza had been exiled in Spain and Mexico, Secretary General of the government Jorge Arrate had been exiled in Holland, and the Minister of Public Works Jaime Tohá was prisoner for seven months on Rawson Island where party leaders of the UP had been held and tortured. Huneus, 2003; 2007.

⁴⁰³ Ibid. This was not the position taken by some members of the Concertación belonging to the Socialist Party, many who travelled to London to support his detention (including Allende’s daughter) and who called for Pinochet to be extradited to Spain.

Blair, and the Law Lords in the House of Lords.⁴⁰⁴ Pinochet's fate was eventually decided over a series of trials, where his legal team continually disputed his ability to stand trial.

The first decision made by the High Court on October 28, 1998, declared that as a former head of state Pinochet had immunity from prosecution, and therefore could not be extradited to Spain. Meanwhile, he remains under house arrest pending an appeal to the British House of Lords. On that appeal on November 25, 1998, which coincided with the dictator's eighty-third birthday, the Lords reverse the decision of the British High Court (named Pinochet 1) by a 3:2 majority as they decided that international law approved by the UK at the time did not recognise immunity for crimes committed as a former head of state.⁴⁰⁵ Despite this overruling, by December the revelation that one of the Lords present during Pinochet 1 Lord Hoffman, had been an unpaid director of the human rights group Amnesty International, forced the House of Lords to reconsider Pinochet's immunity, and a second panel was reconvened (Pinochet 2) that dismissed the first decision to extradite Pinochet as unruly. By the time of the third appeal (Pinochet 3), a larger group of seven Law Lords was appointed and on March 24, 1999 they confirmed by a 6:1 majority that a former Head of State was not immune from prosecution for an international crime, and so Pinochet could be extradited to Spain where, "furthermore, under the Torture Convention, states had an obligation, not just an option, to act against allegations of torture. [Where] these holdings represented major

⁴⁰⁴ Madeleine, Davis. 2003. *The Pinochet Case: Origins, Progress and Implications* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies); Wright & Oñate, 2007.

⁴⁰⁵ Davis, 2003.

steps forward in international criminal law”.⁴⁰⁶ Despite this, the last ruling significantly reduced the charges that could potentially be brought against Pinochet by the Spanish courts, since the crimes committed had to qualify as such under UK law during the same time period that the UK ratified the International Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment therefore only covering crimes of torture and genocide committed after December 1988.⁴⁰⁷ A year into Pinochet’s detention, the Chilean government insisted that Chilean sovereignty was under threat as long as Pinochet continued to be under arrest, with his legal team arguing that his deteriorating physical and mental health made him too weak to stand trial abroad, and requested his return on ‘humanitarian’ grounds.⁴⁰⁸ A team of UK doctors (with the presence of Pinochet’s lawyers, but not the prosecution) eventually examined him in January 2000, and on March 2, 2000 the Home Secretary Jack Straw announced his final decision to end extradition proceedings and ordered Pinochet’s release from British custody. Pinochet returned to Chile on March 3, 2000, a few days before Ricardo Lagos of the Socialist Party became President.

The aftermath of the case for Chilean democracy and the UK exile diaspora

Overall, despite the frustrations of not being able to secure Pinochet’s extradition to Spain and bring him to trial abroad, the Chilean exiles in the UK had played a crucial role as part of the wider Chilean exile diaspora and transnational human rights movement in organising the daily picket outside the London Clinic, that became known

⁴⁰⁶ Roht-Arriaza, 2005: 56.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

as ‘El Piquete de Londres’, communicating with the media and sitting on all the court hearings to disseminate information about the trial.⁴⁰⁹ According to one of the main organisers of the picket I interviewed, she claimed that during the trial, those Chilean exiles that had remained in the UK no longer felt like victim but were transformed into social actors capable of bringing the dictator’s crimes to light in their own home.⁴¹⁰

The coordinated transnational network of Chilean exiles in the diaspora, human rights groups and lawyers during the case had managed to put the spotlight back onto Chile, with Pinochet beginning to lose favour with a large part of the Chilean public and previous supporters.⁴¹¹ Within days of his arrival back home, Judge Juan Guzmán Tapia declared he would pursue the stripping of Pinochet’s parliamentary immunity from prosecution to stand trial for his role in the Caravan of Death, later announced by the Santiago Appeal Court in June 2000, and upheld by the Supreme Court in August 2000. However, by July 2002, the Chilean Supreme Court suspended the trial, due to Pinochet’s dementia.⁴¹² Nonetheless, Pinochet’s increasing marginalisation from public life, also heralded new judicial cases (some cases that had been initiated long before his arrest) against known perpetrators of crimes against humanity. This opened the way for survivors to place their experiences of torture and detainment (including sexual

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁴¹⁰ Interview carried out with one of the main organisers of the picket 22/12/2011.

⁴¹¹ Huneus, 2007.

⁴¹² By 2005, cases of human rights violations turned their attention to the security forces, with 410 members of the military in court. President Frei Ruiz-Tagle also sought to modernise the judicial system which at the time was still dominated by supporters of the regime by establishing various control measures such as, making the Senate in charge of appointing the Supreme Court judges. Huneus, 2007.

violence) and its effects back onto centre stage in the public sphere⁴¹³ where, “grassroots work was slowly turning torture victims into the symbolic sibling of maximal victims—the surviving sister, as it were, whose suffering showed what also happened to the disappeared or executed brother”,⁴¹⁴ effectively turning the tide in terms of expanding the range of direct victims of the coup.

1998 and the Chilean second generation

The arrest of Pinochet in London in 1998 represented a turning point for the second generation Chileans interviewed in this thesis. As a defining moment in their lives, it signalled a renewed interest in each person’s familial past, as well as an awakening of individual and evolving postmemories in relation to that past.

If previously the focus has been on the familial aspects of postmemory in the shape of the private family stories and memories that the interviewees remember were transmitted to them concerning the Chilean and Argentinean dictatorships, then the year 1998 for the Chileans second generation would see the exposure of those familial narratives in the public sphere. For example, Emilio revealed to me that while he did not remember specific stories being told to him while growing up because in his own words, “it wasn’t really something that we kind of talked about in detail”: the arrest of Pinochet in 1998 unveiled a new connection with the history of the dictatorship in Chile, a connection that was also mediated by the growing interest in the case throughout the

⁴¹³ The Valech Commission of 2003-2004 (National Commission of Political Prison and Torture), was set-up to further identify persons who suffered imprisonment and torture. In total it was presented with 35,868 cases of which 28,456 qualified under the criteria of detained political prisoners, with 9% of those cases belonging to Chileans who testified from the diaspora. Stern, 2010:291.

⁴¹⁴ Stern, 2010: 281.

media in the UK. This situation stirred his own questioning and awareness of what had happened to his own family as a result of the coup. He told me that:

I suppose when Pinochet got arrested here was when lots of other things came, my parents were both interviewed in the media quite a lot, you know, it came out, stuff came out. I mean yeah, before then the specifics weren't something that was talked about.

In this sense, the re-emergence of the oral testimonial accounts of the first generation of Chilean exiles in the in-between space of the diaspora in the UK, once again providing their first-hand experiences of kidnap, torture, disappearance, and exile during the regime to the media, transformed the second generation into collective witnesses of this phenomenon. This was a key aspect of the construction of postmemory for the Chileans interviewed here, in that it allowed them to reconnect with that traumatic past away from the familial sphere by being able to share those experiences with others. Where previously the second generation was only perhaps aware of their parent's experiences as part of those personal familial encounters, individuals like Emilio were now attesting to the first generation's need to share their experiences with a wider British public, not only testifying to their previous lives and political militancy in Allende's Chile, but their longstanding presence and activism as part of the Chilean exile diaspora in the UK.

However, this process was different for everyone which also depended on the age of each individual. When I asked Alicia for example, if while at school she had talked to any of her friends about her family's past, she told me that, "No, no, no. I didn't, I wasn't aware of my parent's history or past. Actually I think I was quite unaware until Pinochet arrived to this country". For Alicia, attending the picket in

London in the early days of Pinochet's arrest before she travelled to Chile to live with her father was a significant time for her which she was able to share with other second generation sons and daughters of political exiles living in the UK. The picket for the second generation then not only represented a chance to bring Pinochet to justice, but to make the British public aware of the longstanding presence of the Chilean exile diaspora in the UK and the growing presence of the second generation. Alicia expresses that moment in this way:

I personally think, not that they're ignorant, but everyone lives in their own little world in this country, and I think some people are not even aware of what's happening on the international community. So until you are personally affected or it's in the news regarding your country, until Pinochet arrived in Britain, the British people started to know what was occurring, or occurred in Chile. And then of course, I felt that that identity and I considered myself Chilean. And of course even though I didn't live it, I felt that I had to be there in representation of my family.

For Alicia, even though she acknowledges, 'I didn't live it' (in reference to the Chilean coup), Pinochet's detention in 1998 not only reconnected her to her own family's trajectory as political exiles in the UK, but to a growing public awareness of the case that also contributed to her claim that she 'felt that identity' as the daughter of political exiles. Alicia went on to explain how for the first time in her life, she considered herself Chilean and expressed this identity as part of the wider collective body of the Chilean diaspora present at the picket where she had felt a need to, 'be there in representation of my family', in solidarity with her parents and other exiles. For Alicia, this expression of a hybrid diasporic identity took place in the space in-between the familial sphere and the public sphere in the diaspora space, as part of a wider recognition by the British public

of the longstanding struggle of Chilean exiles in the diaspora. Part of this awareness raising included reminding Britain of its role in selling the regime arms,⁴¹⁵ and especially of the ongoing relationship between the General and ex-prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, whom he had visited days before his arrest.

In Alicia's narrative, we can see how the experience of attending the pickets as a young woman every day after school, refracted her familial postmemory of a traumatic past outwards into the diaspora in-between space, that not only connected her to the present events of the picket, but also in her on words 'reinforced' for her the presence of a widespread community of Chilean exiles in the UK, members of which she was now interacting with on a daily basis. Even though Alicia had not lived during the period of exile like her parents had done, being part of the picket gave her the opportunity to belong to an affective community of people her parents had belonged to when they had first arrived in Swansea as political refugees. She expressed sense of appreciation to be a part of those moments she shared with the wider Chilean diaspora when she wondered how a, "small community can make such a big statement regarding politics and how it can make everyone's eyes looking one way and that's what I felt happened".

The reappearance of this intergenerational diasporic affective community gave Alicia the chance to approximate the past by being able to foster a living connection with a wider first generation of political exiles. In turn, by directly participating in the picket of 1998, she was also herself becoming a reflexive political diasporic subject whose translocational positionality allowed her to link the militancy of the 1970s of the

⁴¹⁵ Wilkinson, 1992.

political exiles of her parents' generation, with the eventual emergence of the second generation as social and political actors within the diaspora space in their own right.

Similarly for Luis, the picket represented a time for the Chilean exile community to come together and reassert their presence in the diaspora field, despite the seemingly negative outcome of the case:

It was amazing that he was even considered to be put on trial, that in a way was an achievement and that fact that he was denounced worldwide for ages as you know. "What's he on trial for?" "Human rights abuses", therefore they're human rights abuses in Chile. I mean that got everywhere basically which is an achievement as well. And the fact that from there he went back to Chile and his influence and power went down completely which was really important because he was still really influential, and it brought the whole debate into Chile of what actually happened. So there were lots of benefits in a sense which may it's easier to see from England rather than being in Chile, to see those benefits. But yeah it was just like I say a really unique time, it kinda felt touching like being in touching distance of something that could actually happened, the he could actually be tried. Well, 'cause we went on the protests and got together a lot more with the whole Chilean community, yeah you were just seeing people all the time. So yeah, it was a big moment, kinda mixed emotions you know, really happy that he was arrested...and then he got away with it.

Luis' narrative does more than highlighting the momentous occasion of the arrest, trial, and picket, in bringing together different exiles from all around the UK; it speaks of the re-emergence of a diasporic affective community made up of Chilean exiles, their kin, and their British and international supporters, an affective community founded beyond the direct victim of the Chilean dictatorship. The second generation's postmemory narratives also showed that their experience of this event had also influenced a different awareness or consciousness towards the continuing repercussions of the dictatorial past where even if Pinochet was not extradited, for Luis the result of the international

campaign against him impacted greatly on Chile, since according to him, “it brought the whole debate into Chile of what actually happened”, not only in terms of the arrest, but also in reminding the nation of the crimes of the dictatorship and his regime. In this way, Luis’ narrative interconnects the field of the politics of memory in Chile, with the diaspora field, and acknowledging that for the second generation perhaps it has been easier to evaluate the positive outcomes and ‘benefits’ of the trial that were, ‘easier to see from England, rather than being in Chile’.

Alberto and José’s joint narratives of the picket

Another set of very revealing narratives surrounding the arrest of Pinochet and the participation of the Chilean second generation in the picket comes from brothers Alberto and José, who I interviewed together. Their joint narrative also speaks about the convergence of the familial and affiliative dimensions of postmemory, and their coexistence in the space in-between the diaspora field when it meets with the field of the politics of memory back in Chile.⁴¹⁶ Alberto and José’s father came to the UK as a teenager alongside four other siblings escaping the Pinochet regime. The brothers and sisters were soon followed in exile by their parents, as José and Alberto’s grandfather, a city politician and a mayor at the time of the coup in Chile had been jailed and tortured for supporting the UP government. As young children, Alberto and José were taken frequently to El Piquete, as their father was a prominent figure among the Chilean exiles in organising the protests and vigils outside the Houses of Parliament, the London Clinic and the house in Virginia Waters where Pinochet was on house arrest. At the time, José

⁴¹⁶ Joint interview with José and Alberto carried out on 25/09/2011.

and Alberto claimed to not have really understood what was going on due to their young age, and they remembered that they viewed it as an excuse to ‘go out’ and get the day off school, as any twelve year old and nine year old boys would rejoice the chance to be able to do. When I asked them to tell me more about what it was like at the time to miss school in order to go to the pickets they told me that:

Alberto: Well, that’s the thing that we loved the most! We just saw it as an excuse to leave school early!

José: Talk about yourself, I was a hard worker!

Alberto: He’s just like... [put’s on voice of father] “Yeah we’re going down to Virginia Water, do you wanna come?” I was like, “do we miss school?” [reply]“Yeah”, “alright then, when do we start?” And then yeah they would write a note to our teacher and then we would just go.

José: We never had a problem the school always said “fine”, “it’s absolutely good”. I mean, I always enjoyed going to the picket because you get to shout, wear t-shirts and carry signs. There’s like food and everyone is dancing, it was actually really good fun.

Alberto: Yeah, it was like a party there.

José: Yeah, always a good spirit.

Recreating the context of the picket during their interview, not only gave an extremely revealing insight of that time as a very strenuous process for all of those involved in the work that went on behind the scenes in staging the picket on a day-to-day basis and emotionally dealing with the decisions of the courts; but from the viewpoint of Alberto and José, exposing another dimension of their participation as children. Here they were able to convey the sense of fun that the act of collective protest brought as a ‘party’ occasion, when people came together to shout, eat and dance. For those in the second generation that had been too young or not yet born during the early years of the Chile

Solidarity Campaign in the UK, this was the first time they were experiencing occasions similar to those events that brought different groups of Chilean exiles together from the 1970s, and now in the present, also involving a new audience not necessarily attached to the Chilean exile diaspora. In connection to this, it has been argued that one of the strengths of the Chilean exile diaspora from 1973 onwards, was that:

Through their resistance, solidarity strategies, and commemorative practices, Chileans created and inhabited a newly devised distinct space. From this vantage point, they filtered information coming from “inside” and amplified and disseminated vestiges of the past. With their emphasis on solidarity practices, they were able to create an expanse both to contain memory and to produce opposition to the military dictatorship. It was into this constructed site of struggle that General Pinochet in advertently fell when he was arrested in London in October 1998.⁴¹⁷

As a diasporic in-between space and a ‘constructed site of struggle’ that Joan Simalchik describes above, Alberto and José – similarly to Luis when he spoke about the significance of his participation in the picket – were also able to look back at the picket as a highly momentous time when their family came together with other Chilean exiles in the UK. The reasons how and why the dictatorship had affected their family privately, suddenly became part of a public trauma no longer exclusive to the families of exiles and their kin, but exposed and celebrated among an extensive affective community of activists, where adults shared their experiences with their children, children among children, and with the wider British public.

⁴¹⁷ Joan, Simalchik. 2006. ‘The Material Culture of Chilean Exile: A Transnational Dialogue’, *Refuge*, 23: 102.

Therefore, Alberto and José told me that at the time their awareness of what was happening during the picket was always closely associated with a positive and new found sense of togetherness among the Chilean exiles, other Latin Americans, and the British public, with their family's story extending towards many others that had not suffered the same fate. They told me that:

Alberto: I mean, we knew what was happening, like, the Spanish wanted to get him for what he did to some Spanish citizens or something, and they were trying to see whether they could extradite him to Spain. And at the time we didn't know. We knew that Pinochet was bad, we knew that he had a bad effect on our family, so we were just there but at the time we didn't know all the details and the semantics of what was happening. We knew how to shout slogans in Spanish and things like that. Yeah, I mean we didn't truly understand for a long time what Pinochet meant to the family and the effect he really had. I mean, it was only till a couple of years ago that we really found out what happened to my dad and the whole family.

While they knew that 'Pinochet was bad', José told me that in his opinion, their young age at the time also prevented them from fully understanding the 'ramifications' of the events taking place. Consequently, during the interview process the brothers were able to articulate how their lack of understanding as children provided them with another type of affective knowledge on the legacy of the dictatorial past, one that allowed them to experience the events of the picket in a much more playful and joyful manner. With the same group of exiles gathering on a regular basis, Alberto conveyed the sense of togetherness and good humour that grew among the picketers:

That was one of the things that made it so great as well 'cause like, we became really close-knit by the end, cause people would sleep there and be there non-stop for twenty four hours. And then you'd end up seeing the same faces, and everyone was joking around.

Alberto and José also described how huddling together around the radio to hear the verdict of the Lords decisions whether to extradite Pinochet, also further intensified a celebratory feeling of coming-together by different groups of people sharing the same will towards justice. Recounting this scene in the manner that one would listen to the commentary to a football match on the radio, Alberto stated:

At the beginning it was two votes against arresting him, and we're huddled around the radio and we're all gutted, and then it was like 2-1, and then it was 2-2. (...) And then the last guy said "we're going to arrest him", you know, it was like 3-2, you know, that's the vote. We all celebrated, we turned on the music, we all danced, you know, we shouted, we had food. That was definitely the strongest memory of the picket, when they voted "for". But it never came to fruition, because then he just said "oh, I'm too ill", and then he got sent back to Chile.

The strongest memory of the picket, when the Lords eventually decided on the grounds for extradition, was also quickly followed by disappointment once the British government decide not to follow through with it, and Pinochet was allowed to return to Chile. The picket however was one among many commemorative practices initiated by the Chilean exiles that the brothers described:

Alberto: We were just doing a protest march anyway, and as the protest was outside Parliament, we stuck I can't remember how many hundreds of these little white crosses. It took hours to do, but it looked so good when we did it. Or the time when we did the white masks, and the....

José: Oh yeah, I remember doing that!

Alberto: It was good, that was good. It was this other protest when everyone put on a white faceless mask and then painted one hand red, and everyone just walked like that for ages and that was really good as well. Good fun, and yeah, really powerful as well.

Years later, the death of Alberto and José's *abuelo* (grandfather) in 2005, a year before the death of Pinochet in December 2006, would also influence them greatly, in the sense that they felt an injustice for their family and what they had gone through:

Alberto: Pinochet died after, you know, it's not fair you know, 'cause our grandfather suffered through his regime and then he dies. And then Pinochet gets away with it and he gets to die in his own bed, in his own home rather than in prison, despite all the horrible things he's done to Chileans, to our family. And then that's what we saw and got more involved and we were saying, "What's this all about?"

Alberto described how the death of their *abuelo* also prompted him as the older brother, to approach his father, as well as his grandmother and aunt to ask them questions about the past. This type of approximation to family members Alberto also told me was part of a phenomenon happening to second generation individuals his age in the UK since, "they're getting more involved now, so it's possible that it gets passed down to us instead, you know, as time goes by". Despite the closeness between them, according to Alberto, his father has not spoken often to him and his brother about his past because, "there's a lot of things that have happened within our family that dad prefers to shelter us from, sort of, that kind of stuff. Which is fair enough, you know. If he doesn't want us to know that kind of stuff, but we are obviously intrigued." In this sense, the past has always been a 'touchy subject', showing the precariousness involved in the process of postmemory, which has meant that the brothers have found new strategies to approach the past with subtlety. For example, they found that approaching different family members such as their aunt, had given the opportunity to find out additional things, with José claiming that since she is the most, "talkative and the most open", turning to her had been easier than speaking to his father. In Alberto's case, by also approaching his

aunt, he was able to find out about certain events during the dictatorship, such as the time that she evaded capture while she was visiting a friend when the military came to look for her at her house because she, “started helping people speak out against the Pinochet regime and then that’s why the army were after her”. As well as the time she refused to sing the national anthem in public because according to Alberto, “it was all about having freedom and stuff and they were, sort of, like in a coup.” For the brothers, whoever they have asked about the past they have always done so with sensitivity, explaining that:

Alberto: A lot of times, whenever I see my auntie, sometimes we are alone and I would say something to her, “what was it like?” Or with our *abuela*, “what was it like?” You know, the conversation might drift to that subject, I don’t just blurt it out, we’d just be talking and be like “yeah, what was it like, how was this thing”, and whatever, and it just comes out. Because I think it’s still like a touchy subject with them, so I don’t just blurt it out, I just let them go with the flow and then they’re comfortable talking about it, they just say it.

José: They roll with the punches!

Alberto: Yeah! They roll with the punches! And then, that’s just how it comes, I don’t force it on them. But my dad, you never get round to that, so I think over the years, I’ve only had about three conversations with him, like in-depth ones.

In reminiscing about their childhood experiences in a family of Chilean political exiles, Alberto and José transmit a sense of playfulness towards approaching the legacy of the dictatorship and how it impacted on their family, and in doing so, revealing how the second generation have found different and conscientious ways with which to communicate with the first generation about the past, learning how to make them feel comfortable about answering the questions they might have had while growing up.

The continuation of postmemory into a new diasporic landscape

Since their participation in the picket, the brothers also spoke about their more recent involvement with a human rights group named Ecomemoria based in the UK that was founded by their father and aunt among others during the detention of Pinochet in 1998. Ecomemoria is a group that commemorates the lives of the detained-disappeared of the Chilean dictatorship, by planting trees in sites chosen by anyone wishing to remember a detained-disappeared person. In reality as the brother's explained, while this practice is not just restricted to the direct families of the victims of Chilean state terrorism, so far the plantings have always taken place in countries where the Chilean exile diaspora still resides. The planting ceremony is co-organised by members of the group and in conjunction when possible with the relatives or friends of the detained-disappeared person, in order to provide information about that person's life for the reading that takes place during the ceremony as well as choosing music and readings to perform. The brothers explained that the ceremony usually involves Andean music, poetry, and readings regarding the lives of those commemorated, as well as, the traditional salutes and calls where the names of the detained-disappeared are read out loud alongside traditional leftist chants. After the tree is planted, a plaque is also unveiled next to the tree with the name of the individual commemorated, explaining that they were made to disappear by the Chilean military regime.

Whereas in the early days of Ecomemoria the brothers explained their attendance only as part of the 'backdrop' of the ceremony, they went on to detail how they have recently become more involved with the organisation and decision making involved in the group's activities. For Alberto:

They always wanted us to be a part of it from when we were very young. So we were never just like, “you guys go play. We’re gonna plant this tree”. We were always there when the tree planting happened, and it was always when they went to discuss things, then we went to play. So we were never just dragged along and then out in a play pen while they did things. We were always there (...) You know when everyone goes round putting in the soil? Yeah, we were there, and we would when we were very small, us me, Jose, and like the rest of our cousins would get like, little shovels and put the soil in.

Similarly to the events of the picket in 1998, the second generation as children and young adults have always been present at these commemorative practices, that have not only highlighted the crimes against humanity of the dictatorship and the names of the detained-disappeared, but the long-term presence of the Chilean exile diaspora in the UK. At their most recent Ecomemoria tree-planting ceremony in Wales in August 2011, the group held a ceremony during the yearly Latin American festival ‘El Sueño Existe’ in Machynlleth Wales, held to celebrate the life of the Chilean musician and poet Victor Jara who was assassinated by the regime. At this ceremony that I attended, the participation of the brothers and other second generation (and even third generation) children of exiles was very visible, in how these younger generations became crucial participants during the ceremony.⁴¹⁸ For Alberto and José, this included writing alongside their father the script that they would read aloud during the ceremony about one of the people commemorated who had been a young soldier killed by the regime after he refused to take part in repression. Their work also included preparing a separate presentation given by the group at the festival about their history which was largely led

⁴¹⁸ For a more substantive description and analysis of the ceremony, see, Carolina Ramírez, and Alejandra, Serpente. 2012. ‘Ecomemoria’s Diasporic Space of Commemoration: A Tree-Planting Ceremony and its Living Memorial’, *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, 21:189-202.

by another second generation activist from Sheffield. They both explained that, their increasing involvement in the ceremony that summer had made them feel ‘proud’, as they identified a connective thread between the ceremony and their past attendance at the picket in 1998. The stated that:

José: I remember the idea started after Pinochet wasn’t going to be extradited. Then they said, “OK, we have to do something now”, and they pulled their ideas together, someone came up with it, I’m not sure who, and that’s how Ecomemoria was born. It was born in the failure of the justice system.

Alberto: Yeah, ‘cause before we thought we were going to get justice and then when he got away with it, we realised...well people aren’t going to know now.

José: so we had to keep people active.

Alberto: So yeah, so that was their own way of showing people it’s not over. Just because Pinochet is now dead so whatever, it doesn’t mean it’s just going to go in the history books. People need to know about it, people need to understand, that kind of thing.

Watching Alberto and José during the ceremony that day, it was clear that the first generation members of Ecomemoria were extremely keen to encourage the participation of their children and grandchildren in all aspects of the ceremony including the procession to the tree-planting site, the readings, the music, and the traditional chants given in honour of those killed by the regime. Not only that, but the crowd that gathered to partake in the ceremony were not just made up of the Chilean exile diaspora, but local Welsh people and those attending the festival that had no direct links whatsoever to Chile or the dictatorship. In recognition of the specificity of the site chosen to carry out the planting, a traditional song was sung in Welsh and local children who were there with their parents attending the festival, were also entrusted with carrying the young tree

to the site, expanding the affective community of people gathered to commemorate the lives of the victims of state terrorism, beyond the detained-disappeared, the exiles, and their kin. All in all, the multidirectional aspects of the ceremony not only conjured the ghosts of the detained-disappeared now haunting new diasporic spaces of belonging, but the ceremony also evoked the mobile nature of this diasporic in-between space for a new audience of active participants.⁴¹⁹ An affective community founded since the days of the picket against Pinochet in 1998 and now galvanised in the present, producing unexpected encounters with other traumatic events not tied to the Southern Cone military dictatorships.

Overall, this extension of Alberto's and José postmemory from the private familial space, towards more collective and affective connections with the dictatorial past that began during the time of the London picket in 1998 all the way through to their more recent involvement with the commemorative practices of Ecomemoria, has evidenced the gradual establishment of a transient diasporic in-between space. This in-between space functions as a shifting site of commemoration, bridging the field of the politics of memory in Chile, with that of the diaspora space and home to Alberto and José. The diasporic in-between space of the Ecomemoria ceremony has no fixed monuments, instead promoting the living connections that postmemory is exemplary of. Moreover, The planting of trees as 'living' monuments in different sites, evokes the displacement of the Chilean diaspora as well as argued elsewhere, reminding us of the bodies that are

⁴¹⁹ Ramírez & Serpente, 2012.

put to work during the ceremony as a type of embodied ‘affective labour’ in active commemoration of the dictatorial and other traumatic pasts.⁴²⁰

As such the postmemory narratives of Alberto and José have shown that the space in-between, not only produces new spaces for ‘living’ memorials away from the traditional memory sites in Chile, but a space through which to continually renew the historical struggle of the first generation of Chilean exiles. This, alongside the second generation and the wider British public, to remind those who witness it of the far-reaching legacy of the dictatorship that forced those exiles to come to the UK in the first place. More significantly, the in-between space has allowed the second generation to affirm their own links to a traumatic past, and exposing the connections between the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone and the diaspora field from the point-of-view of their own narratives and experiences as separate to the previous generation, without being overshadowed by them.

Furthermore, what the picket in 1998 heralded for Emilio, Alicia, Alberto and José, and many of the other Chilean interviewees here, was a radical resignification for them as to what the lineage of traumatic memory from generation to generation could mean in the diaspora space. As we have seen with Alberto and José’s participation in the picket and with Ecomemoria, the gradual emergence of a diasporic in-between space from the 1970s onwards transformed those commemorative practices established in the diaspora, not only to include the second generation, but other hybrid histories of trauma beyond familial ties. In doing so, creating opportunities for new bonds to be articulated among a

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

wider audience beyond the traumas of the dictatorship, and as a multidirectional coming together celebrating the formation of new kinds of political subjectivities.⁴²¹

Argentinean second generation narratives: The Falklands/Malvinas conflict

In the previous section, we have seen how the arrest of Pinochet in London in 1998 that affected the Chilean second generation in this thesis, linked the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone with the diaspora field in the UK. I will now turn to look at a different event, the Malvinas/Falkland's conflict that took place between Argentina and Great Britain in 1982, which also affected Argentinean second generation interviewees such as Gabriela and Elena: the former who lived through the conflict in Argentina, and the other who experienced it from afar in the UK.

During her interview, when Gabriela detailed to me her memories of growing up in Argentina, she also recalled how the short war in 1982 between the military regime and Great Britain had marked her life, in relation to her memories of the period before the transition to democracy. At that time in her primary school, Gabriela remembered how alongside fellow school mates they were asked to bring food, toiletries, clothes, games and other supplies to be packed in boxes to send to the Argentinean soldiers on the front line in the South Atlantic. When Gabriela told her father how excited she had been about what she had done at school that day, and that she needed to take more rations to school, she remembers that he refused to give her anything else to put in her box because as he told her, "those things are not going to get to them". While Gabriela described how as a child she had been upset at her father's reaction at that time, she was

⁴²¹ Ibid.

now realising how, “my father was the only lucid one”, in comparison to what she described as the nationalistic tendency of that period to support the war effort, despite the longstanding human rights abuses committed by the regime.

In comparison, Elena’s experience of growing up in the UK during that time was also shaped by this event coming towards the end of the armed forces being in power. Whereas Alicia pointed out previously that Pinochet’s arrest in London had put Chile on the map for many people in the UK, according to Elena the same had happened previously in the early 1980s with Argentina and the war, albeit during a tenses atmosphere. When I asked Elena whether during her time at primary school she had ever spoken to her friends about where she was from she told me that: “my general recollection of that era is that no one really knew where Argentina or Chile were until the Falklands happened.” Elena was nearly nine years old at the time of the war, and she explained that primary school had not always been a happy time for her during this period due to the taunts she received from her fellow classmates. The events of the war made Elena stand out among her peers as a Chilean and Argentinean second generation exile and daughter of political refugees, as she had to continually justify where she was from, “then you could quite easily tell them where Chile was because it was the thin one next to Argentina, which was just next to the Falklands.” The extra attention she received from her fellow pupils was also evident during a more sinister incident that Elena recalled:

I remember this one instance when I’d gone into the loos at school and this other girl came in and said, “oh your mum’s Argentinean, your mum’s an Argie”, and made kind of machine gun noises and actions. Which was quite, I dunno, I think it took me quite by surprise. I don’t remember what my reaction was at the time but the fact that I still remember that it happened obviously must have shocked me a great deal, so I think people were aware.

In hindsight, Elena claims to not being able to remember her initial response to this event, but assumes that it, 'must have shocked me a great deal', as part of many other incidents that she states made her be more 'aware' of who she was. In secondary school, again Elena explained that she did not specifically talk to any of her close friends or anyone else about her past, except that, "there was a very clear difference between a lot of the people who were at school who were quite right-wing, really into Margaret Thatcher and her policies and politics, and my background which was very different because I was actually in a public school." Not only were Elena and her brother Mauricio the children of Southern Cone political exiles, but the recipients of 'assisted' places at their school which meant that most of her fellow pupils, "were a lot better off than we were and with different political leanings. So again, there was a very pronounced sense of not quite fitting in with the rest of the kids there." Mauricio also expressed a sense of feeling different within his local community of which the school was a part of since, "(...) Epping was really just a kinda of a white area at the time especially, it still is really to be honest. So it was hard to find any kind of great cultural points of reference to compare myself to beyond the obvious main one." In this case, the 'obvious main one' not only refers to his Chilean and Argentinean roots, but also perhaps to other communities of migrants more closely associated with the legacy of the British empire, who were also absent in the mainly white British area where Elena and Mauricio lived and went to school in.

In relation to his sister's experience, Mauricio also related to me what he remembered about Elena's encounter detailed above:

I remember her having problems you know during the Falklands war in the changing rooms someone that, one of the girls apparently kind of simulating having a machine gun, and shooting at her kind of killing her with a machine gun and of sound effects and everything just because of whatever they had heard at home or read in 'The Sun' or whatever. It was a lot more shocking, I guess my sister was a lot more conscious of a lot more stuff than I was at that age, I guess I was kind of protected through it by being the youngest and being the most ignorant as well I guess.

Here, postmemories of difference are shared between sister and brother, at a time when Mauricio identified a particular xenophobic behaviour exemplified by the girls who taunted his sister by pretending to shoot her with a machine gun, and that he now believed were linked to, 'whatever they had heard at home or read in 'The Sun' or whatever'. Although he claims that he was somewhat shielded from this event by his age and ignorance, Mauricio was also affected since he could not help but be influenced by how it affected his sister, in identifying how her consciousness about the bullying, allowed her to then protect him from what was happening to her. In this way, Mauricio's and Elena's postmemories are not just constructed between their interactions with their parents, but similarly to José and Alberto's joint postmemory of their childhood, as a result of their own shared experiences of exclusion and difference that the sister and brother shared while they attended school in outer London in the 1980s.

Another interviewee who mentioned the war, but in terms of its more current impact on her profession as a journalist, was Ana, who was working for a newspaper at the time of her interview, one that she described as being, "completely pro-England". Ana went on to explain how the legacy of the war and the ongoing territorial and sovereignty disputes between the two countries have affected her work life and made

things awkward for her on certain occasions due to her identity as a second generation Argentinean living in the UK.

During the time that I interviewed Ana, in April 2009, President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner of Argentina had attended the G20 summit meeting in London, coinciding with the anniversary of the Falklands/Malvinas war. A colleague of Ana's working closely alongside her had been asked to write a story on Kirchner's visit, following on from another newspaper's story that the President was planning a, "big boozy party" on the anniversary of the war in the Argentinean Embassy in London. Ana told me that she knew this was an unfounded story, since she had information from other sources that President Kirchner was in fact to hold a simple commemoration service at the embassy for everyone killed during the conflict. Ana told me that she was able to help her colleague to write his article in a more balanced way, and said that:

You come across things like that all the time. You know, things question your ethics and your morals and there's all sorts of ethical dilemmas but in that situation, I was in the fortunate position where I could do something about it. And I could say to the guy writing the story, this is what it actually really is.

For Ana, other occasions when she has experienced tensions surrounding her roots and the events of the war, have been while watching the game of football. Argentina and England in particular have shared some intense rivalries in the past ever since the events of the war, typified by the 'hand of God' incident during the 1986 World Cup in Mexico where the player Diego Maradona went on to score a goal with the aid of his hand and scoring again after to win the game for Argentina 2-1, a particularly contentious issue among some English football fans ever since. She told me that:

Football is a massive issue obviously between England and Argentina. And inevitably they always seem to play each other in really controversial games and in really important World Cup games where one of them is going to go out or whatever. It never seems to be an irrelevant game. And some of the things that are written, are you know, in certain newspapers you know, in The Sun, The Mail, you know, whatever, and are absolutely on the verge of xenophobic I think a lot of the time. And obviously that is very uncomfortable as well. My dad is a massive, massive football fan, you know, always supports Argentina. My sister is always kind of on the fence and I've tended to support England up to now but, in the past couple of years I've been leaning towards both if you like. I mean I don't care too much about football to be honest! But yeah, I mean things like that are really uncomfortable.

Ever since the 1982 conflict then, we have seen how tensions between the two countries have been felt in various degrees by Gabriela, Elena and Ana, with both Mauricio and Ana identifying a continuity in the tone taken by 'certain newspapers' in promoting 'xenophobic' views towards Argentineans, especially during periods when issues over the sovereignty of the islands have cropped up, or the national football teams have played against one another in major tournaments. Ana in this way reminds us of the importance of the mediation of postmemory, where certain events and how they are presented in the media, also have an impact on the subjectivities of the second generation, where in the case of Elena these events sometimes make her question her 'dual' identity.

While these experiences were not directly shared by the Argentinean interviewees together like their Chilean counterparts during the events of 1998, their experiences are nevertheless also formative of a diasporic affective community, inhabiting an in-between space where the past events of the war still have repercussions for those that live in the diaspora. For interviewees such as Ana, living in the UK and

having Argentinean roots places her in a difficult situation where, “things like that are really uncomfortable”, but at the same time making her aware of her positionality in-between, where she is able to support two different football teams, and feel part of two different cultural heritages. Failing to recognise Ana’s translocational positionality in-between the field of the politics of memory in Argentina and the diaspora space in the UK, would also eclipse her postmemory that contains her parent’s struggle to leave Argentina during the dictatorship, her Jewish heritage with links to the generation of Holocaust survivors, and finally, her life in the UK identifying and belonging between two different cultures.

Argentina in the 1990s-2000s and H.I.J.O.S.

The next significant period for some of the second generation Argentinean interviewees in this thesis comes after the restoration of democracy in Argentina during a period in the mid-1990s when a resurgence of memory narratives took place within the field of the politics of memory both in Argentina and Chile. Here, we have already seen how the appearance of the children of the detained-disappeared as socio-political actors within the human rights movement, saw groups like H.I.J.O.S. in Argentina beginning to organise new public protests in the form of *escraches*, that inspired their Chilean counterparts to organise *funas*, in joint objection at the culture of impunity in the region and ongoing presence in their societies of unpunished repressors and torturers.⁴²²

⁴²² In one of the first publications by the organisation H.I.J.O.S., detailing the political significance of the practise of the *escraches*, a group from Chile is also invited to participate in the debate surrounding the political project of the *funas*, which is described not only as a space for the children and relatives of the detained-disappeared, but all of those who wish to share in their action against impunity. In expressing the political dimension of the *funas* the Chilean contributors state that, “it essentially involves that justice is alive within us, in all of our acts. That it does not treat us as spectators or as already represented, but as producers and participants”, as an “alternative way of living justice”. In acknowledging the joint work of

In Argentina, H.I.J.O.S. was formed in 1996 with their members largely made up of children of detained-disappeared parents, followed by the children of political prisoners and exiles, and with the organisation having different branches all across Argentina as well as abroad in Europe.⁴²³ Their appearance in the public sphere was as a direct objection to the political context of the 1990s, under which President Menem (1989-1999) extended the *Obediencia Debida* and *Punto Final* laws established under the newly-democratic government of Alfonsín, establishing a different familial model of protest in contrast to past memory initiatives tied to the memory of the detained-disappeared.⁴²⁴ The aim therefore of these new social actors and their counterparts in Chile, was to reenergise from the point-of-view of a wider affiliative second generation, a critical stance towards the historicisation of the dictatorship and the political militancy of the 1970s, to encourage a wider societal response towards past complacency and accountability and redresses the lack of justice apparent at that time in terms of establishing justice for human rights violations committed during the military regimes.⁴²⁵

the *escraches* and the *funas* they state that: “we know that due to our recent histories, the impunity of genocide is the founding basis for all the injustices that we currently live today, that is why we believe it is really important that in supporting this first issue [of the magazine *Situaciones*], that all of society is committed with this project.” All my own translations. Rodrigo, Sandoval, and Diego, Ortolani. 2000. ‘De Escraches y Funas’ In, *Hacemos Situaciones 1: Los Escraches* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones de Mano en Mano).

⁴²³ See, Benedetta, Calandra. 2007. ‘Entre Historia “Fria” y Testimonios “Calientes”’: H.I.J.O.S. de los Desaparecidos Argentinos (1976-1983)’, In *Memorias de la Violencia en Uruguay y Argentina: Golpes, Dictaduras, Exilios (1973-2006)* (ed.) Eduardo, Rey Tristán (Santiago de Compostela: Universidad Servicio de Publicaciones e Intercambio Científico): 309-316.

⁴²⁴ Bonner, 2005.

⁴²⁵ Gatti, 2008.

One of my interviewees, Juan is an Argentinean male originally from Tucumán living in the city of York in the county of North Yorkshire, with his wife and children, who at the time of interview was 36 years old. He had lived in the north of England since 2003 working as an artist and music teacher. In the late 1990s, Juan became involved with H.I.J.O.S. in Córdoba, and had been one of the key leaders in the 1999 campaign of the Asamblea Permanente por los Derechos Humanos in Tucumán (Permanent Assembly for Human Rights - APDH) against the re-election of the then Governor of the province, Antonio Domingo Bussi. Governor Bussi (named in the *Nunca Más* report as one of the key military figures during the dictatorship) was the only ex-figurehead of the junta to have been elected to office during democracy, as a national deputy in 1991 and later as a governor of the province of Tucumán in 1995. Twenty years previously in 1975, as a commander in the armed forces he had lead the 'Operativo Independencia' in Tucumán as part of a group of trial military offensives mounted against the local guerrilla groups in the run-up to the coup.⁴²⁶ During the dictatorship, according to testimonies in the *Nunca Más* report, Bussi had directly assisted in tortures and assassinations, across a province that had a total of thirty detention centres and 1,000 documented detained-disappeared persons.⁴²⁷ As part of the Amnesty laws in the 1980s and 1990s, Bussi was exempt from being taken to trial, but in 2008 he was finally condemned to life imprisonment to be spent under house arrest for the disappearance of the Peronist senator Guillermo Vargas Aignasse.⁴²⁸ Bussi

⁴²⁶ Victoria, Ginzberg. 2011. 'Torturador, Represor, Asesino, Dictador Y Fusilador' in, *Página 12* «<http://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/elpais/1-182038-2011-11-25.html>».

⁴²⁷ Ginzberg, 2011.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

eventually died at eighty-eight years of age on November 24, 2011, a month after my interview with Juan.

Juan explained that his father, a medical doctor at the time of the coup, had been disappeared since 1977 when he had been on his way to treat one of his patients. Juan has always believed that Bussi was directly involved in the assassination of his father, and after returning to Tucumán since having moved to Córdoba in 1990, he was shocked to see how much support Bussi had in his home province, especially among his fellow teachers at the school where Juan was teaching music at the time, as well as among a wider group of friends, family, and neighbours. He was even astounded to see how the local school children he taught from the local *villa* (shantytown) all had Bussi campaign stickers on their folders and schoolbooks, oblivious to his past as a repressor during the regime. For him:

People our age were repeating what their parents told them, slogans, they repeated stupidities, and it worried me to see why the young people didn't... There were no texts for young people and there wasn't... there wasn't any discussion about what had happened from a historical point of view, in other words, they repeated slogans. For example, one of the Bussi posters read, "Like in 1976," the campaign poster. Which is shocking because, how would a young person of twenty years of age imagine what "Like in 1976" means? What he would have possibly imagined is an image of order, of a city without crime, families that were all happy, and well...⁴²⁹

This confrontation with the 'amnesia' Juan witnessed in those around him, and his growing consciousness and identity as the son of a detained-disappeared father, prompted him to join H.I.J.O.S., where he began to be interested in compiling the

⁴²⁹ Interview with Juan carried out on the 22/10/2011. My own translation for quote in Spanish see, Appendix 11.

testimonies of his fellow activists, within what he described as a, “collective space for belonging”. This he managed, despite not being able to fully convey his own experience to others around him, but where he felt much more comfortable in listening to the experiences of others who had similar stories to tell. Through this process of attending to other’s narratives, Juan was able to absorb them as his own, where he identify that, “it is not the same thing to tell someone who has *no idea* what happened, what happened to you, than to tell someone who *perfectly* understands what happened to you.”⁴³⁰ The variety of experiences that Juan was exposed to from his fellow activists in H.I.J.O.S. in Córdoba in the two years that he spent there, were for him indicative of a plurality of personal political engagements exploding at that time, which he interpreted in terms of the different components of an affective community where each person was sharing their own personal approximations to the past. During this peak period of activism, Juan related how he became conscious of varying levels of emotional maturity expressed within this collective, and that while the group shared an identity that was publically expressed, in private this was a more fragile process in terms of producing clear goals and objectives used in protests and declarations.

Juan stated that within the group his reluctance to narrate his own experience in favour of observing how others connected with their family’s traumatic past, would prove to give him a valuable lesson and became an important driving-force behind his commitment to participate in the group. In his view:

It was a powerful experience. Powerful because I came from Tucumán which is like coming from a military barrack...my mother is a person who did not

⁴³⁰ Juan’s own emphasis.

react well, I don't know if there is a good reaction, let's say she did not know how to confront what happened with the dictatorship and she baptised me and my brother and she put us in a school with priests! That was the way to solve the problem! So in my house it was something that was not talked about and I am a bit of an annoying guy, so finding a space like H.I.J.O.S. for me gave me a space, firstly to analyse, to listen, of containment, everything.⁴³¹

This collective and affective containment of the group gave Juan his own space in which to internally reflect on his own difficult familial legacy, in a context under which from the day his father disappeared, Juan's mother refused to refer to him or allow her sons to discuss the past within the family home, let alone the details and circumstances regarding her husband's disappearance. As a result, H.I.J.O.S. provided Juan with a much needed secure space where he could work through his own painful past by absorbing the experiences of others, and as such, become a critical reflexive witness and participant regarding the activities and decisions taken by the group. Away from the internal group dynamics, Juan particularly enjoyed taking part in the *escraches*, especially when they involved art, theatre, dance, and other creative practices to denounce the presence in the public sphere of known-repressors. For him, the *escraches* represented a more creative political act of memory work in comparison to the more closed internal debates of the group. Both in terms of publically exposing individual and familial narratives of trauma and putting them to work in the public sphere, and in promoting the formation of a counterpublic to the culture of impunity and creating a wider affiliative network of social actors.

⁴³¹ My own translation, for quote in Spanish see Appendix 12.

Nevertheless for Juan, the militancy he experienced for a time as part of H.I.J.O.S. had its limits. While initially, the experience of becoming a member had offered him a protected environment through which to forge new affective and emotional connections that he had previously lacked within his own family, in the end, this would prove not to be enough. Upon his return to Tucumán, Juan led the campaign against Governor Bussi when he became the general secretary of the APDH, a more structured and direct political platform from which to participate in a project that had a bigger sense of ‘urgency’ in acting against a situation that up to that point he had found unbearable to live in. The campaign of the APDH in Tucumán was eventually successful with Bussi losing the elections, but nevertheless, the emotional significance involved in this project also signalled for Juan, “a big break with Argentina [that] takes place for me”. Juan slowly began to feel overwhelmed by the things he witnessed and dissatisfied with direct collective action in H.I.J.O.S and the APDH that for him were no longer leading to any “radical change”, and described how he often felt sad in terms of what he called the ‘disaster’ of *Menemismo*. Part of the reason why Juan left Argentina for the UK then, was tied to this period of his youth and militancy as the son of a disappeared father which following his involvement in the downfall of Bussi in the late 1990s, he then witnessed the replacement of Bussi by his own son into politics. Alongside other economic reasons, this was a contradiction too many for Juan and exemplary of the type of the flawed democracy of Argentina in the 1990s, a context which he increasingly found too emotionally suffocating and alienating.

On his arrival to Europe, first in Spain and then to the UK, Juan was able to reunite with his uncle (his father’s brother) and cousins, who had left Argentina with his

family as exiles, as well as making sure that he kept in touch with his fellow activists in Argentina who he still regarded with warmth and admiration for their continuing work in the field of the politics of memory. To summarise, Juan's experience is indicative of how his postmemory transcended the familial, in a context where his father's disappearance and his mother's refusal to acknowledge it as such, thwarted any possibility of lineal familial memory transmissions. Instead, Juan's postmemory speaks of how he forged alternative familial links with organisations such as H.I.J.O.S., constituting a different kind of collective activist family unit that in their coming together found a new space through which to mourn together, and memories of which he has brought with him in his new life in the diaspora space.

Travelling postmemories: Positionality, identity and political activism

I will end this chapter by bringing together connected themes of identity, positionality, and activism in relation to how the second generation Chilean and Argentinean postmemory narratives are all tied by their joint construction of the diasporic in-between space which they inhabit in the UK, and always in connection with the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone, including other Latin American countries.

Starting with the theme of identity, and concerning the notion of hybridity that is constituted in the in-between space of the diaspora, most of the interviewees spoke about a dual identity: whether they identified with one country more than the other, or equally between the two, in terms of the complex overlaps that exist between their continually changing positionalities. For example, Miguel told me that:

When people ask me, “where are you from?” I can never say I’m English, I’m always Argentinean because I feel Argentinean. And at the same time, I don’t feel that it is a minor trajectory in my life that I am here in London and then to do something else, to go somewhere else. I feel that it is in London where I will live and die, I don’t know. But even so, I think one of the things that made it difficult for me to understand and part of the resentment I had is because I could not mix the two things, I could not understand that you could be Argentinean and live in London without losing that Argentinean identity. And every time I realise that it is not difficult to do this, you can feel what you feel and live a different life.

Despite having lived in the UK since the late 1980s, Miguel identifies more closely with his Argentinean roots, but even so, this is predicated on a state of connection with how he feels about living in the UK. In this case, resulting in Miguel learning to accept that he could both live in London while still be able to feel Argentinean. While Miguel spoke about reconciling his Argentinean and British identities, Emilio on the other hand described how he felt more distant from his Chilean roots. When I asked him how his parent’s exile from Chile had influenced him he stated that:

Oh, definitely, it’s defined me. Yeah it’s defined my political outlook. And then the nature of their exile also, because of the fact that you know, they’re scientists. I mean, I don’t think it was a typical...It was a different type of exile to for example ‘political exiles’ who came here, who were...whose parents didn’t manage to integrate for whatever reason and then both children sort of grew up with a kind of hatred of Britain and not being Chilean. At home not speaking Spanish but yet not feeling British. Whereas, I didn’t have that, I always felt comfortable being British, although I knew that I had a Latin American ethnic background.

For the Chilean second generation children of exiles like Emilio interviewed here who were born in the UK, most of them identified to a certain degree with being ‘British’ whilst also acknowledging their Chilean roots in relation to their parent’s past. Then

again, this new found sense of Chileanness as we have seen with Alicia and with Alberto and José, was not only predicated on the intergenerational transmission of cultural memory, but also, through their direct participation in the picket against Pinochet and in Ecomemoria where second generation subjects have been able to define their own activism in relation to the dictatorial past. According to Emilio however, his parent's status as 'scientists' on arrival to the UK differentiated them from the rest of the Chilean 'political' exiles, who Emilio describes were less open to 'integrate' and therefore struggled to adapt to a new country. During his interview, despite expressing a certain distance from the rest of the Chilean exile diaspora, Emilio spoke about how the shaping of his own political identity was to a great extent influenced by his parent's political views, when he said that, "it's quite normal I think when your parents are of a certain political persuasion, you're more likely to be of that type." As such, he put forward the view that the legacy of their exile has been transmitted as what he called a, "critical approach, a left-wing stance", where in comparison to others from the same generation he identified, "in that sense I'm in a minority political outlook in Britain". In turn, this political identity and reflexivity that Emilio has gained, influenced his approximation to Venezuela, a country where other exiled members of his family had resided in, and a political context which Emilio stated is, "sort of seen to be an experience similar to what was going on in Chile in the 70s, there's probably something in there that has to do with my parents."

Likewise, Luis another Chilean second generation interviewee, also expressed a similar interest in Latin American politics and political activism. He stated that on his regular trips to Chile, "I've continuously done things to do with human rights". He

described for example, his attendance at numerous protests on September 11, as well as taking part in the *funas*, the equivalent of *escraches* in Argentina held by a wider affiliative second generation of activists. At the time of his interview he was hoping to be able to go back to Bolivia to, “live the experience”, as Emilio had done in Venezuela. He stated that: “I mean it sounds a bit kind of grandiose, but in some way to try and defend that process of what’s happening, and there’s no doubt that’s completely connected with what happened in Chile.” For Luis, the engagement that second generation Chileans have towards the past is straightforward:

I think like I say, you either want to engage with what happened or you don’t. And I have and yeah it’s defined everything I want to do and my motivation now. I work for a development agency and I want to promote social change and it’s definitely all from that. I mean I might wanted to do that anyway, but there’s definitely like a real core there. It’s kind of, I don’t know it sounds all romantic and stuff but you kind of want to carry on, you don’t just want to kind of leave it, you kind of know what happened and you don’t want it to happen again and work for any opportunity for positive social change and those kinds of things.

This newfound political engagement for Luis has its roots in the ‘real core’ of the longstanding presence of the Chilean exile diaspora in the UK. His sense of connection with the dictatorial past moves beyond the familial sphere, and comes from his belief that the events of the dictatorship should not be repeated, therefore propelling him to want to know what happened and ‘work for any opportunity for positive social change’, in different social and political contexts away from Chile. When I asked him about the impact of his father’s political exile on himself he told me that:

Well, it’s been massive, there’s no doubt about that. I haven’t grown up in Chile, I’ve grown up here so people always ask you, “where’s your name

from?” “Where are you from and your parents?” So I would say, “my dad’s from Chile”. And it’s not like I think about it every single time but you know, there’s a reason that he’s from Chile, there’s a reason that I’m here, and that reason is the coup. He wouldn’t have come to England, it’s as simple as that, so in that sense I’ve talked to my friends about this as well. We exist because of the coup.

Together with his friends who are also second generation sons and daughters of Chilean political exiles, Luis articulates a powerful multidirectional recognition of postmemory towards identifying the reasons why they have been born in the diaspora, and in turn, recognising and acknowledging the connections between the field of the politics of memory in Chile with the field of the diaspora when he states that: “we exist because of the coup”. This powerful statement exposes the collective and affective dimensions of postmemory contained within the second generation’s reflexivity on the pervasiveness and displacement of the past into the diasporic present, while being fully attentive to their own identities, political projects and interests.

As we saw in Chapter 3 with Alicia and Amelia’s experiences of return to Chile, it is clear that with regular trips to the Southern Cone to visit family, or with subsequent visits on their own, these individuals have been able to shape their own postmemories of those countries (including other destinations). Consider the case of Mauricio who spoke to me about his most recent stay in Argentina:

It really impressed me in Argentina with the Argentinians, the level of debate that goes on about politics and the past and memory and different issues to do with the coup and disappeared people that was... Is something...I dunno, it’s something that came as a massive relief and impressed me to see this culture of wanting to or needing to kind of discuss things which you know is so alien to so much of what’s ‘English’ and what I’ve grown up with here. This was pretty important for me, I’m still in limbo up to a point as you can see from what I understand and what I’ve worked through myself and what I

understand about what everyone's experienced. It's difficult I guess that's the name of the game!

Though his identification of a different 'level of debate' going on in the field of the politics of memory in Argentina, and even on a day-to-day level, Mauricio found this to be a 'massive relief' in comparison to what he has experienced in the UK. The convergence of the fields of the politics of memory and the diaspora space, in the space in-between is precisely apparent in Mauricio's feeling that he has grown up in 'limbo', but which he has more recently learnt to recognise as a positive aspect of his hybrid identity and where he states that, 'I guess that's the name of the game!'

In the same way, Alicia also took time during one of her trips to Chile in 2005 to also be a part of the field of the politics of memory. She told me that:

The day before I left for Chile [in 2005], Gladys Marín⁴³² died, and here obviously was a woman that represented all the exiles families. I went to that march and I've never seen anything like that in my life. So yeah it's been a whole process. And it's the main reason why I think I studied law, it started opening my interest.

In as much as the process of connectedness of postmemory for Alicia, Emilio, Luis and Mauricio involved a direct involvement within the field of the politics of memory in Chile and Argentina with the memory initiatives they partook in – where Alicia was for

⁴³² Gladys Marín was a leading figure of the Chilean Communist party, exiled to Moscow in 1973, leaving her two sons behind with her husband arrested and disappeared in 1976. Marín covertly returned to Chile in 1978 to orchestrate a resistance movement, as well as the founding of the armed Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front (FPMR) in the 1980s, both made up of returnee exiles. She was also the first person to file criminal charges against Pinochet.

See:<http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/2005/mar/09/guardianobituaries.chile> (accessed on 12/01/2013).

example able to join the commemorations for an emblematic figure of Chilean exile – other second generation narratives have expressed more ephemeral but no less crucial linkages to engaging with the dictatorial past, from the point-of-view of the diaspora’s in-between space. This was certainly the case with Elena when I asked her about her impact of the legacy of exile which she shared with her parents:

Quite! Yeah I think the circumstances under which we came here probably overshadowed a lot of my experiences as a child and as I say my perception of who I was and where I fitted in or not at school or culturally, or in society more generally. I mean I think obviously it’s had a big impact in terms of the way I think or my attitudes to certain things. On the other hand, I’m not someone that’s particularly active politically, so maybe there’s a bit of a contradiction there.

Although Elena claims a contradiction exists between her past experiences and her lack of current political awareness or participation, she still acknowledges the profound impact her experience of exile alongside her parents has had on her life, which to an extent ‘overshadowed’ her childhood, but which she recognises has also had a positive impact on her current ‘attitudes’ to things. Conversely, Elena positions her experience of exile with her parents despite her own traumatic experiences, in an optimistic manner where she recalls the fate of many other families who she believes suffered worse experiences than her own:

There was certainly the sense that the military had every bit as much dislike and distrust for my generation of kids and foetuses, as for their parents, because the expectation was they would do the same thing. They would come back and be the same sort of people and do the same sorts of things, and what they did was aim at stopping that. There are obviously the cases in Argentina where kids were taken away from their parents and adopted by different families or were disappeared altogether. As I’ve said, we were lucky that the three of us got out from both countries alive.

We can see that Elena's diasporic translocational positionality has allowed her to view the field of the politics of memory in Argentina from a distance, and recognise that all of the repressive practices of the military regime had one aim: to abruptly sever the familial ties between leftist political subjects and their kin. In acknowledging the familial political links between herself and her parents, Elena does so without positioning herself as a victim, but by understanding that despite her traumatic experiences, she and her parents were ultimately lucky to escape both military regimes.

The space in-between and political subjectivities

As the voices in this thesis so far have demonstrated, they interweave personal familial narratives of the dictatorial past, with narratives stemming from the diaspora space, exposing under Rothberg's formulation, "the figure of an ethical subject of multidirectional memory."⁴³³ In Amelia's case as we saw in Chapter 3, despite experiencing anxiety and depression for a number of years after returning from Chile, she received counselling and was able to finish her A-levels, carry out some volunteer work in Nicaragua in her gap year and finish her degree at university. She told me that:

I've been trying to get my head together and finally get over you know, all these bouts of depression and these bouts of trauma, and these anxieties. I still haven't conquered them. I still bite my nails! Really, really badly! But I kind of look on at the experience of Chile...I don't look on it as a negative experience anymore. I look at it as something that happened and that I had no control over but that I learned lots and lots from it. And it was incredibly hard, incredibly hard for me. But you know, you turn every experience into something positive and I think I've tried to do that. I mean, I'm fluent in Spanish now. Which I probably wouldn't have been otherwise. It was also my kind of awakening in terms of seeing true inequality. And I think it really helped to shape my own worldviews and my belief in justice and equality.

⁴³³ Rothberg, 2009.

Amelia has recognised that in spite of the negative experiences she suffered as a child on her return to Chile, she had limited control over the situation at the time, which she is now able to view in more positive terms. Her reflexivity, has enabled her to move beyond her own suffering, and remind herself that her displacement between the two countries gave her a ‘kind of awakening’ in terms of becoming an ethical subject of multidirectional postmemory, conscious of ‘true inequality’ which has shaped her own ‘worldviews and my belief in justice and equality’.

Amelia also spoke to me about a recent protest that she attended with her mother outside the London School of Economics campus in Aldwych, against the visit of then Chilean President Sebastian Piñera in October 2010. Amelia explained how during the protest which she took part in with her mother; they both became increasingly frustrated with the different concerns being voiced by various groups of Chileans in attendance, with a large majority also demonstrating against the plight of the Mapuche indigenous communities in Chile. Since the President’s visit coincided with the dramatic rescue of the thirty three miners trapped underground for 69 days in the San José mine near Copiapo in the Atacama Desert, Amelia had found it odd that the majority of the protestors would choose to mainly focus on the Mapuche and not include broader themes of injustice affecting all Chileans. For example Amelia believed that the miner’s plight should have provided a perfect opportunity to critique the historical establishment from the dictatorship onwards, of a neoliberal economic model, which led to the full private ownership of Chilean mining companies and the increase in mining accidents related to repressive labour laws. Aside from this, what this protest did for Amelia was

make her realise how much her mother had been involved in Chilean political issues over the years to the detriment of her mental and emotional health. Amelia took the opportunity to approach her mother, and suggest to her that she become involved in other issues outside of Chile. Amelia stated that, “I hope her field of vision will widen and I will try and help her through it. But she did say “you’re right. I should look for other things.” Which is pretty good”. We see here how in the unfolding of a continuing politically affective community of Chilean protesters, intergenerational transmissions between the first and second generations, have not just happened one-way, but in the diasporic space in-between, have expanded to include dual and multidirectional transmissions, where the case of Amelia and her mother shows, children have also imparted something onto their parents.

Another example of how the diasporic space in-between has facilitated the emergence of ethical diasporic subjects of multidirectional postmemory comes in Felipe’s assessment of the London riots in August 2011 that had taken place two months previous to his interview. He told me:

I am very struck by how people [here] processed the riots and the things that happened in London a few months ago. I remembered 2001 which for me was so strong, but clearly was another thing...other completely different situations. An Argentina starving to death (...). I have that image from channel 13 of starving children in Tucumán and the people of the urban belt who were looting for food and who were carrying milk like that practically... Clearly that’s not what occurred here. (...) In Birmingham they looted Louis Vuitton for example! So, it was of another nature. And people had a very repressive attitude with a lot of, “they are an embarrassment”, never trying to understand. (...) It seemed to me that it is a society that wasn’t looking for...very asleep, too much consumerism, too much value put on the accumulation of Louis Vuitton! (...)It’s in the vocabulary and in the language, it’s something, “exclusive”, in England and in other places, it’s something positive. From exclusive to exclusionary, there is only one step. How

horrible, no? That in a society there is something “exclusive”, something that excludes others and that this is a positive value. I think this says a lot about a moment and a society...look at how all these people appropriated your exclusiveness!

Felipe’s narrative interweaves his assessment of the London riots, with his experience of the 2001 economic crisis in Argentina, fleeting between the field of the politics of memory and the diaspora field that he now inhabits. It is from this very complex multidirectional positioning and situatedness in the space in-between of the diaspora that Felipe’s narrative shows his ability to link both events (while still acknowledging contextual differences) and express a critical reflexivity towards what he saw as the excesses of consumerism during the London riots. It is without doubt, that Felipe’s translocational positionality, his experiences of displacement into exile as a young child, and his coming-of-age in 1990s Argentina have forged a hybrid consciousness able to articulate a different reflexive awareness on the connectivity of different historical events.

Finally, in what follows I would like to introduce a last example of the links between a diasporic positionality, identity, and political subjectivity, when during their interview in 2011, I asked José and Alberto what they would reply if someone asked them where they were from. Both brothers immediately told me that despite being born in the UK, they identified as being more Chilean than British. For José, this identification with a Chilean identity was shaped by his father’s leftist militancy and his subsequent memory work that he has transmitted to him and his brother, when he stated that:

José: I think what it means to be Chilean means that our dad has installed in us such an idea of what it means to be Chilean. And 'cause of what we went through more in the picket, because it lasted so many years. I think we both say we relate more to the Chilean side of life far more than British culture. 'Cause I mean we know Chilean culture a lot more as well, so yeah. I think it means that because of what happened with Ecomemoria we spoke so much more to other Chileans and stuff, we consider ourselves Chilean more than English, despite us being born here and not properly speaking Spanish, having a terrible accent.

It's had such an effect on our family and all the other families of Chileans. It's a big slice of our life. If you take it away from us then, you take away such a big part of our life being Chilean, and Ecomemoria, the human rights, and all of the morals that dad taught us, everything it means to be Chilean. That's why we consider ourselves to be Chilean because that's the biggest part of our lives in comparison to everything else. The biggest factor I would say.

Alberto: Yeah definitely.

For the brothers, identifying as Chilean is a two-way process where not only do they recognise certain aspects of their identities that have been shaped by what their father has transmitted to them, but also, on affiliative terms, how their own participation in past protests (the 1998 picket) and more recent commemorative events (Ecomemoria) also have had a huge part to play. In their case, being Chilean, is much more than just feeling Chilean, but connected to a wider historical human rights struggle, that has affected not only their own family, but 'all the other families of Chileans' in the UK. This strong sense of affiliation with what it means to feel Chilean from the point-of-view of an affective community living in the diaspora's in-between space was also exemplified when we spoke about other more current and related events taking place in Chile and the UK. The brothers for example referred to the recent student riots against

the privatisation of education in Chile, and the rise in tuition fees in the UK. Alberto told me about Chile that:

Alberto: It's looking like the riots that happened here a while ago. I don't know really much about it. All I know is that it's the same sort of thing we had here last year when we protested about the fees going up. It wasn't as sort of rowdy as what's happening in Chile.

José: They're definitely far more creative in Chile. The kissing was a stroke of genius definitely, and the running around the campus.

Alberto: Oh yeah, the thing where all the couples kissed.

José: Yeah our dad tells us all the time, "the Chileans students are doing this", and "the Chilean students are doing that".

Alberto: Yeah we are up-to-date on the Chilean things and the rise of tuition fees.

In relation to the student protests of 2010-2011, José related that despite him being part of the last wave of students to pay the £3,000 tuition fees a year which was about to rise to £9,000, he still felt committed to attend the protests in London. He explained that:

José: A group from our college got together and went, we protested and it was good. People always ask me why I went, 'cause I'm going to university this year so I miss...it doesn't affect me. But the point is not because it affects you or not, the idea is wrong. And I know that through empathy. If I was in their situation, that I would have to pay £9,000 because I was born a year later...knowing that all the people in government got their tuition for free, and then all the people like me, the people in the year above who got EMA and got their tuition for only £3,000. People that have no effect on the banking system, people like that have to pay through their nose, some of the worst reparations for doing absolutely nothing to cause the problems we are in now.

I think that's why...I mean in terms of all the protests, I don't agree with the looting, but I think it's hardly surprising. I think the police tactics were terrible. 'Cause I mean we got charge with horses while we were there, when we were in Whitechapel. The police just moved out of the way and the horses just ran at us, and we all started to sprint and keep going. When we were in Trafalgar Square as well, they all came in riot gear.

Alberto: And they wacked us.

José: Yeah and we all just ran out of Trafalgar Square.

In solidarity with fellow students, Alberto and José's experience of the student riots, articulates in their joint multidirectional narrative an empathetic script that has longer historical roots in their previous involvement with the picket against Pinochet in 1998, and their more recent participation with Ecomemoria, but also, in their consciousness of the links between UK students and the struggles of students in Chile fighting privatisation. As ethical subjects of postmemory, the brothers have acknowledged what has been passed on to them by their father and other family members, including a wider network of Chilean exiles, whilst also reflecting on their own reflexive positionings as Chileans belonging to a second generation of political exiles, and their political subjectivities as students.

Following on from previous chapters, Chapter 5 has demonstrated how the Chilean and Argentinean second generation narratives of postmemory presented here continually cut across the boundaries of the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone, and the diaspora space. What they jointly reveal is the plurality of previously unknown experiences tied to the legacy of the dictatorial past in Chile and Argentina, where narratives of the dictatorial past and the diasporic present are continually being questioned and resignified, in the in-between diasporic landscape of postmemory.

Conclusion

This thesis has shown that the postmemory oral narratives of the second generation Chileans and Argentineans living in the UK presented here are positioned within a complex and shifting diasporic in-between space that actively interconnects the field of the politics of memory of the Southern Cone military dictatorships and the diaspora field. By looking at the diasporic traces of postmemory as a concept to describe the approximation to a traumatic past within second generation narratives, it has contributed to a new understanding on the affective transmission of intergenerational memory. Specifically, in looking at the shift from the private world of the familial towards more collective multidirectional identifications that can generate more critical affiliative engagements with past traumas.

In applying the concept of postmemory in a new diasporic setting, this thesis has brought Chilean second generation narratives together with Argentinean ones, which jointly feature a wider range of experiences that are not all directly linked to a dictatorial past. The purpose of featuring this mix of oral narratives has been to demonstrate the shifting meaning of the concept of postmemory when applied within a diasporic in-between space in the UK, where a new context can come to speak about both the mobile and situated dimensions of postmemory. These dimensions emerge in a diasporic fluid space of identification, commemoration, and experimentation with intergenerational memory taking into account the current lived realities and hybrid identities of the second generation in constant dialogue with their parent's legacies.

As a result, this thesis also argues the diasporic postmemory narratives presented here are aligned with Gatti's 'narratives of the absence of meaning' stemming from the Southern Cone, where second generation sons and daughters of the detained-disappeared have critically engaged with the dominant representations of their parents contained in official historiographies of their militancy of the 1970s. This alignment then, crucially focuses on the proliferation of different positionalities in relation to ongoing debates on the legacy of state terrorism in the Southern Cone, which seeks to expand the limits of the field of the politics of memory to include previously excluded voices and positionalities from the diasporic 'grey-zones' yet to be fully investigated. Therefore, the establishment of new theoretical reflections on narratives of postmemory tied to the politics of memory in the Southern Cone are proposed, as reflections that are firstly; not geographically bound, but exist in a mobile and alternative diasporic landscapes of memory, and secondly; that collectively articulate different kinds of situated linkages to the past critically questioning their own bloodline links to trauma.

The narratives here then do not try to bridge the inconsumable distance between themselves and the field of the politics of memory from the Southern Cone. Instead, they emerge in a diasporic space in-between that demarcates the radical conjunction and disjunction between these two fields of cultural memory, showing how both fields interact in the diaspora's borderlands. Both fields in the mixing zone of the in-between space contain traces of each other, and so the narratives that have been discussed here, are hybrid products of those encounters forming part of an evolving historiography of cultural memory tied to the Southern Cone military dictatorships. Aside from the shared experiences of exile, migration, displacement, and return, this has also been shown

through the exposition of key events straddling both fields, that have also had a major impact on the Chilean and Argentinean diasporic subjects here, namely: the arrest and detention of General Pinochet in London in 1998, and the Falkands/Malvinas conflict in 1982.

In the case of the arrest and detention of Pinochet in 1998, this event mobilised a transnational human rights movement between both fields where different generations of Chilean exiles, their kin and a wider British public came together to reignite their struggle from abroad against the practices of state terrorism perpetrated by the regime and to end the impunity that protected the dictator. We have seen for example, how from their participation in the picket against Pinochet, through their more recent involvement in the group Ecomemoria, Alberto and José's postmemory incorporates the collective pleasures of protest, commemoration, and mourning as part of a collective affective community. The brother's narratives spoke of the more playful dimensions of the picket, exposing their intrafamilial linkages to the dictatorial past with outside influences, and in dialogue with other experiences of generational transmission and affiliation beyond the first generation of Chilean political exiles in the UK.

With the Argentinean narratives, we saw a wider range of experiences, where if they did not all share the same background shaping displacement to the diaspora, also spoke about the process of intergenerational approximation to the dictatorial past initially through the context of the family. The diasporic situatedness of the Argentinean narratives actually displayed the various degrees of pervasiveness of state terrorism, which did not just have an impact on the direct victims, but on other subjectivities not

all associated with the figure of detained-disappeared, but featuring diverse experiences of exile, displacement, and disappearance.

By presenting all of these narratives together, this thesis has opened up a multidirectional diasporic framework of postmemory taking place within Bhabha's 'intervening space' of the in-between, positioned in a shifting borderline with the field of the politics of memory from the Southern Cone. In doing so, the opening of a new context through which to discuss the interrelated links between the concepts of diaspora and postmemory, has allowed us to analyse how postmemory according to Andreas Huyssen has, "functioned like a motor energizing the discourses of memory elsewhere".⁴³⁴ This new gaze towards the diasporic boundaries has been pivotal in exposing the role of the second generation in the Southern Cone and diaspora alike, as the new emerging social actors in the interconnected transnational landscape of postmemory.

Furthermore, in exposing the relationship between the familial and collective dimensions of diasporic postmemory, this thesis maintains that the second generation narratives featured here should not be viewed as passive recipients of traumatic memories, from one generation to the next. On the contrary, these narratives exemplify how the creation of memories, relations and affiliations beyond direct bloodlines, "strives to *reactivate* and *re-embody* more distant political and cultural memorial structures by reinvesting them with resonant individual and familial forms of mediation

⁴³⁴ Huyssen, 2003: 99.

and aesthetic expression”,⁴³⁵ which in turn can creatively engage different affective communities of participants. In attempting to expand Hirsch’s familial terrain of postmemory, this thesis has revealed the articulation of new affective communities of postmemory in the narratives of the Chilean and Argentinean diasporic subjects that share a commitment to remembering from the spaces of the margins – as well as challenging normative frameworks of memorialisation and commemoration that ignore the ongoing presence and contribution of exiles and migrants beyond the geographical confines of the field of the politics of memory in the Southern Cone.

This alternative focus, resists the tendency within the practice of memory studies to only highlight what we saw Radstone label as the ‘spectacular’ instances of trauma and proposes instead a highly significant expansion of new historical memory fields, an approach which researchers such as Cvetkovich have argued, can ‘refract’ trauma outwards towards other lesser-known experiences. Put differently, to view the traumatic history of the Chilean and Argentinean dictatorships from the viewpoint of the diaspora in the UK, acknowledges how that traumatic history continues to have resonance in the present, not only through a personal reflexive consciousness, but through the forging of new collective and affective ties of remembrance from the point of view of the diaspora space.

Future postmemories

The narratives of postmemory of the second generation Chileans and Argentines in the UK interviewed here, are crucial components of what Steven J. Stern has fittingly

⁴³⁵ Hirsch, 2012: 33.

called the ‘memory chest’ of the field of the politics of memory – belonging to a field that travels and shifts in time. As we have seen, by looking at both the familial and affiliative frameworks of postmemory through a diasporic lens, this makes the concept as Rothberg has argued, “(...) susceptible to transmission across fields”,⁴³⁶ without losing sight of the situatedness of those different historical contexts. In the space in-between, a creative intersection occurs, one created by other kinds of memories; such as, the Malvinas/Falklands conflict in 1982, the return to democracy in Argentina in the early 1980s and 1990 in Chile, the process of return from exile to Chile and Argentina, the arrest of Pinochet in London in 1998, the memory work of Ecomemoria, and the student protests against university fees in 2011. Ultimately, none of the oral narratives presented here have strictly spoken about one field over the other. Instead, we have seen that they are composites of the complex overlap between the dictatorial past and the present lived realities of the second generation, who have acknowledged the impact from both their parent’s experiences as well as wider sociocultural influences in the diaspora space.

Following on from this, future research is needed to further define the interconnectedness as well as the points of disconnection between these two cultural memory fields, to continue to document not only well-known examples of the cultural aesthetics of postmemory from the Southern Cone such as in the domains of documentary filmmaking and art, but also, to include the marginalised voices of the second generation in terms of the everyday lived realities of individuals, especially those

⁴³⁶ Rothberg, 2009.

in the diaspora. In this sense, future work on second generation diasporic postmemory need to take further into account for example, Landsberg's theory of 'prosthetic memory', which complements Hirsch's and Rothberg's work in studying the effects of how the experience of modernity continues to result in the disruption of, "family, kinship, and community ties", that we see today.⁴³⁷ These disruptions Landsberg has argued have been expressed in new forms of public cultural memory included in the expansion of memory-making technologies, where new encounters between the public and those technologies are taking place at 'experiential' sites.⁴³⁸ According to her:

The unreliability of memory in the modern age, combined with the ruthlessness of the present, compels people to engage in memory projects – projects of narration and genealogy-that make the past "recognizable" and potentially interpellative. The mass cultural technologies that enable these memory projects also create a new possibility: the construction of prosthetic memories might serve as the grounds for unexpected alliances across chasms of difference.⁴³⁹

As such, a further engagement with Landsberg's provocative formulation of prosthetic memory can make us more aware of the links between the familial and mediated dimensions of postmemory that really interconnects all the possible interfacing points of construction, where, "prosthetic memory creates the conditions for ethical thinking precisely by encouraging people to feel connected to, while recognizing the alterity of the "other""⁴⁴⁰ Throughout, we have seen that the narratives present here collectively

⁴³⁷ Landsberg, 2004

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

⁴³⁹ Ibid: 3.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid: 9.

propose a different kind of ‘sensuous engagement’ as Landsberg proposes, with the dictatorial past which she argues is a type of engagement that, “(...) becomes the basis for mediated collective identification and the production of potentially counterhegemonic public spheres”.⁴⁴¹ In this way, following on from Landsberg, this thesis proposes a future outlook towards how the memories and narratives at play here, are also part of the ‘commodified memories’ of the mass cultural technologies of capitalism, and as such can also be transformed to, “(...) serve as the ground on which to construct new political alliances, based not on blood, family or heredity but on collective social responsibility.”⁴⁴² Future research should therefore also focus on how the age of the internet has allowed these technologies of postmemory to emerge, creating alternative cyberspaces of connection through social media sites and propelling new displaced counterpublics of memory.

Turning to the interview process itself, a possibility for alternative collective and affective lineages between social actors has also occurred, as a moment that shapes both the interviewee and the researcher, and is one aspect of research that needs to complement more thorough investigations in the future. Here I am thinking that memory work should always be attentive to the affective processes of connection that occur during these encounters between interviewer and interviewees, and to frame the emotions that erupt out of that process as part of the knowledge formation of academic work. In particular, we should be more receptive to how –following Cvetkovich’s lead –

⁴⁴¹ Ibid: 21.

⁴⁴² Ibid: 155.

the discipline of feminist oral history when allied with many others, is also capable of creating a ‘living’ and ‘embodied’ archive of memory work, that does not just document under-researched narratives, but also takes into account how, “the interviews are part of the work of mourning, which can also be a productive form of melancholy because mourning is not terminable when we keep the dead alive and with us”.⁴⁴³

This research therefore forms part of this reflexive oral history process where following from Carrie Hamilton’s work, more studies of intergenerational political activism and memory need to focus on what she terms ‘the legacy of positive feelings’⁴⁴⁴ as opposed to traumatic repetition. Consequently, questions of gender should also be given more attention, where as we have seen, the process of uncovering the arrival of the first generation of Chilean exiles to the UK revealed hidden memories of feminist political activism among the Chilean exile diaspora, in a historiography dominated by the male militant left. As such, it is also important to ask, what happened to those gendered political identities from the 1970s-1980s? And how are they active in today’s new waves of diasporic commemorations forty years after the coup? These are also future research questions that have stemmed from this thesis and need further unpacking.

In this manner, this thesis hopes to build the groundwork for future investigations allowing an exploration of the emergence of these new postmemory

⁴⁴³ Cvetkovich, 2003: 235.

⁴⁴⁴ Carrie, Hamilton. 2010. ‘Activist Memories: The Politics of Trauma and the Pleasures of Politics’, In *The Future of Memory* (eds.) Richard, Crownshaw, Jane, Kilby and Antony, Rowland (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books) 266.

diasporic in-between spaces tied to the legacies of state terrorism from the Southern Cone military dictatorships, including other dictatorial legacies such as the Uruguayan dictatorship. Within which, we can look at the ways in which second generation postmemory oral narratives (and even other forms of narratives) produce new delocalised political alliances, new spaces of commemoration, and new alternative and playful ways of approaching a traumatic past as ethical reflexive subjects of wider affiliative postgenerations.

Finally, in recalling the novel *Una Vez Argentina* that introduced the notion of the diasporic space in-between of this thesis, the second generation Chilean and Argentinean narratives – similar to the protagonist of the novel Andrés, who is attempting to reconstruct both a familial and national past from the viewpoint of his translocational positionality in the diaspora space – have shown a tremendous resilience in their continual refusal to identify as victims. They have moved beyond the intimate space of the familial, and created new collective spaces of social remembering, ultimately fostering a communal responsibility towards the past from the viewpoint of the diasporic present.

Appendix 1

Interview with Sofia carried out on the 4/03/2009:

“Era una vida sumamente excitada, alegre, entretenida, bah! Difícil y dura en muchos sentidos porque la policía no nos dejaba un minuto en paz. Pero porque el gobierno de la Unidad Popular no era tan, digamos, tan radical. Hacían las cosas todas tan lentamente, entre el parlamento. En el parlamento todo le salía mal porque no tenía mayoría. Nosotros no teníamos paciencia. Cuando digo “nosotros” somos el grupo que yo pertenecía. Y donde yo estaba, eran ellos en mayoría, ¿no? en la Universidad de Concepción. ¡Era una gloria! Porque estaban...eran jovencitos. ¡Y andaba siempre con tantos jóvenes y jovencitas!”

Appendix 2

Interview with Maria carried out on the 2/12/2008:

“¡Nosotros nunca pensamos que esto iba a ser largo, que iba a ver un golpe, pero que realmente nosotros ni como cientista sociales ni como militantes de partido, ni como mujer tampoco! Visualizamos lo que podría ser este problema tan grande que podría venir. ¡A pesar de que sabíamos que venía un golpe lo teníamos muy claro! Intelectualizado! ¡Pero nunca pensamos cuales podían ser las consecuencias! ¡Entonces seguimos trabajando, haciendo la vida normal de partido y todo, diciendo “viene un golpe! ¡Viene un golpe!”, pero no hacíamos nada en la práctica. Nunca hubo tanta formación paramilitar ni nada de esa cosa. Solamente un grupito pequeño”.

Appendix 3

Interview with María 2/12/2008.

“Yo me quede sola después de...porque fue como un secuestro, ósea, hombres armados hasta los dientes deteniendo a mi marido, llevandolose... ¡Yo no sabía todavía que había pasado a (...) todavía desaparecido....Todo este cúmulo de experiencia espantosa! ¡Pero yo decía “dios mío! ¡Que lo que es todo esto! ¡Que es lo que está pasando!” Era como que la realidad...tú no podías absorber esa realidad tan dura. Fue detenido, yo seguía trabajando. Era la mujer de preso político. Muy estigmatizada, muy seguida, muy perseguida. Tenía estudiantes nuevo en la salas de clase que yo notaba que eran tipos mayores que eran agentes de la DINA en ese tiempo. Me perseguían, todos los días, iban a la casa. ¡Me hacían caca afuera de la puerta para decirme “aquí estuvimos anoche!” Me tocaban los vidrios a tres, cuatro de la mañana. A veces yo tenía que abrir la puerta. Me hacían desnudarme. Pasearme frente a ellos, me ponían la arma por distintas parte del cuerpo. Me llevaban una carta de mi marido que escribía “estoy bien no te preocupes” que se yo, ósea, el precio que pagaba yo por esas cartas era espantoso. Y a la mañana tenía que salir maquilada, arreglada, hacer mis clases como que no pasaba nada. Entonces yo veía como mujer, veía que la ideología dominante del machismo se aprovechaba - “¿esta mujer es vulnerable,” ya? ¿Para, no solo batuquearla sino enmasillarlas, me entiende? Rebajarlas al grado máximo porque no podían ver que yo todavía seguía trabajando y yo hacía clase y todo normal.”

Appendix 4

Interview carried out with Amelia on 23/10/2011

“Bueno mi mama es Chilena (...) y ella fue...era, y todavía los es, de una ideología que se pueda decir es de izquierda. Y apoyo Allende, el Presidente....que se dice que es un presidente socialista pero más que nada un presidente progresista. Que fue votado, ósea fue elegido democráticamente y como esto era como una amenaza al plan que tenía Estados Unidos en contra el comunismo en el tiempo durante la guerra fría. Hicieron todo lo posible que llegara, para a meter otro presidente entre comillas. Y este se llama Pinochet, llego a ser...el golpe de estado fue el 11 de Septiembre 1973. Y mi mama como estaba muy metida en todos los movimientos progresistas que existían en esos tiempos. Y parece, no me acuerdo exactamente pero, parece que también era “member” de... unos partidos de izquierda. Y también su hermano, pero su hermano era mucho más militante. Bueno, ella y su marido que tenía en esos tiempos fueron muy perseguidos por el régimen. Y el esposo fue detenido y lo metieron en la cárcel. Mi mama también...su vida, ósea fue súper...no solo por esto del esposo sino también todo lo que ella vivió con la familia porque su familia nuclear era de izquierda entonces. Los milicos estaban buscando al hermano, se llevaron y detuvieron y desaparecieron al uhm, al “fiancé” de su hermana. Ella parece que perdió el trabajo...su trabajo fue muy...como sociología era un tema también medio de izquierda entonces obviamente no era lo mismo bajo una dictadura de derecha.”

Appendix 5

Interview with Amelia 23/10/2010

“Mi papa es de Estados Unidos. Nació en California. Y el también viene de una familia muy...políticamente hablando muy radical. Mi abuela y mi abuelo, los dos eran miembros del partido Comunista en Estados Unidos. No sé si eran...bueno eran... y cuando llego la guerra fría y todo eso hubo como un ‘witch-hunt’ dentro del país, no solo fuera del país. Y mis abuelos no... refusaron de “swear the McArthur oath” que era “pledge allegiance to the United States and I reject anything communist” y todo eso. Y como eran de esa inclinación “they refused to...” refusaron de declararlo. Entonces fueron como ‘blacklisted’ y tuvieron que andar poco como a la... un poco escondidos, pero no tanto poco. Bueno y al final mi abuelo consiguió un puesto aquí en una universidad en Inglaterra entonces pudieron venir para acá. Esto fue en los...mi papa tenía como quince, dieciséis años. También querían salir de Estados Unidos por la guerra de Vietnam porque no querían que sus hijos “would be drafted” para el “military service”. Y bueno así llegaron mis padres y mi papa vivió en Londres toda la vida. Bueno hablaron desde el punto en que se conocieron mi mama igual ósea llego a Londres. Y mi papa como estaba bastante metido con la cosa de Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign, Cuba Solidarity Campaign, Chile Solidarity Campaign, estaba en los círculos de Latino Americanos también que estaban acá. [Había] muchos exiliados en esos tiempos en los setentas. Y conoció a mi mama en una fiesta y bueno ahí se conocieron.”

Appendix 6

Interview with Amelia 23/10/2010

“Mi mama lo pasó muy mal, incluso hasta este día es como que ella llegó a un trauma. Y no puede dejarlo. Siempre cada vez que me enfado con ella o ella se enfada conmigo siempre saca esto de nuevo, que “¡yo que la pase tan mal llegando a Inglaterra!” “Que fui cleaner, que fui chambermaid”. “Que viví en una pieza”. Ósea vivió en un ‘bedsit’ con mi hermana que era pequeña, no tenía dinero, tenía que trabajar mientras estudiaba. Ósea fue muy sacrificada, muy sacrificada. Y en un país ajeno, no hablaba muy bien inglés, y más encima en esos tiempos Londres era menos cosmopolita que es ahora. Y no creo que tuvo muchos incidentes así como de racismo, xenofobia. Pero uno...dice que uno se sentía como más “foreigner, no como ahora que están...hay tanta mezcla y se escucha tantos idiomas en un día que no es tan extraño que hay gente que hablan dos idiomas y que no son...bueno no que los ingleses son todos blancos de ojos azules y rubios porque eso ya no corre pero...se notaba más en esos tiempos. Entonces ella siempre dice “que lo pase muy mal” y siempre lo saca, es como un trauma que no se puede... “she can’t get over it””.

Appendix 7

Interview with Miguel carried out on the 9/03/2009.

“Creo que lo que más nos sorprende a nosotros y nos parece un poco raro viviendo acá en Londres es el tema de la dictadura y crecer en ese ambiente de miedo y de bronca, de impotencia. Es algo que uno nunca llega a entender hasta vivirlo realmente. Entonces, siempre, siempre preguntaba mucho sobre eso. Hemos visto varias películas sobre los Montoneros y esas cosas. Entonces sí, mama y papa nos cuentan bastante sobre eso y de

los amigos que perdieron, de los soldados que entraron a casa y quemaron libros. Uno de mis tíos fue bastante de izquierda durante la dictadura y lo exiliaron a Francia, era pintor. A través del conocimos mucha historia. Siempre por ahí un poco unilateral porque toda la familia mía tiene esa arma de izquierda que de derecha entonces siempre tenes el cuento de un lado y nunca de los dos, por eso me gusta ver películas y entender un poco más del punto de vista de los de la derecha, mismo si no comparto los ideales de ellos para poder darme una idea más racional.”

Appendix 8

Interview with Gabriela carried out on the 18/10/2010.

“El si estaba involucrado, yo no sé bien hasta el día de hoy, yo un día lo senté y le dije que me explicara y él me contó más o menos pero, él dice que estaba involucrado en un grupo de...que hacían defensas...como él era abogado. Pero eso es lo que a mí no me cierra yo creo que hay algo medio extraño ahí porque él un poco trabajaba como abogado cuando estaba allá. Él trabajaba en comercio, en otra cosa, ósea que no entiendo cuál sería la conexión. Pero en fin, el de alguna manera o otra estuvo involucrado. Él estuvo trabajando una época con un escribano que al momento es desaparecido. Entonces yo creo que...yo creo que a través de el quizás estaba en este grupo que él hasta hora no me ha dicho...vez, la próxima vez que lo veo le voy a preguntar. A la mejor después de tantos años me lo puede llegar a decir más claramente.”

Appendix 9

Interview with Miguel 9/03/2009.

“Me acuerdo de la era de Alfonsín por ejemplo y me acuerdo del peligro justo antes de irnos de que volviera la dictadura en el 82, en el 86 perdón, cuando estaba Alfonsín. Y me acuerdo de ir a la Plaza de Mayo y de cantar y gritar. Me acuerdo de la saga de Menem por ejemplo, todo eso aunque no lo llegue viviendo, estando allá lo vivía a través de mis parientes y cuando hablábamos con ellos nos comentaban, nos decían cosas. Así que desde los 80s hasta ahora esa historia la sé, la conozco y aunque no fui partidario entre todo más o menos me entere (...).”

Appendix 10

Interview with Felipe carried out on the 2/10/2011.

“Mi abuelo por mucho tiempo decía, recordaba, “¡porque esta casa yo la conseguí cuando Perón habría créditos entonces yo lo tome y después tuve suerte y tuve mucho trabajos en el Teatro San Martín!” Porque hacía escenografías, era pintor, “¡y entonces lo pude pagar rápido!” Pero con mucho agradecimiento hacia el Peronismo. Creo que a ellos la izquierda les parecía muy abstracta, y lucha por ese tipo de cosas les parecía muy abstracta. Sobre todo porque mi madre no está tan razonada con algo más obrero sino con anarquismo, con algo más extremo. Que estaba más alejado de lo que ellos pensaban. Ósea, creo entre las dos familias se llevaron bien. ¡Se unieron en la desgracia de alguna manera!”

Appendix 11

Interview with Juan carried out on the 22/10/2011.

“La gente de nuestra edad repetía lo que los padres les decían, eslogans, repetían tonteras y me preocupaba ver porque los chicos no...porque no había textos para los jóvenes y porque no había, so se hablaba más de lo que había pasado sobre ese tema del punto de vista histórico, ósea, se repetía eslogans. Por ejemplo, unos de los afiches de Bussi decía, “Como el 76”, el afiche de la campaña. Que es impactante porque, que se imaginará un chico de 20 años lo que significaba “Como el 76”. Lo que se imaginaba posiblemente era una imagen de orden, de una ciudad sin crimen, familias que estaban todas contentas, y bueno.”

Appendix 12

Interview with Juan 22/10/2011.

“Pero fue una experiencia impactante. Impactante porque yo venía de Tucumán que es salir de dentro de un cuartil militar... ¡Mi mama es una persona que no tuvo una buena reacción, no sé si hay una buena reacción, digamos no supo enfrentar lo que paso con la dictadura y nos bautizó a mi hermano y a mí y nos metió en un colegio de curas! ¡Esa fue la forma de solucionar este problema! Y entonces en mi casa era una tema que no se hablaba, y yo soy un tipo medio rompe bola, entonces encontrar un ambiente como H.I.J.O.S a mí me dio un espacio, primero para analizar, para escuchar, de contención, todo.”

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