REMEMBERING PINOCHET

THE ROLE OF POLITICAL EXILES IN CONSTRUCTING A CHILEAN COLLECTIVE MEMORY

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Abstract

This thesis aims to understand how collective memory is being constructed and reconstructed in modern day Chile, and the role that political exiles have played and continue to play in pushing memory and responding to cultural trauma. It takes a closer look at the changing memory landscape of Chile, and shows how master narratives are contested and negotiated by social actors demanding truth and justice, thus broadening the perspectives on the past in a public space. These processes can be seen through the creation of sites of memory that serve as an important source of collective memory. The research focuses on the challenges Chilean political exiles have faced with repatriating back to their home country and living in modern Chile by analyzing *retornado's* personal narratives of their experiences specifically during three periods of time—Allende's Chile, in exile, and upon return to Chile—and how former exiles perceive and construct lived experiences in their memory today.

The core of the empirical data presented in this project is based on eight testimonies, five from returned political exiles and three from key players in the Chilean asylum process. The variety of testimonies from individuals with different backgrounds and experiences provide a more comprehensive, multi-angled perspective on the topic of Chilean exile.

This study of Chilean memories is important because the dictatorship continues to be the most controversial and contested period of time in Chile's recent history. Collective memories are points of contestation and struggle between different social and political groups, but are relevant and important for understanding the past and contextualizing the events of the past with current social and political struggles.

Preface

I would first like to thank the staff at the Museum of Memory and Human Rights (MMDH) in Santiago, especially my internship supervisor, Walter Roblero, for the time he took out of his busy days to discuss human rights and the dictatorship with me, as well as his assistance in determining which testimonies and research materials to utilize for my project. I appreciate his patience and collaboration in my thesis. Without the MMDH's support, this thesis would have been incomplete.

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Introduction

Sundays in Chile are a declared national holiday. The bustling and chaotic streets of its capital Santiago become empty and quiet as businesses remain covered by giant metal doors and Chileans stay at home eating a big lunch with family, recuperating from the busy week. This Sunday, however, the streets are not that empty. The day is August 30th, 2016 and marks the ten-year anniversary of another, very different public holiday—the National Day of the Disappeared. Mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, cousins, friends, etc., fill up Santiago's streets in front of former detention and torture centers wearing black t-shirts with black and white images of their loved ones and the words "*Dónde están?*" (Where are they?) written underneath. Red carnations are pinned over their hearts and remembrance candles cover the sidewalks in front of the memorial sites. Chileans are coming together to remember and commemorate their family members and friends who "disappeared" under the seventeen-year dictatorship.

Down the street at the Museum of Memory and Human Rights, the Association of Relatives of Disappeared Detainees is inaugurating the exposition "Living Voices: Truth and Justice Now," in honor of the holiday, which contains over 600 photographs of the dictatorship's victims that were once used by family members over 40 years ago when searching for their disappeared relatives. A father of a *desaparecido*, now in his late eighties, gently weeps into a tissue while holding a photo of his son. His wife embraces him and calmly listens to the various family members share memories of their loved ones; the tears in her eyes having dried out from crying over the years.

Chilean President Michelle Bachelet, a tortured detainee survivor herself, established August 30th as the National Day for the Disappeared in 2006 stating that:

> *In creating this day, we pay homage to all the Chileans who were victims of this terrible crime, and whose names will forever be written in our collective conscious as a country…. Remembering the shame and the horror is*

> *good for our nation. We should not run from the horrible acts that form a part of our history; we can learn from what happened (Bachelet qtd. in Crooks).*

Even though close to forty-five years have passed since the Chilean military moved against President Salvador Allende and bombarded presidential palace La Moneda is the heart of Santiago de Chile, the country remains extremely divided on what happened on September 11th, 1973. For some people, it was the day that Chile was saved by its glorious military from a civil war and a communist dictatorship. For others, it was the day that a democratically elected government and a revolution for a more equal society was crushed, marking the beginning of a cruel dictatorship that would eventually last for seventeen years.

While living in Chile for a year, I was told by people I met in Santiago that it was best to just not talk about the dictatorship because Chileans will never agree in what happened and that it was something that was in the past. Since the return to democracy in 1990, however, the memory landscape in Chile has undergone profound changes. Within a year after the democratic transition, the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation was created to investigate the human rights violations under the military regime and resulted in the documentation of the fate of 2,759 persons who were either disappeared or executed in the Commission's "Rettig Report" (Brahm). By the late nineties, former centers of detention, torture, and execution were slowly being recognized and later converted into memorial sites. From the 30th anniversary of the coup in 2003 onwards, the discourse on the dictatorship focused more on memory and memorialization of human rights violations, than on the previous public discourse of forgetting in order to move ahead. Today, Santiago now boasts a new Museum of Memory and Human Rights, which was inaugurated in January 2010 by President Michelle Bachelet.

In this project, I will take a closer look at the changing memory landscape of Chile, and show how the master narratives of the Chilean truth commissions are contested and negotiated by social actors demanding truth and justice. Over the past two

decades, a variety of actors have fought to create new spaces for their narratives on the dictatorship, thus broadening the perspectives on the past in a public space. These processes can be seen on a local level through the creation of sites of memory ranging from plaques and memorials to the recuperation of many former detention and torture centers and the creation of the Museum of Memory and Human Rights. This paper aims to understand how collective memory is being constructed and reconstructed in modern day Chile, with a focus on the role that former Chilean political exiles have played during and after being forced into exile. Through the research findings, the paper seeks to answer the following question:

To what extent have former political exiles served as a catalyst in the creation of a Chilean collective memory?

Literature Review

Pre-Allende Chile, 1950-1970

In order to fully understand the rise of the Pinochet dictatorship and Chile's bumpy transition to democracy, it is essential to understand not only the Allende period of 1970 to 1973, but also the political environment in Chile leading up to the Allende years. When Allende was elected president, Chile was a highly troubled and divided nation deep in an economic crisis. This was due to the fact that Chile's economy during the 1950s and 1960s depended almost solely on the sales of copper, which accounted for 80% of its exports by 1968 (Mabry). Numerous Chileans worked in the copper industry and relied upon the copper companies in order to create a livelihood, and the instability of global copper prices and the private sector's control of the mines posed a great threat to the working class. Inflation during the late 1960s forced Chile into extensive borrowing from the United States as well as other multilateral agencies, and when Allende took office in 1970, the country's debt was 25% of their $8 billion gross national product. The 1960s was a decade characterized by a large social gap in Chile with 35% of the national income being controlled by the top 10%. Wages were extremely low, working class jobs were

scarce, and families struggled to make ends meet. In an attempt to improve the economic situation, Chile slowly began to nationalize the copper industry and limit the private sectors control (Mabry).

Another reason for which Chile found itself divided and in great economic distress was due to the land reforms instituted by President Eduardo Frei Montalva (1964-1970) of the Christian Democrat party in response to pressure from the Chilean left. The land reforms aimed to garner support for his administration from the lower classes by expropriating large parcels of land dominated by inefficient, wealthy estates to landless peasant farmers, increasing the productivity of the land. While Frei's land reforms were a helpful initiative for the poor in Chile, many Chileans argued they were not radical enough and pushed for more drastic and immediate action. The reforms intensified Chile's political climate and parties began to polarize as the country further plummeted into an economic crisis (Heit). This set the stage for the coming elections and made Allende's promise for more radical policies to support the lower classes and create real change in Chile extremely attractive.

Allende and the Chilean Road to Socialism, 1970-1973

On September 4th, 1970, Chile became the first country in the world to democratically elect a Marxist government. Salvador Allende Gossens was elected president of Chile on his fourth bid for office. The UP came into power with a narrow plurality in a three-way election with 36.3% of the popular vote against the Radical Democrat-National Party (RD-NP) and Christian Democrat (CD) rivals, who gained 34.9% and 27.8% of the vote respectively, making his victory somewhat controversial (King). In order to secure the election, Allende ran as a candidate for the *Unidad Popular* (UP), a coalition composed of the two main Chilean working class parties, the Communist and Socialist parties, along with three small dissatisfied bourgeois parties—the Radical Party, the Social Democrats, and the Independent Popular Action. With three parties that openly defended capitalist property, the UP's program, as Allende told *The New York Times,* was "not a communist program, nor a socialist program," but "a convergence of opinion" that

was committed to the revolutionary transformation of the economical, social, and political structure of the country (King).

The UP's approach, known as the "Chilean Road to Socialism," focused on preparing the way for a future Chilean socialism within the confines of the constitutional and legal order (Winn 16). The UP 's primary goal was to create "profound changes that the national situation require[d]," talking not of socialism, but of "People's Power" and a "People's Government" that would transfer power from the old ruling groups to the workers, peasants, and progressive middle classes, both urban and rural, in a series of more radical reforms than that of the previous Frei administration (Torre). The reforms were meant to improve Chile's stagnating economic situation by focusing on the unresolved land program, as well as the massive exploitation of Chile's major source of wealth—copper—by US imperialism (King). It's unique combination of features brought widespread international attention to the country, capturing the imagination of progressive forces and sparking off a debate about the correct road to socialism not only within Latin American, but also amongst European countries. While at the same time, the UP intimidated the United States as Allende's socialist policies would undoubtedly harm U.S. business interests in Chile and the States feared it would create a domino effect across Latin America if the country was allowed to fall to communism ("Allende Dies in Coup").

In the global context of the Cold War, the US feared that the Soviet threat was posed in every country of Latin America, which they viewed as their "backyard," and its foreign policy set out to eliminate it. U.S foreign policy toward Latin America is historically based in the Monroe Doctrine, a policy introduced in 1823 to deter European interference in the affairs of the New World. It provided a semblance of moral responsibility for the States to "protect" the nations of its hemisphere by granting them the right to intervene in the affairs of their southern neighbors "when it felt that its interests or security was at risk" (Nieto and Brandt 18). With the success of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 and the onset of the Cold War, the States used the Monroe Doctrine to justify meddling in Latin America. U.S. Secretary of

State Henry Kissinger was quoted as commenting: "I don't see why we have to let a country go Marxist just because its people are irresponsible" (Dukes 121). Oftentimes, the real reasons for US intervention were obscured between political interests versus intervention to protect or promote economic interests. At the time, the United States controlled around eighty percent of the copper industry, as well as many other industries in the country, and the US viewed the Chilean nationalization efforts of internationally-owned private sectors as yet another way that the UP was trying to undermine US power in the region (Kornbluh Chp. 1). Within a few weeks of Allende's election, the CIA had fully implemented what was known as Project FUBELT to bring down the UP. President Richard M. Nixon informed U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in a classified meeting that he has $10,000,000 available and more if necessary to "make the [Chilean] economy scream," and before long, it would (Kornbluh Chp. 1).

The UP experiment enjoyed a triumphant first year even with the mounting pressure from the United States and the fact that it inherited Chile's drastic economic and social crisis. The majority of the UP's reform measures took place during his first year in office, at the end of which Allende proudly claimed:

> *We control 90 percent of what were the private banks….more than seventy strategic and monopolistic enterprises….We are owners! We are able to say: our copper, our coal, our iron, our nitrates, our steel: the fundamental bases of heavy industry today belong to Chile and the Chileans* (Qtd. in Winn 16).

From the onset, the Allende government had to work fast to prove its legitimacy and set economic recovery as its immediate objective (Torre). The depression that had begun in 1967 reached its lowest point in 1970, and around half of children under the age of fifteen were classified as malnourished (Kaufman 266). The UP administration wasted no time in socializing the economy by taking over the copper mines, other foreign firms, oligopolistic industries, banks, and large estates. By a unanimous vote of Congress in 1971, the government totally nationalized the

foreign copper firms, which were mainly controlled by two US companies, Kennecott and Anaconda. This reform measure was one of the few bills Allende ever got through the opposition-controlled legislature, where the Christian Democrats held the majority (Pike). In addition, the government took over 2.4 million hectares through Allende's agrarian reform policies, and more support was given to the relatively ignored indigenous people of Chile with the creation of the Indian Development Corporation and the Mapuche Vocational Institute (Torre). The government developed initiatives that provided free milk to children to fight malnutrition, offered tax reliefs to small businesses and common people, as well as raised pensions for the elderly (Smitha).

The UP's drastic advances toward socialism primarily resulted from the support and actions of Chile's workers and peasants, who took it upon themselves to become protagonists of the "revolutionary process;" a role influenced by the concept of the self-led "government of the workers" and strengthened by the leftist media. During the UP, Chilean workers reached historic increases in income, status, and organization, and their voice was gaining unprecedented influence and power. The end of Allende's first year saw a 30% average rise in real wages, a 10% shift of national income from capital to labor, and the unemployment rate dropped from 8.4% to 4.8% (Winn 17). Such advancements came at a price for some as the socialist initiatives left the richest segments of Chilean society with a sense of anxiety and dissatisfaction as they were losing wealth, property, and power. The opposition became more frustrated, intensifying their desire to overthrow the UP and deepening societal tension. Certain members of the opposition deliberately created more economic chaos in the country with the hope that the UP would ultimately fail by setting off a large exodus of capital, ceasing private investment, and withdrawing bank deposits (Torre).

After the Unidad Popular's successful first year, the economy began to regress as a result of growing domestic and international pressure, leading to two disastrous final years. Allende faced problems holding the party's coalition together,

attempting to pacify the more leftist groups both inside and outside the UP who were pressuring the administration to accelerate the transition towards socialism (Fas.org). Relations with the United States were also becoming more hostile and increasingly weighing down on the administration. (Dukes 121). After Chile nationalized the copper mines, Nixon sent all of his best men of the CIA to Chile to destabilize the Allende government and to push for a coup (Kornbluh Chp. 1). The United States also initiated an economic blockade against Chile with U.S. multinationals and banks, such as the Inter-American Development Bank and World Bank, and took measures to sink the world price of copper with the hopes that the economy would fail and the military would overthrow Allende. The blockage imposed an enormous amount of stress on the already weakening economy by terminating financial assistance and blocking loans from multilateral organizations, upon which the Chilean economy heavily relied ("Allende Dies in Coup").

As Chile's global reputation continued to worsen as a result of its deteriorating relationship with the States, other international corporations began to pull their foreign investment out of the country for fear of nationalization, further complicating the situation on the ground for Allende. The US capitalized on the growing discontent of the Chilean military toward the Allende government, and increased aid and training of Chilean military personnel in the Unites States and Panama, helping to accelerate a campaign of domestic destabilization (Pike). Actions led by the United States to bring down the Chilean economy were working and successfully setting the stage for a future coup to overthrow the UP. By 1973, the Chilean economy was in shambles after facing such intense social and economic challenges, mixed with a decreasing global price of copper that pushed miners to go on strike eighty-five times during 1971-72. There were widespread labor strikes, unemployment, and inflation had soared to 1000%, and attempts by the government to control the prices of many products only led to a drop in their supply or expanded the black market (Smitha). By the middle of 1973, the political climate had dramatically intensified to the point where large mobilizations of both pro- and anti-government groups became frequent, often ending in violent clashes (Torre).

The opposition movement grew stronger with the continued sponsorship of the C.I.A, now financing a propaganda campaign aimed at middle class citizens, anti-Allende sectors, and the armed forces, with the goal of generating a general climate of military insubordination to the constitutional government. Allende's efforts to maintain some degree of a working consensus with the opposition soon became frivolous (Torre). Then, on June 29th, 1973, Army Leiutenant Colonel Roberto Souper led a group of 80 soldiers in a failed coup attempt against the UP known as "El Tanquetazo" as it primarily used tanks. Army Commander-in-Chief Carlos Prats was determined to secure the military's tradition of nonintervention, and went in person to the presidential palace, La Moneda, to confront the soldiers and successfully bring down the coup (Torre). Far from marking the end of the coup plotting, however, "El Tanquetazo" was when it began in earnest. Senior officers grew worried by the challenge to their authority and feared that a breakdown in discipline would continue and that they would be swept away if they did not join forces. Shortly thereafter, Prats ultimately resigned, followed by other top military officials, leaving the path clear for oppositional forces in the military to undertake the overthrow of the constitutionally elected government (Devine).

The Chilean Coup and the Pinochet Regime, 1973-1990

On September 11th, 1973, the highly anticipated military overthrow took place when Chile's three armed forces, with U.S. assistance, launched a concerted attack against its democratic government. By 8 AM, the navy started off the coup by taking over the port city of Valparaíso and by 9 AM, the armed forces were in control of all of Chile except for the center of Santiago. Allende gathered with his loyal presidential guard at La Moneda and were given until 11 AM to surrender or face attack by the Chilean air force. Allende refused and held his ground (Kornbluh Chp. 2). At 11 AM, Allende's final speech to his country was broadcasted over the Communist Party radio station, Radio Magallanes. His message was one of strength and hope:

> *I will not resign. With my life I will pray for defending the principles dear to our nation. I have faith in Chile and its destiny. Other men will overcome this grey and bitter*

> *moment where betrayal threatens to impose itself. Continue knowing, all of you, that much sooner than later, the great avenues will open through which will pass free men in order to construct a better society. These are my last words having the certainty that this sacrifice has not been in vain (Atd. in "Allende Dies in Coup").*

Minutes before noon, Chilean air force jets pierced the skies over downtown Santiago and descended upon the presidential palace, firing rockets with immaculate precision through doors and windows on the north side. For the next 20 minutes, La Moneda was attacked six more times, leaving the palace in flames and many of Allende's guards dead. The whole city erupted in gunfire for the next couple of hours until Chilean troops stormed the palace only to find that Salvador Allende survived the bombardment, but had taken his own life rather than become a prisoner of the military. By 2:30 PM, Caeser Agosto Pinochet's seventeen-year dictatorship had begun (Devine).

In the days following the coup, Chile became an arena of massive bloodshed, violence, and fear after the Military Junta seized control of the country and issued a barrage of decrees to restore order on its own terms. The first phase of the dictatorship (1973-1975) was mainly destructive, aimed at rapid demobilization, depoliticization, and stabilization. The Military Junta immediately froze the constitution, suspended congress, outlawed political parties, instated a strict curfew, and took over the universities and media in what was referred to as *Reorganización Nacional* (National Reorganization). The military also set out on a rampage of repression to "cleanup" the population of Allende officials, supporters, or anyone else suspected to be a threat to the military government by conducting raids, mass arrests, executions, and "disappearances," and ultimately establishing a climate of fear and intimidation that would remain for years. Shortly after the coup, the military junta named Pinochet as its main chief on the grounds that he was the oldest member and held the most power. In June 1974, Pinochet's position as "Supreme Chief of the Nation" became official when the Junta members signed

Decree Law 527, a title which he kept until he ascended to "President of the Republic" on December 18th, 1974 (Kornbluh Chp. 2).

The Nixon administration quickly mobilized to help the Chilean military consolidate its rule, and created action programs meant to meet Chile's economic, monetary, and military necessities in order to set the country on the road to economic and political recovery. Almost overnight, the US lifted the economic blockage that was used to undermine the UP, and began providing bilateral and multilateral economic assistance to the country. A few weeks after the coup, Assistant US Secretary Kubisch declared to Congress: "It is quite apparent that Chile is going to need considerable aid, and if it adopts a sensible government, I would expect that aid to be given" (Kornbluh Chp. 4). Within the first few years of the military regime alone, the States provided hundreds of millions of dollars worth of aid to Chile. Not only was that a far greater amount of US assistance than what the Allende government received, but the military government was given remarkably preferential treatment over all other Latin American countries. With the States back on good terms with Chile, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank were now free of US obstruction and both reopened their loan programs in Chile. The outpour of international aid allowed Chile to stabilize the economy, overcome the food shortages experienced during the UP, and foster considerable amounts of support within the middle and upper classes. All of which greatly contributed to Pinochet's consolidation of power and tightened his grasp on the country (Kornbluh Chp.4).

In order to eliminate any suspected threat to the new regime and cleanse the population, the military regime quickly rounded up Unidad Popular militants and sympathizers at approximately twenty detention and torture camps scattered throughout the country. The most famous of which was the National Stadium in Santiago where, according to statistics compiled in the Junta's secret report, it is said that a total of 7,612 prisoners were processed just between September 11th and October 20th alone, including the well-known Chilean Folk singer Victor Jara. Jara, along with thousands of others, were tortured and killed in the National Stadium, as

well as other concentration camps across Chile, and their bodies buried in secret mass graves, thrown into the Mapocho River, dropped into the ocean, or dumped at night onto city streets. In June 1974, Pinochet created the DINA, which served as the Chilean Army's intelligence unit, and held absolute power under the decree 521 to detain, torture, and kill any individual suspected to be subversive (Kornbluh Chp. 3). It is estimated that around 3,065 people were murdered or forcibly disappeared, and upwards of 38,000 others who were subjected to abuse and torture during Pinochet's seventeen-year reign of terror (Long). The exact number of people killed and tortured is unknown and changes frequently as new evidence and testimonies are emerging. Making people simply disappear is a particularly cruel and psychological way of terrorizing the opposition and inflicting pain on surviving family members without having to follow any particular procedure that could leave a trail of evidence and criminal accountability (Kornbluh Chp. 3). In addition, the Military Junta arrested over 82,000 people and at least 200,000 individuals were forced into exile ("Chilean Political Exile" 31).

The Chilean Diaspora

Forced exile was central to the Pinochet dictatorship's strategy to eradicate the Chilean left, thus consolidating and retaining control of the country. By forcing an estimated 200,000 Chileans into exile (around 2% of the population in 1973), Pinochet's government systematically and deliberately violated Article 13, Part 2 of the 1948 United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, among many others, which states that "everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country" ("Chilean Diaspora" 57). Around 4,000 of which were formally expelled under Decree Law 81 passed in November 1973 with the purpose to give the regime virtually unconditional authority to expel citizens, and many more had to escape in fear of their lives (Escobar 15). Exile began on the day of the coup and extended beyond the return to democracy on March 11, 1990. Chileans were dispersed across the globe to more than 200 countries, and it is estimated that more than 450,000 Chileans continue to live abroad today, forming

what eventually became the Chilean diaspora as exile became long lasting (Askeland and Sonneland 3).

The search for sanctuary took a variety of forms and each way presented a certain level of danger. During the first few years of the dictatorship, departure into exile was dramatic and abrupt. Some of the most immediate and viable places of refuge after the coup were foreign embassies and ambassadorial residences, which took in thousands of asylum seekers. Another possibility was to escape the country illegally with false documents by fleeing across the Andes Mountains or Atacama Desert to neighboring countries. For many, crossing the border proved too dangerous and they ended up staying in Chile, unwilling to take such a risk. In order for a person to be granted asylum through official means depended on many different factors, such as their nationality, political party, level of notoriety, importance in the UP, social connections, and civil status, as well as their luck (Smith 2). In general, the asylum process for Chileans, as well as foreigners, consisted of four main stages that occurred in the years following the coup: 1) foreign refugee assistance, 2) asylum in embassies, 3) asylum for prisoners without convictions, and 4) asylum for prisoners with convictions.

Immediately following the coup, foreign refugees living in Chile were given priority assistance in leaving the country as they were protected under international agreements signed by Chile (Kozak Interview). At the time of the coup, over 12,000 refugees resided in the country that sought asylum through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) from the dictatorships in their respective countries during the *Unidad Popular.* The refugees, primarily from Brazil, Uruguay, Bolivia and Argentina, were legally protected by the United Nations 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1972 Protocol. As pursued Chileans did not yet have refugee status, they were not immediately given the same international protection. Even though there were agreements in place to protect foreign refugees in Chile, many were detained, tortured, executed, or simply disappeared (Smith 3).

The second stage of asylum focused on the pursued Chileans that lived in constant fear of being detained and having to suffer military repression. Beginning the day of the coup, many Chileans sought asylum in foreign embassies and ambassadorial residencies, which predominately lasted until 1975. Such a path to exile posed a great and unexpected problem to the Government by making the humanitarian crisis that was occurring in Chile more visible amongst the international community. As a result, the Government made it extremely difficult for asylum seekers to enter the embassies by installing guards around the properties. Even if they succeeded in entering the embassies, the asylum process did not get easier. There were typically hundreds of people crammed into the embassies waiting for their paperwork to be processed so they could receive permission to leave the country as well as visas to live in their host countries. This process could take anywhere from a few months to upwards of a year during which the asylum seekers could not step foot outside the embassies (Smith 14).

Once the draconian phase of the dictatorship settled down, certain laws were passed that allowed Chilean exiles to leave the country legally, but still presented a great risk. Many of which greatly suffered from the regime's repressive policies, having endured incarceration and torture, constant surveillance by the government, or were blacklisted workers who were fired from their employment and could no longer earn a living. The terrorist acts under Pinochet's regime had no boundaries and a broad range of people fell victim to horrific atrocities, thus seeking asylum. Many times, family members of political prisoners or suspected subversives were also arrested or subjected to harassment as the military rule sought to discipline the population at large (Escobar 7). As the asylum situation worsened in Chile, it created a detrimental image of the military regime that was not beneficial for its international legitimacy. There was a growing concern amongst the global community towards the Junta's Human Rights violations. The United Nations began criticizing the Pinochet regime and the United States, the same government that once supported the coup, starting to distance itself from Pinochet (Saez 7). Such a

growing concern created a space for Human Rights organizations working in Chile, with the support of foreign solidarity groups, to negotiate alternative solutions with the government. Robert Kozak, Director of the European Migration Committee (CIME) from October 1973 until 1979, introduced the idea behind the final two stages of asylum that allowed "a path that could lead to concrete actions by trying to use migration as a way for political prisoners to regain their freedom by going abroad to countries willing to accept them" (Kozak Interview). On December 4th, 1974, Decree Law 504 was signed between the CIME, CICR, CONAR and the military government that would authorize persons sentenced to prison terms by military courts to request that their sentences be commuted to exile. The law allowed over 2,000 political prisoners to commute their sentence to serving time in better conditions outside of the country. In addition to Decree Law 504, the government authorized protection to political detainees without sentences to leave the country, freeing another 3,000+ people (Smith 4).

With such a large quantity of exiles leaving Chile through official channels, on scheduled flights with documents in order, the military and its supporters attempted to portray exile as humane and voluntary, and a better outcome than subversives deserved. Regime-controlled newspapers applauded the government's decision to commute prisoners' sentences to exile proclaiming it a step toward "complete liberty in Chile" ("Chilean Political Exile" 35). Forced mass exile of the Chilean left was central to Pinochet's plan to gain absolute, uncontested control over the country. However, it turned out to be a double-edged sword for the regime as it physically removed the majority of Pinochet's opponents from Chile, but then exiles went on to spread awareness of the Chilean reality across the globe and deny the military regime the legitimacy it sought ("Chilean Political Exile" 39).

Life in Exile

The Chilean exile is a perplexed individual. Those who made up the original diaspora typically shared one thing in common—the fact that they were targets of the dictatorship based on actual or suspected political stances and actions. Beyond

that, Chilean exiles were a diverse group of women and men expanding across all ages, races, social classes, professions, and regions. Their lives in exile varied drastically as well according to personal circumstances and the countries where they found asylum. Regardless, life for exiles was nearly always challenging as they carried heavy psychological baggage. They were often bitter and town down from defeat and from experiencing torture and imprisonment. They harbored guilt for leaving dead, detained, or disappeared comrades behind ("Chilean Diaspora" 61). Dreams, families, and careers were abruptly destroyed from one day to the next after having been violently uprooted. The majority of political figures and successful professionals lost the public roles that their political involvement afforded them in Chile and were forced by exile into the private realm. Many exiles were also unable to find work in their fields and had to obtain menial jobs that provided a living, but no satisfaction. They had to overcome language barriers, and oftentimes parents became dependent on their children who learned the host country's language quickly due to their age, thus becoming the link between the family and the outside world. All of these hardships, along with a plethora of other legacies associated with sudden, forced exile, had to be faced without the typical support of the Chilean extended family, further compounding the challenges of adaption ("Chilean Diaspora" 61).

Problems with exiles adjusting to their host countries, especially beyond Latin America, were so great that it was common for them to suffer from high rates of depression, divorce, addiction, and suicide ("Chilean Diaspora" 61). Exiles living in Latin American countries had the relative advantage of a same language and similar culture, while those settling in Europe, Canada, Asia, Africa, and Australia encountered more challenges, such as new cultures, climates, and languages, making adaption more difficult ("Chilean diaspora" 60). Most exiles believed the dictatorship would only last for a short period and such hope caused them to live in a suspended reality, neither in Chile, nor in their host country. During exile, the ironic saying was often repeated that exiles lived "*con las maletas hechas*" (*with their suitcases packed*), prepared for their eventual return that would not be allowed for

over 16 years in total ("Chilean Political Exile" 35). Chilean exiles were often received with sympathy from their host countries and in many of the developed countries; they were granted governmental assistance that assured them an adequate level of material welfare, but were rarely provided with any psychological support. Chilean psychiatrists established a center in Belgium that treated refugees from around Western Europe for problems associated with repression and exile ("Chilean Diaspora" 61).

Having lost the political battle at home, exiles quickly joined forces abroad in an attempt to undermine Pinochet in the international arena. Upon arriving at their exile destinations, leftist militants established local units of their respective parties, which grew shortly thereafter to include regional, national, and international party structures. The Chilean exile community was important in maintaining the resistance against the military regime and actively organized cultural activities with the objective of constructing solidarity organizations and disseminating information on Chile. Such expatriate parties also served an important role in replacing the family and friends, thus giving exiles a sense of identity and belonging ("Chilean Political Exile" 39). They went to great lengths to keep the repression and human rights violations practiced under Pinochet in the news, paving the way for Chile's eventual return to democracy. Across the globe, Chilean exiles organized marches, demonstrations, and *peñas* with Chilean wine, *empanadas*, folkloric song and dance, to raise money and awareness. Exiled Chilean musical groups even traveled to entertain and encourage the exile population ("Chilean Diaspora" 61).

It was not until 1983 that the regime began publishing monthly list of exiles permitted to reenter due to an increased pro-return movement in Chile and abroad whose goal was to redefine exile and expose Pinochet's grave human rights violations. The lists were extremely short and allowed fewer than 2,000 in the span of ten months, which ultimately heightened the importance of fighting for human rights ("Chilean Diaspora" 62). Beginning the day of the coup, citizens who left Chile were required by the military government to obtain permission from the ministry of

the interior to return to the country. Many exiles had the letter L stamped in their passports, signifying that the person was blacklisted from reentry. In an attempt to combat national sentiments towards exiles, respond to exile anti-Pinochet activity abroad, and squash the pro-return movement, the regime created an image of a "golden exile" throughout the years, portraying exile as a luxurious existence compared to the hard economic and political environment Chileans were enduring at home. Pinochet's administration hoped to deepen the societal divide and further isolate exiles from their compatriots back home by eliminating domestic support as much as possible, and therefore, eliminating their power and potential threat to the regime ("Chilean Political Exile" 44).

The purpose of the pro-return movement was not only to grant exiles the right to go home, it also had political purposes as well. In 1980, Pinochet rewrote the Chilean constitution, which scheduled a national plebiscite for 1988 to determine whether he should extend his rule for another eight years. The increased appearance of popular opposition towards the regime reignited hope that the dictatorship could be toppled during the plebiscite, if not before. In order for the opposition to succeed in Chile, the presence of political exiles was imperative to Pinochet's defeat ("Chilean Diaspora" 62). Succumbing to rising domestic and international pressure, the regime loosened policies towards exiles and in September 1984, began publishing lists of persons prohibited from reentering the country, rather than those allowed. Then in September 1988, a month before the scheduled plebiscite, Pinochet declared the end of forced exile in an attempt to make the vote appear legitimate and fair. While many exiles decided to return home, many facing criminal anti-regime charges feared prosecution and remained in their host countries. Nonetheless, the pro-return and opposition movement ultimately succeeded and won the plebiscite with nearly 56% of the vote, thus ending Pinochet's 16 ½ years in power ("Chilean Political Exile" 45).

A Second Exile

The Christian Democrat Patricio Aylwin became Chile's president in March 1990. While Aylwin represented the country's transition towards democracy, the new government was severely constrained by the 1980 constitution, which remained in force, and by Pinochet's continuing presence as army commander-in-chief that lasted until 1998. The new president did succeed in establishing a truth commission to uncover the atrocities of the dictatorship, but the majority of the details remained classified and protected by an amnesty law that was passed in 1978 which prevented courts from prosecuting military officials involved in the torture and killings during the dictatorship. As a result, Aylwin could only offer material and symbolic reparations to survivors and their families in hopes of reuniting the severely divided country. Incentives were also offered to the majority of exiles who had not yet returned, including duty exemptions, validation of international degrees and professional certificates. The new government also created a temporary government agency, known as the National Office of Return (ONR), to facilitate the reintegration of exiles into Chilean society ("Chilean Political Exile" 46).

Even with the progressive support of the new government, numerous exiles decided to remain abroad for a plethora of reasons. During the 16+ years in exile, many had married nationals in their host countries, created families, built a satisfying career, and found it difficult to uproot their lives once again. Others had heard the challenging experiences of *retornados* who found it painful or impossible to adjust to a profoundly changed Chile, one that had evolved into a new society lacking solidarity and marked by stark class and social divisions (Olsson 373). Upon return, exiles faced much discrimination in both their personal and public life. Pinochet's "golden exile" propaganda succeeded in making the local population believe that exiles enjoyed a glamorous lifestyle abroad, a sort of extended vacation. Discussing their time in exile was not accepted, and family members and friends who had stayed behind often shunned them. Furthermore, many exiles were still blacklisted from jobs, especially in the business sector, and employers held a strong prejudice

against hiring former exiles to avoid any problems. Their presence represented the country's controversial past and many times, people who stayed behind and forced to live under the regime's long-term oppression regarded them as enemies of the state or traitors. Such overt discrimination forced *retornados* to maintain a low profile regarding their experiences in exile and seek out others with similar backgrounds for aid and solace ("Chilean Diaspora" 63).

The icy reception and backlash *retornados* experienced post-exile starkly contrasted to the expectations they had imagined for many years, often leaving them depressed and feeling alienated. Children of exiles who were raised abroad also experienced maladjustment and depression when their expectations of Chile, resulting from their parents' nostalgia for the homeland, were not met. Rather than ending with the fall of the dictatorship, the Chilean diaspora entered a "new exile" where *retornados* oftentimes left Chile again to return to their adopted countries or seek a better life in yet another country ("Chilean Diaspora" 63).

Truth and Reconciliation in Democratic Chile

Years of intellectual suppression and censorship of the press under the military regime created what some referred to as a *cultural blackout* that disregarded the country's recent past. The divided society and lack of solidarity were further compounded by the *protected democracy* that had been laid down by Pinochet in the 1980 constitution meant to restrain the opposition in the event of the return to democracy ("Chilean Political Exile" 47). Despite the obstacles, President Alywin remained faithful to his election platform that centered on truth, justice, and reparations, and shortly after taking office he created the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation. It was installed at a time when the press reported the discovery of several mass graves across the country with the remains of disappeared persons (Klep 261). The objective of the commission, commonly referred to as the Rettig Commission after its chairman, was to establish as complete a picture as possible of the human rights violations under the Pinochet regime, and

to recommend a plan of action for reconciliation, or a shared understanding, of the nation's past. The Commission was presented as a compromise solution with no apparent political bias by appointing an even split of representatives from Pinochet supporters and opponents (Weissbrodt and Fraser 602-603).

Over the course of nine months, the commission investigated 3,400 cases of death and concluded in the "Rettig Report" that: 2,115 of the cases qualified as human rights violations committed by state agents, 164 people died as a result of political violence, and the other 641 cases were still undecided by the report's deadline (Brahm). The last section of the report alphabetically listed all of the victims' names with a short summary of their cause of death or disappearance. The report did not, however, name any of the perpetrators, as they remained protected from their crimes under the 1978 amnesty law. The Rettig Commission recommended both financial and symbolic reparations meant to restore the dignity of victims, including a number of laws that were to provide victims' families with a monthly pension and erecting a monument that was to mention all the names of the regime's victims (Klep 261).

The Chilean truth commission was a huge step toward creating a new political environment in Chile. It served as a turning point in gaining respect for victims and advancing public understanding of the country's past, resulting from its widespread publication and availability to the public, as well as its full endorsement from President Aylwin (Weissbrodt and Fraser 621). Though many still argued that it was not possible to achieve official truth without the authority to interrogate military officials and without revealing the names of perpetrators. Such was experienced a few weeks after the Report's March 1991 release when right-wing Senator Jaime Guzmán was assassinated on April 1st, 1991, and undermined the Commission's goal of seeking political reconciliation. Public attention quickly shifted from the advancements made by the Commission to concerns about leftist violence. Guzmán's assassination exposed that it would be nearly impossible to develop a national

memory of the past while lingering authoritarian enclaves prevented full exposure of the truth and hindered the transition to democracy (Weissbrodt and Fraser 622).

As long as Pinochet's policies were still present in the new government, Chile could not officially remember the coup and the dictatorship. Without being able to remember, Chileans would forget their recent past in what Jelin has described as "an institutional manifestation of *social amnesia*" (Jelin 140). Governmental discourse after the release of the Rettig Report started using a language of "closure" and "national progress" regarding reconciliation that not only existed as an immediate response to create a shared understanding of the past, or lack thereof, but a prolonged one integrated into democratic Chile. Chilean political strategy under the Social President and past exile Ricardo Lagos (2000-2006) focused on forgetting Chile's controversial past and instead focused on looking towards the future. On the 37th anniversary of the coup, President Piñera (2010-2014) called for national unity, stressing that most Chileans were not alive in 1973 and the painful experience of the past could now be overcome. The President's emphasis on generational experiences and the importance of protecting Chilean youth from the past presented a dichotomy between reconciliation and the living memory of those who experience the dictatorship. The government's attempt to actively forget Chilean history shocked exiles as they returned home after years of creating and preserving memories of the past (Hirsch 90).

Since the resumption of democracy in 1990, the political activity of exiles and returnees has focused on seeking truth and reconciliation for the regime's human rights crimes by keeping the memory of the past alive ("Chilean Political Exile" 47). Reconciliation cannot be achieved as long as perpetrators refuse to take accountability for their crimes, and truth and justice remains unaddressed for a great majority of survivors and families of victims (Read and Wyndham 80). The Rettig Report gave no answer to victims' family members most urgent question: *¿Dónde están? Where are they?* In addition to not naming the perpetrators responsible for the victims' fate, the report did not acknowledge the hundreds of

thousands of Chileans who had suffered imprisonment, torture, and exile (Klep 262). Since the Chilean government was restricted from building a case against Pinochet and the military, exiles and Chilean sympathizers took it upon themselves to gather information regarding human rights violations for the Spanish courts that were willing to help. Then, on October 16th, 1998, the impossible happened: Pinochet was arrested in London with the support of the Spanish government ("Chilean Political Exile" 47).

The extreme impact of Pinochet's arrest and the numerous cases against him in Chilean courts activated a new space for remembering Chile's past. Chileans rediscovered a language that was muffled during the democratic transition. Terms such as *torture* and *atrocities* were articulated in the media, replacing decidedly inaccurate *abuses* or *excesses.* The illusion of a completed transition to democracy and, with it, the burying of Chile's recent past, crashed against the resurrection of the crimes of the dictatorship, and demands for truth and justice gained new momentum. Pinochet's continued power was seen as a major weakness of the Commission and holding him legally accountable for human right crimes proved that further exposure of the truth was within reach (Brahm). These processes at play on the national level ever since the fall of the dictatorship can also be traced in the creation of commemorative sites around Chile that honor victims of the dictatorship. These sites attempt to reveal the truth lost under Pinochet and foster a shared understanding of the past, thus creating a unified collective memory for the country.

Creating Sites of Memory

By the mid-1990s, well-known names and locations of most former centers of detention, torture, and execution were disappearing from much of Chilean society. At the same time, a torture survivor of the infamous Detention Center *Tejas Verdes* in Santiago called upon fellow survivors and sympathizers to defend the past by refusing to forget the location of these sites:

> "If we, conscious of the terror which has been established in the country, pass through here without suspecting the existence of this place, what remains for those who want, deliberately, to deny the terror over the others?" (Qtd. in Read and Wyndham 81).

The term terror encompasses the horrendous atrocities committed or threatened by a group, especially against civilians, in order to frighten people and achieve a political goal. Denying the terror and human rights violations imposed on a people by their government is much easier when the sites where traumatic events occurred cease to exist; yet the future stability of a country depends heavily on how their state deals with reconciling and remembering such places. Sites of memory are created to commemorate and remember an important event, individual, and/or group of people from the past (Winter). Commemoration, or the act of paying tribute, is contextual, depending on *who* is performing the work of remembrance. Memories are personal as well as social, and sites of memory where memory is constructed, preserved, and able to survive in the present are created not only by national leaders but also by local communities. Sites of memory represent spaces composed of a mix of multiple voices on several levels, which come together and undergo a social process of *remembrance*, and whose product is the active formation of individual and collective memory (Winter). If the event or people being remembered are socially controversial, then sites of memory serve "as alternatives, complements and precursors to more direct demands for more truth and/or more justice," and always embody conflict or the possibility of further violence if not properly handled by the government (Hite and Collins 4). Yet, commemorative site processes have generally been initiated by a group of relatives and survivors, instead of the state, who lobby to have the site preserved and protected by gaining national monument status (Hite and Collins 5).

For family members and friends of victims, as well as survivors, of traumatic events, specific sites of memory may also serve as sites of mourning. *Mourning* is considered an outward, active process and refers to "the public display of grief, the social expression or acts expressive of grief that are shaped by the beliefs and

practices of a given society or cultural group"(Strobe et al. 5). While the grieving process is internal, it is closely related to mourning, with mourning being the method through which a grieving individual or collective is healed. Both grieving and morning are responses to the loss of an attachment and psychiatrists argue that the end of the mourning process is marked by a grieving individual's reattachment to society (Strobe et al. 5). Therefore, I use the term *sites of mourning* as a place or space where an individual or a collective can enter to publically grieve with the end goal of healing. Sites of mourning are particularly important after violent events, such as war, where many people went missing without a trace left behind. Such was the case during the Pinochet dictatorship where the military set out to eliminate the Chilean left, resulting in the disappearance of thousands of individuals with no clue as to what happened and who were never formally buried in a grave. That matters a great deal to the victim's families who need something to remember, to mourn. The fact that so many Chileans disappeared during the dictatorship made commemorating its atrocious events and victims extremely difficult. Conventional religious practices require a site, a grave, or a place to go to where individuals can honor those who die.

One of the most important sites of memory in Chile is Villa Grimaldi in the nation's capital, Santiago. It is the most infamous torture and detention center from the Pinochet dictatorship and was the first to be officially recognized by the Chilean government as a memorial site. The process to memorialize Villa Grimaldi was imitated by its victims' family members and survivors, not the state, when heavy machinery entered the grounds at the end of 1990 to demolish what remained of the buildings. Survivors and family members, along with local social organizations, came together to denounce the action with national and local authorities. Their campaign centered on not only saving the space to commemorate its victims, but to create a symbolic platform from which they would demand the official truth and human rights lost under Pinochet (Klep 262). It was not until the publication of the Rettig Report that their pleas gained some momentum as part of the ethical campaign of symbolic reparations of the victims. Unfortunately, the site was

demolished and preparations were being made to sell the space as condominiums 1994 before they were able to recuperate the grounds and receive governmental financial support to create a memorial site. It took three years after that before converting the site into the Villa Grimaldi Peace Park, yet controversy continues regarding constructing new buildings and plaques on the site. In 2008, supporters succeeded in reconstructing one of the torture chambers and creating a Memory Room (Wyndham and Read 43).

The movement to establish memorial sites received an enormous boost in 1998 after Pinochet's arrest. It sparked an irruption of memory and marked the beginning of a new period, which miraculously coincided with the Military Coup's 25th anniversary (Aguilera 107). From then on, survivors and victims' families, along with various human rights organizations, were able to push forward their agenda on truth, justice, and memory. Memory of the past grew considerably and experienced a veritable boom on the commemoration of the Coup's 30th anniversary in 2003. It was on this day that Chile's National Stadium was proclaimed a national monument, a symbolic act as it served as the first large-scale detention center under Pinochet where over fourteen thousand people were interrogated, tortured, and executed in the first two months of the regime alone (Read and Wyndham 82). From 2003 onwards, the Central Government has provided funding through the Human Rights Program of the Ministry of the Interior to support the realization of these kinds of symbolic reparations, but the majority of funding comes from the respective municipality (Aguilera 105).

Under the Presidency of Michelle Bachelet (2005-2010), a former prisoner in Villa Grimaldi and political exile, governmental funding for memorialization projects increased and more former detention and torture centers were opened to the public. One of which is *Londres 38,* declared a national monument by the government in late 2005, after much debate between the sites survivors and victims' relatives on whether or not to accept governmental aid in memorializing the building. Many argued that *Londres 38* victims under the military regime should

not have to deal with a government at any level that compromised with the military (Wyndham and Read 46). Memorial sites that have been funded by the government are commonly organized and developed by a variety of social organization, sparking such a debate on how to remember the past and how to relate it to current political and social challenges facing modern Chile (Klep 265).

One breakthrough memorial site that opened in January of 2010 at the initiative of President Bachelet is the Museum of Memory and Human Rights (MMDH) in Santiago. Its creation stems from the recommendations for symbolic reparations outlined in the Rettig Report and represents the culmination of 30 years of fighting for human rights policy in Chile. According to the Chilean Institution, its mission is to "make the Museum of Memory and Human Rights a space…that rescues the recent history of Chile and replaces it with the truth, [and] that grows and carries forth the promotion of a culture of dignity and respect for all people" (Lange). The museum is Bachelet's legacy to addressing the human rights violations of the Pinochet regime, which is still an issue that continues to reverberate at all levels of Chile's political society, while keeping a hopeful eye on its future. The MMDH itself represents a contentious dynamic as the Bachelet administration resisted representing the past in any way that would be interpreted by the Chilean right as favoritism toward the left. Shortly after its inauguration, an editorial in Chile's right-winged newspaper *El Mercurio* criticized the museum for focusing exclusively on the state terrorism of the military regime without providing a "context" for overthrowing Allende. Anticipating such criticism, Bachelet stated in her inaugural speech: "tragedy [of human rights violations] can have many explanations, but absolutely no justification" (Kornbluh and Hites). However, the critics are not the museum's challenge. Marcia Scantlebury, Director of the commission that designed and built the museum, commented at the inauguration that the MMDH's biggest challenge is "indifference" amongst Chileans to reflect on their dark past and inspire a brighter future (Kornbluh and Hite).

Located in the Yungay neighborhood, an area inhabited by immigrants, young professionals, and working-class families, the brand-new MMDH building boasts a contemporary architecture that starkly contrasts with the more traditional character of its neighbors. The building's exterior is clad with a layer of copper that pays homage to the metal that has played a major role in the Chilean economy and nods to the Allende's administrations great achievement of nationalizing the country's mines. The copper skin also serves to filter the sunlight in order to protect the museum's patrimony, and exerts an anesthetic effect that relates to the idea of a tamed transparency when recalling past events (Estefane 162). The permanent three-floor exhibition on the Pinochet dictatorship aims to give visibility to the grave human rights crimes committed during the regime, while at the same time provide dignity to victims and their families and inspire political reflection and national conscience so that such violations never repeat themselves in Chile. The museumgoer is meant to feel as if s/he was experiencing a certain aspect of the dictatorship; rather then representing it, it is played out in a performative sense. This is achieved through a series of constant aesthetic strategies displaying documents, photographs of victims, their personal objects, projecting testimonies, showing torture devices, etc., as well as the museum's play on lighting. Such visual effectiveness and emotive strategies is employed to place a filter upon the presented history to shape and frame memory through museum presentation. Confronted with painful representations, visitors are forced to take a stand. Some show empathy, trying to connect themselves with the painful experiences of victim's memories, while other may experience a more logical and distant approach to the exhibition (Estefane 163).

The museum and its permanent exhibition provides Chile with a physical master narrative of the dictatorship, as opposed to the textual ones of the Rettig Commission, and is a powerful new actor in the construction of a Chilean collective memory. The museum includes a subterranean library and documentation center where archives, historical documents, etc., are kept for educational and investigational purposes. The documentation center plays a huge role in creating

memory and preserving it through a variety of projects aimed at collecting oral and written testimonies of Chileans who were forced into exile during the dictatorship, including those who returned to Chile, those who remained in their host countries, those who were born into exile, and those who left the country again after returning. The primary goal of such initiatives is to generate a space that gives visibility to exiles' memories in order to better understand their experiences abroad and upon returning to Chile, and the emotional toll it took on their individual and collective sense of identity (*Memorias de Exilio*). The bearing of testimony is an extremely vital component in the reconciliation process. By formally exposing their subjective, private pain, victims are allowing their story to be understood in an objective, political context. This process can be cathartic and healing for survivors and provides them with a new space to relate to their past and associate meaning to, and therefore reframe, their personal pain as it is transformed into a political experience (Agger and Jensen 116).

The Museum is not the first institution to collect testimonies after the return of democracy to Chile. Collecting survivors' testimonies was crucial to compiling information for the Rettig Report under the Chilean truth commission. However, state-driven initiatives aimed at national reconciliation shortly after the fall of Pinochet held an undertone of closure, amnesia, and suspension. It is important to note that national reconciliation is a complex process, one that cannot suspend social processes associated with the traumatic past. Both victims and societies require time to elaborate on them (Cornejo et al. 128). The Museum approaches collecting survivors testimonies over forty years after the Coup with such an understanding and with the awareness that such memories are in a constant state of construction and reconstruction. The testimonies collected by the Museum provide a more complete narrative of not only what occurred in the aftermath of the 1973 Coup, but also the events that occurred throughout the democratic transition, and how they have transpired into modern-day Chilean society.

Theoretical Perspective

In order to answer the research question, the project relies on a complex of theories that facilitates understanding of the various themes and concepts revealed in the interview findings. To shed light on the complexity of the act of remembering and its relation to memory and identity, the collective memory theory will be applied to analyze the process of constructing and reconstructing Chilean collective memory through sites of memories. Then, the cultural trauma theory will build off of the collective memory theory to facilitate understanding of the collective loss of identity in social groups who have experienced a traumatic occurrence and how tears down collective identities if the social group does not express a shared memory of the past.

Collective Memory Theory

Memory is usually conceived as individually based, something that resides inside the heads of individuals. Allan Young defines memory as having three meanings: "the mental *capacity* to retrieve stored information and to perform learned mental operations, such as long division; the semantic, imagistic, or sensory *content* of recollections; and the *location* where these recollections are stored" (Young 4). Theories of identity formation or socialization tend to conceptualize memory as part of the development of self or personality in order to analyze emotions behind human actions. Such a perspective affirms the role of memory in human behavior, bringing the past into the present as seen in the embodied reactions of individuals on a day-to-day basis (Eyerman 161).

Memory has been interpreted in many different ways in both the academic and public sphere. Discrepancies are based on implicit assumptions rather than explicit formulation, which have cluttered the conceptual landscape and have led to many misunderstandings on the usage of the term. The most prominent divide between the various interpretations of memory stems from the fact that memory is commonly understood from the perspective of two separate functions. One function

approaches memory based on the assumption that it can provide an accurate representation of the past, and thus memory performance can be assessed for its appropriateness and power in terms of what might be called an *accuracy criterion*. The other function calls upon memory to provide a *usable past*, a narrative of events and actors that can be employed in the present. A usable past is most commonly associated with individual or collective identity claims, such as heated debates that can sometimes escalate into "history wars." These claims can take many forms, yet hold similar goals of reconciling events, fostering patriotism, or overcoming defeat (Wertsch 31).

Categorizing memory based on an accurate representation or a usable past could potentially suggest that the two exist in isolation when, in fact, they tend to be deeply intertwined in the process of remembering. For the purposes of this research, I shall be taking an approach that understands memory as a complex mix of meeting the needs of both functions in terms of "functional dualism." Memory is judged by its degree of accuracy and any false representation of the past is typically met with objections. This is not to say that researchers believe individual memory to be particularly accurate since decades of research have shown a plethora of ways that memory can be inaccurate (Wertsch 31). The error-prone nature of memories is expressed in Plunka's study of memory regarding the Holocaust:

> Memory, by its very nature, is always fallible and therefore tainted. When writing or speaking from any present vantage point, memory is particularly unlikely to recall what was truth twenty, thirty, or forty years ago, when, as a young person, one viewed the world differently. There is always an abyss between the reality of an event and its recurrence in memory years later. Moreover, memory may fade with time, shift as a result of brain or bodily traumas, fragment, remain selective or modified, be challenged by competing memories, or be repressed (Plunka 301).

In contrast, we turn to memory to provide us with a usable past in order to construct a coherent individual or collective identity. A usable past is imperative to create a sense of sameness over time and space for any individual or group identity

and is sustained by the act of remembering, regardless of its supposed accuracy (Wertsch 31). Thus, memory is an active process that is constantly being constructed and reconstructed through remembering.

Notions of collective identity built upon the concept of memory by theorizing that the outcome of participating in collective behavior, such as social movements, results in the formation of a new, collectively based identity and the loss of "self." In this sense, individual memory, based off of a person's unique experience, is downplayed as it is seen to impede identification with social group processes and as a result, collective identity (Alexander et al. 65). Once the barrier of individual memory is crossed, there exists a deeper concern with collective consciousness and with how the memory of these social groups is conveyed and sustained, establishing what is referred to as a *collective memory*. The term group may be understood as either a small, cohesive unit, such as a family or organization, or it may be what Benedict Anderson referred to as an "imagined community" whose members cannot know each other personally, such as a nation-state (Connerton 1). In other words, people in a social group feel connected to each other based on a sense of kinship through familial ties or shared values. Such a connection is reflected in the concept of *solidarity,* defined as "a feeling of unity between people with the same interests, goals, etc." (Merriam-webster.com).

The notion of collective memory was first raised by French sociologist Emile Durkheim, who wrote extensively about commemorative rituals, yet his student, Maurice Halbwachs, is the one who is credited with expanding the idea into a theory of collective memory. In Halbwach's classical account, memory is collective in that it is supra-individual, and individual memory is constructed and can only be understood within a group context because the individual is derivative of the collective. He argued individuals analyze events and concepts within a specific social context in order to coherently place their memories (Olick 334). Nearly a century after Halbwach began his work on collective memory, the research community in the field still expresses a lack of agreement about what the basic categories are and

how they should be studied. Thus, numerous theories have developed with their own adaptation of the term, proving that a singular definition is elusive. Challenges in outlining a concrete definition stem from issues with conceptualizing collective memory's complex relations with history and myth, or its accurate representation of the past, and are further exacerbated by the fact that memory is given a variety of meaning according to its many functions across multiple levels. However, there exists a set of basic dimensions in collective memory theory that provide a conceptual landscape on which issues can be discussed (Wertsch 6). Hallmarks in collective memory theory stress that, although memory is individually conceived, remembering is a social process that is influenced by a group's dominant discourses. A social group's identity, no matter the size, is constructed with narratives and traditions that are created to give its members a sense of community. Social groups are solidified and develop collective awareness in the present through continuous reflection upon and re-creation of a distinctive, shared memory. It is in this space of a shared past where individual identity is rooted and negotiated, even though there is always a unique, biographical memory to draw upon (Alexander et al. 65).

For the purposes of the research, the term collective memory is used to describe the stories, artifacts, food and drink, symbols, traditions, images, music, etc., that provides narratives that form the ties that bind members together. It provides individuals and groups with a cognitive map, unifying them through time and space and guiding them in their understanding of who they are, why they are here, and where they are going. Within the narrative provided by this collective memory, individual identities are shaped as experiential frameworks formed out of, as they are embedded within, narratives of past, present, and future (Eyerman 161). Memory, and in extension collective memory, however, are not phenomenas located inside the heads of individual actors, but rather within the discourse of people discussing the past together. From this perspective, the past is collectively experienced and articulated through the process of remembering, serving as a temporal reference point that shapes the individual, more than it is reshaped to fit individual needs. Both individual and collective memory is conceived as an outcome

of interaction within which individuals locate their identity based on the different ways individuals and collective are positioned by, and position themselves, within narratives. It is a dialogic process that is in constant negotiation and is never arbitrary (Alexander et al. 67).

As previously mentioned, there are challenges within collective memory theory regarding its representation of history or myth. The "interest theory" of memory construction, as referred to by Michael Shudson, believes memory to be entirely malleable in order to suit present needs. Shudson, however, argues that the past is resistant to total manipulation for a variety of reasons, especially considering that parts of the past have been recorded and therefore maintain a certain amount of objectivity (Alexander et al. 67). In support of these claims, Barry Schwartz states that "given the constraints of a recorded history, the past cannot be literally constructed; it can only be selectively exploited" (Schwartz 398). Therefore, collective memory is more similar to myth as it can be negotiated and selectively recollected by a specific social group, according to the group's needs and interests. Memory is the property of the living subjects who hold it and is in a constant state of evolution, and history is a stagnant process that is marked by its distance to the past (Weedon and Jordan 146). While collective memory makes reference to documented historical events that hold a degree of objectivity, the meaning of these events are analyzed and obtained based on a group's perspective. History, on the other hand, aims at comprehending events in a broader, more objective way that is more universal than memory, especially as a profession or academic discipline. (Alexander et al. 65).

French historian Pierre Nova took the idea that memory, in opposition to history, is in constant evolution and always-embodied in living societies through processes of remembering and forgetting, and developed it in his influential concept of *sites of memory* (*lieux de mémoire*) (Weedon and Jordon 145). He argued that memory is no longer a real part of everyday modern life as it once was, or is, in societies with strong oral traditions. Therefore, history as process and as representation of that

process separates life from memory, transforming the account of the past into an inactive one. Modernity has brought a demise of organic forms of collective memory and has been replaced by sites of memory where memory "crystallizes" and survives in a history rather than in "real environments of memory (*milieux de mémoire*)" that are found in more traditional societies (Nora 12). Nora's sites of memory—"museums, archives, cemeteries, festivals, anniversaries, treaties, depositions, monuments, sanctuaries, fraternal orders" (Nora 12)—serve to represent narratives of history and identity, and are an important source in the creation of collective memory. These narratives of the past are property of social groups and may be at variance with aspects of documented history, either mainstream or marginalized. Therefore, they make history present as they mobilize past narrative into the present, helping to frame attitudes and understand power relations at play in a particular society (Weedon and Jordan 146). In this paper, I advocate that collective memory is best understood in terms of *functional dualism*, creating a space for history and myth to come together, in order to fully understand a social group's notion of itself and collective narrative, such as its sites of memory, that are in a constant state of construction and reconstruction in response to broader questions of social power in the present.

Cultural Trauma Theory

Much like memory, the notion of trauma, or a severe emotional response to a terrible event, has a deep impact on both the individual and collective identity. As opposed to psychological or physical trauma—or trauma experienced by an individual— *cultural trauma* refers to the collective experience of dramatically losing identity and meaning that affects a social group who have achieved a certain level of solidarity. In defining the concept, Jeffrey Alexander stated that:

> Cultural trauma occurs when members of a collective feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever, and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways (Alexander et al. 1).

Cultural trauma emerges from a mythical past or from a fabricated past that creates fictional histories based on a social group's perspective as those distant pasts find expressions through people's actions long after its occurrence. In other words, such trauma need not necessarily be felt by everyone in a group or even directly experienced by any or all of its members, but the trauma will affect the overall cohesion of the collective (Eyerman 160). A key claim of the theory is that events that are currently thought of as traumatic for civil society are not inherently devastating, but are rather constructed as such through cultural processes. In this sense, cultural trauma does not naturally exist, but is something that is created by society through a long process of narration and signification (Alexander et al. 62).

Alexander differentiates cultural trauma from what he calls *lay trauma* in social thought. Lay trauma refers to the idea that trauma inevitably follows devastating events, with shattering consequences for individuals and victim-societies (Alexander et al. 6). However, cultural trauma cannot assume that any events, as horrendous as it may be, will turn into a trauma for the collective who encounters it. Cultural trauma is constructed when the collective experience of massive disruption becomes a struggle of meaning and identity amongst members. The social group then cognitively identifies the existence of some event as the source of human pain, and establishes and accepts its traumatic meaning (Alexander et al. 10). The cultural trauma must be understood, explained, and made coherent through public reflection and discourse, which is a time-consuming undertaking requiring much mediation and representation. This in turn, allows members of collectivities to share the sufferings of others and define their solidarity. Oftentimes, social groups refuse to acknowledge the reality of fellow members' pain, and also their moral responsibility for the pain, leaving them to suffer alone, thus preventing solidarity (Eyerman 160).

Alexander referred to the identification of cultural trauma and the reconstruction of the traumatic event within public discourse as the *trauma process*. Cultural traumas are not things, but processes of meaning making and attribution where groups struggle to define an event and to manage and control it. It is the "gap between

event and representation" as competing narratives emerge within a collective when determining what is significant to an event and how it should be presented through mass mediation (Alexander et al. 10). This involves identifying the nature of the pain, the victims, and the attribution of moral responsibility. It is a process that aims to reconstitute or reconfigure a collective memory, and thus collective identity, by reinterpreting the past as a means towards reconciling present and future needs (Alexander et al. 63). In the trauma process, the cultural trauma is not decided by the collective, but rather created by powerful *carrier groups*. Carrier groups are the collective agents who articulate the narrative of grievance and represent the interests and desires of the affected to the general public through a variety of mediated forms from protests and newspapers to film and music (Alexander et al. 11). They help transform emotional response into words and images that can be dispersed, and are essential to the making of cultural trauma and in its continued affect. Most commonly, these agents represent a broad range of professions, such as artists, politicians, intellectuals, writers, journalists, etc., but they can also be preexisting entities or form in response to a particular traumatic occurrence, such as survivors, family members, and friends (Alexander at al. 11).

The agency of carrier groups to create a narrative of a past traumatic event in the form of collective memory does not only exist in the individuals, but also within cultural artifacts and creations. As previously discussed, Nora's sites of memory represent an important source in the constitution of collective memory, and in regards to cultural trauma, their creations are imperative in the trauma process for social groups to symbolically reconstruct the past in order to confront and attempt to make amends with the pain for which it is responsible. Sites of memory that are not spatially limited, including films, literature, testimonies, anniversaries, festivals, etc., are particularly important for mobile social groups whose members are dispersed across the globe, such as exile populations. These sites of memory are able to transcend geographical boundaries to spread across the globe and reach distant members of the collective. Thus, creating a space for collective identity

through collective memory to remain intact and allow the act of remembering to span spatial, as well as temporal, limitations (Alexander et al. 70).

Methodology

This project aims to understand how collective memory is being constructed and reconstructed in modern day Chile, and the role former political exiles play in overcoming social amnesia to promote the creation of a shared Chilean collective memory. The core of the empirical data presented in this project is based on eight testimonies from returned political exiles and key players in the Chilean asylum process. The variety of testimonies from individuals with different backgrounds and experiences will provide a more comprehensive, multi-angled perspective on the problem formulation.

Ontological and Epistemological Considerations

The research examines the challenges Chilean political exiles have faced with repatriating to their home country and living in modern Chile by analyzing *retornados'* personal narratives of experiences both abroad and upon return, with a focus on personal and collective memory. It aims to get a deeper understanding of the varied experiences that they have lived during three periods of time, including Allende's Chile, in exile, and upon return to Chile, and how they perceive and construct these lived experiences into their personal memory today. In order to do this, this paper adopts a *constructionist* position as the ontological approach as it asserts that order within social realities is not a pre-existing condition, but rather something that is continuously negotiated (Bryman 33-34). Due to the fact that reality has many interpretations, there is no foundational process by which the truth or the falsity of the construction of reality can be determined. For constructionists, social phenomena and their meanings are in a constant state of construction and reconstruction by social actors, and each person has a unique understanding of social reality as a result of their social and lived experiences (Bryman 33-34).

For the purpose of the project, *constructionism* will help identify and analyze common concepts within participant testimonies by focusing on underlying themes found in people's individual recollection of lived experiences from the past, and how they negotiate meaning of such lived reality through individual memory. It has previously been discussed that individual memory is constructed and can only be understood within a group context as it provides a space to coherently place one's memories. Therefore, memory comes to us mediated by its social and ideological constitution, and is always partial and situated. With regards to *retornados* creation of personal memory through bearing testimony, it is assumed through a constructionist stance that an individual's recollection of the past may vary based on their personal background and experiences with personal and collective identity, trauma, and healing. A *retornados* personal memory is not an infallible and accurate representation of history; rather, it is created and developed over time through the act of remembering.

The epistemological stance of *interpretivism* offers a platform on which subtle nuances between the *retornados*'s unique experiences can be explored. Interpretivism views the subject matter of the social sciences (i.e. people and their institutions) as fundamentally different from that of the natural sciences and thus, requires a different logic of research procedure that accounts for the subjective creation of meaning. Social reality has a meaning for human beings and therefore, humans act on the basis of the meanings they attribute to actions and the actions of others (Bryman 28). Within this study, this means that the *retornados*, acting on their subjectivity, create meaning and interpret social reality based on their social location, and use this as a foundation to construct their personal and collective memory.

A subset of interpretivism is a school of thought known as *phenomenology* that focuses on a people's experience and interpretation of the world. It is important for phenomenologists to understand a person's individual mindset within a collective

and be able to interpret their actions and social world from their perspective (Bryman 30). A focus on phenomenology applies to the research since it takes interpretivism a step further to reveal how individuals, as opposed to collective groups in general, make sense of the world that surrounds them by giving meaning to their individual social reality. Through this stance, the research will be able to analyze how different *retornados* construct individual memory based on their personal background, experiences in exile and upon return, and how this impacts their sense of personal and collective identity in modern-day Chile, thus influencing Chilean collective memory.

Methods of Data Collection

An underlying premise of the paper's research is that the subject matter of the social sciences differs from that of the natural sciences based on the creation of meaning. Thus, a qualitative research approach was adapted as it aims to understand particular aspects of social life through its methods that emphasize words, rather than quantification, in the collection and analysis of data (Bryman 380). In most social science studies, the interest is drawn in "people's behaviors, thoughts, emotions, and artifacts," as well as the conditions of the context in which people behave, think, and make things (Bernard and Ryan 5). Qualitative research findings include elements of people's social interactions and reproductions, which can be limiting as the focus is on experiences that are individually unique and understood in a specific context (Bernard and Ryan 5). These findings, however, will be used to determine common themes and concepts that will serve as the building blocks in developing a general understanding of the social reality on a broader scale.

The project's design is that of an ethnographic case study of Chile since I, as the researcher, have been "immersed in a social setting for an extended period of time; make regular observations of the behavior of members of that setting; [and] listen to and engages in conversation" as I have been living in Santiago for the past year (Bryman 432). This design fits well with a qualitative approach as it demands an intensive examination of the context (Chile), and how the various social actors

(*retornados* and key players in the Chilean asylum process) interpret and create meaning of past experiences through the process of remembering in testimonies and documentaries. Furthermore, the research seeks to obtain valuable data deriving from personal testimonies through semi-structured interviews as well as documentaries. It would be impossible to receive such data through quantitative methods due to the sensitive and nuanced nature of the topics, which would not be clearly addressed, nor deeply understood quantitatively.

A total of eight testimonies were watched of individuals with various backgrounds and experiences to provide the research with a multi-angled perspective. Walter Roblero, Archive Researcher at the Museum of Memory and Human Rights, conducted all eight semi-structured interviews face-to-face during the years 2009-2015. The goal of the semi-structured interview style was to allow the interviewees to bear their testimony in an organic and personal way. By using an extremely loose method of interviewing, themes and concepts emerged organically as interviewees elaborated on their own personal narratives how they deemed fit. Allowing interviewees to recall their memories without providing too much direction is especially crucial in collecting testimonies, as the interviewer does not want to affect or shape the interviewees' memories. The amount of interaction from the interviewer when collecting testimonies should be minimal and only serve to assist the interviewee's train of thought, clarify parts of the interview, or seek elaborations regarding specific topics. The questions posed by Roblero varied amongst the testimonies, and he tended to only intervene when the interviewee was having difficulty expressing their train of thought, for emotional or organizational reasons, or left out certain parts of the narrative that were of importance to the chronological order of events.

It is important to add that providing testimony of traumatic events can be understood as a cathartic, healing process for survivors and as a way of giving meaning to, and therefore as a reframing of individualized pain, as the private pain is transformed into public prominence. It is through bearing testimony that

individuals are able to relate to their pain in a new way and reestablish a connection with reality (Agger and Jensen 4). The collection of testimonies at the Museum of Memory and Human Rights is a movement to document personal memory in hopes of preserving part of the past that will eventually serve to create a shared Chilean collective memory. Yet, in the immediate aftermath of collecting testimony, the process may be a therapeutic one for those who experienced traumatic occurrences because it can allow them to see the universality in pain that had been internalized as a personal encroachment. This was most evident in one testimony is particular, that of Ana Soto, when she explained that she had to step away from working with human rights for a while because it was too emotionally taxing on her, and she needed to maintain her psychological strength to keep working and being there for her daughters. Yet, she tells Walter that "*she always missed [human rights] and…was happy to finally sit down and talk with [Walter] because [she] felt that it was the one thing that she was missing…*" (Soto 31).

The main testimonies outlined in the discussion include five interviews of Chilean political exiles that returned to Chile at varying points before the end of the dictatorship after having lived abroad many years. The remaining three testimonies are from two Chileans and one Argentinian that played very important roles in helping to secure formal exile for asylum seekers through their work with the Decree Law 504 that allowed political prisoners to commute their sentence to serving time in better condition outside of the country. All interviewees were between the ages of 50 and 73 years old as outlined in the chart below. The five interviews of the returned political exiles are part of the MMDH's *Proyecto Los Caminos del Exilio (The Paths to Exile Project)* while the three interviews of the key players in the Chilean asylum process were conducted as part of the *Proyecto 100 Entrevistas* (*100 Interviews Project*). All the interviews were conducted in the participants' native language of Spanish, and the five testimonies for The Paths to Exile Project have been transcribed by MMDH interns and can be found in the appendix section of the paper, while the three testimonies for 100 Interviews

Project have not yet been transcribed by the Museum, thus the information and quotes were pulled directly from watching the testimonies.

The Paths to Exile Project Interviewee General Information

Int.	Name	Gender	Age at Interview	Country of Exile	Years Spent in Exile
P1	Patricia Vera	Female	61	Holland	10
P2	Ana Soto	Female	65	Denmark	12
P3	Alihuen Antileo Navarrete	Male	50	Switzerland	9
P4	Gloria Cordero Sepúlved (Married to Victor Rojas)	Female	73	Costa Rica	10
P5	Victor Rojas (Married to Gloria Cordero Sepúlved)	Male	73	Costa Rica	10

All of the interviewees for The Path to Exile Project had different reasons for seeking asylum abroad as well as for their eventual return to Chile. Patricia Vera was a militant of a small leftist political party known as The Popular Unitary Action Movement (MAPU). There she met her partner, one of the MAPU military leaders, and shortly after the coup, the two of them sought asylum at the Dutch Embassy. At the time, Patricia was pregnant with their first child, and they lived in the Embassy for two months while all the official documentation for their exile was completed before they left for Holland. Patricia initially returned to Chile at the beginning of the '80s after living ten years in exile due to increasing relationship issues with her partner. They had separated and he was preventing Patricia from seeing their son Rodrigo. Then, one day when she was with her 9-year-old son, she took him on a plane back to Chile to ensure that she would have access her son. After five months of living in Chile, Patricia returned to Holland with Rodrigo. Over the following years until her interview with MMDH, Patricia had lived a transnational life spending time in both Europe and Chile. In her testimony, she states that she is "*Chilean Dutch now*" (Vera p.1, 1) and that Chile is her "*elusive country*" because there have been so

many times that she has wanted to stay there, but could not for a variety of political, legal, and financial reasons (Vera P.1, 44).

Ana Soto was a university student when her and her husband Sergio became militants of the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR). The day of the coup, Sergio was in a city to the south of Santiago called Valdivia, and told Ana that he would return to Santiago, but never came. A few days later, Ana's father traveled to Valdivia and found Sergio in the city jail. Sergio was released after five months and the couple lived a clandestine lifestyle for a year before accepting their friend's help in obtaining a visa through the Danish Embassy. At first, Sergio was against seeking exile in Denmark because he felt it was his duty to stay in Chile and fight the dictatorship, but as more and more of their *compañeros* went missing, they decided it best to leave the country. Sergio sought asylum in the Venezuelan Embassy for one month before he met Ana on the airplane to Denmark who got on the plane with her daughters "*like the other tourists*" (Soto 14). Then, at the beginning of the '80s, the MIR was encouraging exiled members to return illegally and live a clandestine lifestyle in order to take down the dictatorship because staying in exile was not helping the situation in Chile. Ana decided not to return under the MIR's conditions because it meant that she would have to leave her two daughters in Cuba. Therefore, they decided that only Sergio would return in 1981 while Ana stayed in Denmark with her daughters. Two years later, in September 1983, Sergio was assassinated. Shortly after his death, Ana made the complicated decision to return to Chile with her daughters so they could be with friends and family, and because she "*prefer[ed] to have Latino children than European children*" (Soto 25).

Alihuen Antileo Navarrete is the youngest person out of all the interviewees who was exiled. He left Chile for Switzerland with his family when he was only nine years old. At the time of the coup, his family was politically active as leftist militants who greatly supported President Allende. His father was Mapuche, an indigenous group from south-central Chile, and participated in Mapuche social movements fighting for their rights, while his mother was of Chilean descent and worked as a social worker.

Alihuen's brother also played an important political role as the Director of the National Institute of Agricultural Development in the Cautín Province under the Allende government. His aunt was a candidate for congress and was on the board of directors for health services in the Cautín Province. With his family having such a strong political presence, Alihuen grew up thinking that it was normal to have political conversations, discussions, and be actively involved in social organizations. Once the coup occurred, members of his immediate and extended family were forced into exile in order to save their lives as they were being pursued. His father immediately left for Argentina, eventually separating with Alihuen's mother, while other family members exiled to Europe. Alihuen's mother took him to the south of Chile in hopes of a better life, but she was unable to find a job and their worsening economic situation forced them to join their relatives in Switzerland. At first, Alihuen did not want to leave Chile and asked a man working at his high school if they could provide him with lodging so he did not have to go. Years later, as Alihuen matured and learned more about Chile's history and why he grew up in exile, he became more politically active and felt more and more compelled to help his country take down Pinochet. In 1986, Alihuen made the decision to return to Chile to fight against the dictatorship when he was eighteen years old under the false pretext that he was returning to his home country to go to university.

The last two interviewees from The Paths to Exile Project are a married couple who were interviewed separately. Gloria Cordero Sepúlved met her husband, Victor Rojas, while studying theater at the University of Chile. Victor was a militant of the communist party and over time Gloria became more politically active through him. While she did not consider herself very political, she believed in the Left's ideas and values. When the coup occurred, Gloria was working for the Institute of Agricultural Development (INDAP) making photo publications that taught *campesinos* how to utilize their land more efficiently; and Victor was working as an actor in the theater at the University of Chile, which was known for its plays that focused on social issues of the time. Both institutions had Leftist affiliations during Allende's administration and many people were laid off from their jobs the day of the coup.

Such was Gloria and Victor's case and it was very difficult for them to find work during the following years. Victor was able to find a job selling gloves with a friend's family business before it shut down a few months later due to the importation of cheaper gloves from Argentina. Shortly thereafter, Victor and Gloria began selling fruits and vegetables from their garage in order to provide for their family. In her interview, Gloria said, "*surviving was not easy*" after the coup and "*there came a day when it was just too much for [them]*" as they kept hearing every day about another person who was killed or detained (Cordero 21). The couple made the final decision to leave Chile after one incident, in particular, where they attended a folkloric festival in a village outside of Santiago and their children ran off to the front of the crowd to get closer a better view of the stage. Victor followed his children and excused himself to a man in the crowd as he went after them, and the man responded by forcefully pushing Victor without any concern that his children were getting away. When the family returned home that night, Victor reflected on what was becoming of Chile and quietly told Gloria that *"[he could not] take it any longer here*," to which she responded, "*me neither*" (Rojas 16). They then contacted their friends who had exiled to Costa Rica and had previously offered them assistance in seeking exile there. Shortly thereafter, they left for Costa Rica.

Victor and Gloria have very positive memories of their time in exile. When remembering their experience, Gloria comments "*the truth is that [their] exile was a golden exile*" *and she does not believe that other people had as good of an experience as they did in Costa Rica*" (Cordero 23). Costa Ricans were very welcoming and almost immediately, they both found jobs—Gloria worked for the Costa Rican Presidential House and Victor taught classes at the local university and acted in the National Company of Theater. Even though their new lives in Costa Rica were very successful, they always felt things were missing. After Victor's brother visited them in Costa Rica, they began thinking about how their mothers were growing older and older and how much they were missing by not being with them in Chile. On top of this, they wanted to return to Chile before their daughters were too immersed in Costa Rica, as well as they wanted to go back and participate in the political

effervescence that was occurring in Chile at the beginning of the '80s. After almost ten years in exile, Victor and Gloria returned to Chile with their two daughters.

In order to supplement the five testimonies of returned political exiles from The Path to Exile Project, three additional testimonies were analyzed of key players in the Chilean asylum seeking process from the 100 Interviews Project. All three of their testimonies provide invaluable personal insight into the "behind the scenes" processes of Chilean political exile that helps to further understand the *retornados* experiences going abroad and upon return. The first testimony is from Roberto Kozak who was the Director of the European Migration Committee (CIME) in Chile from October 1973 until 1979 and played a vital role in the asylum process during the critical first years of the Pinochet dictatorship. Through his work in CIME, Kozak is personally responsible for having helped over thirty thousand people who were being pursued by the government to safely leave the country as a result of negotiations he participated in with Pinochet's government that allowed political prisoners charged with crimes to leave Chile without the option of returning ("Chile Está de Luto"). In his 2009 interview with the Museum of Memory and Human Rights, Kozak describes the four main stages of the asylum process for Chileans, as well as foreigners, that occurred in the years following the coup, previously outlined in the "Chilean Diaspora" section of the Literature Review.

The other two testimonies from the 100 Interviews Projects are from Claudio González, the Executive Director of the Christian Churches' Social Assistance Foundation (FASIC), and Verónica Reina, one of FASIC's lawyers, who both worked in FASIC during the years following the coup. FASIC was created at the beginning of the dictatorship and played a fundamental role in defending thousands of Leftist militants who were being persecuted by Pinochet's repression. FASIC was created in response to the institution of the Decree Law 504, which allowed political prisoners charged with crimes to commute their sentence to exile abroad, as Chile needed a organization that would be in charge of working with political prisoners and their families during the asylum seeking process. FASIC is a non-governmental

organization that was founded by a group of Christian churches in Chile that came together to defend and promote human rights in the country by protecting those pursued by the dictatorship. It also served as a special operating agency for the UNHCR in their refugee family reunification program by working with political exiles' family members in order to obtain the documentation needed to reunite with their loved ones abroad. Furthermore, FASIC provided psychological and psychiatric support to victims of repression: tortured persons, ex-political prisoners, and family members of executed or disappeared detainees (Vilches).

Limitations and Ethical Considerations of Data Collection

Due to the sensitivity and traumatic nature of the topic, it was determined that the research should be conducted by viewing testimonies collected by a reputable organization that had previously interviewed returned political exiles. Initially, I started building relationships with known returned exiles in Santiago that are friends of my Chilean landlord, who herself exiled to Spain for 17 years. However, the more I informally talked to them about their experiences abroad it became evident that many of them preferred not discussing it or had been conditioned to not describe their experiences due to its taboo and controversial nature in modern Chile. Even if I were to have secured interviews with them, it is doubtful that they would have completely opened up to me, as I do not have a strong relationship or connection with their story since I am not Chilean, and I also do not represent a well-known institution that works primarily with such sensitive issues. I also questioned whether the fact that I am from the United States would prevent *retornados* from fully disclosing their narrative due to the US's contentious position in supporting the coup.

Not wanting to jeopardize the research, nor switch my topic, I began exploring other possibilities to access the information I required from interviews and came across the opportunity to realize a research internship program with the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Santiago, Chile, where I had been living since August 2015. I was immediately accepted into the program after applying for the

internship, and completed a two-month internship in their documentation center where I worked two days a week with MMDH staff, particularly Archive Researcher Walter Roblero, in determining what materials would be meaningful for my research. Walter and I spent a significant amount of time discussing my project ideas, and he handpicked the testimonies and research articles and books that he deemed would serve as a good launching pad and support my inductive research. Walter also confirmed my hesitations that it would be difficult collecting the information for my research and stressed that it is even difficult for *retornados* to disclose their story to MMDH archive researchers. Given my time constraints, he encouraged me to focus on the Museum's testimony collections.

Another methodological limitation of the research was that the *retornados* interviewed by the MMDH were clearly those who continued to remember. Evidently, this means that only those who were actively willing to discuss their past feature in this work, and it is highly likely that those who suffered most from trauma were less willing to discuss these experiences. The testimonies watched for this research were of Chileans that had a clear desire to serve as witnesses to their experiences through providing their personal narrative.

Methods of Data Analysis

Based on the size on my sample and the semi-structured nature of the testimonies, I decided that the most appropriate way to process and analyze the data would be by carrying out a thematic analysis as it approaches data based on the human experience and its subjectivity (Guest et al. 12). Themes extracted from the thematic analysis can be defined as categories that derive from the collected data and are found by the analyst (Bryman 579). Themes are not always the categories that occur most often within the data, but rather rely on the researcher and the focus of the research that determines what is meaningful or not. In thematic analysis, the "researcher's judgment is the key tool in determining which themes are more crucial" (Braun and Clarke 79). Identifying and pulling themes out from collected data can be considered a process similar to coding since classifications and

categories are created directly from it. By going through the transcripts of The Path to Exile Project testimonies, I identified two main themes that were present in all of the transcripts and then noticed that each theme could be further condensed into three categories covering time periods from Allende's Chile to their return from exile. The data was then classified with a table representing one main theme across the twotime period categories, as shown in the following table.

Example:

Main Theme 1

	Allende's Chile	**In exile**	**Upon Return From Exile**
Interviewee 1	Data	Data	Data

While processing and analyzing the data, I constantly adapted the themes and categories to reflect the testimonial responses as accurately as possible to minimize alteration and repetition. I also identified several main themes, but chose the most important themes that could be connected to my theories and help to answer the problem formulation. For the purposes of this research, the thematic analysis was only applied to the five *retornados* testimonies in order to build up the discussion section, which was then connected with the theoretical and conceptual body of the research. The findings from the remaining three testimonies of key players in the Chilean asylum seeking process from the 1000 Interviews Projects, which were directly integrated into the analysis section as they belong to separate samples. These findings were used to complement the discussion since they approached the different themes from a unique perspective that helped to add value to the final conclusions.

Through the use of thematic analysis for this study, it was concluded that the best approach for the research is that of induction where theory is the outcome of the research. Main themes were discovered out of the collected data by identifying similarities and patterns within the testimonial transcripts as a result of the semi-

structured flow of the interviewer's questions. Interview questions in the testimonies were created with the aim to obtain information regarding lived experiences of specific occurrences and time periods in recent Chilean history related to the Pinochet dictatorship. By using a semi-structured method of interviewing, themes and concepts emerged naturally for the interviewee as they shared their personal narratives in their own terms. Through the process of bearing testimony, interviewees discussed a multitude of topics in great detail that facilitated the process of revealing patterns and common themes that ultimately led me to connect the findings and draw final conclusions.

Analysis

Upon revising the collected data from the testimonies, two main themes were identified that consistently emerged from common concepts that facilitated the interpretation of the information through the thematic analysis. The two designated themes are: *Solidarity* and *Memory*. When analyzing the main themes, it became apparent that the themes revolved around three distinct time periods that were also outlined in the chronological progression of the testimonies. Within each time period, *Allende's Chile*, *In Exile, and Upon Return From Exile*, the main themes shifted and represented new understandings of the terms, which varied amongst testimonies that ultimately serve to construct each interviewee's individual memory. By analyzing the themes in chronological order, this section aims to construct a knowledge flow that will organize and clarify research conclusions of the collected information.

In order to construct a comprehensible analysis based on these themes, related quotes were pulled out from the collected data to help demonstrate the connections that the main themes have with the concepts and theories presented in the theoretical section. Identified patterns and meaningful new concepts that repeatedly appeared in the data also served to develop the analysis.

Solidarity

The concept of solidarity was a reoccurring theme in the returned political exiles' testimonials and documentaries. It was expressed not only in terms of unity among members of a social group based on their sense of kinship and shared values, but also as a breakdown of the ties that bind members together. Political exile, in and of itself, represents a breakdown of solidarity as certain members of a collective are expelled from a country and forced by authority to live elsewhere. Throughout the analysis of the data, the usage of the term shifted enormously during the different time periods as the former exiles described their experiences going into exile abroad and upon their return to Chile.

Most of the respondents spoke very highly of their experiences during the years leading up to the coup when Allende was in power. The Chilean Path to Socialism was a social experiment that represented a peaceful revolution aimed at improving Chile by achieving equality for the poor and working class, and freeing the country from economic dependence or servitude to any outside power. When asked what their experience was like during the Unidad Popular, Patricia responded, "*super beautiful…it was hope…we were very happy, so happy that I politicized my dad, my mom, my older brother, my younger siblings…I politicized them all…. It was a time of much hope, much illusion…it was incredible….*" (Vera 13). Alihuen remembered the UP fondly: "*It was a beautiful and permanent thing, and we were doing it to help the most modest people*" (Antileo 6). Those involved in the Chilean Path to Socialism took great pride in their work and considered it to be one of the most important aspects of their lives at the time. They had a strong sense of political solidarity, which Patricia demonstrates in her testimony: "*we were all together in [it] and we were building something that was very just for everyone [and it was] going to be great…*" (Vera 16).

Allende supporters' solidarity was not limited to any one generation, or social and racial class. It represented a great mix of people who saw the injustices in Chilean

society and strongly believed that they could be fixed through socialist policies. Patricia, for example, came from a lower class family and that her parents "were very poor [and her] childhood was very poor" (Vera 5). While, on the other hand, Gloria came from a middle class family and had "a very spoiled upbringing" (Cordero 1). Gloria learned about poverty at a young age when she would assist work parties for her father's job. Her father was a civil engineer and, after a building is completed in Chile, it is customary to throw a party for everyone involved in the project and their families. At these parties, the construction workers would surround Gloria and tell her how her father exploited them. At the time, Gloria was eight or ten years old and it was shocking for her to hear their stories (Cordero 1-2). She heard their stories and learned how much they struggled to provide basic necessities for their families. It was a turning point in her life that made her understand that not everyone "…lived in a family where [they sit down] at the table…[and] on the table there were plates and silverware and cups …" (Cordero 4). She began to question herself: "Why do they have to live like that? Why do I live like this and they live a different way? Why do they live in a house that I would not even dare to enter because it would embarrass me..." (Cordero 4).

Alihuen came from a "Leftist family that…fundamentally [identified with] Allende" (Antileo 1). His father, being Mapuche, was very involved in the Mapuche movement of the time, while his Chilean mother was a social worker, and his brother and aunt also worked for social institutions. Since Aliheun grew up in a household where many of his family members were dedicated to solidarity work and were very politically active, political discussions were a big part of his childhood and he thought it was normal to be part of solidarity movements (Antileo 1).

Towards the end of the Allende period, solidarity amongst the Left began to breakdown. According to Gloria, some Leftist parties "turned into enemies of the Allende Government because they were no longer in agreement with it and wanted more" (Cordero 13). All of a sudden, they had "*enemies all over…enemies in the Right and enemies within the same Leftist group*…"(Cordero 13). When the coup occurred,

social solidarity in Chile broke down even more as the divide between the Left and Right deepened. Alihuen described that he was shocked on the day of the coup when "*some of [his] neighbors began to raise flags and played festive music to celebrate the coup, and they were neighbors whose children were our friends. This eventually led to a break in our childhood friendships*" (Antileo 9).

The deepened divide between the Chilean Left and the Right after the coup occurred led to a rebirth of solidarity within the political parties themselves as people struggled to determine who could be trusted at the time. This was particular evident in the testimonies when the interviewees discussed how they sought asylum. In Roberto Kozak's testimony, he describes the most effective way to asylum was through an embassy in regards to safety and guaranteeing that you would avoid repression (Kozak Interview). Patricia was one so luck enough to be granted asylum in an embassy. She was able to enter the Dutch Embassy after lying to the Chilean police, who were blocking people from going near the Embassy, by saying she was a university student with a scholarship to study in Holland and she needed to speak to one of the diplomats regarding her scholarship. After much convincing, the police allowed her to pass and the moment she entered the Embassy, she was under official protection of The Netherlands. Upon entry into the building, Patricia said "*it was full of people, full of Chileans, who were all refuged there. There were around forty and all of them cried [with joy] when we entered*" (Vera 26). The other refugees were also pursued members of the Left and knowing how dangerous and tense the situation was in Chile at the time, they displayed immense solidarity with one another when people made it to safety inside the building. During the time Patricia spent in the Embassy, both the other refugees and Embassy employees were very supportive of one another and all helped each other survive. Embassy workers would ensure that the refugees' families were informed about their whereabouts and help families provide clothes to them (Vera 29). The Embassy also gave the refugees puzzles and cards so they could occupy their time, and everyone worked together to organize parties and celebrations for the holidays (Vera 28). Such support and solidarity was not the case, however, outside of the Embassy. When

Patricia's legal documentation was finally processed for her to leave to Holland, a group of people who lived near the Embassy came out of their houses and started throwing rocks at the protected bus that was taking her and other refugees to the airport and screamed, "*Leave, communists, and never return!"*(Vera 31).

Solidarity was also a common theme when interviewee's discussed their time in exile abroad. In his testimony, Claudio González described how it was very common for exiles to spend a lot of time with one another crying, singing songs, eating Chilean food, as well as fighting amongst one another as they created a makeshift family in exile (González Interview). Four out of the five *retornado* testimonies describe their asylum process as a result of friends and family's support in acquiring visas for them to other countries or assisting them upon arrival with food and housing. Ana and her family secured a visa to Denmark after one of their friends sought asylum at the Danish Embassy and was able to obtain a visa for herself as well as three other individuals who were in danger, plus their families (Soto 13). Victor and his wife Gloria were offered help in exiling to Costa Rica by a few friends of theirs who had previously left for Costa Rica. Upon their arrival to Costa Rica, their friends provided them with housing and helped them gain employment with their first weeks of exile, which would have been very difficult to achieve without their support (Rojas 14).

In the majority of cases, Chilean political exiles were extremely well received abroad. Alihuen explained this as being the result of what Chileans had democratically achieved with Allende: "*Chile really represented a very important paradigm for Europeans and for the world in general as it was the possibility of starting a revolution or becoming socialist in peaceful terms and not through the use of weapons. Therefore, it was a very important phenomena"* (Antileo 19). One of the most transformative experiences Alihuen had regarding European solidarity with Chileans was during his first week in exile in Switzerland when he went to an antique store with his mother to buy pots and pans with the impression that used items would be cheaper; not knowing that antiques can be quite expensive in other

countries. There was an old woman working the store and they asked her how much the pans cost using the little French they could speak. The woman, realizing they were not Swiss, inquired where they were from. After Alihuen's mother explained they were from Chile, the woman lifted her sleeve to show them her tattoo from a concentration camp. The woman began to tear up saying she spent time in Auschwitz and that she knew fascism, too. Without exchanging many words, the women understood the others struggle and pain. They hugged one another and the older woman gave Alihuen's mom a pot for free (Antileo 15).

In Patricia's testimony, she explains that she had similar experiences to Alihuen's in Switzerland: "*There was a fairly large solidarity movement with Chile, so we in general—the students, the people, the politicians—we were like heroes to them because they had closely followed the Allende process and they admired him, so the coup in Chile was a big deal to them, too*" (Vera 41). While Chilean exiles enjoyed much solidarity amongst themselves and with their host countries' populations, they did encounter many negative aspects as well. When Patricia left Chile for Holland, she was far along in her pregnancy with her first child and recalls her experience giving birth shortly after arriving to Holland as a negative one because the medical staff at the hospital did not take the time to help her understand what they were doing to her and just did it: "*The Dutch were learning with us, too, about how to host us and how to deal with diversity…. there was a lot of ignorance on a day to day basis*" (Vera 41).

Even in exile, Chileans always maintained a sense of solidarity with the country they left behind. Many exiles were part of Chilean solidarity movements abroad that sought to spread awareness of what was going on in Chile in an effort to support the fight against Pinochet's repression from abroad. Once Alihuen grew a bit older and could understand why his family was forced into exile, he joined the communist youth movement and started taking part in solidarity activities, such as festivals, concerts, soccer tournaments, that raised funds for Chile to overthrow the dictatorship (Antileo 26-27). At the beginning of the 1980s, there was a growing

rhetoric encouraging exiles to return to Chile to help overthrow the dictatorship. Having grown more and more passionate about the Chilean situation through his participation in the communist youth movement, Alihuen decided to return to his home country when he was eighteen in 1986 to help his fellow nationals combat Pinochet (Antileo 33). Ana's husband, Sergio, who was very politically active during the Allende years, also answered the call to return to Chile during the dictatorship to help overthrow Pinochet. Sergio illegally returned to Chile in 1981 with the help of the Leftist political party, MIR. Ana did not want to go back to Chile under the MIR's conditions because that would mean she would have to leave her children in Cuba and therefore, the couple decided that she would remain in Denmark to care for their daughters while Sergio returned alone (Soto 20-21).

Solidarity had been an extremely important theme and aspect of the Chilean political exiles' life both before and during their time in exile. Supporting others and representing disadvantaged groups was an underlying current in the life of a Chilean political exile that many times upon their return and after the fall of the dictatorship, former exiles continued working in solidarity programs with vulnerable populations. The second time Patricia returned to Chile, she earned a scholarship through the World University Service that paid former political exiles a monthly stipend to work in a non-governmental organization in their home countries as a means to support their reinsertion into Chilean society. Having been introduced to gender concepts and taken university classes in Women's Studies in exile, Patricia accepted employment at the Women's Institute in Santiago (Vera 45). After Chile became democratic, Alihuen left the communist party and started working with Mapuche Movement in Chile where he continues to work today. Upon return to Chile, Ana started working in the northern region of the country with poor rural populations: "this was something that empowered me, strengthened me. It was something very, very important, and since [working with rural populations] was not very developed in Chile at the time, I knew that I needed to help develop it" (Soto 29).

In his testimony, Roberto Kozak talks about how difficult the re-integration process could be for exiles upon return to Chile. He explains that, in general, *retornados* experienced a healthy return process, but there were many cases when they did not. For example, during the democratic transition, laws were passed that facilitated the process of bringing personal items from abroad into Chile, such as a car, by not charging exiles taxes. This law deepened the stereotype of the "golden exile" and created much resentment towards returning exiles that let to violations of their spirit and character (Kozak Interview). Claudio González, in his testimony, states that the first groups to return from exiles experienced extreme culture shock going from a more liberal culture up North to a more conservative one in Chile. In order to help combat this, FASIC created a publication called "Chile Return" where they outlined things to consider about reintegrating into Chile, in terms of culture, work, information about cost of living, etc. (González Interview).

Furthermore, Kozak describes how difficult for children of exile to return back to Chile as it was more of an exile for the children to go to Chile than it was a return like it was for their parents. For the most part, children's integration process abroad was a lot easier and organic, and it was extremely difficult for them to leave everything and return to Chile—a less developed country than the majority of the countries that hosted exiles (Kozak Interview). Gloria expressed how difficult it was to convince their daughters to return to Chile because they only had bad memories of Chile and the coup, and they had built up a good life at school and with friends that they did not want to leave Costa Rica (Cordero 30).

Memory

As outlined in the theory section, memory is an active process that is constantly being constructed and reconstructed through the act of remembering. Individual memory is not a phenomenon located solely within the individual mind, but rather within conversations of people discussing the past together, thus it is influenced by a social group's dominant discourses. The art of remembering is especially important for exile and formerly exiled groups as the attempt to understand who

they are, why they are here, and where they are going. Exiles inhabit a space "in between," a space that in territorial terms does not coincide with one particular country but falls between two or more countries. Therefore, exiles relationships with both countries are based on different and conflicting memories, loyalties, and expectations. Three features appear particularly important in *retornados* testimonies. Memories about the past (from childhood to young adulthood) result in a longing for their homeland that they experienced throughout exile. At the same time, Chile (as a nation) is being subjected to a political critique of what transpired before and after the coup. Secondly, *retornados* varying experiences with adaptation and integration into their host countries, as well as upon return to Chile, impact their life during and after exile.

The majority of the interviewee's fondly looked back on the their lives growing up in Chile while giving their testimony. Patricia recalls: "*my childhood was very poor, but very rich. I mean, I am telling you now and I tell my children and everyone else that we have a happy, very happy childhood*" (Vera 5-6). "*My father and mother loved each other a lot and spent fifty years together married and they always walked hand in hand…. my father never had a formal education, but he was an exceptional man in the sense that he knew a lot, held much knowledge, I'm not sure where it came from, maybe from other lives, but he was a master, a good master, a very good father*" (Vera 6-7). Victor laughed and smiled as he remembered his childhood in Santiago: *"[I lived in] a very beautiful pace because we had a park in front, where I used to go and spend time with my neighborhood friends…. They would have the Spring Festival there. I have many lovely memories "* (Rojas 2).

The coup marked a turning point in their happy memories of their past in Chile. For Alihuen, who was a young boy when Pinochet rose to power, he describes the day of the coup as the end of his childhood: "*It was like a nightmare that I started living…because we started seeing war—a bombing of that nature is a war action, almost conventional. The displacement of troops, the displacement of tanks, trucks, the military takeover in the city—they were things that were not at all in the mental*

universe of a nine-year old boy" (Antileo 8). Later in his testimony, Alihuen remembered how he used to walk all the way to the Mapocho River in Santiago with his brothers, which he considered to be a big adventure since he rarely left the environs of his neighborhood: One day "*we arrived to the Mapocho River, maybe fifteen or twenty days after the coup… and we sat down on the edge of the river and watched the current, and I didn't understand what I was seeing, I mean the objects that were floating down the river, and I didn't see, I didn't understand what they were until they passed by us and I saw they were cadavers of human bodies, of people. Then, when I realized there were human beings, I mean when I saw dead bodies for the first time, it was an absolutely traumatic event and I remember feeling like I was going to vomit…it was like a scene out of a movie. This generated a trauma in us kids because I couldn't sleep, I had imsomnia, I couldn't eat*" (Antileo 11).

The intense trauma Alihuen experienced first hand as a kid affected him for years because he was never properly treated with professional help: "*I believe that this was one error that organizations, including the Swiss government, committed by not having provided us [young Chilean exiles] with professional medical support*" (Antileo 21). As a result, Alihuen explains how it was very common for young Chilean exiles to experience problems with psychological problems, aggression, alcohol addiction, etc., because they did not know how to process their pain (Antileo 24).

Gloria recalls the day of the coup by relating the panic and military presence to what you would see in a "*Nazi movie*" (Coredero 17). When she arrived to her job at INDAP the morning of the coup: "*there was this atmosphere that many of [my co-workers] were ready to hide everything that we had done, like breaking political identification cards, posters, documents*" (Cordero 14). "*There was a girl that inconsolably cried. I was like, in a state of shock, but calm, like how I react during earthquakes, and I realized that is what needed to happen here. Not break down, no, because that's not healthy, that's not good*" (Cordero 15). "*The only thing that one could do was be a witness of what was going on and after be able to talk about it, talk about what one saw, what had occurred*" (Cordero 18). Gloria was referring to

serving as living memory of the traumatic events that she lived through in order to spread awareness of what had happened that day or else "worse things" could occur in the future if the past is not remembered (Cordero 18).

Throughout Ana's testimony, it is evident that she struggles recalling the past and oftentimes stops mid sentence saying, "I don't remember exactly how it went" (Soto 12). Her memory is slowly fading and it shows in her facial expressions and body movements during the testimony that she fights remembering because it is too painful. Ana did recall the days after the coup as extremely difficult since her husband Sergio was detained outside of Santiago in a city called Valdivia. During her interview she recalls living in constant fear that he had been assassinated until her father found out that he was imprisoned in the city jail after searching for him (Soto 11). While Sergio was released from prison months later and lived in exile for almost seven years with his family in Denmark, he returned to Chile in 1981 and was assassinated two years later. Ana returned to Chile without her daughters to bury her husband, but came to the conclusion years later that she should have allowed her daughters to participate in the "*death rituals*" because they would have been able to understand what happened to their father (Soto 25). The trauma that Ana and her daughters experienced before, during, and after exile led them to spend a significant amount of time in therapy to deal with their pain and memories of the past. When Ana and her daughters returned to Chile while Pinochet was still in power, her eldest daughter Luciana believed that it was her fault that her father had died and the two of them could not openly talk with anyone at school or elsewhere about what they were living because it was too dangerous—they could have been jailed or hurt (Soto 29).

Ana continued with her narrative and proudly explained how Luciana went on to study psychology at university and wrote her thesis on memory in Chile. All of the people that Luciana interviewed for her research mentioned that the one thing that is missing from their life that would allow them to live more peacefully is justice (Soto 33). Ana agrees that justice is also the one thing that is missing for her because

she has never been able to understand what exactly happened to Sergio. She tells of her frustration with the MIR and does not understand why they have not reconstructed that part of history: "*We want to recuperate this historical memory, and the lawyers know a lot about what happened, and I began to realize that they know more than I do, from all the recompilations that they've done. Yet, I don't know why those who are still alive from the MIR haven't, or at least to my knowledge, reconstructed it*" (Soto 33).

Over the years since the transition to democracy, the Chilean government, as well as the US government and human rights organizations, have and continue to slowly release classified information and documentation that help to piece together Chile's past. Gloria comments, "*as declassified documents come out, we see that there are still many things that have been hidden for fifty years—until all these little old people who were tortured die*" (Cordero 36). Alihuen relates to Gloria's sentiments "*there must be institution and public policies, but that is the challenge of those who want to rescue memory; to make and design public policies that have the power and ability to do this, to make documentaries, to make videos, to make testimonies, that is our work*" (Antileo 45). At the end of his testimony, Alihuen hopefully added "*there is a Museum of Human Rights and that is not a small feat. During the democratic transition, that was something unthinkable—unthinkable—and now that it is running, that it is working, may it have a social and cultural impact. The way I see it now, I am optimistic for the future, I am optimistic in the present. The future will be full of complexities and changes that our country needs and we need to do it*" (Antileo 48).

It is important to add that in her testimony, Veronica Reina, who was a lawyer for FASIC, said that the Pinochet government went to great lengths to conceal or exterminate all the evidence and documentation about political detainees time in jail and what ultimately became of their fate. Since she had access to political detainees files when she was processing their paperwork to commute their sentence to exile, her work proved essential in preserving memory through written

archives as all the files were saved at FASIC that had been destroyed by Pinochet's administration (Reina Interview).

Discussion

Through bearing their personal narrative, each *retornado* displayed the back and forth struggle that most exiles experience with wanting to remember and wanting to forget the traumatic occurrences they lived though. On a personal level, *retornados* face an individual struggle when recalling positive as well as negative memories of the past. By analyzing the testimonies, two prominent themes kept reoccurring as the *retornados* chronologically told their personal life narratives from the days of their childhood up until present time. However, their sense of solidarity and recollection of memories shifted drastically around three distinct time periods: 1) Allende's Chile, 2) In Exile, and 3) Upon Return to Chile From Exile. The analysis points to the dialectical tension that Chilean Political exiles exhibit after having lived a disaggregated and diasporic experience. The greatest shifts the *retornados* displayed derived from changes between moving geographical locations from the time period they lived in Chile, to then being forced into exile abroad, to their eventual return to Chile.

Since the Chilean coup occurred on September 11th, 1973, former Chilean political exiles have continuously inhabited a space "in between." In between territories, imagined communities, cultures, race, memories, which have challenged their sense of personal and collective identity, being partially Chilean and partially from their new surroundings. Much like individual memory is conceived from collective memory, individual identity can only be understood based on collective identity. A social group's collective identity is created with narratives and traditions that serve to give its members a sense of community and kinship. A social group develops and fortifies its sense of unity through the continuous act of reflecting upon and re-constructing a specific, shared memory. Thus, the past is collectively experienced and articulated through the process of remembering, that serves as a temporal

reference point from which a person negotiates and creates a viable individual identity out of their identification with a collective. As a byproduct of exile, *retornados* have developed new communities and forms of solidarity from their new locations in exile and upon return to Chile, which give new meanings of unity to their life. Throughout the analysis, it is evident that former exiles do not derive their sense of solidarity purely based on "nation," as a territorial and imagined community, which was once an important reference point and force in their lives, particularly during the days of their involvement with the national political project of Unidad Popular. Former political exiles' broken relation to their homeland has led to a break in their sense of individual identity and belonging as a Chilean.

The *retornados* individual struggle is representative of the struggle that Chile is experiencing at a national level in constructing a shared collective memory as Chilean society as a whole grapples with wanting to forget and wanting to remember the traumatic occurrences of the past. Furthermore, Chileans are still extremely divided along old political lines between the Left and the Right. Forty-five years after the coup, many Chileans are still at odds on how the past should be remembered, creating a "history war." Each side displays its own interpretation of memory of the past that stems from how they assessed its *accuracy criterion* and *usable past*. As discussed in the theoretical section, categorizing memory based on one or the other of its two functions could potentially suggest that they exist separately of one another when they tend to be deeply intertwined in the process of remembering. In order for Chile to construct a shared collective memory, as a result a shared collective identity, memory needs to be approached as a complex mix of meeting both accurate representations and usable past in terms of *functional dualism.* As determined in the analysis, memory may fade or shift with time as a result of competing memories, lived experiences, and may be forgotten or repressed due to brain or bodily traumas. Thus, a mix of accurate representations and a usable past in collective memory is in a constant state of negotiation. Regardless of its supposed accuracy, a usable past is imperative to create a sense of solidarity over time and space for any individual or group identity. Memories of Chile's past, on an

individual and collective level, are part of an active process that is constantly being constructed and reconstructed through the act of remembering. Therefore, collective memory only makes sense in the present.

Through analyzing the *retornados* testimonies, as well as Guzmán's documentaries, it can be concluded that modern Chile lacks a shared collective memory and that Chilean memory is an arena for struggles over the past. Ever since Chilean political exiles left their native land to go into exile, they have always played an extremely important role in pushing collective memory. Once abroad, they collaborated with one another, as well as with citizens in their host countries, to create Chilean solidarity movements in an attempt to fight Pinochet's oppression from afar. As discussed in the testimonies, exiles would organize solidarity activities by putting on marches, festivals, concerts, sports competitions, in order to to spread awareness of the human rights violations that were occurring in Chile and to keep their plight in the news so it would not be forgotten. Not only would such activities promote solidarity with non-Chileans, but it deepened solidarity amongst the Chilean exile populations as they came together for a cause they greatly believed in and listened to Chilean music, danced the Chilean national dance called *cueca*, and enjoyed *empanadas* and Chilean wine.

When the first waves of Chilean political exiles illegally and legally returned to their home country while Pinochet was still in power in order to join the resistance movement to end the dictatorship, exiles further pushed Chilean collective memory by coming together to fight for democracy and for the memory of Allende and the coup. Even since the days when Chile's transition to democracy up until modern times, former political exiles have served as a catalyst in the struggle to create a shared understanding of the nation's collective memory. Their presence alone represents a contentious living memory, which is why it was so difficult for them to secure work upon return to Chile, as people did not want to remember. They returned to a drastically changed Chilean society that had been erased of its memory throughout the dictatorship. The social amnesia that former exiles

encountered upon return to the country that they so longingly yearned for while in exile was a drastic shock to many and led them to feel like they were living a second exile—only this time within their home country. The testimonies and documentaries demonstrate how it was socially unacceptable and taboo for former political exiles to speak of their experiences for fear of being discriminated against or even hurt.

Conclusion

Over the years since the return of democracy in 1990, the call to create a shared Chilean collective memory by former political exiles, torture survivors, and friends and family of disappeared persons is increasingly being answered. Their struggles did not end in vain as Chile is progressively witnessing the creation of sites of memory across the country at former detention and torture centers, as well as the placement of commemoration plaques and monuments, that are being both privately and publically funded, giving recognition to Chile's traumatic history. One of the most important sites of memory, however, occurred with the construction of the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Santiago. It represents the culmination of 30 years of fighting for human rights policy and it created a space for Chile's collective memory to be publically and formally constructed through its effort to educate both the domestic public, as well as international visitors. It also provides a space for survivors and victims' friends and family to come together to heal and commemorate their loved ones. The importance of such a museum in the healing process of Chile's cultural trauma through the creation of a collective memory was expressed by former political exile and Chile's current and extremely popular president, Michelle Bachelet, when she told the audience to a standing ovation the day she inaugurated it: "There are images I did not wish to remember, but there are also people, good and beautiful, who, above and beyond all the pain and sadness, I always want to remember again" (Kornbluh and Hites).

Former political exiles have played a key role in serving as a catalyst in the creation of a Chilean collective memory. They have and continue to serve as a powerful carrier group that articulates the cultural trauma that Chile experienced in the form of a variety of narratives. One extremely important type of narrative is that of the testimony. Testimonies of former political exiles have providing a new tool in understanding the past by seeing and listening to exiles explain their story from their perspective and in their own words. The main institution responsible for collecting testimonies of former political exiles, as well as others involved in the fight for human rights in Chile, is the Museum of Memory and Human Rights. It has been and will continue to be a powerful new actor in the memory landscape of Chile. Testimony as a narrative, as well al the other various sites of memory, have helped to "crystalize" the collective memory of the dictatorship in Chile. It is only through the continued fight of carrier groups and key players, such as political exiles, who bring cultural trauma into the public realm that this process of "crystallization" of collective memory can continue to occur with the hope of one day providing survivors and victims' families with the reconciliation they are seeking to be able to live a peaceful life. Only then can Chileans successfully come together and overcome their traumatic past.

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