THE MODEL STUDENT:

MASCULINITIES AND MARKETPLACES IN CHILE, 1965-2005

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Abstract

This thesis examines the extent to which Chile’s conception of itself as an international “model” of economic progress—particularly since the end of the Pinochet dictatorship, but also before and after it—is related to how a series of the country’s writers and artists represented and questioned “models” of masculine identity and performance. José Donoso, Pedro Lemebel, Miguel Littín, Patricio Guzmán, Jorge Edwards, Alberto Fuguet, Carlos Leppe, Carlos Flores, Pablo Simonetti, and Roberto Bolaño deploy images of masculinity that intervene in—and alter—certain economic narratives conventionally understood to be structured around heterosexual, male protagonists. These narratives—all of which are built around the conventional wisdom that Chile’s economy, independent of how it was run and when, has functioned as a model to others throughout the past fifty years—include the modernization efforts undertaken during Eduardo Frei Montalva presidency; the utopian, socialist aspirations of the Unidad Popular; the dictatorship’s imposition of neoliberalism; and the discourses of “mourning” aimed to defy the economic premium placed on the present (to the detriment of remembering the past) throughout the “post-dictatorship” 1990s and 2000s. By showing how Chile’s conception of itself as exceptional enough to be an economic model to others can lead to the construction of literary and artistic “models” and “anti-models” of masculine identity that interact with (and question) its economic rhetoric, this thesis will argue—in a novel appropriation of the rhetoric of exceptionalism—that another, unsuspected paradigmatic aspect of Chile lies in the deployment of gender and sexuality to question economic models in its cultural production.
Table of Contents

**Acknowledgments**  
v

**List of Figures**  
viii

**Introduction**  
1

**Chapter 1. (Re)producing Modernity: Monstrous Masculinities in the Cultural Production of Chile’s Agrarian Reform, 1965-70**  
26

**Chapter 2. Utopia and the Art of Masculine Futures Gone By, 1970-1973**  
89

**Chapter 3. Simulated Masculinities: Dictatorship, Postmodernism, and Neoliberalism, 1973-90**  
163

**Chapter 4. Masculinities in Mourning: Sexual Teleologies, Postdictatorship Economics, 1990-2005**  
242

**Works Cited**  
310
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List of Figures


Figure 25. *El Charles Bronson chileno*, dir. Carlos Flores.

Figure 26. Film poster, *Death Wish*, dir. Michael Winner. Image from imdb.com.


Figure 31. *El happening de las gallinas*, Carlos Leppe. Image taken from Richard 1986: 70.

Figure 32. *El happening de las gallinas*, Carlos Leppe. Image taken from Galaz and Ivelic 191.

Figure 33. *El perchero*, Carlos Leppe. Image taken from Galaz and Ivelic 197.


Figure 37. *Prueba de artista*, Carlos Leppe. Image taken from Richard 1986: 75.

Figure 38. *Lo que el SIDA se llevó*. Photograph by Mario Vivado.

Figure 39. *Bacchus Amelus, New Mexico, 1986* (detail). Photograph by Joel-Peter Witkin.


Figure 43. *Das Männergesicht*, Lorenza Böttner. Courtesy of VDMFK.

Figure 44. Untitled photograph by Pedro Madueño (detail). Published in *La Vanguardia* (Barcelona), September 2, 1992.


Introduction

Modeling Masculinity and Economics from the South of the World

The Chilean economy has long been associated with the idea of the model: in a seemingly endless feedback loop, it is simultaneously positioned as both a neoliberal paradigm that Reaganite and Thatcherist economic policies in the metropolitan North Atlantic later followed, and as a “good student” that has rapidly assimilated those policies (first modeled by the North Atlantic and elsewhere). It was also held up as a model of a novel form of democratic socialism, under the government of Salvador Allende in the 1970s, and before that, as a model for the implementation of US Alliance for Progress agrarian reform policies. Meanwhile, since its return to democracy in 1990 after seventeen brutal years of dictatorship, Chile’s economy has been considered the very paragon of a balance between social democracy and capitalist development (Drake and Jaksic 12, Wisecarver 68, Lagos 199). This rhetoric of exceptionalism is a key aspect of Chile’s definition of itself. Many Chileans see their own country as a model economy, and others do as well: for example, former US president George W. Bush (in 2005) and US presidential candidate Herman Cain (in 2011) both cited Chile’s privatized individual retirement program as a model for one they wanted to implement.¹ Meanwhile, when Chile’s citizens elected Allende, then-US secretary of state Henry Kissinger worried about the influence of Allende’s win over the rest of Latin America (Kornbluh 80), and the author and activist Naomi Klein (2007) has derisively pointed out how the country is “still held up by free-market

¹ In a September 2011 article on the Mother Jones website, Tim Murphy analyzed Cain’s statements in favor of privatizing social security, and cited a 2005 article (by Barbara Dreyfuss) in the magazine that went into much greater depth on the matter when Bush invoked Chile’s plan as a model for what he wanted to do in the US. The two articles can be found at http://www.motherjones.com/mojo/2011/09/herman-cain-chilean-model-explained and http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2005/03/siren-santiago, respectively.
enthusiasts as proof that Friedmanism”—that is, a form of neoliberal economic management conceived by University of Chicago economist Milton Friedman and implemented in the Chile of dictator Augusto Pinochet—“still works” (103). In fact, in recent years the country has served as a signpost for what the United States might become: the privatizations, public sector reductions, for-profit schools and colleges, and de-industrialization currently being discussed and/or implemented in the US have already been undertaken by Chile.² Although many changes have had to take place over the last fifty years in order for the country to be considered an example both of the most unregulated form of capitalism and also of a particularly utopian type of socialism, throughout that time Chile has variously been represented—and has represented itself—as a “model” of both what to do and what not to do. Just as politicians and economists here in the north have looked to Chile as a model for policymaking, I argue that a closer look at a selection of Chilean cultural production that has deployed gender and sexuality to question the ways these economic models are constructed can serve as a different kind of model: a paradigm for similarly gendered modes of questioning accepted notions of economic thought here in the US.

Aside from the fact that one of the main precepts upon which this thesis is based is that Chile is consistently seen as an exemplar of economic management, the idea of exemplarity itself is rooted in economic thought—and pervasive in other, non-monetary discourses as well. Indeed, exceptionalism is often a selling tool: the unique aspects of a brand, service, commodity, or ideal

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² A brief perusal of the rhetoric of the 2012 US presidential campaign can serve as an indicator of the extent to which Chile and the US are dealing with similar issues: Democrats have criticized Republicans for outsourcing industrial jobs rather than keep them in the US; Republicans are seeking to cut the size of the government and privatize social security; and the Obama administration has responded to what it considers predatory lending practices by for-profit universities, which have also lately come under criticism in Chile (see, for example, http://ciperchile.cl/2012/08/04/contra-la-vision-fabril-de-la-educacion-%C2%BFuniversidades-con-fines-de-lucro/). For information about the way the debates are taking place in the US, see http://www.democrats.org/democratic-national-platform and http://www.gop.com/2012-republican-platform_home/.
are often put on display, by marketing departments or tourism bureaus or ideologues, in order to set it apart from its competitors. The rhetoric of the superlative—“The World’s Deadliest Spiders,” or “America’s Next Top Model,” for instance, to name a few programs on US television—indicates a logic of competitiveness that has long been key to capital. Still, the banner of exemplarity was also raised by the Chilean Left, as a way for Allende’s Unidad Popular government to gain international attention and solidarity from like-minded countries in the early seventies. Before that, too, Chile was held up as a model of democracy, having managed to sustain it (albeit mostly in a form restricted to elites) for a particularly long time before the Pinochet-led coup. Similarly, exceptionalism and exemplarity are discursive elements deployed by cultural and literary studies. Artistic, cinematic, and literary works are included in canons precisely because they “model” larger currents of political or aesthetic thought. Historical discourse points to certain “case studies,” whether documents, oral testimony, or other kinds of cultural products, as evidence to support the construction of larger narratives. To be exceptional, whether as a historical moment, as a work of art, as an economic system, or simply as a person, is to mobilize a series of rhetorical turns that are key to understanding how paradigms form and shift. This thesis will show how Chile’s conception of itself as exceptional enough to be construed as an economic model to others can lead to the cultural production of other forms of exceptionalism there as well, in the form of “models” and “anti-models” of masculine identity that interact with—and question—the country’s economic rhetoric.

Gender and economics have always been closely related to one another, as a number of critics have shown, and the rhetoric of the exemplar is one way in which the relationship

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3 Friedrich Engels is widely considered to be the first to discuss the interrelation of economics and marriage in his 1884 work *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, and since then, the imbrication of gender
between the two can be made particularly clear. As the reasons for which Chile was held up as a model of economic management changed over time, so did different expressions of sexuality—as manifested in art, film, and literature—fall in and out of favor. In general, the idea of a “model economy,” at least as conceived in Chile, is considered to be a gendered, and particularly masculine, phenomenon, in the most conventional, normative sense. It is no coincidence that Gabriel Salazar’s (2002) historical discussion of “hombre” in 19th century Chile is structured around the “patriarcado mercantil,” a class of men whose fortunes were very much entangled in the exercise of sexuality, in the form of marriage to women from “suitable” (that is, equally prosperous) families, and whose identities as men were interrelated to their roles as “providers” for their children and wives (18). This continues to this day, with discussions in the Chilean media of wealth controlled not by individuals, but by families and even dynasties, almost always headed by men—with recognizably “illustrious” last names like Angelini, Calderón, Yarur, Matte, Luksic, and Solari, among others—which “patrimony” is safely couched within what Judith Butler (1990) called the “heterosexual matrix” (7). From the perspective of sociology, R.W. Connell makes the connection between masculinity and the economy explicit in the study *Masculinities* (first published in 1995 and reedited in 2005), pointing out that although the

within capital has been the subject of work by such critics as Judith Butler (in *Gender Trouble* and * Bodies that Matter*), Lee Edelman, and the proponents of the so-called “affective turn” in literary and cultural studies.  

4 Salazar’s discussion of “manliness” is fairly narrow, excluding any mention of homosexuality until a passing reference at the end, in the context of the “masculinidad emergente de los niños populares del 2000”—a reference I will discuss in further depth in chapter four.  

5 See Hugo Fazio’s volume *Mapa de la extrema riqueza al año 2005* for more information about the distribution of wealth in Chile among a few families.  

6 In a footnote, Butler defines this term as the “grid of cultural intelligibility through which bodies, genders, and desires are naturalized. I am drawing from Monique Wittig’s notion of the ‘heterosexual contract’ and, to a lesser extent, on Adrienne Rich’s notion of ‘compulsory heterosexuality’ to characterize a hegemonic discursive/epistemic model of gender intelligibility that assumes that for bodies to cohere and make sense there must be a stable sex expressed through a stable gender…that is oppositionally and hierarchically defined through the compulsory practice of heterosexuality” (208). While this term is a useful one, the fact that Butler relies on notions of “hegemony” to define it indicates its problematic nature; I explain my misgivings about notions of “hegemony” vis-à-vis gender below, from which point I will use the term “reproductive arena.”
“market agenda has little to say, explicitly, about gender,” “the world in which neo-liberalism is ascendant is still a gendered world, and neo-liberalism has an implicit gender politics. De-regulation of the economy places strategic power in the hands of particular groups of men […]” (xxiii). There is a tradition of associating sexuality, specifically masculinity, with economic discourses that has been a very useful way of thinking about Chilean culture.

Still, many of these discussions of how masculinities are constructed in Chilean and Latin American literature are structured in similarly inadequate ways: on one side are placed the caudillo, the Guevara-esque revolutionary, and the functionary of the lettered city—among other models of maleness that are often associated with heteronormative sexual identities and practices—and on the “other” side are positioned models of masculinity that are supposedly less powerful, such as the loca.7 While such arguments are powerful, and often rooted in sociological and economic research, the ways in which heteronormative “models” of masculine wealth and power are disrupted by anti-models of masculinity in Chilean cultural production are much more complicated. This study seeks to show the extent to which many of the historical narratives that have been deployed to explain and critique recent Chilean cultural production, at least between 1965 and 2005, are not only masculinist in nature (feminist critique has amply shown this), but also often constructed in opposition to practitioners of non-normative male sexuality.8 The sort of economic “modernity” to which Chile aspired in the late sixties, for example, is one such narrative that imagines a heterosexual head-of-household as its ideal figure—perfectly positioned

7 Rubí Carreño uses the term “apeqenados” (2007: 125) as a shorthand term for this sort of “non-hegemonic” men as they appear in literature. Gabriel Salazar, meanwhile, discusses the military, clerics and businessmen as masculine “types” in his gendered history of century Chile (2002). R.W. Connell makes use of “case studies” of different kinds of men in Masculinities (2005), which types different masculinities into types such as “protest masculinity,” “homosexual masculinity,” and “rational masculinity.”

8 Such men may not even necessarily be gay: for the purposes of this study, they are subversive enough to be considered “non-normative” even if they have unconventional, dissident responses to reproduction. I will be using the term “queer” fairly loosely, in this sense.
as the protagonist of the agrarian reform that would more widely distribute prosperity and most effectively contain any sort of Cuban-style revolution; there was little room for any who would defy such an ideal. Meanwhile, to be an ideal (male) worker, student, or revolutionary in the conventional narrative of the “utopian” economy proposed by the politics of the Unidad Popular government meant acquiescing to a very reduced subset of heterosexual praxis. After the fall of the UP, the dictatorship’s authoritarian, family-oriented narrative for Chile clashed with its insistence on radical, neoliberal economic openness that brought a number of new ideas into the country—many of which were replicated in Chile in novel ways that contradicted any narrow ideas about heterosexuality. In the so-called “post-dictatorship” period, “mourning” has been a useful narrative to classify artistic and literary remembrances of those lost in the dictatorship: in the face of rampant capitalism that continuously relegates the past into obscurity, as with an item that has gone out of fashion, it serves to recall those (often men who were heterosexual and politically “palatable” to the point of blandness) who struggled against the imposition of that capitalism. This thesis argues not only interrogates many of the “models” of masculinity created in Chile’s cultural production, showing the extent to which they can be “queered”; it also contends that these models must be examined in the context of larger economic narratives, whether on the left or the right, and that those narratives as a whole can be “queered” as well.

Before I continue, however, allow me to address a key methodological question: why should this study only be about masculinities? I argue that masculinity warrants a closer look because the very term connotes normative notions of comportment, just as the term “femininity” has been shown to do. On its face, the term is a fairly neutral one: the Latin word *masculus* is defined as “male, masculine; worthy of a man.” By the 1620s, though, masculinity came to be
defined as “having the appropriate qualities of the male sex, manly, virile, powerful.” The interrelatedness of “masculinity” with these normative qualities needs to be interrogated in the way feminism deconstructed “appropriate” notions of “femininity.” In the Anglo-American context, Judith Halberstam made great strides in this sense: her *Female Masculinity* (1998) discussed how there was no need to think of representations of masculinity and femininity as tied to any particular gender. It would be naïve to assert that a focus on masculinity is to the exclusion of femininity, since, as Halberstam and many others have pointed out, the two are much more closely intertwined than we might think. Still, as Ben Sifuentes-Jauregui (2002) argued in his insightful reading of José Donoso’s 1966 novella *El lugar sin límites*, the tendency of some to “almost deliberately, sometimes unknowingly…confuse masculinity and heterosexuality” is “the result of a tautology so prevalent in Latin American culture” (106). I cite this as reason enough for an urgent re-thinking of masculinities in Latin America. It is this urgency that leads me to focus on masculinities here; however, in order to make my case, I will make broad and extensive use of feminist thought, to which my analysis owes an enormous debt, throughout this thesis.

Just as Butler makes the case that literature can expose gender performance as a copy of a non-existent, essentialist model, rather than as “prediscursive” (10) or “natural” (7), I propose to trace a particular genealogy of Chilean art and literary forms which systematically expose some of the seemingly fixed discursive models of masculinity as mutable and artificial. Not only that, however, I propose to extend Butler’s analysis to show how the interrogation of masculinities by certain Chilean artists and writers are inseparable from interrogations of larger, economically-oriented narratives of Chile as a model that have long been taken for granted. Although such

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dominant narratives of the Chilean economy may be held up as models to be copied by other countries at different historical junctures—narratives such as its approach to “modernity” during the late sixties, its theoretical and practical interpretations of “utopia” in the early seventies, its authoritarian machinations during the dictatorship and the diaspora that resulted, the “mourning” that had to take place once the dictatorship ended, and its orientation towards an as-yet-undetermined “futurity”—those narratives are no more prediscursive or natural than the performances of masculinity of those constructing them. In Chile, then, art and literature have offered an ongoing critique that, as this thesis will show, can clarify our understanding of how masculinities are inextricably linked to its economic narratives.

**Defining Masculinity in a Market Context: Identity v. Practice**

Many critics have sought to bring clarity to the idea of masculinity as a concept. As Gail Bederman (1995) and Robert Irwin (2003) have pointed out, the concept is difficult to define because the study of masculinities has been carried out in vastly different ways. At times, for example, critics have fallen into the trap of essentialism, defining “manliness” as “a culturally defined collection of traits, attributes, or sex roles,” that is, models of a “transhistorical essence substantially unchanging over time, rooted in biology, and therefore not amenable to historical analysis—or to human efforts to change gender relations” (Bederman 6). Other times, expressions of masculinity are examined as relative attributes, in which some men are seen as “more” masculine than others: a “hegemonic” masculinity,\(^\text{10}\) on one side, and a masculinity of

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\(^{10}\)“Hegemonic masculinity” has been employed as a critical tool by Connell, Salazar, Pierre Bourdieu (2001), and Rubí Carreño (2007). Connell, for instance, invokes the work of Antonio Gramsci to define hegemonic masculinity as “the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women” (77), and as “the successful claim to authority, more than direct violence...(though violence often underpins or supports authority)” (77). By emphasizing the fact that hegemony is a temporal
“weakness,” or queerness, or (at their most cliché) “crisis,” on the other. Irwin has summarized these two positions (essentialism v. relativism) in his study of masculinities in Mexican cultural production: masculinity “is at once an absolute category, the binary opposite of femininity, and a category to be measured in degrees and compared against the masculinity of others” (xix). Both conceptions are flawed, however, because they assume the existence of “prediscursive” and naturalized attributes vis-à-vis masculinity: the former ties it exclusively to “manliness,” while the latter assumes that it has to be either dominant or dominated. Still, the debate between views of gender as an all-encompassing discourse of essential identity rife for deconstruction (first pioneered, and then amended, by Butler12), and the importance of maintaining some traces of identity for the purpose of building identity-based alliances, is analogous to this conundrum in masculinity, and has served as a fertile ground for an ongoing debate13 that Nelly Richard (2008) succinctly sums up as follows:

La fuerza renovadora del feminismo como uno de los instrumentos más poderosos de la crítica contemporánea surge de esta tensión—nunca resuelta—entre, por un lado, la necesidad política de configurar identidades prácticas (relacionales y situacionales) para combatir las formas de subordinación y marginalización sociales que agencia la desigualdad de género, y por otro, el juego plural de las diferencias que se vale de lo

11 In a 2011 talk at Princeton University, Idelber Avelar pointed out the extent to which narratives of “crisis” in masculinity studies have become a commonplace among different critics (such as Connell) who have sought to define masculinity.

12 In Bodies that Matter, which was published three years after Gender Trouble, Butler makes it clear that in addition to defining gender as societally constructed, it is important to examine the material factors that determine how that construction operates, whether racial, classed, or otherwise.

13 See, for example, the treatment of identity in Simone de Beauvoir’s (1953) famous assertion that one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman; Patricia Hill Collins’ (2000) important work on black feminist theory, which complicates the “standpoint” of feminism with issues of race and class; Julieta Kirkwood’s (1986) theories of feminism as a resistance to Chilean dictatorship and authoritarianism; and Chandra Mohanty’s (2003) work on “postcolonial” feminisms that work in solidarity with more “first world” feminist forms.
ambiguo para fisurar internamente las oposiciones binarias (por ejemplo, la oposición masculino/femenino) y descentrar las pertinencias de identidad fijas y lineales (8).

While she is talking about feminism in this particular quote, Richard’s analysis, here and elsewhere, is central to my own thinking on masculinity. While I agree that the tension between situational identity and discursive identitarian deconstruction is, and should remain, unresolved, I propose that a more novel way of trying to define masculinity is to examine it not in terms of any particular characteristics that are supposedly proper to it—such as “manliness,” or “hegemony,” or (possibly queer) “powerlessness”—but rather in terms of sexual practice.

Thinking about masculinity as a practice rather than as an identitarian characteristic allows for a greater understanding of why masculinities and the economy are so intertwined, and why some expressions of masculinity are considered to be more or less normative, or subversive, than others. Participation in the practice of reproductive sexuality is almost always the principal factor through which masculinity is represented and categorized, in art and literature as well as in society at large, which is likely the reason for the “tautology,” mentioned by Sifuentes-Jauregui, conflating heterosexuality and masculinity. A focus on sexual praxis can break with this tautology, however, rather than reinforce it, and the idea of reproduction is key in this sense. Connell alludes to the “reproductive arena,” in which “sexual arousal and intercourse, childbirth and infant care, bodily sex difference and similarity” (71) operate as factors that determine the

14 The field of Chicana/o and Latina/o Studies has also been fertile ground for innovative ways of thinking about this debate. Paula Moya (2002) posits an identity-based theory that she calls post-positivist and realist. This involves, first, a “commitment” to the idea that people’s identities have larger referents in the outside world, and are therefore not simply discursive, or arbitrary. That which is “real(ist),” then, does determine (and limit) our experiences. Second, her theory involves the possibility of creating an objective idea about an identity, based on experience. Such objectivity, Moya admits, would hardly be free of ideological bias (which is why she calls it “post-positivist,” rather than positivist), and would actually be an ideal, always subject to revision in light of new experiences that might contradict or broaden earlier concepts of that identity.
participation in, and construction of, social spheres.¹⁵ Connell’s discussion of the reproductive arena emphasizes how states, markets, the law, and other institutions are ordered, and thus serves as a powerful factor that links sexuality with the economy:

state organizational practices are structured in relation to the reproductive arena. The overwhelming majority of top office-holders are men because there is a gender configuring of recruitment and promotion, a gender configuring of the internal division of labor and systems of control, a gender configuring of policymaking, practical routines, and ways of mobilizing pleasure and consent (73).

The reproductive arena is as figurative as it is practical, of course; Connell points out that it is a social phenomenon, and briefly discusses the debate about gays serving openly in the US military as an example of a “challenge” to the reproductive arena that proved the extent to which even the possibility of participating in normative, heterosexual reproductive practices was and is intertwined with state and market structures (73). Whatever “models” of masculinity a man chooses to follow, it would seem that his internalization of the most heteronormative models is only viewed as “authentic” when accompanied by participation in normative forms of reproduction.

The reproductive arena has been useful as a sociological trope, but I argue that it can be extended to the realm of cultural representation, in order to indicate the extent to which heterosexual reproductive practices (and their converse, Richard’s “practices of sexual difference” (2004)) are linked to the broadening (or deconstruction) of definitions of masculinity. Lee Edelman’s work (2004) is very illuminating in this sense: he shows how in art and literature, the figure of the queer—literally defined as a practitioner of non-reproductive sexual acts—is positioned as the antithesis of a political sphere whose rhetoric is focused primarily on the

¹⁵ Foucault has a helpful discussion of this process in History of Sexuality Volume I, in which he points out that sexuality inevitably enters into the realm of the public, because of the way that the realization of power relations which are present – “immanent” (Foucault 94) – in sexual unions continues to progress even when outside of private contexts.
“future” of younger generations. This rhetoric of futurity, of which Edelman gives several examples,\(^\text{16}\) is thus (for him) conservative to the extent that it “works to affirm a structure, to authenticate social order, which it then intends to transmit to the future in the form of its inner Child” (3, emphasis in original). Edelman positions the queer outside what we might think of as the “reproductive arena,” and shows why queerness is so threatening to the institutions that have been bastions of traditional models of masculinity, such as the military, the church, the political classes, and owners of the means of production. He does this by using art and literature, which have the unique power to represent threats to traditional models of masculinity on a much broader scale. Queer sexual praxis has the potential to threaten these institutions precisely because it comprises a rejection of reproduction, and thus the rejection of a future (generation) in which different ideologies propagate: in such a future, capital would remain firmly rooted in family-oriented “patrimonies,” and leftist thought would presumably be passed along to future generations as well.

As Edelman might predict, the more mainstream, party-oriented forms of Chilean politics—all of which have an interest in perpetuating themselves forward in the future, whether on the left or on the right—subscribe to normative ideas about reproduction. This thesis will show how certain forms of literature, art, and film represent normative masculinities in the form of reproductive sexual praxis that is imbricated in the dominant economic ideologies of their respective time periods. Miguel Littin’s 1969 film El chacal de Nahueltoro, for example—created in the context of Chile’s first wave of agrarian reform—blames the crimes of José, the

\(^{16}\) One such example is a 1996 letter by the catholic cardinal of Boston, Bernard Law, denouncing “proposed legislation giving healthcare benefits to same-sex partners of municipal employees,” since “such access to healthcare would profoundly diminish the marital bond” and undermine, in Law’s words, “‘the principal, and the best, framework for the nurture, education, and socialization of children’” (28-9). Edelman concludes, brilliantly, that this is a “fatal embrace of a futurism so blindly committed to the figure of the Child that it will justify refusing healthcare benefits to the adults that some children become” (29).
main character, on a lack of inclusivity by Chile’s economic sphere. It attributes José’s refusal to go along with the gendered expectations for campesinos—José kills the woman he lives with and her children, in an act that is both a horrible crime and a violent extrication of himself from the reproductive arena—on a system that never taught him how to properly “be a man” (and, in doing so, presumably marry the woman and serve as a father figure to her children). And yet, he is “tamed” to become a productive worker, in the context of the state’s prison apparatus, and held up, even when executed, as a model of reform. This constitutes a replacement of one kind of model of “modern” masculinity for another: an operation as contradictory as Chile’s aspiration to “modernity” in the late sixties, during which it tried to implement moderately left-wing socioeconomic and agrarian reforms in order to head off any sort of leftist, Cuban-style revolutions. In Augusto Pinochet’s 1982 memoir, The Crucial Day, meanwhile, the narrator discusses his daughter Jacqueline’s birthday party—held a few days before the September 11, 1973 coup that brought Allende’s socialist government down and led to the installation of neoliberalism as the economic law of the land—as a pretext for the conspirators involved to plot their attack, under the guise of attending the celebration. Pinochet’s role as paterfamilias offers him an alibi as he plans to make his conservative political and economic aspirations for Chile a reality: a stance that conjugates economic futurity and reproductive masculinity. Occasionally, however, even expressions of non-reproductive masculinity end up reinforcing conventional, reproductive politics: several stories in Pablo Simonetti’s 1995 collection Vidas vulnerables not only depict queer masculinity as complicit with foreign, market-oriented images of gay masculinity that became dominant in Chile thanks to its neoliberal openness to trade, but also look upon reigning structures of economic and patriarchal privilege there with favor and nostalgia, even when these structure are harmful to their gay characters. Although I will discuss
these works in further detail later on (in chapters one, three, and four, respectively), I invoke them here to indicate the extent of the urgency of focusing on artistic and literary representations of the praxis of reproduction as a central way of gaining insight into larger attitudes about the “ideal” logics of capital and politics.

Edelman’s advocacy for a total rejection, through queer praxis, of the public sphere’s dominant rhetoric of futurity is both overly nihilistic and also not as nihilistic as it claims to be. Edelman certainly does not discount the idea of leaving behind some sort of legacy; by publishing his book in a well-known university press, he is leaving behind a specular trace of his ideas that will certainly be available to future generations, even if said volume is titled No Future. Indeed, another major aspect of the linkage between economics and masculinity—whether or not the latter hinges on reproductive sexual praxis—is the idea of recognition; the “legacy” left behind by those who are positioned firmly at the center of the reproductive arena might come in the form of offspring and patrimony, but if queers did not desire to leave a (literary, political, or economic) legacy themselves, “crises” of masculinity, however clichéd, would never exist. The idea of a “queer legacy” might sound oxymoronic at worst, and vague at best, but the desire for recognition and legacy is one shared by all who seek to make interventions in the political and economic spheres while performing masculinity, whether or not that masculinity subscribes to normative practices of reproduction or mainstream political forms. In fact, I would argue that masculinity and reproductive praxis are, indeed, inseparable, and that it is possible—and even imperative—to extend the way we think about masculinities to include practices of non-normative, queer forms of reproduction. These practices may not be

José Muñoz (2009), in a response to Edelman, makes the case for a “queer future” in art and literature. Couching his arguments in utopian terms, he states that queerness is not yet fully realized; I will discuss his arguments in chapter four.
biological—Edelman’s intervention, for example, is discursive—but they certainly can be, as we shall see (in the first chapter) with Donoso’s unforgettable character of La Manuela in *El lugar sin límites*. And, once representations of queer performances of masculinity have appropriated reproduction, they can be extended to other spheres as well. So it is that, for example, the notions of “modernization” that pervaded Chile and Latin America in the late sixties—within which dependency theory, the Alliance for Progress, and agrarian reform were all inscribed—can be “queered” by representations of subjects from that period, such as the Jackal of Nahueltoro, who refused to conform to, and indeed exposed, the patriarchal ideals behind those reforms; the utopian visions of equality and socialism that dominated nostalgic longings for the Unidad Popular in artistic works created after its fall can be tinged with visions of gay liberation, as in the writings of Pedro Lemebel; and even Edelman’s ideas about queer futurity (or the lack thereof) can be re-thought to take into account the indelible legacies left by artists and writers whose creations in the aftermath of the dictatorship, such as the performance artist Lorenza Böttner. Reproduction is key, then, to all forms of masculinity: this marks a redefinition and broadening of masculinity that is both urgent and already long in progress.

**Times and Places: Situating Representations of Chilean Masculinities**

Just as more careful inquiry into Chile’s current definition of itself as a model economy reveals a longer history of such discourse than perhaps previously expected, a closer examination of literary and cultural studies of masculinity in Chile reveals that such gendered discourse has been present for a long time, despite the fact that many previous studies in this area\(^{18}\) have limited themselves to the postdictatorship era. This focus on the dictatorship and postdictatorship

\(^{18}\text{Although in the nineties and early 2000s such studies—including Avelar (1999), Richard and Moreiras (2001), and Blanco (2004)—were quite urgent, I am making the case here for a broader historiographical scope.}\)
has been quite a common method for a number of recent studies of Chilean cultural production not only because of a spike in the number of excellent Chilean writers, artists, and critics in the eighties and nineties—Lemebel, Ariel Dorfman, Raúl Zurita, Diamela Eltit, Roberto Bolaño, and Richard come to mind—but also due to the fact that the work these artists and critics did fell neatly into currents of thought and debates that were dominant in North Atlantic academic circles at that time, such as postmodernism, cultural studies, and trans- and interdisciplinary work. In fact, this allowed their work to function perfectly as “test cases,” or target texts, for these nascent critical theories—another way in which Chilean cultural production has served a “model” function.\textsuperscript{19} Lately, however, it has become increasingly apparent that the queer aspects of Chilean cultural production, particularly as far as gender and the economy are concerned, run much further back. Cristián Opazo (2009), for example, has uncovered a tradition of non-normative sexuality among male Chilean writers that runs back as early as Augusto D’Halmar’s novel \textit{Pasión y muerte del cura Deusto} in 1924 (89), and although Opazo’s work has not explicitly connected these expressions with economic thought, he does show how early cultural

\textsuperscript{19} Despite the fact that some have called the use of North Atlantic, poststructuralist critical theory on Latin American texts an imperialistic enterprise, or as the imposition of first-world feminisms on third-world contexts, Richard defends it. Some Latin American feminists, she states, “acusan al teoricismo metropolitano de corte postestructuralista de borronear las categorías de ‘realidad’ y de ‘experiencia’ en las que se materializa la dimensión político-social de la identidad en América Latina” (Richard 2008: 32-3): making the case, that is, that the “experiences” of Latin American women (in this case) defy the theories of the global north. Richard cautions, however, that this operation “contribuye lamentablemente a desactivar la necesidad teórico-política de que el sujeto-mujer enfrente la tarea crítica de re-articularse discursivamente a través de las instituciones de la cultura” (Richard 2008: 36, emphasis in original). She adds, too, that this experiential, non-theoretical praxis has implications not only for women, but also for Latin America as a whole: “La defensa de una corporalidad primaria como depósito arcaico de lo femenino proyecta un imaginario femenino del cuerpo-naturaleza que se hace fácilmente cómplice de la concepción metafísica del ser latinoamericano como pureza originaria que emana de un continente virgen,” (Richard 2008: 36), which in turn “deshistoriza el significado político de las prácticas subalternas cuyas operaciones de códigos reinterpretan y critican—hibridamente—los signos de la cultura dominante, desde el interior mismo de sus correlaciones y mezclas de poder” (Richard 2008: 38). Richard thus advocates for a type of feminist theory that takes Latin America as its explicit referent, but instead of focusing on any unified experience, it would instead focus on “diferencia(s)” (Richard 2008: 45).
production in Chile has modeled discourses of queer masculinity for later works. Rubí Carreño (2007), as well, has focused on both feminist and queer discourse in Chile, all the way back to such writers as María Luisa Bombal and Marta Brunet, although her analysis was more focused on the Chilean literary tradition than on the broader narratives—both economic and political—that have lent global implications to that discourse. Later, however, she wrote (2009) about how historicizing gender and cultural studies in Chile beyond the period of the dictatorship and post-dictatorship has the advantage of doing away with narratives of Latin American cultural production that are overly invested in stereotypical conceptions of state violence and other forms of “barbarie” that have dominated the lenses of Latin American literary criticism in recent years, particularly when practiced in the North American academy. In this sense, I subscribe to Carreño’s readings of modes of “self-representation” in Chilean literature: the works I examine “no solo son documentos de la barbarie sino también escriben la pregunta sobre qué significa crear y ser un artista o intelectual en situaciones en las que la ideología se hace carne” (2009: 15). It is my intention, then, to follow a more historiographically oriented form of literary criticism here, in order to more accurately capture the changing, and often ambiguous, forms in which representations of economics and gender have coalesced and come undone over time in the country’s cultural production. The works in my corpus have thus been chosen for their ability to expose how dissident practices of reproductive masculinity can expose the inconsistencies in the production of narratives of Chile’s economic tropes on the Left and Right, so many of which have been constructed around very narrow ideas about male sexuality. The figurative and literal images of masculinity constructed in the works under study—documentary subjects, characters in novels and films, bodies in performance art—interact with and question, through their very

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20 This has also been a preoccupation for Juan Pablo Sutherland and Fernando Blanco, who both created parallel “anthologies” of queer Chilean writing in 2001. I will discuss these in chapter four as attempts at canon formation.
“presence,” economic trends conventionally considered to be embodied by men conventionally-held notions of reproductive masculinity.

While the works I will discuss all come from Chile, this thesis is hardly an apology for any sort of national “unity” in the country. In fact, many of the works analyzed here were produced outside of Chile—the product of a vibrant diaspora of intellectuals, artists, and writers who found themselves thinking (about) Chile from far away for political, sexual, economic, or family reasons, and whose distance, both geographic and critical, allowed for particularly sharp observations. These exiles extend throughout the period of time under discussion here: many left long before the dictatorship (Donoso), some remained outside the country until Allende was deposed (Alberto Fuguet and his family, for instance), others were part of the huge wave of exiles forced out of the country by the laws of the dictatorship (Jorge Edwards, Dorfman), others were relegated to what Michael Lazzara calls “insile” (2002: 12), producing art within Chile but from the position of total political and cultural outcasts (Carlos Flores, Carlos Leppe), and yet others remained outside the country even after it was safe to return (Bolaño, Böttner). Still others wrote from positions that do not fit comfortably into any of those categories. Far from being the single “imagined political community” that Benedict Anderson theorizes in his definition of the typical nation (1983: 6), Chile’s cultural production shows it to be rather more like a patchwork of communities interspersed throughout the globe and throughout different artists’ consciousnesses. It is for this reason that I propose to organize the Chilean writers and artists here using economic, rather than nationalist, criteria.

Globalization has disrupted our way of thinking about local and national societies, as Néstor García Canclini (1999) has pointed out (26), such that some Chilean exiles abroad and elites within the country end up having much more in common with global elites than with their
own compatriots; but there are other reasons for focusing on the economy over the nation as well. The rhetoric of the economic model, so prevalent in Chilean critical thought (and so often either vaunted or deconstructed in Chilean cultural production), is the central idea that runs through the works under study here (and many others outside the scope of this study). It has, I would argue, largely overwitten nationalist discourse as the principal way in which Chile’s boosters have sought to set the country’s economy apart as an exemplar, and therefore as an attractive destination for investment (or, in times of Marxism, gestures of economic, political, and artistic solidarity). As such, Chile’s vibrant artistic corpus has both undermined preconceptions of the country as an insular nation and challenged the idea of the nation as the central axis around which it can be organized—setting this study apart from previous ones that have focused on masculinities and the nation. Meanwhile, the works in this corpus—all of them products of a diaspora of sorts, whether created inside of Chile or not—have been chosen because they mediate, critique, and interrogate not so much preconceived notions of the Chilean nation, but rather by exposing the oppressively gendered logic of its economic *grandes récits*.

**An Organizational Schematic**

Chapter 1 of this thesis, “(Re)producing Modernity: Monstrous Masculinities in the Cultural Production of Chile’s Agrarian Reform, 1965-70,” opens in 1965 because around that time, a number of factors coalesced to make Chile’s economy and cultural production more outward looking. First, implementation of the agrarian reform and modernization directives of the Alliance for Progress program came soon after the election of Eduardo Frei Montalva to the

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21 Here, I am thinking of Irwin’s study of Mexican masculinities and Bederman’s study of masculinities in US nation formation; this has also been, in the Chilean context, an ongoing preoccupation for Blanco (2001 and 2004: 50) and Sutherland (2001).
presidency, and Chile quickly became a model of good practices for the program’s execution throughout the region. Meanwhile, construction on the Comisión Económica y Política de América Latina y el Caribe, or CEPAL (known in English by the acronym ECLAC)—the cradle of dependency theory—was completed in 1966, making international economic thought increasingly associated with Chile. At the same time, José Donoso and Miguel Littin—the former abroad and the latter within Chile but in close contact with the international currents of world cinema—both created artifacts that would make waves in cosmopolitan circles all over the world. Donoso’s two novels, *El lugar sin límites* (1966) and *El obsceno pájaro de la noche* (1970), and Littin’s film *El chacal de Nahueltoro* (1969), are at the center of this first chapter for several reasons. Theirs were the first pieces of Chilean cultural production to widely circulate abroad that were not from the genre of poetry: although Gabriela Mistral, Vicente Huidobro, and Pablo Neruda had made Chilean literature renowned throughout the world, Donoso and Littin were cosmopolitan pioneers in new ways—the former as part of the “Boom,” and the latter in sync with the latest cinematic trends from Europe, such as neo-realism and the *nouvelle vague*. This recognition abroad—which gave their work added cachet within Chile, of course—provided the cultural counterpart to Chile’s newly prominent place in world economic affairs. Their work also showed a new awareness of more cosmopolitan gender norms as well, with characters that exemplified “monstrous” (in the sense conveyed by Judith Halberstam (1995) and Michel Foucault (2003)) performances of masculinity that queered ideas about normative, biological reproductive practices. This chapter, then, draws upon Marshall Berman’s ideas about the contradictions of “modernity” to draw parallels between these literary and cinematic models of modern (meaning, at least occasionally, non-normative) masculinity and the rise of the Chilean economy as a new hemispheric paragon of good practice and modernization.
Chapter 2, “Utopia and the Art of Masculine Futures Gone By, 1970-1973,” is situated in the era of the Unidad Popular government, when Salvador Allende took office and sought to further socialize the means of production, nationalize the country’s natural resources, and accelerate the “modernization” measures introduced by the Frei administration (by, for instance, deepening the agrarian reform). While all of the works discussed in this chapter are about this period (and some were created during it), however, they were all made public after it was over—in one case, fairly long after. Taking this temporal distance was necessary for several reasons. The works associated with this highly politicized—even utopian, as Frederic Jameson (2004) would put it—era all directly confront the historical legacy of the reining political system (as opposed to those discussed in the previous chapter, which took a much more oblique view of the way Chile was being run). As such, a historical distance allows for clearer analysis, as Beatriz Sarlo (2004) points out; this is particularly true in light of the short duration of Allende’s government. Meanwhile, reading works that had taken this temporal distance allows me to examine and critique idealized cultural perceptions of the UP, which seem to become more frequent (and more nostalgic, in the sense of the term conveyed by Svetlana Boym (2001)) as time goes on. To have made use of works published or exhibited during the period itself (such as *Ya no basta con rezar*, a 1972 film by Aldo Francia) would have meant engaging with a historical understanding of the era that was simply too immediate. It was with these factors in mind that I chose the works I eventually critiqued in this chapter: *La batalla de Chile*, the documentary by Patricio Guzmán (1975-9); *Persona non grata*, Jorge Edwards’ 1974 memoir; and “La noche de los visones,” a chronicle from Pedro Lemebel’s 1996 collection *Loco afán*. All three works simultaneously look backward with nostalgia on an era long gone (even shaping that era through editing, in the case of Guzmán); they also look forward to a utopia (or dystopia) yet-
to-be, idealizing (or critiquing, in the case of Edwards) the UP as an economic “model” that could have been. Similarly, they look with nostalgia upon different performances of masculinities that came with those futures and pasts, from the hierarchical dystopia of military discipline portrayed by Edwards, to the utopian preenings of the locas that pervade Lemeble’s work, to the revolutionary rhetoric and action of the guerrilleros and workers filmed by Guzmán.

In Chapter 3, “Simulated Masculinities: Dictatorship, Postmodernism, and Neoliberalism, 1973-90,” I return to Chile to focus on art and literature created within the country—rather than abroad, in places where artistic expression was much more free. As in other countries that experienced dictatorships, there have been many debates about whether the artists who remained in Chile or the ones who went into exile following the violent military coup that overthrew Allende and launched Pinochet into power (such as Raúl Ruiz, Antonio Skármeta, and Ariel Dorfman) should be the ones to define the cultural history of this period in Chile.22 Because of prejudices that Chile was “culturally dead” under Pinochet, as well as the fact that art created in Chile generally circulated very little beyond its borders during this period, less is known about many of the writers and artists who worked within Chile then. In fact, I argue that they comprised their own diaspora, challenging the idealized versions of nationalist rhetoric manifested in art created by those who were abroad, and confronting—on a daily basis—the often painful realities of the neoliberal transition. For this reason, my discussion of this chapter is structured around work that received little attention: the performance art of Carlos Leppe (1974-81); Carlos Flores’ 1984 documentary El Charles Bronson chileno; and Alberto Fuguet’s first novel (first published serially in newspaper form), La azarosa y sobreexpuesta vida de Enrique Alekán (1990). I might have also included the work of Raúl Zurita and Diamela Eltit (who were, 

22 One such intervention in this debate was made in 1990 by Eugenia Brito in her volume Campos minados; I discuss this debate in further depth in the final chapter.
along with Leppe, members of the *Escena de avanzada*), the film *Julio comienza en julio* by Silvio Caiozzi (1979), or the performance art of Lemebel and Francisco Casas’ emblematic duo Las yeguas del apocalipsis, but these artists’ work circulated much more widely, and even so, this misconception of the dictatorship as a culturally dead time has persisted, so perhaps discussion of other artists is in order. The artists I discuss in this chapter offer novel, nuanced approaches to balancing non-normative gender performance with authoritarianism, and denunciation of neoliberal economics with accommodation to it. Leppe’s work, the first performance art in Chile, denounced authoritarian censorship and sexual repression by invoking artistic production as a “reproductive” alternative to patriarchal ideals of male sexuality—and the economic thought that went along with them. Flores’ documentary parodied the precarious conditions of production for films in Chile during the dictatorship, but its subject, a Charles Bronson impersonator with (illusory, ridiculous) dreams of world fame, is a family man, and Flores’ earnest treatment of him ends up simultaneously celebrating normative masculinity (so prized by the family-oriented rhetoric of the dictatorship) and denouncing the dictatorship’s embrace of foreign mass culture (and the models of masculinity that went along with it). Fuguet’s novel—his first, written under a pseudonym before he gained greater notoriety later in the nineties—portrays a fantasy of a first-world Chilean economy (an ideal towards which the economic masterminds of the dictatorship were striving), but couched in a fantasy of escape from the patriarchal restrictions (marriage, respectability, and conventional family life) implicit in the actual (third-world) economy there. In addition to making unexpected and important interventions that subverted the dictatorship’s efforts to simulate (in the sense given to the term by Baudrillard (1994)) of Chile’s historical narrative as teleological, modernist, “Great Man history” (in the words of historian Steve Stern (2006: 174)), all three works represent different,
and unexpected, intersections between normative masculinities, queer sexuality, and authoritarian, neoliberal, heteropatriarchy.

Chapter 4, “Masculinities in Mourning: Sexual Teleologies, Postdictatorship Economics,” begins (and ends the thesis) with a question: can we think beyond a postdictatorship ethos of mourning (and the gender politics that go along with it), and move towards a forward-thinking teleology for both masculinities and economics? While the previous chapters focused on the power of practices of sexual dissidence to undo teleological narratives such as “modernity” and “utopia,” this final chapter places in its sights a concept with which both postdictatorship and queer theory have lately been grappling: futurity. Just as Edelman and José Muñoz (2009) have been debating the extent to which future-oriented public discourse is structured against practitioners of non-normative sexualities, I ask whether Freudian modes of mourning—the dominant political and economic discourse in the Chilean postdictatorship, which has tended to marginalize these sexual practices—can be cast aside in favor of a “futurity” that can take into account queer experiences of the atrocities of the seventies and eighties (something that politicized theories of mourning, in the Latin American context, have failed to do) and carry this spirit of inclusivity forward. It is for this reason that I turn exclusively to the figure of the loca in this chapter, as opposed to previous chapters, in which I counterposed representations of the interactions of heterosexually reproductive and queer, non-reproductive masculinities to interrogate different modes of economic thinking. Instead, I posit the loca as the fulcrum upon which will rest a utopian, yet-to-be-fully-realized model for representing how masculinities and economics can interact in Chile. In order to model different ways in which this mechanism can function, I begin by briefly discussing the work of Pablo Simonetti, whose short story collection \textit{Vidas vulnerables} (1995) represents very few locas, offering instead a homonormative narrative.
of the gay experience in Chile that whitewashes queer militancy and proposes a total complicity with the reigning neoliberal regime. I then return to the work of Lemebel, whose collection of chronicles *Loco afán* (1996) evades and nuances the mourning regime of the Latin American left (most clearly outlined by Avelar (1999)) by discussing the diverging perspectives of the *locas* that the left has occasionally tried to claim for its ranks (or denied, as necessary). Finally, I conclude by returning to the Chilean diaspora, with a remarkable series of stories about the Chilean-German performance artist Lorenza Böttner, reconstructed from *Loco afán*, Bolaño’s novel *Estrella distante* (1996), and a number of visual archives. Serving as a reminder (however inscrutable) of the potential havoc that politicizing the queer body can wreak, Lorenza points to an undetermined moment in which the Chilean economic and political spheres can be conceived as open, affective spaces that affirm masculinities in all forms, whether reproductive or not.

As this thesis develops, readers may get the idea that my compulsion to “queer” the large-scale economic and gender narratives of Chilean history since 1965 is more of an escape, or a negation, than a proposition. By seeking lines of flight from nationalist thought, facile definitions of masculinity and gender, and unreasonably exclusive economic structures, however, I am trying not to focus solely on the deconstructive powers of non-reproductive sexual praxis. On the contrary, it is my hope that this thesis will contribute, chapter by chapter, to the “reparative hermeneutics” that Muñoz, citing Eve Sedgwick (2003), proposes (12): a cultural history that provides a new outlook for the Chilean economy that takes into account, and welcomes, practices of sexual difference in all forms. This way, Chile—which, I argue, has led the way in global economic thought for many years now, for better or worse—has the potential to serve as a “model” for how representations of gender in cultural production can interrogate economic preconceptions, both in the United States and elsewhere.
Chapter 1

(Re)producing Modernity: Monstrous Masculinities in the Cultural Production of Chile’s Agrarian Reform, 1965-70

Introduction: Models of Masculine Modernity

This chapter is about how Chilean literature, film, and art acquiesced to and contested scripts of masculinity that manifested themselves institutionally, politically, and economically in the late 1960s. This dialectic of acquiescence and contestation could be found throughout the world in the 1960s, not just in Chile, which is why I will be viewing this particularly localized sexual and textual phenomenon through the useful (if problematic) lens provided by the worldwide phenomenon of “modernity.” Marshall Berman (1980) calls modernity the “maelstrom” of processes oriented towards an ideal of temporal progression, material progress, and transformation (16). This progression forward, however, always implies a rejection, a leaving-behind, the destruction of a past; despite its overall ethos of propulsion and transformation, there is always enough confusion surrounding modernity to make it often seem like “perpetual disintegration and renewal…struggle and contradiction…ambiguity and anguish” (Berman 16). The late 1960s brought a particular urgency to theories of modernity: the Cuban Revolution, the Mexico City student protests, the May 1968 uprising in Paris, the Prague Spring, the US civil rights movement, and numerous other important historical events all over the world had led to “an oscillating rhythm between annihilation and construction, between visions that led to destruction and those that adumbrated liberation on the personal and collective levels” as Diana Sorensen (2007) has said (3). Latin America in general, and Chile in particular, were hardly immune to the contradictions of modernity. Oligarchic regimes were being toppled by
leftist revolutions, and yet the rightist politics of the Cold War had a strong impact in the region. Meanwhile, OAS-appointed and US-supported “experts” and technocrats professed their intentions to oversee Latin America’s development in the most US-friendly style possible, and yet dependency theorists—in Chile particularly—argued for the substitution of all imports from abroad with national industries, eschewing the role of foreign capital in the development of Latin America. Eduardo Frei Montalva was elected to the presidency of Chile in late 1964 on the slogan of “Revolución en Libertad,” whose semantically contradictory nature reflected Frei’s intention to dismantle latifundia in Chile while essentially preserving class divisions there (Tinsman 84). Indeed, Latin America and Chile played host to particularly effervescent, if often painful, intellectual discussions about politics, economics, and aesthetics in the 1960s, although it should be pointed out that Latin American intellectuals had been debating between the respective merits of tradition and modernity for centuries.2

The Latin American “Boom” generation, made up of authors who in the 1960s managed to achieve distribution of their novels to an extent unseen by previous Latin American writers, grappled with the contradictions of modernity in a particularly Promethean way. Although there was “a shrinking of distances between Latin Americans and the metropolitan cultures,”3 thanks to the qualitative leap forward that Latin American literature had taken at the hands of the Boom writers—allowing for Latin American literature and other world literature to suddenly be “seen

1 The Argentine economist Raúl Prebisch was the main proponent of import substitution industrialization in the sixties, when he was the head of the Santiago-based UN Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), which is now known as ECLAC (or CEPAL, in Spanish). For more information, see Joseph Love’s 1996 article “Economic Ideas and Ideologies in Latin America since 1930.”

2 This is a topic that pervades the essays written by Latin American intellectuals about the formation of the nations that had sprung from colonies established during the Spanish and Portuguese imperial project. Examples of such intellectuals include Simón Bolívar, Andrés Bello, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, José Martí, José Enrique Rodó, Pedro Henríquez Ureña, and Sérgio Buarque de Hollanda, among many others.

3 Of course, although Sorensen (and Carlos Fuentes, whose 1969 work La nueva novela hispanoamericana she quotes when discussing this newfound affinity) does not make this distinction, she cannot possibly mean all Latin Americans, so much as urban elites within Latin America.
as existing in a ‘shared cultural present’” (Sorensen 146)—these same writers felt the need to square this literary “modernity” with a nagging feeling of having lost their sense of belonging to Latin America itself (Avelar 35, Sorensen 146). They debated between eschewing their literary affiliations to the smaller, more provincial intellectual circles in their respective countries, and to the novelas de la tierra that had preceded them,\(^4\) in favor of more cosmopolitan affiliations to each other and to non-Latin American writers—and contemplating the “patricide” that would ensue (Sorensen 147). In fact, as Sorensen and others such as Manuel Puig\(^5\) have shown, 1960s Latin American literary modernity was as much a matter of masculinity as it was an aesthetic and economic issue: the dialectic of forwardness and backwardness that Berman mentions can certainly include issues of gender.

Indeed, in Latin America and Chile, masculinity and aesthetic and economic modernity were inexorably tied together. With all the different (and contradictory) political and economic changes being proposed during the 1960s, some men would benefit and others would find their livelihoods in jeopardy; the revolution(s) at hand would break patriarchal ties among some men and create yet others. Many of the aesthetic and economic ideas being debated at the time were conceived within theoretical and ideological apparatuses—such as Marxism—that were also being used to effect comprehensive interrogations of previous conceptions of gender roles and binaries, and sexual identities and desires. Some feminist critiques of Berman have brought this contradiction into particularly sharp relief. Whereas Berman quotes Marx and Nietzsche’s idea


\(^5\) Manuel Puig parodied the masculinist nature of the Boom generation in a letter, quoted in 1991 by Guillermo Cabrera Infante, which suggested that the Boom writers’ anxieties about which literary traditions they belonged to were also related to anxieties of gender. He playfully compared the major figures of the Boom with forties movie divas: “Borges was Norma Shearer (‘Oh, so dignified’), Carpentier was Joan Crawford (‘Oh, so finery!’), Asturias was Greta Garbo (‘Only because of the Nobel flavor’). Rulfo was Greer Garson; Cortázar, Hedy Lamarr, Lezama Lima was Lana Turner, Carlos Fuentes was Ava Gardner (explanation: ‘Glamour surrounds her, but can she act?’) […]” (Cabrera Infante 184, as cited in Amicola 33).
of “modern man,” as in “‘the man of tomorrow and the day after tomorrow’—who, ‘standing in opposition to his today,’ will have the courage and imagination to ‘create new values’ that modern men and women need to steer their way through the perilous infinities in which they live” (23), Rita Felski (1995) is more skeptical. She points out that

…the exemplary heroes of [Berman’s] text—[Goethe’s] Faust, Marx, Baudelaire—are of course symbols not just of modernity, but also of masculinity, historical markers of the emergence of new forms of bourgeois and working-class male subjectivity. Both in Berman’s account of Faust and in his later evocation of Baudelaire’s flâneur…the modern individual is assumed to be an autonomous male free of familial and communal ties. […] Feminism has in recent years developed an extensive critique of such idealized representations of the autonomous male subject, arguing that this idea of freedom carries within it the seeds of domination in its desire to subjugate the other and its fear of a dependency aligned with the feminine (2, emphasis mine).

Felski goes on to show how modernity can and should also be identified with femininity (3-4), and I would extend her analysis to include the fact that modernity can also be identified with more marginal forms of masculinity. Hers is an extremely important critique, because if being modern means “to be part of a universe in which, as Marx said, ‘all that is solid melts into the air’” (Berman 15), modernity can bring about the interrogation of all fixed gender categories. Felski calls these fixed categories “idealized,” and this chapter will call them “models.” Felski’s work offers a valuable way to examine how different models of ideal masculinity in Chile, as outlined in its film and literature, “melt into the air,” to use Berman’s terms, amidst the upheaval of the changes occurring within—and beyond—Chile’s borders. The interrogations of masculinity carried out by the country’s literature not only question the link between masculinity and modernity; they also question (and redefine) masculinity itself.

Because of Chile’s status as a model of economic development to other countries within and beyond Latin America, the melting away of these models of masculinity in its art and literature, as well as the creation of new ones, had consequences beyond the country’s borders.
Indeed, the literature of the late sixties in Chile has as much to say about the phenomenon of modernity than Goethe and Baudelaire do: Latin America has always been a space of “idealized representations” (to use Felski’s terms once again) of economic modernity imposed from abroad (and, of course, disputed). Chile was nothing less than a “model” of economic modernity in the late sixties, in spite of—or perhaps because of—the country’s huge geographic distance from other sites of upheaval in the world. The US, at least, “looked upon Chile as a showcase for its new Latin American development and security program, the Alliance for Progress” (Tinsman 88, emphasis mine), and so a focus on the politics, economics, art, and literature of late 1960s Chile will prove to be an instructive way to examine these contradictory currents of modernity. Writers and artists there carried out interrogations of aesthetics and economics in parallel to similar artistic interrogations that were taking place throughout the world, but because of Chile’s status as a model abroad, these writers’ and artists’ constructions of gender, particularly masculinity, in this era had a particularly long reach. Due to historical circumstances in Chile that meant that men were largely in control of the economic apparatus in the 60s—even though, as the historian Heidi Tinsman (2002) has pointed out, this phenomenon was quickly changing—an examination of masculinities in the aesthetic and cultural production of Chile must take place in order to rectify, as per Felski’s critique, the tendency of “modernity” to elide subjectivities outside of narrowly defined versions of masculinity. My discussion, therefore, will follow Felski’s interrogation of how the phenomenon of “modernity” can end up essentializing and eliding aspects of gender difference, on one hand, but I will also follow Berman and Sorensen, on the other, who emphasize the implications of the constructive impulse of modernity, despite its occasional rigidities.

José Martí’s text “Nuestra América” (1891) is one of many examples of Latin America’s mediation of foreign “models” of development.
This chapter therefore opens in 1965, a key year for debates about global modernity: it was the year of a party at the house of Carlos Fuentes in Mexico City that José Donoso sets as the beginning of the Boom (Donoso 1972: 123); Che Guevara published the article “El hombre y el socialismo en Cuba” in March 1965 in the Uruguayan magazine Marcha; and Frei Montalva began implementing his ambitious agrarian reform agenda in Chile. All of these events, and others, would have a direct impact on the way masculinities in Chile would be redefined in the country’s literature and art. In particular, two of Donoso’s novels, El lugar sin límites (1966) and El obsceno pájaro de la noche (1970), and Miguel Littin’s film El chacal de Nahueltoro (1969), show how debates about Latin America’s, and Chile’s, economic futures in the sixties were inextricably tied to the ways in which different ideals of masculinities were counterposed. All three works establish symbolic systems in which different men hold different positions within a hierarchical system of masculinities: some “model” men hold sexually and economically advantageous positions in these hierarchies, and others do not. All three works, however, can be read as seeking to question these hierarchies, and the “models” of masculinity that they contain, even if they do not necessarily all subvert them. The masculinities they discuss also had major implications for the modernization efforts that Chile was making at the time: Donoso in particular, but also Littin, were exposed to ideas from abroad, so their works represent attempts to intervene aesthetically in the transnational economic and sexual debates in which Chile was participating.\(^7\)

The sociologist R.W. Connell (2005) makes use of the term “gender” as a way of ordering social praxis, in which “the everyday conduct of life is organized in relation to a

\(^7\) Later on, Donoso’s and Littin’s work circulated abroad and took on transnational implications, as the “models” of masculinity they exhibited offered high-impact interrogations of “modernity” throughout Latin America. One example of how this worked can be seen in the film version of El lugar sin límites (1978), which was adapted to a Mexican context. Another is Gabriel García Márquez’s 1986 rendering of Littín’s clandestine return to Chile during the dictatorship, entitled La aventura de Miguel Littín, clandestino en Chile.
reproductive arena, defined by the bodily structures and processes of human reproduction” (71). For Connell (as for Kemy Oyarzún (1996)), “gender is social practice that constantly refers to bodies and what bodies do […]. It marks one of those points of transition where historical process supersedes biological evolution” (71). Examining the masculinities that manifest themselves in certain works of 1960s Chilean art and literature in light of the reproductive arena will reveal how access to—and the potential for—reproduction often serves as a way for a (heterosexual) man to validate his economic credibility, both among his peers and before his bosses. Although dominant ideas of “modernity” were basically associated at the time with moderate capitalism, intended to stave off both feudalism and leftist revolution, they were also firmly couched in family-oriented rhetoric, and Donoso and Littin were interested in how the economic “modernity” sweeping Chile at the time could also challenge the reproductive arena. Indirectly, Judith Butler (1998) refers to the tensions between economics and the reproductive arena when she offers a response to those who complain that post-structuralism has moved too far away from its Marxist, material origins “to the field of cultural politics, where that post-structuralism is construed as destructive, relativistic and politically paralyzing” (34), as well as too focused on gender theory. Butler hearkens back to an 1884 treatise by Frederich Engels to trace the longstanding link between (heterosexual) reproduction and economic production, leading to “the presumption…that the normative reproduction of gender was essential to the reproduction of heterosexuality and the family” (40), to expose the heterosexism of Marxist “materiality.” Butler then questions these notions as “an effort to colonize and contain homosexuality in and as the cultural itself” (44), that is, divorced from the material, which in

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8 I thank Nicolás Román for bringing this article to my attention during his presentation entitled “Lo único que tengo en las tomas y en las poblas: El género y sus reescrituras poéticas a partir de Víctor Jara” at the Universidad de Santiago (USACH) on October 31, 2010.

9 The title of this treatise is The Origin of Family, Private Property, and the State (Butler 39).
turn is related to heterosexual, reproductive sexuality. My analysis of Donoso’s and Littin’s economic and sexual fictions is intended to extend her line of questioning to the Chilean context:

…how is it that suddenly when the focus of critical analysis turns from the question of how normative sexuality is reproduced to the queer question of how that very normativity is confounded by the non-normative sexualities it harbors within its own terms…that the link between such an analysis and the mode of production is suddenly dropped? (41).

By reconsidering the links between Marxism and the reproductive arena, Butler advocates for non-normative sexualities to be associated with the same notions of the material that normative sexualities are; that way, the connections between production and reproduction can be analyzed in new ways.

I am focusing on Donoso’s novels and Littin’s film precisely because of how their work both reflects and disputes the power of the reproductive arena to determine gender praxis in 1960s Chile; they offer glimpses into how the modernizing pretentions of the agrarian reform were not always structured around “normative sexualities” (although they mostly were). In this sense, Foucault’s discussion of “abnormality,” particularly in light of his writings on monstrosity, is a helpful way to examine the ways in which models of “abnormal” masculinity sometimes occlude models of “reproductive” masculinities in Donoso’s and Littin’s work that hold pretensions to modernity. In Abnormal (2003), the title of a series of lectures at the Collège de France from 1974 to 1975, Foucault outlined the genealogy of the title term through the 18th and 19th centuries as a way of hygienically classifying people within social and gendered spaces; his analysis is particularly germane to my work because he defines abnormality as the deviation from accepted praxes of reproduction (Foucault 55-59). Foucault’s model of abnormality par excellence is the monster: the product of “the blending, the mixture of two species […]. It is the mixture of two sexes….the transgression of natural limits, the transgression of classifications, of the table, and of the law as table: this is actually what is involved in monstrosity” (Foucault 63,
The monster is what is produced when two elements combine in a deviant way, says Foucault—a concept rooted in reproduction. He then goes on to show how the monster can both be “deviant” and also challenge the idea of what is deviant, a concept he calls “tautological intelligibility”:

…the monster is, so to speak, the spontaneous, brutal, but consequently natural form of the unnatural. It is the magnifying model, the form of every possible little irregularity exhibited by the games of nature. In this sense…the monster is the major model of every little deviation. It is the principle of intelligibility of all the forms that circulate as the small change of abnormality. […] Paradoxically, the monster is a principle of intelligibility in spite of its limit position as both the impossible and the forbidden. And yet this principle of intelligibility is strictly tautological, since the characteristic feature of the monster is to express itself as, precisely, monstrous, to be the explanation of every possible deviation that may derive from it, but to be unintelligible itself (Foucault 56-7, emphasis mine).

Foucault points out the power of abnormality in general, and the monster in particular, to generate meaning and transgress institutions structured around more normative sexualities (institutions such as Chile’s agrarian reform). In fact, he later goes on to say that the root of monstrosity lies in the sexual union of two disparate elements: “the monster is said to be a being in which the mixture of two kingdoms can be seen […]. We look for a breach of human and divine law in the progenitors…for fornication between a human individual and an animal” (Foucault 64). This is a concept echoed by Judith Halberstam in her book Skin Shows (1995), in which she examines monsters in Gothic novels (although her analysis can be extended beyond the body of work she analyzes, since, as she points out, “the novel is always Gothic” (11)):

“Monsters are meaning machines” (Halberstam 21). By condensing “various racial and sexual threats to nation, capitalism, and the bourgeoisie in one body” (Halberstam 3, emphasis mine), the literary and artistic monsters of Chile (and Latin America) are “models” of all challenges to the economic modernity so desired by the architects of the country’s agrarian reform, as well as by Boom writers who sought to shift their literary focus away from their more “autochthonous”
Latin American forefathers to more cosmopolitan shores. This is why—particularly in Donoso’s two novels, but also in Littin’s film—the reproductive arena figures so prominently as a space in which disputes for dominance among different “models” of masculinity take place. The “powerful” (Foucault 26) process of designating abnormal individuals and then attempting to “normalize” abnormality (with, of course, varying degrees of success) is, for Foucault, the mark of that society’s achievement of what he calls “synthesis” (15), “transformation” (75), and “transition” (110), if not modernity.

Read along with Foucault’s, Butler’s, and Halberstam’s work, Connell’s concept of the reproductive arena will serve here as a tool to read into the hierarchies of masculinity put forth and deconstructed by the art and literature of late 1960s Chile. A look into who participated in the reproductive arena, who was excluded, and how it structured the narrative fields of the works in question here will provide a valuable supplement to a reading of each of the three works under discussion here as critiques of the decidedly semi-feudal economic system10 that existed at the time. Sexual reproduction, aesthetic conceptions, and economic modernity are all factors that influenced how the works in question here critique the men who propped up Chile’s economic system and prevented it from transitioning to modernity. Like the Frei Montalva government itself, these works advocate for change without calling for the total dismantlement of the economic systems in place since the colonial period.11 At the same time, however, some of the changes for which they advocate can be read as more radical than even the most unorthodox economic upheavals underway in Cuba. In short: their respective critiques look ahead to a more progressive future while stopping short of arguing for the total destruction of the past, but they

10 Emir Rodríguez Monegal (1967), for example, referred to the settings of Donoso’s novels Coronación, Este domingo and El lugar sin límites as “semi-feudal” (77).
11 Gabriel Salazar (2002) talks about how the early uprisings of criollos against the Spaniards in Chile were engineered primarily by “jefes de familia (‘mayorazgos,’ en el siglo XIX) que controlaban a su vez poderosos intereses mercantiles” (17).
also question the correspondence between modernity and any ideas of masculinity that follow the
facile hierarchies established by the reproductive arena.

**Historical Background: The Agrarian Reform in the Context of the Reproductive Arena**

In 1960s Chile, intellectual debates about modernity turned to the countryside. Tinsman
and others have thoroughly examined how different think tanks and politicians at the time held
up the idea of agrarian reform as a way of ameliorating the widespread exploitation that had
taken place until then in the rural areas of Chile. María Antonieta Huerta (1989) has stated that
the reform “era considerada como requisito para poder concertar un desarrollo económico
equilibrado” (186) between Chile’s cities and its countryside. Indeed, there was a growing
awareness of the fact that the cultural distance between urban and rural cultures in Chile was
unsustainably vast. For a series of articles that Donoso himself wrote as a correspondent for the
Chilean periodical *Ercilla* in the early sixties, he visited many remote, rural parts of the country,
describing the dismal conditions of campesinos and other marginal figures and exhorting the
central government to intervene to improve their living and working conditions. In a 1963 article
about the southern town of Yumbel, Donoso denounces the state for the fact that “no hay huella
de bienestar, y poca de progreso en Yumbel” (Donoso 2004: 288). Later that same year, he
covered a summit between Mapuche chiefs and government and church authorities held near the
southern Chilean city of Osorno. There, he issues a specific condemnation of the central
government’s lack of involvement in the countryside: “el gobierno hasta ahora, no había ofrecido
ayuda técnica a los mapuches para trabajar sus tierras. La necesidad los hizo talar sus bosques,
empobreciendo así sus posibilidades. […] Hay miseria, hambre y desesperanza” (Donoso 2004:
Donoso, despite being a member of Chile’s most elite class, was acutely aware of the pockets of economic backwardness in Chile’s countryside. Many of the themes in these early articles recur in the novels he wrote towards the latter half of the sixties. Social scientific texts of the period, meanwhile, examined these issues from a different perspective: Tinsman summarizes a 1965 study conducted by sociologist Laura Collantes that “described relationships between rural men and women as a ‘pre-human world of frustration and ignorance,’” a view that “reflected mid-twentieth-century attitudes held by most sectors of Chile’s upper and middle classes” (55).

While Chile’s national imaginary has always prominently featured rural elements—evidence of which is the fact that Chilean urban slang continues to be peppered with rural vocabulary—a vast cultural, economic and aesthetic gap existed between the countryside and the city in the 1960s, since up until the agrarian reform, rural economies had developed fairly autonomously from the capital (Pinto 109-110).

At stake in these intellectual and aesthetic debates, then, were not only questions about how to modernize Chile’s countryside and make Chilean art and literature more cosmopolitan, but also changing ideas about masculinities: as Sorensen states in her discussion of Donoso’s account of the Boom, Donoso and his contemporaries were intent on moving away from representations of chauvinism and machismo that had characterized the “autochthonous” men of Latin America in previous novels, particularly ones that focused on oligarchic, rural elites, in

12 Interestingly, La desesperanza was the title of a novel Donoso published in 1986, which was also critical of the government at the time.
13 Tinsman points out that Collantes’ study, despite having “pathologized the rural poor,” offers “a unique view of campesino lives through her attention to gender relations and sexual practice” (56).
14 For an exhaustive gloss of Chilean slang and its rural etymologies, see Chilenismos: A Dictionary and Phrasebook for Chilean Spanish (2005).
15 The oligarchic elite man was a common character in all of Latin American literature, particularly in the novelas de la tierra (Aves sin nido, Doña Bárbara, and La vorágine, to name a few). Curiously, Donoso, despite having professed in his autobiographical writings a desire to break with the previous tradition of rural Latin American novels, created two extremely memorable patrones de fundo: Jerónimo de Azcoitia (in El obsceno pájaro de la noche) and Alejandro Cruz (in El lugar sin límites).
favor of more “international” characters (148). Tinsman, meanwhile, has shown that the agrarian reform hinged upon nationwide government campaigns to bolster *campesino* men’s senses of patriarchal authority. While this is not to say that the Chilean government and the country’s artists necessarily had the same political goals—Donoso’s critique of the government is proof of that—Chile’s agrarian reform was still the institutional, economic, and political motor propelling a number of innovative aesthetic collisions of the urban with the rural that changed what it meant to be both “masculine” and “modern;” it thus bears some investigation.

When Frei Montalva assumed the presidency of Chile, he immediately began to implement reforms aimed at achieving some semblance of “modernity” in Chile; these reforms would be primarily agrarian, although he enacted many others as well. Since its independence from Spain, Chile had become a territory in which a large amount of land was held by very few: according to the national agricultural census of 1965, 80% of the country’s irrigable land was concentrated in 7.5% of the number of rural property titles in existence (Pinto 110). In a country where agriculture and mining were (and continue to be) the two main industries, these numbers amounted to major social inequality. In order to ameliorate this situation, reform would have to first take place in the countryside. Tinsman writes, for example, about how DESAL (Center for Economic and Social Development for Latin America), a think-tank associated with Frei’s own Christian Democratic party, saw agrarian reform as key to Chile’s entry into modernity:

> These Catholic reformers embodied the ascendancy of nationalist technocrats who, although mostly self-defined as anti-Marxist, shared the Left’s view of the state as the engine of modernization as well as the premise that economic development and social justice required a significant structural overhaul, including land reform. They also agreed

16 Frei presided over the groundbreaking of construction of the underground Santiago Metro system, the construction of the new Santiago airport in the district of Pudahuel, the extension of the train to the city of Puerto Montt, and many other important projects for Chile’s development. See Luis Moulián, *Eduardo Frei M. (1911-1982): Biografía de un estadista utópico* (2000).
with the Left’s view of latifundia as a feudal institution and a source of national underdevelopment (89-90).

The Chilean government, under pressure to avoid a Chilean version of the Cuban Revolution,\(^\text{17}\) sought to carry out an agrarian reform that would place agricultural land in the hands of more Chileans, while trying not to disrupt the class hierarchies that had been in place there since time immemorial. The US was particularly concerned about the socialist Salvador Allende, Frei’s closest competitor in the 1964 election, and thus poured money into Frei’s campaign as a moderate option:\(^\text{18}\) not leftist enough to be Marxist, but not rightist enough to ignite any popular revolutionary ferment against him and what he represented.

As per the Punta del Este Charter—signed by all Latin American countries except Cuba—that established *La Alianza para el Progreso*, Latin American countries were tasked in 1961 with drafting ten-year development and capital investment plans. The United States agreed to help subsidize the execution of those plans once they were approved by an inter-American board of experts.\(^\text{19}\) Tinsman has a particularly telling passage about Alliance for Progress ideologues’ plans to “create Midwestern-style family farms as the foundation of healthy capitalist development and lasting social peace” (89), which indicates to what extent the US was interested in creating Latin American countries in its own image and likeness. The Chilean government had made some modest strides to enact an agrarian reform before Frei’s election: Jorge Alessandri, the president of Chile from 1958 to 1964, had already signed on to the Punta del Este Charter (Montaldo 185), committing Chile to agrarian reform, and a modest reform

\(^\text{17}\) Sorensen writes about the fact that the Cuban Revolution represented “a kind of exemplarity whose efficacy can be detected in the political and cultural stance of the Latin American sixties” (20).

\(^\text{18}\) According to Ricardo Yocelevsky (1987), the CIA was, directly or indirectly, the source of more than half of the funding for Frei Montalva’s presidential campaign (139), including literature and assorted pamphlets that invoked the threat of communism if Frei were to lose the election.

\(^\text{19}\) For more information about this process, see Peter Smith’s study *Talons of the Eagle: Dynamics of U.S.-Latin American Relations* (1999).
began in 1962. This reform was so modest, however, that it came to be popularly known the “flowerpot reform” (Pinto 110): political resolve on the part of the Alessandri administration to make the reform a lasting one was lacking.\textsuperscript{20} It was during Frei Montalva’s presidency that agrarian reform gathered more momentum.\textsuperscript{21} The Agrarian Reform Law (no. 16,640) of 1967 declared that all plots of land with over 80 hectares of “basically irrigable” land could be expropriated, and then Law no. 16,625, passed the same year, allowed for campesinos to unionize (Pinto 111).

Not surprisingly, Frei Montalva’s agrarian reform laws were as tinged with gender implications as they were economically sweeping. For Tinsman, the ensuing unionization of the countryside, a campaign focused primarily on married inquilinos,\textsuperscript{22} is key to understanding the relationship between notions of masculinity rooted in the reproductive arena and Chile’s economic development. Married inquilinos were, for Christian Democratic labor organizers, ideal candidates to join campesino unions because their “sexual access to female bodies defined their masculine integrity” (118). A man with “masculine integrity” would be best able, the logic followed, to stand up to the boss of the fundo: the patrón. Unmarried inquilinos, meanwhile, were more likely to be viewed with suspicion by both labor unions and potential employers, in part because of this lack of “sexual access” to female bodies; Tinsman states that men who refused to unionize were derided as “maricones (faggots)” (97), and she does not even discuss

\textsuperscript{20} Chile’s first agrarian reform law (no. 15,020) was passed “bajo el persuasivo y combinado influjo de la Revolución cubana, de la radicalización social que de ella se derivó, y de la política estadounidense de la Alianza para el Progreso” (Pinto 110) rather than out of a true impetus for reform within the government.

\textsuperscript{21} As Pinto points out: “El ritmo expropiatorio y modernizador se agilizó significativamente bajo el gobierno demócrata cristiano de Eduardo Frei Montalva, uno de cuyos principales compromisos programáticos era justamente profundizar y consolidar las transformaciones del sector [agro]” (111).

\textsuperscript{22} Tinsman explains the inquilinaje system as a “labor arrangement that tied campesinos in semipeonage to estates in return for rights to land” (21) which dated back to colonial times and “shaped all labor arrangements on the estate” (24). Married inquilinos—99% of all inquilinos were male in 1964 (Tinsman 26)—were the principal target of state unionization efforts because they predominated on the large estates, given the employers’ logic that “workers with families were more loyal and manageable” (Tinsman 35).
the roles of actual homosexuals in the agrarian reform efforts. In addition to the “civilizing mission” of the unions, which “would replace depraved practices with moral behavior, barbarity with citizenship” (Tinsman 85), the unionization campaign was conducted in a way that placed the patriarchal roles of men at the forefront, to reconstitute “men’s authority within the campesino family” in order for them to feel manly enough to “stand up to the boss” (Tinsman 95). According to this logic, “union activism required the essentially masculine traits of toughness, courage, and risk taking,” and “[u]nion machismo differentiated acceptable from unacceptable manly behavior within a bipolar sexual economy of dominance and submission in which adequate masculinity was positively associated with exerting power over someone else” (Tinsman 97). The married inquilino was the ideal type of man who would be able to carry the agrarian reform to fruition, thanks in large part to his access to the reproductive arena, which placed him within a hierarchy that relegated others to the margins of unionization efforts.

The state’s economic policies soon became agents of direct intervention in the administration and possession of Chile’s rural enclaves—and in the formation of new norms about masculinity that would challenge the previous economic dominance of the patrón. The increasing encroachment of the state upon the rural countryside in the late 1960s had a profound impact in a number of spheres. Gradually, isolated rural enclaves—and the types of masculinity that had predominated there—saw themselves affected by increasing changes mandated by urban governments, themselves subject to international political and economic pressure. The ground that was ceded, though, was hardly done out of any sense of social justice, but rather, to improve the governance of the so-called “bajo pueblo,” that is, to avoid revolt, and to meet “el desafío pendiente de superar el estancamiento del (primitivo) capitalismo mercantil chileno” (Salazar 54). The two novels by Donoso, and the film by Littin, chronicle this encroachment of the state
into the backlands of Chile, and the implications that this encroachment would have for the way masculinities were defined throughout the country—and beyond.

The thornily contradictory issue of cosmopolitan intellectuals confronting the backward nature of the countryside has vexed Latin American thinkers throughout the 20th century. Aside from the social science-oriented examples given by Tinsman of Collantes, ECLA, DESAL, and the OAS, interventions on this topic have been made by Ricardo Flores Magón in Mexico (1912), the Peruvian intellectual José Carlos Mariátegui (1928), Jacques Chonchol in Chile (1965), and Florencia Mallon in the US (1995), all of whom have pointed out the problematic position of the campesino: they can be the subjects of literature and other writing about the land, but they can never write it themselves.23 Donoso’s and Littin’s interventions attempt to address this complex situation, and as such, they were part of a much larger current of thought on this topic. Donoso’s journalistic accounts of the Chilean countryside are, as mandated by convention, not about the journalist at all, but he does take enough distance from the events and people he observes to voice his disapproval of the horrible living conditions there, as mentioned above. Littin, on the other hand, was much more skeptical about any distances that existed between him and the rural countryside he represented in his films. Perhaps because he was born not in Santiago but in Palmilla, in rural southern Chile, he asserted his authorization to represent campesinos in his films because he felt that was one himself: “Hay un ritmo interno, sobre todo en el campesino. Y soy campesino, en verdad. Entonces conozco ese mundo como desde adentro. No es que lo conozca, es que lo siento” (Littin and Santa María 34). Even though by the age of 17 he was living and studying in Santiago, and was working as a television director by the age of 21 (Littin 1974: 4), Littin’s response to what Mallon calls “the contradictory role of

23 I thank Susana Draper for this insight.
intellectuals, both as mediators and enforcers…of a hegemonic ‘official story’” (278-9) of the Latin American countryside is to position himself as both cosmopolitan and campesino at the same time. In general, the perspective of Chilean cultural production towards “the problem of the land,” to use Mariátegui’s term, was as contradictory in the sixties as the overarching discourse of modernity that pervaded Latin America at the time. Meanwhile, as I shall make clear below, this intellectual discourse about the land was not exempt of gender implications in Chile, particularly under the watchful eyes of Donoso and Littin.

In general, the 1960s were a time in which traditional and “modern” ideas about masculinity and femininity in Chile engaged in a rich dialectic of utopian longing and apocalyptic destruction, tinged with the urgency of revolution. Chilean art and literature, in this sense, were in line with a theme that was common throughout the world during the latter half of the 1960s, as José Amícola (2006) and others have shown. Amícola places El lugar sin límites, in particular, in the larger context of the social and gender liberation movements of the 1960s, as un documento único sobre la representación de las diferencias sexuales en Latinoamérica en el momento alrededor del “motín de Stonewall” (1969), que es considerado…una divisoria de aguas para la vieja concepción esencialista de la homosexualidad según se lo ve en los estudios de las áreas llamadas ahora provocativamente gay y queer (24, emphasis in original).

In fact, Amícola calls the 1978 film version of the short novel, directed by Arturo Ripstein in Mexico but written by Manuel Puig,24 “un caso único de internacionalismo latinoamericano” (25)—a collaborative effort between a Chilean novelist, an Argentine screenwriter, and a Mexican director. Littín, meanwhile, was strongly influenced by Italian neorealist directors like Francesco Rosi (Mouesca 91, Ruffinelli 2010: 94). Donoso, meanwhile, had studied at Princeton

24 Puig’s name does not appear in the credits of Ripstein’s film, apparently because of a dispute with Ripstein over the adaptation (Amicola 28), but, as Amícola writes, “[l]os manuscritos de ese guión…nos otorgan la certeza de que la adaptación pertenece efectivamente al escritor argentino […]. También tenemos el testimonio de Puig sobre su adaptación” (24).
University and read extensively in English, and was well versed in the work of Saul Bellow, Kurt Vonnegut, and Thomas Hardy (P. Donoso 61). Artistic expressions of the gender-oriented aspects of the “modernity” debate could be seen beyond Latin America, too, of course. Elsewhere in Mexico, William S. Burroughs was writing his novel *Queer* (1985),\(^{25}\) the sequel to his novel *Junkie* (1953). The raid of the Stonewall Inn in New York, a watershed moment for the gay rights movement not just in the US but around the world (Kuhn 77), took place in late June of 1969. In all, as Sorensen writes:

*Liberation* was one of the key words of the day: its field of meanings was political but broadly cultural as well: it reached styles of dress, sexual mores, intergenerational relationships, religious belief, and educational forms. In politics, the old rigidities of Marxism no longer held sway: in the wake of Stalinism, the New Left sought renewed articulations of the critique of capitalism […] (2, emphasis in original).

The New Left movement opened up debates about the individual identities and subjectivities often caught up in the sweeping analyses of old Marxist orthodoxies, and the critical attention to the works in question here was certainly magnified accordingly—it is hardly a coincidence that the aforementioned article by Butler was published in the *New Left Review*. Meanwhile, the aesthetic aspects of this movement towards liberation (and, what we might call modernity) were intensely debated in Chile, because the work of Donoso and Littin, among others,\(^{26}\) mediated these vibrant global movements for Chilean audiences. In the process, Donoso and Littin articulated what I argue are novel approaches to these movements that would, in time, have implications for Chile’s status as a “model” of modernity to others, particularly thanks to their attention to the effects for masculinities of the economic changes taking place in the country’s rural areas.

\(^{25}\) *Queer* went unpublished until 1985, due to concerns about the obscenity of its contents, which included explicit scenes of homosexuality; but *Junkie* was widely circulated in the fifties and sixties, and it is quite plausible that Donoso would have read it while a student at Princeton.

\(^{26}\) The films of Raúl Ruiz, Helvio Soto, and Aldo Francia, as well as the literary works of Jorge Edwards, Pablo Neruda, and Nicanor Parra were particularly notable in the Chilean literature of the late sixties.
**El lugar sin límites: Erecting and Transgressing the Boundaries of the Reproductive Arena**

José Donoso’s novel *El lugar sin límites* (1965) takes place over the course of a day in the life of the transsexual La Manuela (born Manuel González), the part-owner of a brothel in the rural town of El Olivo. From the very beginning of the novel, the specter of Pancho Vega—to whom Severo Sarduy, in an early article (1968) about this novel, refers as “el macho oficial del caserio” (72)—has been threatening a violent return. A year earlier he and some friends drunkenly wreaked havoc on the brothel, and when Don Alejo Cruz—the local landowner and senator for the region—told them to “portarse en forma comedida” (Donoso 1965: 12), they left, though not before roughing up La Manuela and ripping her red dress: “mientras uno le retorcía el brazo, los otros le sacaron la ropa y poniéndole su famoso vestido de española a la fuerza se lo rajaron entero” (Donoso 1965: 13). Pancho proceeded to vow retribution for Don Alejo’s rebuke, but not on Don Alejo; instead, he has sworn revenge on La Manuela and her daughter, La Japonesita, despite the damage he has already done to them, because La Manuela called him a peon: “A las dos me las voy a montar bien montadas, a la Japonesita y al maricón del papá” (Donoso 1965: 12). Sure enough, Pancho shows up at the brothel later on during the day most of the novel’s action takes place, looking for trouble. The complex economic and sexual implications of the relationships among these three main characters of the novel—La Manuela, Pancho, and Alejo—can be read using Connell’s idea of the reproductive arena: each of them has participated in the bodily praxis of reproduction, with varying results, but all of which have major implications for their respective places within the economy of the narration as it reflects and challenges Chile’s “modernity.” In fact, two erections occur during the novel, each of which transgresses the reproductive arena, with corresponding implications for the masculinity of the
characters, the economy, and the narration itself. Aside from the symbolic implications of these erections—because of the phallocentric nature of the narration and because of the dialectic of erection and destruction that Berman sets out as key to modernity (and which Felski critiques)—they have to do with conflicting ideals of economic modernity to which these characters aspire to achieve or preserve, all of which are bound up with reproductive notions of masculinity.

My discussion of this novel will begin, however, with the economic and masculine status quo that these erections challenge. Don Alejo, whose feudal power is highlighted by Rodríguez Monegal’s mention of him as “el verdadero Dios de esta historia, el dador de vida y de muerte” (79), looms as a “model” of reproductive masculinity throughout the novel. In fact, up until the 1960s, as historian Gabriel Salazar (2002) has pointed out, the power of oligarchs like Don Alejo over their spheres of influence, particularly in rural areas, went largely unchallenged, distant as they were from the economic and political tentacles of the state emanating from the capital.27 It stands to reason, then, that Don Alejo has been able to act as the exclusive law (and bank, and arbiter of comportment, sexual and otherwise) in El Olivo; as the region’s senator and dominant landowner, he is the only authority figure with whom most people in the area have any contact at

27 Indeed, no discussion of Don Alejo would be complete without an examination of the oligarch—both urban and rural—a looming throughout Chilean literature. Salazar’s investigation into what he calls el patriarcado mercantil is relevant here because it follows the development of economically hegemonic masculinity from before Chilean independence until modern times. Their “hegemonic masculinity,” in Salazar’s words (borrowed from Bourdieu), was based upon the intention to “proteger o ensanchar el patrimonio mercantil de sus respectivas familias y el modo de vida que ese patrimonio les permitía a aquéllas” (Salazar 18). Another key element of Salazar’s discussion of el patriarcado mercantil is the fact that these men were originally characterized as “jefes de familia (‘mayorazgos,’ en el siglo XIX)” (Salazar 17). The historical development of oligarchic masculinity in Chile, therefore, is rooted in Connell’s concept of the reproductive arena, because of the fact that the early assertion of masculine dominance in the Chilean economy took place because of the oligarchy’s emphasis on serving and broadening the wealth of their families more than that of any state. When the economic power of these patriarchs was put in check under the regime of the agrarian reform, so is that of the rest of their family; just as Tinsman wrote about the changes to the masculinity of the campesinos that the state advocated during the agrarian reform, these changes would have implications for patrones as well. Examples of oligarchic elites through Chilean literature include the urbane Santiagoino Dámaso Encina in Alberto Blest Gana’s Martín Rivas (1862), and his more rural counterpart, the title character in Eduardo Barrios’ Gran señor y rajadíablos (1952). One more recent representation of a patrón de fundo in Chilean popular culture was the character of José Luis Echenique, unforgettabley played by Julio Milostich in the TVN teleserie El señor de La Querencia (2008).
all. La Manuela ruminates about how he has “[t]anta plata” and “tanto poder,” and how he is “tan bueno,” and above all, “tan hombre” (Donoso 1965: 21). Don Alejo’s power has reproductive and sexual implications as well as economic ones: he exercises his authority, in part, through his access to the bodies of the women on his fundo. In fact, given that Pancho was born in El Olivo, there are rumors that he is Alejo’s son, although Pancho denies this: “[n]o tenía que darle cuentas a nadie, menos a este futre28 que creía que porque había nacido en su fundo… Hijo, decían, de don Alejo. Pero lo decían de todos, de la señorita Lila y de la Japonesita y de qué sé yo quién más, tanto peón de ojo azul por estos lados, pero yo no” (Donoso 1965: 38). The blue eyes of many of the peons on the fundo are a race-based marker of Alejo’s paternity; Tinsman has written about how rape was a common way for rural landowners to exercise their power over their employees, not only upon the women they raped, but also on the husbands and fathers of those women, who were powerless to stop the patrón.29 Don Alejo’s power has held El Olivo, the center of his paternalistic sphere of power, in thrall for decades.

And yet, his economic influence is waning in the face of the agrarian reform. El Olivo is destined to disappear (Donoso 1965: 53-4), now that the highway through the area has not been built anywhere near it (Donoso 1965: 44). Also, now that La Manuela is the owner of the brothel, Don Alejo cannot claim to have exclusive control over all the land in the area. He has refused to bring electricity to the town, despite La Japonesita’s desire to put an electric jukebox in the brothel, and his plans are to incorporate the land the town occupies—which he had previously

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28 In his book Siútiico (2008), Oscar Contardo refers to the word futre as one “que alude desdeñosamente al tipo refinado, al elegante, pero más derechamente al patrón o al que podría llegar a serlo. Hay quienes aventuran que el origen estaría en una expresión francesa, fourtre,” which “alude vulgarmente al acto sexual. Su raíz está en el latín futuere, presente en varias lenguas romances en palabras despectivas con el mismo sentido. Por otra parte, la expresión jean-fourtre alude a un individuo incapaz, un inútil” (21).
29 Tinsman points out that “the rape of a man’s wife or daughter by the patrón dually symbolized a campesino man’s subordination: it stripped him of exclusive sexual dominion over his womenfolk and rendered him powerless to prevent it” (47). Tinsman is quick to say, however, that “[t]ife [rap] functioned as a sign of elite men’s domination over poor men, it was always first about men’s domination of women” (47).
promised to sell at low prices to the townspeople in exchange for their votes (Donoso 1965: 64)—back into his fundo as the town dies out. In fact, Don Alejo is associated with decay and loss as much as he is with reproduction and economic control: not only has he just found out that he is dying (Donoso 1965: 97), but also his daughter Moniquita died after Pancho, who used to play with her when they were young, exposed her to typhus (Donoso 1965: 91), leaving him with no direct, legitimate descendents. In line with overarching historical trends in the 1960s, the shrinking economic influence of large, rural landowners like Don Alejo has opened up space for new actors to emerge within the reproductive arena.

La Manuela is the first character in the novel to challenge Don Alejo’s sexual and economic dominance. Her idea of economic modernity is by turns both a feudal and a cosmopolitan one. Near the beginning of the novel, she imagines herself as a triumphant urban performer while at the same time knowing herself to be extremely vulnerable to the homophobic aggressions of Pancho, and dependent upon the aid of Don Alejo:

Si viviera en una ciudad grande, de ésas donde dicen que hay carnaval y todas las locas salen a la calle a bailar vestidas con sus lujos y lo pasan regio y nadie dice nada, ella saldría vestida de manola. Pero aquí los hombres son tontos, como Pancho y sus amigos. […] Y justo cuando me va a pegar con esas manazas que tiene, yo me desmayo… en los brazos de don Alejo, que va pasando. Y don Alejo me dice que me deje, que yo soy gente más decente que él a fin y al cabo no es más que un hijo de un inquilino mientras que yo soy la gran Manuela, conocida en toda la provincia, y echa a Pancho para siempre del pueblo (Donoso 1965: 25-6).

Switching between the third and first person, La Manuela imagines a utopia of queer cosmopolitanism that at the time was only occurring in the most avant-garde circles of major world capitals, while denouncing the limitations of small-minded provincial campesinos like Pancho; however, on the other hand, her fantasy of being saved from violence wrought by the hands of Pancho constitutes an appeal to the very un-modern institution of paternalistic protection that only the local land baron can offer. Later, in a soliloquy addressed to La
Japonesita, her daughter, La Manuela once again expresses a longing to leave, but this time her longing is bound up with the tragic knowledge that such a departure would be impossible:

…te he pedido tantas veces que me des mi parte para irme, qué sé yo dónde, siempre habrá alguna casa de putas donde trabajar por ahí…pero nunca has querido. Y yo tampoco. […] Pero…no se iba porque la Estación El Olivo era tan chica y todos los conocían y a nadie le llamaba la atención, tan acostumbrados estaban (Donoso 1965: 49).

Any desire La Manuela might have to escape to more tolerant latitudes is quashed by her (well-founded) fear of being stigmatized and ridiculed by those who might not be familiar with her effeminate eccentricities. La Manuela’s sexual difference conflicts with other ideals of masculine normativity, and her longing for economic and personal autonomy stands at odds with her surroundings, which limit her freedom of movement and expression. La Manuela, then, is a product of the 1960s, a decade in which, all over the world, modernisms surged together to create “a common language, a vibrant ambience, a shared horizon of experience and desire….to help men and women all over the contemporary world to make themselves at home in this world” (Berman 33, emphasis mine). La Manuela’s simultaneous desire to find a home in the world and knowledge that this is impossible is key to modernity, and sets the stage for her somewhat reluctant challenge of Don Alejo’s dominance.

In fact, La Manuela’s participation in the reproductive arena is as ambiguous as her economic aspirations are contradictory, and took place eighteen years before the day during which most of the action takes place. The novel flashes back to when the ownership of the land upon which the brothel sits was wrested by La Manuela and the brothel’s original madam, La Japonesa Grande, from Don Alejo: Don Alejo has just won his senate bid, having run on the platform of “el partido histórico, tradicional, de orden, el partido de la gente decente que paga las deudas y no se mete en líos” (Donoso 1965: 66) and La Japonesa Grande has planned a celebration. She has invited a band, led by La Manuela, from the provincial capital of Talca to
sing and dance for the occasion. La Manuela does her dance, and the men present begin to fondle and harass her, and finally take her outside and throw her into the canal (Donoso 1965: 78). Don Alejo ends up making a bet with La Japonesa Grande: if La Japonesa can get La Manuela to have sex with her while Don Alejo watches, he will give her the deed to the brothel, which she is currently renting from him (Donoso 1965: 80). La Japonesa proposes this idea to La Manuela, and, for her trouble, offers her a share in the brothel. Sure enough, over the course of a three-page lovemaking sequence that has been the focus of much critical examination, La Manuela is able to achieve an erection, and penetrates La Japonesa Grande. This sexual act has a number of narrative implications: it is how La Japonesita is conceived; it is what results in a key loss of influence and control in El Olivo by Don Alejo; and it is an episode that La Manuela recalls, cowering and shaking in fear at the return of Pancho Vega at the brothel eighteen years later, to convince herself to face him based on the fact that there had been “una vez [en que] no tirité” (Donoso 1965: 101), as Ben Sifuentes-Jauregui (2002) has pointed out (105).

Despite these shows of normative masculinity—having heterosexual sex and standing up to Pancho—La Manuela also rejects the social conventions that would go along with the fact that she is La Japonesita’s biological father. When she leaves the brothel with Pancho and his brother-in-law Octavio right at the end of the novel—moments before the two men beat her to

30 The reaction of the men to La Manuela is simultaneously borne out of aggressive homophobia and also desire: they take her to the canal because they say she is “too hot,” and needs to cool off. They are also impressed by La Manuela’s anatomy when they see her naked, calling her “bien armado,” so much so that “no parece maricón” (Donoso 1965: 78-9).

31 This three-page long sequence, written in a stream-of-consciousness format to which Rodríguez Monegal referred as an “episodio que Donoso describe magistralmente y que cabría comparar con episodios sexuales tan brillantemente metaforizados como algunos de Cortázar en Rayuela o de Lezama Lima en Paradiso” (84), is arguably the center of the novel. Sarduy discusses how the traditional gender roles are reversed in this act: “en el acto sexual el papel de la Manuela, hombre por atribución narrativa, es pasivo. No femenino…sino de hombre pasivo, que engendra a su pesar. La Japonesa lo posee haciéndose poseer por él” (72). Carreño, meanwhile, points out how this scene cements a “sociedad…entre la ‘puta’ y el ‘maricón,’ sujetos marginales como pocos [que]…no sólo posibilita vencer a don Alejo, sino producir, finalmente, un lugar sin límites” (143). Sifuentes-Jauregui also discusses the scene, and his analysis will be examined below.
death—La Japonesita reminds her that she is her father. Those will prove to be La Japonesita’s last words to La Manuela, and La Manuela takes offense at them, because aside from her repeated negations of her paternal role, La Manuela seems to see La Japonesita’s reminder as an attempt to ruin the illusion of femininity that La Manuela has created:

—¿A dónde van a ir, papá? […]
—¿Quién eres tú para mandarme?
—Su hija.
La Manuela vio que la Japonesita lo dijo con mala intención, para estropearlo todo y recordárselo a ellos. Pero miró a Pancho, y juntos lanzaron unas carcajadas […].
—Claro, soy tu mamá.
—No. Mi papá (Donoso 1965: 123, emphasis mine).

La Manuela clearly feels that any embrace of her paternal role would result in a loss of power and even pleasure for her, both of which hinge upon the simulacrum of femininity that she projects to her customers and fellow revelers (such as, in this case, Pancho), and result in a loss of income. This idea is driven home by the fact that La Manuela seems to associate her paternity with drudgery (not to mention her association of her penis with near uselessness (Donoso 1965: 79)):

…cuando la Japonesita le decía papá, su vestido de española tendido encima del lavatorio se ponía más viejo, la percala gastada, el rojo desteñido, los zurcidos a la vista, horrible, ineficaz…venciendo esta chispita que había sido posible fabricar en el despoblado” (Donoso 1965: 49). When La Manuela is forced to think of herself as normatively masculine, she loses what Nelly Richard has called the source of the transvestite artist’s power, that is, the concealment of truth: with privileging the falsehood of appearances over the truth of essences, with letting oneself be mesmerized by the brilliance of the artificial….these are acts that could only disappoint and ridicule the patriarchal faith in theologies of meaning upholding interior truths, the sincere expression of an authentic and profound “I” (Richard 2004: 51).

La Manuela reneges on her paternal role because it takes away from her the power of ridicule that she is able to wield when she has her red dress on and her “I” is split; her paternity also
comprises an admission that would result in a loss of the power of desire that she can wield towards heterosexual men when she acts like a woman—a power which brings with it economic results. Sifuentes-Jauregui would seem to agree, stating that La Manuela’s momentary abandonment of homosexuality in favor of the reproductive arena is, paradoxically, a sort of “castration” (104).³²

Still, it cannot be said that La Manuela is completely dissociated from conventional, reproductively-oriented ideas of masculinity; to do so would result in an elision of the ambiguities of the modernity that Donoso’s novel espouses. Although La Manuela’s brave defiance of reproductive masculinity affords her precious little defense from Pancho and Octavio’s fists, her erection and subsequent incursion into the reproductive arena ends up re-drawing the social, economic and geographic map of El Olivo. It is Rubí Carreño (2007) who has pointed out the central gender ambiguity of La Manuela, whose rescue of her daughter, La Japonesita, from Pancho is both an act of normative reproductive masculinity and also an act of disavowal of the heterosexual aspects of that masculinity (because she makes herself the object of Pancho’s sexual advances rather than La Japonesita). La Manuela saves La Japonesita from Pancho in the end, by taking the beating that would have been for her daughter: “¿Cuántos padres estarían dispuestos a ocupar el lugar de la hija en caso de violencia sexual? ¿Cuánto heroísmo y valentía se requiere para asumirse como homosexual?” (135).³³ La Manuela’s

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³² Sifuentes-Jauregui states that the disorderly, stream-of-consciousness narration of the sexual act between La Manuela and La Japonesa Grande is symptomatic of La Manuela’s loss of “self,” and consequently, narrative authority: “[La Manuela] has lost her penis, her ‘period,’ as well as her phallus, her ‘words melt,’” and her “loss of authority can be seen in the very narrative structure of the event [since] [h]er phrases are joined by a series of conjunctions; language has lost its grammar” (104). Still, given its implication that a loss of phallocentric narration is somehow a loss of subjectivity, this analysis is in itself problematic, in light of the work of French feminist theorists such as Luce Irigaray.

³³ Carreño goes into far more detail about the relationship between violence and eroticism in Chilean literature, with a specific focus on Donoso and three other Chilean writers (Diamela Eltit, María Luisa Bombal, and Marta Brunet).
irresolvable mixture between masculinity and femininity both transgresses and defines the reproductive arena at the same time.

La Manuela’s is only one of two erections upon which the narration of Donoso’s novel hinges, however. The other one occurs towards the end, once La Manuela decides to face Pancho, who has arrived at the brothel to wreak his revenge on La Manuela for calling him a peon. Over the course of the day, Pancho has managed to get himself out from under Alejo’s economic thumb, thanks to his brother-in-law Octavio, who lends Pancho the money to pay back his debt to Alejo and reminds Pancho that he can and should escape from Alejo’s sphere of influence. Octavio, who owns a gas station along the highway that was eventually built at a distance from El Olivo, represents a more urban prosperity, unburdened by generational rural ties, and tells Pancho: “[m]ejor no tener nada que ver con ellos. Son una mugre, compadre, se lo digo yo, usted no sabe en las que me han metido estos futres de porquería” (Donoso 1965: 97). Like Octavio (and La Manuela, for that matter), Pancho aspires to a better life away from the oligarchic ways of El Olivo. He is currently living in a newly-built subdivision for himself, his wife, and his daughter: “Si quiero, si se me antoja, mando a mi hija que estudie. Don Alejo no tiene nada que decir. Nada que ver conmigo. Yo soy yo. Solo” (Donoso 1965: 89). Pancho’s economic aspirations are intimately tied to the reproductive arena: a rejection of the possibility that Don Alejo is his father, a life far removed from the fundo with his own family rather than the Cruz family, and an income hauling goods in his red truck along the new highway rather than within El Olivo.

Since Pancho’s aspirations are so intertwined with normative heterosexuality, any deviation from the reproductive arena could mean economic ruin for him. This is why Pancho is particularly sensitive about his sexual standing, and all the more so after having had it questioned
by Alejo for not paying back his debt (Donoso 1965: 35 and 91), and, years earlier, by Alejo’s servants for playing with Alejo’s daughter Moniquita (Donoso 1965: 93). It stands to reason, then, that the revenge against La Manuela for which he has come to the brothel takes the form of a threat to rape La Japonesita—thereby asserting the same kind of control over La Japonesita’s body that Don Alejo has imposed by siring so many blue-eyed peons. La Manuela, despite her earlier disavowals of paternity, screws up her courage and begins to dance, in order to distract Pancho from his intimidation of La Japonesita. Presently, Pancho finds himself aroused:

...el viejo maricón que baila para él y él se deja bailar y que ya no da risa porque es como si él, también, estuviera anhelando. Que Octavio no sepa. No se dé cuenta. Que nadie se dé cuenta. Que no lo vean dejándose tocar y sobar por las contorsiones y las manos histéricas de la Manuela que no lo tocan...nadie ve lo que le sucede debajo de la mesa, pero que no puede ser...y toma una mano dormida de la Lucy y la pone ahí, donde arde (Donoso 1965: 121).

Pancho manages to laugh off his arousal in that moment, particularly since it went by unnoticed, hidden as it is under the table. But the phonograph soon breaks, and—since there is no electricity for an electric one—Pancho, Octavio, and La Manuela decide to take the party to a bigger brothel in Talca. At this point, their drunken joy quickly sours, because La Manuela tries to kiss Pancho: “Iban uno a cada lado de la Manuela, agarrando su cintura. La Manuela se inclinó hacia Pancho y trató de besarlo en la boca mientras reía. Octavio lo vio y soltó a la Manuela. ‘Ya pues compadre, no sea maricón usted también...’” (Donoso 1965: 124). Fear takes over, for Pancho and especially for La Manuela, for whom the spell of femininity that she has been casting, as described by Richard, is abruptly broken: “la Manuela despertó. No era la Manuela. Era el Manuel González Astica. Él” (Donoso 1965: 124-5). By making explicit the attraction between la Manuela and Pancho has deflated La Manuela’s attempts to perform femininity and cut

34 In this crucial moment, the film version of El lugar sin límites departs from the novel, despite the fact that its screenplay was written by Donoso as well (at least partially): Octavio sees Pancho kissing La Manuela back. The film presents a much less ambiguous picture of Pancho’s desire for La Manuela.
Pancho’s fragile attempts at normative masculinity to the quick; this erotic tension can only be broken through violence.35 A chase ensues, and Pancho and Octavio end up beating La Manuela badly:

Octavio, o quizás fuera Pancho el primero, azotándolo con los puños...los cuerpos pesados, rígidos, los tres una sola masa viscosa retorciéndose como un animal fantástico de tres cabezas y múltiples extremidades heridas e hirientes...castigándolo, castigándola, castigándose deleitados... (Donoso 1965: 126-7).

The second erection of the novel results in a violent confusion of arousal with punishment (the self-punishment in the novel being, presumably, Pancho’s) that ends with La Manuela’s death.

That their respective erections—both key to the progress of the narrative—represent a transgression of the reproductive arena is not the only thing La Manuela and Pancho Vega have in common. They also share a similar critique of Don Alejo, whose reproductive masculinity and economic power they both dispute. La Manuela’s critique comes in the form of a (partial) rejection of paternity and the (occasional) desire to escape from provincial El Olivo. Pancho’s critique comes in an outright resistance of Don Alejo’s ability to economically control him and question the normativity of his masculinity. Perhaps the central tragedy of El lugar sin limites is the fact that Pancho and La Manuela want much of the same thing, as Rodrigo Cánovas (2003) has pointed out (58): they are both queer figures who come extremely close to achieving a figurative escape from El Olivo and the traditional values of Don Alejo when they leave the brothel arm-in-arm, singing a song and heading for Talca. La Manuela’s kiss of Pancho reminds all involved, however, that the escape from semi-feudalism that could bring them to the modernity that they desire cannot be too modern. La Manuela’s path to modernity—one of lights

35 Carreño (140) has pointed out how this scene is both violent and erotic, and this is as good a time as ever to mention—although this is not the point of my analysis—the tradition of psychoanalytic theory that has related violence and eroticism together, particularly in the context of masochism and sadism: René Girard’s Violence and the Sacred (1977) (which Carreño mentions, and whom Adriana Valdés cites in a 1975 study of El obsceno pájaro de la noche), Jessica Benjamin’s The Bonds of Love (1988), and Lynn Chancer’s Sadomasochism in Everyday Life (1992).
and shadow, although not, for this reason, false—is overpowered by Pancho’s (and Octavio’s) more conservative path to modernity: Pancho’s wife and tellingly-named daughter Norma, a house in the suburbs, and indebtedness and exploitation by the merchant Octavio instead of by the latifundista Don Alejo (Carreño 138). Pancho and La Manuela, in the end, are two sides to the same coin. *El lugar sin límites* may stop short of utopian longings for absolute sexual freedom and economic equality, but it does fiercely critique the situation of pre-agrarian reform Chile, and it does so by de-fetishizing reproductive masculinity, as embodied by Don Alejo. A mirror both of Donoso’s equivocating turn in the 1960s away from *costumbrismo* and towards the cosmopolitan (as discussed by Sorensen), and also of the period’s more egalitarian but still patriarchal and heteronormative agrarian reform efforts (as discussed by Tinsman), *El lugar sin límites* is an example of how, in 1960s Chile, the ideal imagined in Felski’s critique of Berman, in which categories of normative masculinity that had previously seemed fixed and immovable could “melt into the air” in the context of modernity.

**El obsceno pájaro de la noche: Effacement as Freedom from the Reproductive Arena**

As Sharon Magnarelli (1993) and Carreño have both pointed out, the origins of *El lugar sin límites* lie within Donoso’s 1970 novel *El obsceno pájaro de la noche*, which is widely considered to be his masterpiece. Donoso carved out a story within *El obsceno pájaro* that eventually became the 1965 novella: “Jerónimo and his four black dogs became Alejo and his four black dogs” (Magnarelli 67). In both novels, Donoso meditates upon masculinity amidst Chile’s changing, 1960s social milieu, but the latter novel offers a much more complex narrative. Critics have attempted time and again to offer some sort of summary of this sprawling,

36 Cánovas has pointed out the significance of the name Norma (58), as in “heteronormativity.”
labyrinthine text, which Donoso worked on over the course of eight years and forty drafts (Magnarelli 93). It spans an indeterminate number of years and countless characters (some of whom transform into each other without warning), but an optimal first approach to it is via the reproductive arena, in which economic prosperity and visibility are linked to male heterosexual prowess in general, and patriarchal lineage in particular. Magnarelli states that heterosexual reproduction is key to the attainment of a position of masculinity that includes both economic and sexual power, because social position is determined not only from a man’s own amassing of capital, but also from his ability to pass that capital on to future generations: “if one accumulates a suitable stockpile of material goods, one will be able to fashion a face, a mask, an identity…a possession that indicates that the family has material goods as well as a social position to be inherited and later bequeathed to one’s son” (103). The reproductive arena in El obsceno pájaro de la noche is thus an arena of symbolic and material capital, which must be perpetuated and passed on to others: a man has more or less power within this arena depending on his abilities to produce capital and pass it on, enhancing the recognition he receives. In order for them to maintain their power and prevent their legacy from “melting into the air,” they look ahead for ways “to connect the turbulent present with a past and a future” (Berman 33) through reproduction.

Accordingly, the principal male characters in the novel engage in a struggle for identity, notoriety, the accrual of material goods, and the perpetuation of their lineage forward in time. Early in the action of the novel, the wealthy young man Jerónimo de Azcoitia returns to Chile

37 Magnarelli adds here the importance of patrilineal succession over matrilineal succession in El obsceno pájaro de la noche: “In the society portrayed, neither the name nor the material goods can be possessed by nor bequeathed through the female line” (103).
38 Cf. Magnarelli: “Among other things, the novel must be read as a struggle to power. Bourgeois Humberto aspires to the power and prestige of aristocratic, oligarchic Jerónimo. The servants…aspire to the power of their masters. The females would seize the power held by the males” (105).
after a number of years in Europe, and despite his impulse to “tomar el primer barco que me lleve lejos de ustedes…a un mundo más claro” (Donoso 1970: 175), he decides to stay. His uncle Clemente, a priest closely linked to Chile’s ruling class, reminds him of his powerful position in the country: “Tu lugar está aquí, hombre. ¿Para qué quieres seguir viviendo en Europa…si aquí eres alguien?” (Donoso 1970: 169, emphasis mine). The visibility into which Jerónimo was born is something to which members of the less powerful classes aspire; in fact, Jerónimo admits, not only is he “someone,” his own history is intertwined with that of Chile itself (Donoso 1970: 169). The claim to power is described by his priest uncle as “God-given” (Donoso 1970: 175), and Jerónimo’s physical perfection is a marvel to behold as well: “la presencia de Jerónimo era una lección de armonía, incómoda porque era imposible emularla en estas latitudes bárbaras” (Donoso 1970: 163). Jerónimo is also acutely aware of what he must continue on; one key motif in the narration is the story of one of Jerónimo’s ancestors, the first powerful man of the Azcoitía family, who had nine sons (and only one daughter):

Érase una vez, hace muchos, muchos años, un señorón muy rico y muy piadoso, propietario de grandes extensiones de tierra en todo el país, de montañas en el norte, bosques en el sur y rulos en la costa, pero más que nada de ricos fundos de riego en la comarca limitada al norte por el río Maule, cerca de San Javier, Cauquenes y Villa Alegre, donde todos lo reconocían como cacique (Donoso 1970: 35-6).

The origins of the Azcoitía family are couched precisely in terms of an all-powerful man, a cacique forefather who forged the agrarian-based economic power that the family continues to enjoy in Jerónimo’s time. Jerónimo’s only option is to protect his family’s interests, which he does by participating in politics, but also by attempting to ensure that his illustrious lineage will survive: “este encierro dentro de patios inexorables donde lo único posible es reproducirse” (Donoso 1970: 175-176, emphasis mine). Soon enough, he begins to participate in the socially

39 See Doris Sommer’s volume *Foundational Fictions* (1991) for more information about the relationship between familial dynasties and economic and national consolidation projects in 19th century Latin American narrative.
accepted dynamic of the reproductive arena, as befits his class, doing “lo que el ritual de los poderosos exigía que sucediera” (Donoso 1970: 177); he marries Inés Santillana, a woman from another well-to-do family; he is later elected to congress, for the party of “los cabecillas conservadores” (Donoso 1970: 194); and after years of trying, he and Inés finally have a son, named Boy, whom Jerónimo hopes will fulfill his pretensions to continue on with his lineage. For Jerónimo, reproduction is key: he must ensure the continuation of a family that has held a powerful position since before Chile became a nation. Inés’s pregnancy promises him the possibility to project himself and his lineage into the future: “Ese vientre que se agitaba pegado al suyo se abriría para procurarle inmortalidad: el friso de medallones, a través de sus hijos y sus nietos, se prolongaría para siempre” (Donoso 1970: 180). Jerónimo’s statement captures perfectly what Berman points out as the central contradiction of modernity, between “our desire to be rooted in a stable and coherent personal and social past, and our desire for growth…that destroys both the physical and social landscapes of our past, and out emotional links with those lost worlds” (35). Jerónimo’s entire identity as a man depends on perpetuating a semi-feudal family lineage into the future, particularly since he is the last male of the Azcoitía family (Donoso 1970: 174); but his projection of his family into the present is incompatible with the agrarian reform sweeping Chile in the name of “modernization.”

40 This is another characteristic that Alejo and Jerónimo share: conservative, traditional political beliefs.  
41 Curiously, Salazar also employs the rhetoric of the “medallion” in his historical discussion of “violencia armada—expresión suprema de la ‘masculinidad hegemónica’” (20). He states that the Chilean oligarchy historically incited the proletariat to fight and defend what was hardly in its best interests, and that the oligarchy masqueraded these incitements to violence in populistic appeals to patriotism: “el llamado Estado de Derecho, en la declamada Cultura de Occidente o en el medallón denominado Patria” (20). Here, Jerónimo’s ideas about the economic and masculine honor it will bring him to perpetuate his lineage are related to what Salazar calls “hegemonic masculinity.” The novel counterposes the medallions that Jerónimo imagines for himself with the history of his servants Peta Ponce and Humberto Peñaloza: “la otra serie, la leyenda enemiga que contradecía a la suya…la serie de medallones ligados a la servidumbre, al olvido, a la muerte” (Donoso 1970: 182).
Jerónimo’s reproductive attempt to propel the Azcoitía lineage towards modernity, however—burnishing the “medallions” of his identity, ensuring the maintenance of his lands within the family, making a place in the history books for himself—does not end in the desired results, because his son, named Boy, is born with extreme deformities. These deformations are described in the novel using graphic detail:

…ese repugnante cuerpo sarmentoso retorciéndose sobre su joroba, ese rostro abierto en un surco brutal donde labios, paladar y nariz desnudaban la obscenidad de huesos y tejidos en una incoherencia de rasgos rojizos…era la confusión, el desorden, una forma distinta pero peor que la muerte (Donoso 1970: 161).

As with *El lugar sin límites*, the motif of monstrosity is closely related to the reproductive arena here: Boy is consistent with Foucault’s idea of the monstrous body. He serves as a “fundamental figure around which bodies of power and domains of knowledge are disturbed and reorganized” (Foucault 62) in the sense that he is the embodiment of Jerónimo’s anxieties about his economic survival and his masculine self-worth. More importantly, Boy embodies a step backwards for the Azcoitía lineage, rather than the projection forward that Jerónimo had wanted—his monstrosity represents the opposite of the masculinist ideas about modernity imagined by Berman and critiqued by Felski; Jerónimo is horrified by the implications of this for the Azcoitías’ future. He immediately relegates his son to La Rinconada, a closed *fundo* far outside the city where other deformed people can surround Boy in such a way that he may never find out that his body is deformed, and also so that no one will find out about the tortuous turn the Azcoitía lineage has taken. And yet the very lineage that is the source of such pride for Jerónimo is also what links him to the pre-modern, occasionally even barbaric customs and folklore of the Chilean countryside, to which Tinsman refers when citing the study of Collantes (56); his lineage is hardly the model of economic power that the Azcoitía dynasty has made it out to be. The inconvenient origins of the Azcoitías persist in the form of Inés’s personal servant, Peta Ponce.
Peta is a key figure in the novel, even though her voice is rarely heard at all: possessor of the folk knowledge of the Chilean countryside, she has “el poder de plegar y confundir el tiempo” (Donoso 1970: 222). Just as the first cacique of the Azcoitía family had to execute the servant of his only daughter for possibly practicing witchcraft, so does Jerónimo realize that he has a “powerful enemy” in Peta, even as he recognizes that she possesses impressive powers (Donoso 1970: 183). Peta’s ability to twist time is what ultimately links Jerónomo’s present to his past, since she herself is related to his family: “hundiendo mi atención en las facciones carcomidas para escudriñar a la Peta, a veces he logrado percibir…las facciones luminosas de la familia patronal” (Donoso 1970: 364). A monster in her own right, Peta literally embodies what Jerónimo (and his cacique forefather) would rather no one knew: the ignoble origins of supposedly illustrious Azcoitía lineage. As conceived by Jerónimo, modernity for the Azcoitías must not be associated with abnormality or monstrosity; but Boy is the embodiment of the family’s grotesque, feudal past, when seen in the context of conventional, reproductive masculinity.

Jerónimo appoints his private secretary, Humberto Peñaloza, an aspiring writer with major social ambitions but a humble background, to be in charge of overseeing Boy’s home in La Rinconada, where he can, in the meantime, write the novel he has always wanted to write in relative economic security and material comfort. Having grown up in the relative obscurity of a

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42 As the foundational myth of the Azcoitías goes, the young daughter, named Inés—having been saved from the supposedly evil hands of the witch—was taken to Santiago, where her cacique father built a convent for her to live out the rest of her days (Donoso 1970: 42); her nine brothers were left to multiply the Azcoitía lineage (and last name) throughout Chile. Still, the legacy of the “niña-beata” lives on: La Casa de Ejercicios Espirituales de la Encarnación de la Chimba, which plays an important part in the novel, is the convent the Azcoitías built so long ago, and Jerónimo’s wife Inés is later obsessed with obtaining some sort of papal recognition for the girl in Rome. Meanwhile, the myth of the niña-beata is hardly grounded in fact, which the narrator of the novel subsequently points out: “Inés de Azcoitía no fue ni bruja ni santa. Estoy seguro de que sucedió lo más simple: la adolescente solitaria…se enamoró de un muchachón […]. Me pregunto si no sería el parto de su hija lo que cubrió el poncho paternal al extenderse por encima de la puerta demasiado grande de la realidad” (Donoso 1970: 362). Far from being a saint, as Jerónimo’s wife would have believed, the niña-beata had transgressed the patriarchal prohibitions of her cacique father and had a child out of wedlock.
poor family, Humberto wants to become a writer because he has promised his father that he will “become someone,” couching his economic (and masculine) aspirations in the same language that the Azcoitías use: “Sí, papá…le juro que voy a ser alguien, que en vez de este rostro sin facciones de los Peñaloza voy a adquirir una máscara magnífica, un rostro grande, luminoso, sonriente, definido, que nadie deje de admirar” (Donoso 1970: 99, emphasis mine). Humberto’s aspirations depend on Jerónimo, from whom he needs money to pay for the printing of his book (Donoso 1970: 283); but Jerónimo also needs Humberto to be watching him when he has sex with women, because his sexual power is borne out of the envy of others:

…no salgas de la habitación, Humberto, mira cómo me desnudo yo también como si me desollara, quédate aquí para que veas cómo soy capaz de hacer el amor…préstame tu envidia para ser potente…tú eres dueño de mi potencia, Humberto…necesito tu mirada envidiosa a mi lado para seguir siendo hombre, si no, me quedará esto lacio entre las piernas, apenas tibio, mírame (Donoso 1970: 227).

When Jerónimo’s sexual performance is not subject to the gaze of others, he becomes impotent and his participation in the reproductive arena is rendered moot. Humberto is quite aware of the power his gaze gives him over Jerónimo, couching this power in the terms of homosexuality:

…yo no sólo estaba animándolo [a Jerónimo] y poseyendo a través de él a la mujer que él poseía, sino que mi potencia lo penetraba a él, yo penetraba al macho viril, lo hacía mi maricón, obligándolo a aullar de placer en el abrazo de mi mirada…castigaba a mi patrón transformándolo en humillado (Donoso 1970: 227-228).

Humberto aspires to dominate Jerónimo sexually and also possess Inés: “mi nostalgia y la nostalgia de mi padre iban a aplacarse porque mi avidez iba a alcanzar el objeto único capaz de

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43 This conflation of homosexuality and masculine domination is a key motif in Mexican cultural production as well, according to Robert McKee Irwin in his volume Mexican Masculinities (2003). Citing “Los hijos de la chingada,” Octavio Paz’s seminal essay in El labirinto de la soledad, Irwin points out that “[o]ne cannot be a man in a vacuum in Mexico; masculinity can be achieved only by interaction. Paz’s key terms are ‘rajar’ [to crack] and ‘chingar’ [to fuck or fuck over]. Women are seen as open, penetrable beings, and their femininity is a sign of weakness, while men are closed beings who show their power over others by penetrating them. […] However, Paz’s vision of gender is not based only upon material sex acts, but is determined in a largely symbolic scenario. In this way, masculinity is frequently put to the test among men. Contests of wit, authority, or brute force produce symbolic relations of sexual penetration, in which the loser cracks, gets fucked, and is feminized by the winner, who, in this way, enhances his
saciar a todos los Peñaloza porque por fin íbamos a dejar de ser sólo un testigo de la belleza para poder participar en ella” (Donoso 1970: 223). As part of the complex transactions of identity in the novel, Jerónimo and Inés must recur to the pre-modern devices available to their family in order to conceive a child; Humberto takes Jerónimo’s place during the conception,44 and Peta takes Inés’s. Another long, wrought-out sex scene reminiscent of the famous one at the center of El lugar sin límites ensues, narrated by Humberto:

…yo puedo no haberle dado mi amor a Inés sino a otra, a la Peta, a la Peta Ponce que sustituyó a Inés por ser ella la pareja que me corresponde, la Peta, raída, vieja, estropeada, sucia, mi miembro enorme la penetró a ella, gozó en su carne podrida […]. En el momento del orgasmo ella gritó:
—Jerónimo.
Y yo grité:
—Inés.
La Peta y yo quedamos excluidos del placer. Ella y yo, la pareja sombría, concebimos el hijo que la pareja luminosa era incapaz de concebir (Donoso 1970: 223-224).

Humberto and Peta appropriate the identities of their employers, and conceive Boy themselves.45 Both Humberto and Jerónimo, then, stake their masculinities upon some degree of domination exercised over the other, in accordance with the way Bourdieu (2001) theorized (11). They also both view reproductive masculinities as a progression forward: whereas Jerónimo defines his masculinity as a way of maintaining his legacy and lineage, Humberto defines his in terms of class mobility, economic advancement, recognition, and notoriety.

44 Humberto already served as Jerónimo’s body double earlier in the narration, when he takes a bullet meant for his boss shot by a group of protestors who are angry at the unfair labor practices of members of Jerónimo’s political party (Donoso 1970: 201-202).

45 Magnarelli’s reading of the conception of Boy is that all forms of “desire and power…must produce monsters” within the logic of the novel (112), while Antonio Cornejo Polar (1975) reads the birth of Boy as the decline of Chile’s landed bourgeoisie in the novel (110).
Humberto is soon unable to continue working at La Rinconada, however—there are a number of reasons for this, but the main one is that as the only non-deformed person present, he comes to be considered the most deformed of all, which causes him to lose his mind—and ends up working at La Casa de Ejercicios Espirituales de la Encarnación de la Chimba, a former convent on the periphery of Santiago\textsuperscript{46} that houses a number of retired former domestics and some orphan girls.\textsuperscript{47} In La Casa, Humberto becomes known as Mudito, a silent man, grotesque and feeble, who cleans and sweeps in a house full of women and occasionally toys with the idea of renouncing his gender altogether. Whereas Humberto aspired to notoriety and upward mobility, Mudito aspires to almost total effacement and (apparent) backwardness: of class status and of subjectivity itself. Enclosed inside La Casa, Mudito lives among the old women there until he becomes one of them, in a position of total servility, not to mention gender ambiguity:

“las viejas, nosotras siete ahora que me han despojado de mi sexo y me han aceptado dentro de su número […]. Yo fui su fiel servidor, don Jerónimo. Aunque quisiera dejar de serlo, no puedo” (Donoso 1970: 67). Later, the old women make him into a doll for Iris, one of the orphans, and he accedes without protest:

\begin{quote}
Comienzan a envolverme, fajándome con vendas hechas con tiras de trapo. Los pies amarrados. […] Cuando llegan a mi sexo lo amarran como a un animal dañino…y me fajan el sexo amarrándomelo a un muslo para anularlo. Luego me meten en un especie de saco, con los brazos fajados a las costillas, y me amarran en una humita que sólo deja mi cabeza afuera. Me acuestan en la cama de la Iris, a su lado, eso es lo que ella exige…porque a ella le gusta dormir con su güagüita\textsuperscript{48}… (Donoso 1970: 338).
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{46} The area north of the Mapocho River in Santiago, known as La Chimba, was seen as peripheral to the city as recently as the 1960s; now, as Santiago has grown, La Chimba (now known as the districts of Recoleta, Independencia, Lo Prado, and others) is a fully incorporated section of the capital.

\textsuperscript{47} This transition is a confusing one, clouded by the insanity of Humberto, who narrates most of this part. Phillip Swanson (1988) has described, in a way that captures how fluid the transitions of identity in the novel can actually be, how this particular one takes place: “Humberto tears at a photograph on the hospital wall, uncovering layers of newspapers and chipping off fragments of the wall in the process, until he is asked to sweep them up—he is now Mudito performing his chores as the Casa’s handyman” (85).

\textsuperscript{48} “Güagüa” is Chilean slang for “baby.”
Mudito reneges completely on his masculinity in this passage, just as by becoming Mudito in the first place, he has reneged on the identity and the economic aspirations that he once had.

The struggle of Jerónimo and Mudito with their respective identities cannot be understood without an explanation of the motif of the *imbunche*, a popular myth in Chilean folklore where witches stole children of privilege, sewed up all their bodily orifices, and denied them identity, and life. In a lengthy study on the “leit motif” of the *imbunche* in Donoso’s novel, Adriana Valdés (1975) states that its power lies in the fact that it renders people mute: “el Mudito se dirige [a sus interlocutores] de manera muy particular: las suyas son ‘palabras de mudo’: no hay relación yo-tú, no llegan a un destinatario. […] Y él ha ‘guardado su voz’ (como su nombre, como su sexo): se ha condenado a una existencia sin un verdadero ‘tú’” (136-7). The concept of the witch, in this case Peta Ponce, is a key element underlying the pre-modern conceptions of masculinities in the novel: she is apparently the main threat to reproductive masculinity, because not only does she eliminate one’s ability to speak to an interlocutor, she eliminates all potential for intercourse, in any sense of the word, because “los separa de toda posible relación verdadera con el mundo” (Valdés 143) by binding and sewing up their orifices. The witch, being infertile, cannot bear children herself, so she can only steal those of others; this is the ultimate subversion of both the reproductive arena and all the class structures it perpetuates, because of the *imbunche*’s absolute denial of (the fixity of) identity. The old women who live in La Casa tell each other tales of the witches and their diabolical plans:

…las brujas [querían] robarse a la hija del cacique…robársela para coserle los nueve orificios del cuerpo y transformarla en imbunche, porque para eso…se roban las brujas a los pobres inocentes y los guardan en sus salamancas debajo de la tierra, con los ojos cosidos, el sexo cosido, el culo cosido, la boca, las narices, los oídos, todo cosido,

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49 The idea of the *imbunche*, a word that refers both to the witch and also to the sewn-up child, has captivated Chilean artists, critics, and writers over the last 50 years. See also Oreste Plath (1973), Catalina Parra (1977), Carlos Franz (2001), Nelly Richard (2004), Sonia Montecino (2007), and Roberto Hozven (2007), among others.
dejándoles crecer el pelo y las uñas de las manos y de los pies, idiotizándolos, peor que animales los pobres, sucios, piojosos, capaces sólo de dar saltitos cuando el chivato y las brujas borrachas les ordenen que bailen… (Donoso 1970: 42).

This grotesque description deserves to be quoted at length because of its implications for masculinities: it represents the end of reproduction, the opposite of notoriety and fame, and the subversion of the idea of masculine possession of others. To lack a “face”—which is what happens when one is turned into an imbunche—is to disappear, to be incapable of material accumulation, and to not perpetuate one’s lineage. Not only is the imbunche, which initially appears in the novel as an oral tradition bandied about by women, positioned as the apparent opposite of reproductive masculinity; it also seems to be a folkloric, decidedly un-modern and non-cosmopolitan trope: all destruction and no creation; all past and no future; and to be accumulated rather than to accumulate.

The imbunche is therefore what the male characters in the novel define their aspirations to the reproductive arena against. This trope repeatedly thwarts the visibility and agency to which Jerónimo and Humberto’s masculinities aspire. Peta manages to subvert Jerónimo’s designs to perpetuate his lineage, and brings about the conception of a monstrous Azcoitía heir to obscure the lineage. Meanwhile, Humberto’s gesture of abandonment of the reproductive arena is his transformation into Mudito, and eventually, into an imbunche—a transformation that is complete by the end of the novel:

…envuélvanme, viejas, arrópenme bien…para no poder mover los brazos ni las manos…cósanme entero, no sólo la boca ardiente, también y sobre todo mis ojos para sepultar la potencia en la profundidad de mis párpados, para que no vean, para que él no los vea nunca más, que mis ojos consuman su propio poder en las tinieblas, en la nada, sí, cósanmelos, viejas, así dejaré a don Jerónimo impotente para siempre (Donoso 1970: 87).

Mudito renounces everything related to reproductive masculinity, which would seem to be the opposite of the “modernity” that reproduction would bring, as Jerónimo has imagined it. Rather
than rendering Mudito powerless, however, his power over Jerónimo increases the closer he comes to achieving anonymity and imbunchifación, because the less Jerónimo is seen, the less powerful he becomes. Mudito’s apparent renunciation of the reproductive arena is paradoxically a move to weaken Jerónimo: by undermining age-old concepts of reproductive masculinity and agrarian economic prowess that have existed since the times of Jerónimo’s cacique forefather, Mudito contributes to a different kind of modernity, one that is less feudal and less agrarian. This is the central tension of the novel: undermining Jerónimo’s agrarian masculinity while at the same time renouncing masculinity himself, alternately aspiring to the reproductive arena while practicing abject effacement, Mudito/Humberto is the very embodiment of why Felski’s critique of Berman’s ideas about modernity is so germane. Modernity is not necessarily the progression forward of age-old ideals about masculinity, despite what Jerónimo wants to think, and the imbunche is not necessarily the pre-modern trope it appears to be, because of its operation to undermine masculinities associated with Chile’s semi-feudalism.

In an economy that is in the process of shifting to a more modern, less feudal state, Jerónimo’s pretensions at illustriousness are increasingly less feasible, whether he has produced an acceptable heir or not. Boy has grown up in a world of representation—it is no coincidence that his world in La Rinconada is presided over, at least initially, by a writer—in which normative models of masculinity and subjectivity on the “outside” are turned on their heads. Boy is raised by other deformed people, and even the statues in La Rinconada are deformed figures.

50 My use of this term here is a reference to the slippery theoretical ground of “abjection,” proposed by Julia Kristeva in her 1982 study of avant-garde literature, *Powers of Horror*. Kristeva contends that the discourse that is produced, that must be produced, when there is a simultaneous rejection of the “law”—the hegemonic order—and a refusal to adopt any new such models, is what perpetuates signification itself. The difference, contestation, and transgression of masculinity that stands as a contradiction to all previously sanctioned terms of it, all of which “disturb identity, system, order” (Kristeva 3). This is an interesting way to attempt to grasp the ambiguity of Mudito’s move to undermine Jerónimo’s reproductive masculinity (and notoriety) by renouncing reproductive masculinity (and notoriety) himself.
Once Boy becomes an adolescent, however, Jerónimo changes his mind about hiding Boy away, and decides to groom him to leave La Rinconada and live a “normal” life, as conventional and unprotected as possible, in order to continue the lineage of the Azcoitías: “casarlo con una prima fea, que tuvieran hijos y nietos, que viviera en la ciudad, que se dedicara a la política, a los negocios, que fuera socio del Club de la Unión. Que se termine la Rinconada, eso quiere [Jerónimo]” (Donoso 1970: 497). Having lived his life sheltered—by Jerónimo’s own design—from the hierarchies of the outside world, however, Boy is not taken in by the powerful façade that his father projects in other social situations, and his father’s masculine “perfection” holds no currency because he does not envy him the way Humberto once did. Humiliated by this lack of recognition in La Rinconada—a space of his own creation, after all—Jerónimo realizes the precariousness and ultimate emptiness of the identity that he has assumed, and tries to renounce it, “tratando de arrancar con mis uñas esa máscara…tengo que sacármela a pesar del dolor y aunque quede sin cara” (Donoso 1970: 510). The final impulse of Jerónimo’s life is to become an imbunche of sorts, but he fails and ends up drowning in one of the fountains of La Rinconada (Donoso 1970: 512). In death, his prized legacy is considered debatable at best—“el papel de Jerónimo de Azcoitia fue más bien político antes de histórico y que su nombre sólo perduraría en los textos especializados” (Donoso 1970: 512)—and at his burial, all present mainly lament “el fin de tan noble linaje” (Donoso 1970: 513), since they are unaware of the existence of Boy. Jerónimo’s supposedly exemplary identity—upon which his masculinity depends—seems set to fade off into distant memory without much fanfare.

Boy is a key figure in the novel who has been largely overlooked by critics. Aside from observations to the effect that Boy embodies the imperfect, deformed contradiction to Jerónimo’s supposed perfection, there is a critical silence around him that reflects the status of oblivion,
anonymity, and relegation that he occupies in the novel: “no es raro que el recuerdo de Boy se borrara de la memoria de la gente….resultaba más cómodo [olvidarlo]” (Donoso 1970: 162). A five-day sojourn beyond the walls of La Rinconada, however, followed by Jerónimo’s sudden visit to La Rinconada, shakes Boy out of his world of artifice; all of a sudden, the model of masculinity that Boy is expected to emulate changes, from one of deformity to one of normality and convention, explicitly tied to the reproductive arena. Boy refuses this kind of life, and plots a way to stay in La Rinconada forever: “Voy a borrar el mundo de afuera. […] Ahora que conozco la realidad, sólo lo artificial me interesa. […] Después, cuando…mi padre desaparezca, yo les entregaré todo para que desde afuera ustedes mantengan mi verdad” (Donoso 1970: 488-491). Boy makes a deal with the deformed people of La Rinconada that he will let them live on the inside forever, free from the judgment and gawking of the outside world, as long as they help him rebel against Jerónimo’s plan to return him to the “real.” The plan is successful: Boy manages to humiliate Jerónimo completely, making him doubt his own hegemony by questioning the very foundation of his identity; Jerónimo’s reaction to this sudden powerlessness is insanity and suicide. Representation and fiction win out, and the implication is that Boy can continue living on inside La Rinconada, undisturbed by the social and sexual implications of the reproductive masculinity that his father embodies and his lineage represents. This is in line with the trope of the *imbunche*, as outlined by Valdés: Boy is able to “liberarse de la ‘atroz pesadumbre de la vida consciente,’ de la imposición intolerable del ser” (138). The total abstraction of oneself from the burden of conventional, reproductive masculinity, as Jerónimo and Humberto imagined it, anyway—one of visibility, notoriety, and recognition—can mean liberation and progress, rather than a step backward from modernity. Boy’s rebellion against Chile’s agrarian structures of reproductive masculinity, even if it ends in abnormality and even
anonymity and *imbunchificación*, can also be put in the contrary terms of modernity: he resists the reproductive, agrarian-oriented masculinity that his father embodies, but the agrarian alternative of La Rinconada that he proposes and establishes is both a perpetuation of pre-modern economic models and also a total rejection of the hopes (and failures) of his father and his lineage, and the triumph of artistic representation.

The (sometimes contradictory) modernizing turn that the Boom took from *lo costumbrista to lo cosmopolita*, as it turns out, is one that had major implications for gender and economics as well—particularly at the hands of Donoso. Sorensen made reference to this in her analysis of *Historia personal del “Boom,”* in a quote that I included at the beginning of this chapter; but there is more to say on this score. By questioning and critiquing the productive (economic) and reproductive (masculine) capacities of two *patrones de fundo*, Jerónimo and Don Alejo, Donoso shows the potential for Chile’s modernization—and the modernizing impulse of the Boom, as well\(^1\)—to be a non-normative, queer, and even monstrous phenomenon. Despite the fact that Magnarelli is pessimistic about any social changes arising from Donoso’s critique, stating that “there is little reason to believe either that oligarchic families have died out or that the Chilean sociopolitical situation has changed significantly” (116), *El obsceno pájaro de la noche*—and *El lugar sin límites*, for that matter—portray the ways in which masculine characters

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\(^1\) Hugo Achugar (1979) asserts that the internationalization of Donoso’s writing, in the context of the Boom, meant that his novels from the 1960s cannot be read in the context of the socio-political currents taking place in Chile at the time (236), but the implications of *El obsceno pájaro de la noche* for economics and gender cannot be separated from what was happening in Chile. Curiously, Achugar makes this claim, about all of Donoso’s writing from the period, in his section about *El obsceno pájaro de la noche*, but not in the section of his monograph that covers *El lugar sin límites*, which has much less ambiguous socio-economic implications in Chile. His analysis is structured as a counter-argument to a 1977 article on Donoso by Hernán Vidal, who reads *El obsceno pájaro de la noche* as an allegory of Latin America’s dependence upon “la hegemonía económica de los conglomerados multinacionales, en especial aquellos con base en Estados Unidos” (10, as quoted in Achugar 236). However, Vidal and Achugar are talking primarily about the conditions of production of the novel, not the content of the novel itself; therefore, Achugar’s retort that “resulta estéril—si no equivocado—referir la producción donosiana a los fenómenos socio-históricos que constituyen lo central del caso chileno en la década de los sesenta” (236) is somewhat excessive, considering the important intervention of the novel in the timely issue of Chile’s agrarian reform.
and the (masculinist) literature of the Boom itself struggle with the economic status quo in Latin America, which manifests itself in the reproductive arena. On one hand, the complicated turn away from tradition that the Boom represented takes the form of an “abyss” in both novels, in which some male characters question whether their own existence is valid if the “models” of masculinity they have been emulating disappear. Pancho Vega’s realization that Don Alejo will soon die, for example, leaving him without a “father” to try to be like, is something that “vacío la noche y…tuvo que aferrarse de su manubrio para no caer en ese abismo” (Donoso 1965: 97); one of Boy’s handlers in La Rinconada, meanwhile, acknowledges the risk of Boy “falling into an abyss” (Donoso 1970: 496) if the monstrous characters surrounding him cease to be the figures upon which he models his own existence. This shift of patriarchal models that the novels’ “modernity” brings about—a dying patrón, in one case, and the possibility that Boy’s “world of representation” will come to an end, in the other—leads to insecurities. On the other hand, however, economic modernity is identified repeatedly with queerness and independence from the reproductive arena in the novels: Boy rejects his father’s desire for him to participate in perpetuating the Azcoitia lineage, La Manuela tries to turn away from her fatherly duties, Mudito undermines Jerónimo’s desire for recognition by rejecting his own masculinity and turning into an imbunche, and Humberto aspires to literary recognition while making Jerónimo his “maricón.” For many critics, the principal form that emerges from these and other textual ambiguities is the novel itself (Swanson 71)—a metafictional reading later echoed by

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52 Multiple critics have pointed out the dualistic structure of the novel, which is constructed around a number of binaries in conflict with one another. Achugar writes about the novel’s dichotomies in more philosophical terms: “Anverso y reverso, antagonismo, dicotomía que se liga a otros enfrentamientos como ‘amo-siervo’ y ‘realidad-imaginación’” (242). Swanson’s reading of the novel is based almost entirely upon its dichotomies, particularly that between Donoso’s pessimistic vision of the world as chaotic and fragmented (68), on one hand, and attempts within the novel to bring order to that chaos, on the other. Meanwhile, Carreño offers a somewhat simplistic reading of the gender dichotomies in the novel, contrasting its masculinities with its femininities: the men are either hegemonic or
Magnarelli (97) and Carreño (121), among others. Art is the only possible answer to the formless chaos of the outside world, and the only way to achieve a kind of “modernity” (masculine, literary, and agrarian) that does not depend on patriarchal structures. The novel, meanwhile, is hardly the only art form in which these challenges to the reproductive arena took on economic implications during the period of Chile’s agrarian reform.

El chacal de Nahueltoro: Disrupting the Lineage of Agrarian Injustice

Miguel Littin’s watershed film El chacal de Nahueltoro narrates the true story—culled from media coverage, interviews, and court records (Hart 63-64)—of José del Carmen Valenzuela Torres, who murdered a woman with whom he was living, along with her five young children, in the early sixties near the southern Chilean city of Chillán. The film’s narrative follows José from his childhood, when he runs away from home and is left to his own devices at the tender age of eight, through the circumstances leading up to his crime and the crime itself, to his imprisonment and rehabilitation, and finally to his execution. Until recently, El chacal was the most widely seen Chilean film in history (Rist 221), and its story resounded with Chileans at home and abroad. Littin was clearly drawn to the story of José, as were many other Chileans. Littin clearly intended the story to be a denunciation of the injustices in the Chilean countryside at the time, which is one of the main things that critics have pointed out when analyzing the film: José’s is an exemplary case of how the rural poor are marginalized.

“apequenados” (125), simultaneously desiring and rejecting paternity (126-7); the women of the novel, meanwhile, are looked down upon, enclosed, and quickly disposed of once they produce children (122-4).

Curiously, the film calls this process “amansamiento,” or “taming,” as if José were an animal.

Ruffinelli (2010), for example, highlights the fact that José is portrayed as just as much a victim as those he murders: “la historia no habla de cinco víctimas sino de seis: el victimario es tan víctima como los que él ha asesinado. De manera alusiva, y así y todo muy clara, la miseria de los campesinos se postula como un crimen de la sociedad y del Estado” (95). Mouesca talks about “la a veces pavorosa marginalidad del campesino, la mentira e hipocresía de una justicia de clase” (90), and Ana Lopez mentions the film’s critique of “a society that unfairly plays
Another aspect of the film that most of its critics (Doll 102-4, Navarro 81, Jacobsen 36, Hart 66, Mouesca 91) have focused on is a central tension between Littin’s expressed desire to make films that were autochthonously “Latin American,” on one hand, and the cosmopolitan influences that informed his work, on the other. Héctor Ríos, the director of photography on _El chacal_, had studied film in Rome (Doll 102), and Littin himself admits to being influenced by Brecht (Littin and Santa María 19), but at the same time he insists on his desire to stay away from “un cine a partir de nuestra estética…impuesta por moldes europeos” (Littin and Santa María 24). The film, made for 300,000 Escudos (Littin and Santa María 65), the equivalent of about $35,000 in 1969 US dollars, immediately became part of a transnational stream of ideas about “Third Worldist Film”: “an alternative, independent, anti-imperialist cinema,” seeking independence from the influence of mass-market Hollywood studio films and “calling for a tricontinental revolution in politics and an aesthetic and narrative revolution in film form” (Shohat and Stam 248). The stakes for the positioning of José’s case as a sort of exemplary response to economic injustice, then, are quite high: the story of the film is meant to be a catalyst for outrage all over the world at Chile’s socioeconomic divisions and also for reform in Chile, but also, the film itself was created to counter what the filmmaker saw as the imperialist forces in the world that had helped create those socioeconomic divisions in the first place.

It should be pointed out that one of the notable achievements of the Frei Montalva administration was to revive public policies promoting the production of feature films—*El...
chacal de Nahueltoro likely would not have been made if not for these policies. First, the Frei administration reopened the offices of Chile Films, a government organ headquartered within the University of Chile, which had first been established in 1942 as a reflection of both the increasing industrialization of the country as a whole, and a rise in cultural activity under the Frente Popular presidency of Pedro Aguirre Cerda in the late thirties (Mouesca 13); Chile Films had fallen out of favor in the fifties and early sixties. Second—and more importantly—the Frei administration passed a law creating the Consejo de Fomento de la Industria Cinematográfica and stipulating that 20% of proceeds from movie ticket sales had to be reinvested in the production of new movies (Mouesca 34). Together, these policies made it much more financially feasible to produce films; they also explain why Chilean films from the late sixties and early seventies tended to reflect the political agendas of the governments in power at the time. For example, the first head of Chile Films after its 1960s reactivation, Patricio Kaulen, created “Chile en marcha,” a news program that was basically a publicity machine for the Frei administration (Mouesca 34). Littin himself, meanwhile, was appointed head of Chile Films in 1970, after El chacal “was exhibited during Salvador Allende’s successful election campaign by trade unions, at schools, and in open air meetings and was later released to theatres in 35mm, eventually being seen by an estimated 500,000 people” (Rist 222); he continued the practice of using Chile Films as a platform to promote Allende’s policies.57 The ideological bent of other films made in the late sixties, including those of Aldo Francia, Raúl Ruiz, and Helvio Soto, was also largely in accordance with the political directives of the Frei administration. These directors

57 Aside from the political use of El chacal for Allende’s election campaign, Chile Films would sponsor Patricio Guzmán’s 1971 documentary El primer año, which was about the first year of the Unidad Popular. Guzmán’s work, and La batalla de Chile in particular, will be discussed in greater depth in the next chapter.
and others were all present at the first-ever Latin American Film Festival in 1967,58 organized in Viña del Mar by the Cine Club there; the next version of the festival was organized the following year in Mérida, Mexico, and in 1969 the festival returned to Viña, which was when El chacal premiered (Hart 64). Littin’s work grew out of a hotbed of politicized creativity59 that held the incipient Chilean film industry in thrall in the late sixties and early seventies; the historical and political context of this industry is key to understanding the films that were part of it.

Given the political outlooks of this generation of filmmakers, it is no surprise that Littin intended his film to be a denunciation of the agrarian conditions of Chile in the sixties; what is surprising, however—and this is something that critics of Littin’s film have overlooked—is the fact that his accusatory rhetoric and imagery had explicit gender implications as well as political and economic ones. In 1987, he described what his and other filmmakers’ political intentions were at the time the film was made: “El cineasta del ’67 reclamaba para sí y ocupaba un papel en el combate por la liberación de América Latina. El paternalismo era cosa del pasado” (Littin 1987: 33). Pointing out the link between paternalistic masculinity and the redistribution of the latifundia taking place at the very same time that he was making El chacal, Littin allies himself with the project of the agrarian reform—even though he takes a distance from the economic interests and paternalistic stance of the patrón only to align himself with the masculinist rhetoric of armed combat. This statement is largely in sync with the official line about masculinity as it stood during the Frei administration, at least as Tinsman has described it: rejecting the longstanding patriarchal domination that was the cornerstone of Chilean latifundia, while

58 Littin, in a 1987 article, recalls that there were delegates present at the 1967 festival from Peru, Argentina, Mexico, Venezuela, Bolivia, Brazil, Uruguay, and Cuba. Despite pressure from the OAS, Alfredo Guevara and Saúl Yelin of the Cuban Institute for Cinematographic Art and Industry (ICAIC) were able to attend (Littin 1987: 27). Many more filmmakers were present at the 1969 festival: Nino Criscenti and Roberto Savio from Italy, Saul Landau from the US, Glauber Rocha from Brazil, and Joris Ivens from the Netherlands (Francia 156-161).
59 Both the 1967 and 1969 festivals were sponsored in part by the Chilean Ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs.
supporting the traditional, heterosexual male power structures deployed in the name of fighting those latifundia, was typical of the contradictory discourse employed during the Revolución en libertad.

More interesting in terms of gendered rhetoric, however, is the answer Littin gave in a 1970 interview, when asked why he wanted to make El chacal in the first place:

Al leer ciertos diarios atrasados, me encontré con un titular que decía: “‘¿Cómo voy a morir, Canaquita?’ ‘Sin chistar, porque sería feo.’” Había algo ahí que me interesó. Algo que no tenía nada que ver con mi mundo. Seguí leyendo y encontré que el juez preguntaba al asesino: “‘¿Por qué mataste a los niños?’” Y él respondía, “Pa’ que no sufrieran los pobrecitos.” Luego me interesó mucho más (Littin and Santa María 11).

José, whose many nicknames included “El Canaca” (thus the use of the diminutive “Canaquita” by the archived newspapers), sparked Littin’s imagination in the first place in part because of his bravery—a traditionally masculine trait—in the face of his impending execution. To “flinch” or “complain” (chistar) at the moment of his execution would be “ugly” (or improper) because it would show weakness and compromise conventional ideals of manliness. The second part of Littin’s 1970 statement has to do with masculinity as well, however, and marks the beginning of my interpretation of the film: by reasoning that the children’s lives would have been full of suffering if he had spared them, José offers a glimpse into the extent of his deviance from the economic and gender norms of Chile at the time. It becomes clear not only that José’s own childhood experiences have led him to believe that abandoned children in rural areas are better off dead than alive; but we also see that by committing these murders, José has chosen to completely abstract himself from the reproductive arena. Instead of choosing to be a father to the five children of his partner Rosa, with the ensuing paternal (and patriarchal) legacy this would have brought to him, José eliminates any possibilities he could have had of being the ideal subject imagined by the governments of the period. The Frei administration’s agrarian reform-
oriented economic policies, so linked to the reproductive arena—the weak attempts at agrarian reform by the Alessandri administration before it, which was in power when José committed his crime, were even more ideologically conservative—had no use for men like José, who did not and could not espouse the kind of masculinity most highly valued at the time. Although Littin never put his interest in José’s story in such explicitly gendered terms, it is clear that he was at least obliquely aware of some of the gendered implications of his economic critique of Chile’s agrarian situation. Still, I argue that _El chacal de Nahueltoro_ can be read as a much more radical departure from the gender discourse of the time than Littin perhaps intended.

José is positioned on the periphery of the reproductive arena from the very beginning of the film. He states that his father was an _inquilino on a fundo_, and abandons the home when José is very young; José, who leaves when he is eight, is also unable (or unwilling) to be part of a stable, conventional family structure. As Edgar Doll puts it, making use of research by Salazar, Sonia Montecino, and quoting an article by Fernando Franulic Depix:

> “los peones-gañanes no formaban familia, su impulso cotidiano era andar la tierra […]. Todos sabían que…por hallársele en el camino y sin ocupación—es decir, sin una papeleta que atestiguase que tenía ‘amo’—se le consideraba un ‘vagabundo mal entretenido,’ y…se le acosaba y se le perseguía. Era un sospechoso por nacimiento” (Doll 113).

This certainly echoes Tinsman’s analysis, which emphasizes the focus of _campesino_ unionization efforts on married _inquilinos; afuerinos_ like José and his father before him were completely marginalized from the modernizing efforts of the agrarian reform. Late in the film, the judge in José’s case (Figure 1), marking a sharp contrast to José in words and appearance, refers to him as “un individuo rústico, de un gañán, digamos, de tercera categoría”: men like him were viewed with suspicion by members of the upper classes, and certainly any potential _patrón_, because they “appeared to gain the least from paternalistic arrangements and, in turn, seemed to owe the least
deference to social superiors. As single men...afuerinos presumably proved less vulnerable to the possibility of being fired than inquilinos” (Tinsman 52), and were also seen as suspect by labor organizers, as discussed above. Afuerinos were thus subject to rejection and suspicion by the powerbrokers of the Chilean countryside, and young José is unambiguously portrayed in El chacal as an outcast vis-à-vis this system, as evidenced by a close-up of his dirt-caked but innocent face when apprehended by the Carabineros police for vagrancy (Figure 2). The early part of the film, in fact, offers scene after scene of young José’s exclusion from the (male-dominated) institutions of “respectable” Chilean society. First, a policeman, washing José in the (almost certainly freezing) river, tells him to “¡Aguántese como hombre!”—drawing attention to an evident lack of knowledge on the boy’s part of how to do such a thing, presumably due to having not had a father to show him. Later, the policeman foists him off on a parochial school, where the priest inculcates students in Catholic teachings through rote repetition; José is unable to understand what is going on and the priest is hardly willing to take the time to explain. He runs away again, and has a picaresque-like adolescence, moving from patrón to patrón, working whenever and wherever he can. Rather than marrying and working in one place, José ends up drunk on cheap wine and getting kicked out by the madam of a brothel (Figure 3). Within the first fifteen minutes of the film, José is systematically refused entry into all of the patriarchal institutions (and, by extension, from the reproductive arena) as they stood in the sixties in Chile: the church, the law, and the brothel. Just as we can observe in the works from this period by Donoso, an exclusion from the reproductive arena is as much an economic exclusion as it is a sexual one, and in fact Littin summarizes all these exclusions under the banner of economics when talking dismissively about the elements of bourgeois Chile that turned their backs on José:

60 A similar scene can be found in Aldo Francia’s 1973 film Ya no basta con rezar; filmmakers at this time were highly critical of the attitudes of paternalism displayed toward the poor by certain sectors of the Catholic church.
“‘Dios, Patria, Bandera, Ley’: los pilares en que se sustenta el sistema capitalista,” he stated in a 1970 interview (Littin and Santa María 54). José is thus positioned as a monster of sorts, in the way Halberstam describes it: he is the embodiment of sexual and economic deviance.
Littin’s film is divided into five sections, carefully sequenced to maximize the injustices it seeks to denounce: “La infancia de José,” “El andar de José,” “Persecución y apresamiento,” the aforementioned “Educación y amansamiento,” and finally “La muerte de José.” After the first section about José’s childhood wanderings, in the second section he meets Rosa Rivas, a recently widowed woman living with her five young children in a primitive adobe house on a fundo. José stays with her and, for a time, forms part of a family unit. Moving back and forth in time—José has been taken by the police to the place where he murdered them, in order to do a reconstruction of events, which introduces this particular sequence—the film narrates how he walks up to the house where Rosa is chopping wood (Figure 4). A long travelling shot ensues, in which José asks for water, Rosa goes to get a glass for him, and returns to find him chopping the wood for her, after which he ends up staying the night: a wordless sequence that rather eloquently demonstrates how closely interwoven economic usefulness, patriarchal protection, and sexuality are in José and Rosa’s short relationship. Later, when Rosa gives José a plate of food to eat and tells him how her husband was murdered, the narration begins to switch times more quickly. There is a brief flash forward to the following day, when Rosa and her children are evicted from their house by the patrón, juxtaposed with a flashback to Rosa’s husband’s funeral, in which the patrón arrives and offers her his condolences, and then back to a conversation, post eviction, between José and Rosa, in which Rosa tells him that the patrón justified his eviction by saying that now that she has another man by her side, he wants her off the land since he no longer has any obligation to her: “Y de hombre ¿qué te quejai [sic]?” he asks her. “¿No tenís al atorrante que llegó ayer?” This eviction of a single woman, and in particular of five young children, is the high point in the film’s denunciatory arc: not only are Rosa and her children the

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61 Rosa is played by the actress Shenda Román, who was married in real life to Nelson Villagra, the actor playing José.
victims of a despotic landowner, but the insinuation is also made by the *patrón* that he is getting rid of Rosa only now that she has a man by her side, since she was unable to care for herself and her children on her own (and thus needed the protection of the *patrón* before). This, despite the fact that the film clearly showed from the time she appeared on screen that she was perfectly capable of at least chopping wood and obtaining food for them, which are hardly small tasks. Using flashbacks and flashforwards, the film manages to critique both the sexism and the economic callousness of rural landowners in one compact but sophisticated sequence.

This leads up to the scene that Ruffinelli has called “una de las secuencias más logradas del cine latinoamericano” (95): the scene in which José murders Rosa and her children. A frenzied scene, it begins with José and Rosa drunkenly quarreling over a jug of wine that Rosa has managed to obtain (although we are never shown how she got it, and the film does not dwell on why Rosa chose to prioritize the purchase—or robbery—of wine over food for her five, now homeless, children and her partner). The murder scenes themselves, while bloodless, convey the drunken disorientation and brutality of a desperate man left homeless and powerless in the countryside. Just as the shot in which Rosa and José meet is a traveling shot, their final moments together are also shown as a traveling shot, albeit much more accelerated, in which the camera moves back and forth between the cowering Rosa and the enraged José, who bludgeons her to
death with a stick (Figure 5). Héctor Ríos stated that this sequence was “una de las escenas en que Miguel me había pedido asediar al actor. La cámara pretendía dejar de ser testigo para convertirse en consciencia en el semidespertar de la borrachera. […] No la cámara meramente objetiva, sino subjetiva; entrando en el sentimiento del personaje” (Littin and Santa María 83). José manages to escape the scene of the crime, but he is eventually arrested and put in jail.

Rist’s analysis of how “Littin, a Marxist, was making an inspired critique of how the combined forces of Chilean authority—church, military, school, and state—continue to keep the peasantry marginalized in poverty of mind and spirit as well as substance” (223) is accurate enough, but it is important to point out how those same authorities also act to rehabilitate José after his arrest. Although they do execute him at the end, José’s remarkable “taming” takes place thanks to the very institutions that previously turned their back on him—the church, the law, the reproductive arena, and the economy itself. Ruffinelli points out the “existential irony” of the state’s contradictory response to José—“cuando se comienza a vivir, es hora de morir” (94)—but the more central irony is the one that manifests itself long before José’s execution, when the same structural forces from which José was first excluded later come to embrace him. The first outward sign of this rehabilitation occurs when José kicks a soccer ball to some other prisoners
playing outside; afterwards, the camera focuses a tight shot on José’s smiling face, which becomes a freeze frame (Figure 6). José is increasingly integrated into society, albeit behind the walls of his prison, which are ironically imprinted with the slogan “Redimir…No Deprimir”: he learns to enjoy soccer; a sympathetic priest takes an interest in him, converts him to Catholicism, and prays with him up until his very last moments (Figure 7); the director of the prison system travels all the way from Santiago to promise José that Chile’s Patronato de Reos will take care of his mother after his death; José is taught to make and sell guitars, and proves quite the craftsman (Figure 8); and he fantasizes about women whose images he looks at in pornographic magazines, telling one of his jailers that “ésta sí que sería una buena despedida” (Figure 9). The “taming” process takes place largely though the inculcation of highly traditional masculine values: sports, a respect for the Catholic church, a work ethic, a more conventional (and non-violent) response to female sexuality, and an “unflinching” respect for authority—even towards the military firing squad that eventually executes him. The night before José’s execution, the director remarks that the priest “ha hecho una buena labor, no se puede negar. El hombre está tranquilo, no va a presentar problemas mañana”: a self-congratulatory statement by Chile’s authorities on their ability to turn José into an exemplary prisoner.

62 Multiple scholars of Latin American culture have theorized about the links between soccer and the social sphere in Latin America, such as Tony Mason (1995), Pablo Alabarces (2003), and José Miguel Wisnik (2008).
Figure 6.

Figure 7 (José is near the center of the frame).

Figure 8 (The priest is on the left).
Indeed, despite the fact that José’s original crime constituted an extrication of himself from the reproductive arena—an interruption of a family’s lineage, and a denial of his own potential to become a patriarch—he is still held up as a model of manliness, economic success, and Christianity after his reform. This replacement of one kind of model of masculinity for another—an operation as contradictory as the “modernity” in which it was conceived—does not diminish José’s historical legacy in the slightest, even when he is executed for the crime he committed. In fact, the nature of the death penalty as an exemplary punishment only serves to enhance José’s status as a model. In one later scene, José poses for a newspaper photo session, smiling and blindfolded, to show that “así me van a matar” (Figure 10): he is aware of the historical legacy that he will be leaving behind, and the members of the media portrayed interviewing him only augment this legacy. His status as a “model” of reform and of victimhood is helped along by the fact that his crimes were never sexual in nature; he did not

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63 This is the third main aspect of the film that critics (Hart 63, Ruffinelli 94, Rist 222, Mouesca 91, Navarro 94, Lopez 417, and Jacobsen 35) have focused on in their readings of El chacal: the way the film seems to bridge documentary and fiction, based as it is on real events. This is relevant to my reading only in that José’s interactions with the members of the media eventually serve to perpetuate his masculine legacy, in the absence of more conventional methods of doing so, like having children.
rape any of the people he killed, even though the film mentions this possibility. José continues to be portrayed as a victim of economic circumstances; if he were a rapist, as well as a murderer, his status as a model of masculinity would not hold up, and his criminal monstrosity—already difficult to “justify”—would be too overwhelming to identify with. Cristián Santa María, interviewing Littin, links José’s rather conventional sexuality to the filmmaker’s intention to create a film free from the commercial trappings of sex and violence so common in Hollywood films: “la película, siendo sobre el Chacal, se mueve en un estado de gracia: ni sexo, ni sangre. Dolor y poema para retratar desde adentro una realidad. No me cabe duda de que había una inocencia en sus realizadores que rechazaban tan fáciles tentaciones de ingredientes comerciales” (Littin and Santa María 83-4). The film blames the “marginalization” of campesinos like José to a lack of comprehension by Chile’s economic sphere, and attributes José’s refusal to initially go along with the gendered expectations for campesinos on a system that never taught him how to properly “be a man.” Again, the structural conditions under which the film was made—contrary to the capitalistic motivations of Hollywood sensationalism and violence—are analogous to the action of the film, in which José is positioned against both the patriarchal and the capitalistic motivations of the reproductive arena. Even though he is “civilized” to become a productive worker and expresses regret for his earlier defiance of the reproductive arena, José never (re)joins the reproductive arena. Still, he is still held up as a model of masculinity in time—in fact, his “legacy” as a model of masculinity persists, and is even magnified, once he is executed.

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64 The voice in off of a radio announcer is heard when José is on the lam, talking about rumors “de que este sujeto deje a su paso una estela de sangre y muerte. Se sabe que, en otro poblado, fue hallado el cadáver de una pequeña de cortos años, violada.” Still, this possibility is quickly dismissed, if never actually refuted.

65 Foucault traces the evolution of monstrosity from a biological to a criminal phenomenon to the middle of the 18th century, when “the figure of the monstrous criminal, of the moral monster, suddenly appears with great exuberance,” thanks to “a kind of economy of the power to punish and the transformation of this economy” (Foucault 75, emphasis mine).
Conclusion: The Aesthetics and Economics of Modernized Masculinities

Far from a matter to be relegated to the sphere of the “merely cultural,” these three works show how sexuality is closely intertwined with the material aspects of the modernizing impulses that were prevalent in late 1960s Chile. Although modernity, as conceived by the think tanks that promoted Frei Montalva’s agrarian reform policies, was a normative, patriarchal phenomenon, Donoso’s two novels and Littin’s film show how modernity can also be a turn away from the countryside and what it represented—towards the cosmopolitan, globalizing influences that arrived in Chile in the form of the Boom and third-worldist film. These more cosmopolitan modernities also make room for expressions of masculinity that deviate from the conventional, normative frameworks of the era’s economists (and theorists like Berman, for that matter) to non-normative, feminine (as theorized by Felski) and even “monstrous” masculinities that embody the anxieties about the onset of modernity that were held by those in whose best interests it was to perpetuate conventional, reproductive masculinities as the norm. The aesthetic and economic implications of this modernity, duly broadened by characters like Boy, Mudito, La Manuela, and José del Carmen, cannot be overstated: although their rebellions against the reproductive arena generally stop short of overturning it completely, they led the way forward...
for more radical critiques of it that would manifest themselves when the Unidad Popular took power in 1970, and operate alongside a more radicalized agrarian reform and an increasingly experimental visual and literary aesthetic.
Chapter 2
Utopia and the Art of Masculine Futures Gone By, 1970-1973

Introduction: Representing and Modeling the Utopian “Moment”

Salvador Allende won the presidency of Chile in September of 1970, and since he was the first-ever democratically elected socialist leader in Latin America, expectations for change in the country were high, at least among those who voted for him.1 Allende promised to accelerate many of the progressive policies that the Frei Montalva administration had begun in the previous decade—particularly its agrarian reform efforts—and added a number of other planks to his platform as well. In a speech entitled “Para qué hemos vencido,” delivered at his inauguration on November 5, 1970, the new president outlined, in broad strokes, what his election meant, and what his government, known as the Unidad Popular (UP), intended to do:

Sin precedentes en el mundo, Chile acaba de dar una prueba extraordinaria de desarrollo político, haciendo posible que un movimiento anticapitalista asuma el poder por el libre ejercicio de los derechos ciudadanos. Los asume para orientar el país hacia una nueva sociedad, más humana, en que las metas últimas son la racionalidad de la actividad económica, la progresiva socialización de los medios productivos y la superación de la división en clases (Allende 79, emphasis mine).

This rhetoric marked both a continuation of, and a drastic shift from, that of the Frei administration. On one hand, Allende continued his predecessor’s language of Chilean political exceptionalism, discussing his own election as an unprecedented and “extraordinary” shift in the country, with the potential for the entire world to look to Chile as a model of development. On the other hand, however, Allende broke with the previous administration in certain key ways as well, particularly through his stated intention to move towards socialism; Frei’s policies, as discussed in the previous chapter, had never challenged existing class hierarchies, their reformist

1 Allende won with a plurality (36.3%), although not a majority, of the popular vote in 1970 (Loveman 247).
impulses notwithstanding. Allende’s rhetoric, in fact, bordered on the utopian, in the most classical sense: he invoked lofty goals for Chile that were reminiscent of how Thomas More’s *Utopia* (1516) first made use of Platonic virtues to advocate for “legislation which gave to all an equal share in all goods” (105), as well as the abolition of all private property (101-3) and all class divisions (131). Chile’s economy would once again become a model for sweeping political and economic changes; meanwhile, this utopian discourse would have major implications for the ways in which sexuality—particularly masculinity—manifested itself in the public and private spheres.

The UP’s utopian goals were as closely tied to ideas of gender as they were to ideas of private property. Indeed, gender was a lightning rod for the UP during this time, in which ideas from the global sexual revolution clashed with moralistic rhetoric from a Left concerned about being associated with libertinage. One way this link between masculinity and economics manifested itself was through another practice of the Frei administration that was perpetuated by Allende: the rhetorical linkage of political commitment with conventional notions of male sexual comportment. Just as Christian Democratic labor organizers had linked the *campesino’s* role as a strong paterfamilias to his ability to take a firmer stance against his (possibly abusive) *patrón*, the UP invoked the rhetoric of heterosexual masculinity by calling upon men to entice women to participate in the UP the way they would appeal to a potential lover. In the words of the historian Heidi Tinsman (2002), this was “a masculinist challenge that real Popular Unity men took on the heterosexual task of wooing women over to the right side. […] Allende likened men’s political education of women to seduction, calling on men to ‘conquer women for the revolution…’”

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2 It is surely for this reason that the Chilean Left made strong moral judgments about the sexual comportment of its political militants throughout the 50s, 60s, and 70s. For example, Pablo Neruda—appointed by Allende in 1970 as ambassador of the Unidad Popular to France—was repeatedly admonished by Socialist Party leaders for his sexual indiscretions.
(219). Chile, meanwhile, was hardly immune to the effects of the sexual revolution already well underway around the world from Paris to Berkeley to Mexico City, and the political and economic effects of this relaxation of standards of sexual comportment soon made themselves felt locally. On the other hand, however, the moralizing inclinations of utopia—particularly as related to sexual comportment—comprise a key unifying factor in More’s text, and Allende invoked this rhetoric as well. For example, More writes that in Utopia, sex outside of marriage is strictly prohibited: “If before marriage a man or woman is convicted of secret intercourse, he or she is severely punished, and they are forbidden to marry altogether unless the governor’s pardon remits their guilt” (187). Tinsman, meanwhile, points out that “Allende was particularly sensitive to allegations that the UP was immoral” (222), which is likely why his inaugural speech also calls for young people to sublimate their “desires” (of what nature, he does not mention) into “more work.” The UP’s political aims were often expressed in the terms of economics and sexual morality that More’s Utopia first laid out.

Aside from the curious fact that Allende’s family home was located on Tomás Moro Avenue, in the Santiago-area district of Las Condes, there is a long lineage that directly connects his politics to More’s inspirational text, and exposes the extent to which utopia has been constructed as an overtly masculinist phenomenon for centuries. As Pierre-Luc Abramson (1999) has pointed out, utopia has always been associated with the Americas: “el narrador de la Utopía, Raphaël Hytloday o Hythlodée, es un filósofo y navegante portugués que se presenta como un compañero de quien dio su nombre al Nuevo Mundo, Américo Vespucio” (17). Abramson goes

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3 Abortion, for example, was legalized under certain circumstances in 1970 (Tinsman 227), and information was readily available about how to obtain different methods of birth control, including the pill. See, for example, “Hoy día le toca a la píldora” (1973), in the magazine Ramona (15-17). Tinsman has written about the UP’s “celebration of youth heterosexuality,” which “simultaneously affirmed an expression of female sexuality and emphasized female bodies as objects of male desire” (235).

4 After this house was looted following the overthrow of Allende, it was expropriated by the military, and today it functions as a convalescent home for retired Air Force officials.
on to point out the extent to which European thinkers were inspired by America as a “tabula rasa” (25), a clean slate upon which they could implement their ideas. Abramson shows how More’s ideas greatly influenced a set of socialist thinkers—Henri de Saint-Simon, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, and Edgar Quinet, among others, “a quienes Marx y Engels agruparon ad vitam aeternam bajo el rótulo de utopistas” (18)—who brought the main impetus to the French Revolution of 1848. That revolution, in turn, inspired a number of Chilean thinkers such as Francisco Bilbao, José Victoriano Lastarria, and Santiago Arcos Arlegui. Allende, a Mason like Bilbao, Lastarria, and Arcos, greatly admired many of the ideas for social programs that they proposed, which included “montes de piedad, mutuales obreras, baños públicos, [y] escolaridad gratuita” (Abramson 96). These three men sought to implement these programs—fairly paternalistic all, but still representing a major improvement in quality of life to many poor—in Chile, much to the chagrin of the entrenched elite there, which responded violently. Around the same time, in Capital (1867), Marx laid out a concrete set of measures for achieving a utopian labor regime, which were also couched in somewhat masculinist rhetoric. These measures included the creation of “an association of free men, working with the means of production held in common, and expending their many different forms of labour-power in full self-awareness as one single social labour force” (171). Once the means of production were collectively owned, Marx posited, workers would be conscious of each others’ needs, which would result in greater solidarity among them. This idea of “solidarity among men” underpinning the ideas of Marx and

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5 José Martí’s critique of the un-nuanced imposition of Eurocentric flights of political, social, and economic fancy onto the Americas is duly consigned in his 1891 tract Nuestra América. Abramson does acknowledge the imperialistic underpinnings of this European imagination of America as a utopia, but this relationship between Europe and America is a useful way to think about how Chileans under the UP felt that their economy was both influenced by European thinkers and also a model that could lead to Europeans’ reconception of how socialism could be carried out democratically.

6 Bilbao, Lastarria, and Arcos were the leaders of a movement, portrayed in Alberto Blest Gana’s 1862 novel Martín Rivas, which sought to introduce more social policies in Chile. Modeled after the French revolution, they were repressed by Chile’s authoritarian government (which was, in turn, backed by the oligarchy) in 1851.
the other utopian thinkers—in Chile, France, and elsewhere—was one of the driving forces behind the UP’s utopian social programs. Historian Brian Loveman (2001) summarizes these changes in a way that indicates how sweeping they aimed to be, at least for the (male) “workers and peasants” that would benefit most from them:

To solve Chile’s problems, the UP coalition proposed a peaceful transition to socialism. This required replacement of Chile’s existing political institutions with a unicameral legislature, or people’s assembly, to root out the evils of presidentialism and parliamentarism; reorganization of the judiciary and educational system; and greatly increased participation of workers and peasants through union and community organizations in national and local policymaking. Further, the program called for restructuring the economy by greatly increasing the scope of the “social” or public sector, by expropriating all agricultural estates of more than the equivalent of eighty hectares of irrigated land, and by nationalizing the financial system (banks and insurance companies) as well as “all those activities which have a strong influence on the nation’s social and economic development” (Loveman 246).

Allende, inspired by a tradition of thinkers that included More, Bilbao, Lastarria, Marx, and a number of others, sought to implement a political utopia in Chile that would socialize resources, but that—as the product of the highly masculinist development of utopian thought—was couched in very gendered rhetoric.

In any case, however, as Svetlana Boym (2001), Beatriz Sarlo (2003), Frederic Jameson (2004), and others have pointed out, utopia is not simply something that can be so easily “implemented.” Its very etymology points to its impossibility—it comes from the Greek words _ou_, meaning “not,” and _topos_, meaning “place”—so a _utopia_ is something that, by definition, does not actually exist. This is something that Jameson points to when he talks about how utopias lose their power as soon as they move from imagination into practice: utopias are at their most potent when they are limited to theory, that is, when “no agency has appeared on the horizon that offers the slightest chance of hope of modifying the status quo, and yet in the mind—and perhaps for that very reason—all kinds of institutional variations and re-
combinations are possible” (Jameson 44). This inherent non-implementability is certainly one characteristic common to all utopias: as soon as they become politically feasible, they paradoxically cease to be utopias:

…when popular demands grow louder and more confident, then…those grievances and demands grow more precise in their insistence and urgency. […] But at such a moment the utopian imagination no longer has free play: political thinking and intelligence…have concrete content” (Jameson 44, emphasis mine).

By this logic, then, Allende’s utopian rhetoric lost its power the moment it was translated into concrete public policy initiatives, and the most powerful utopian impulses of the time—including, but not limited to, the idea of armed struggle—lay outside the UP precisely because of their absolute lack of political pragmatism. This is likely the reason why Jameson concludes that the imagining of utopia—before its “moment” of implementation and actuality—is the most utopian exercise of all: utopia loses its power when we no longer have the need to imagine and desire it (53), even if that means that at least some of our utopian impulses (at least as they were originally conceived) have come to fruition.

The art and literature related to this period thus becomes key: by remaining squarely in the realm of “free play”—that is, the product of pure imagination, and thus separated (to a certain extent) from the concrete reality of public policy initiatives—an intervention that was never fully realized.

For example, as Tinsman points out, the fact that Allende’s vision for agrarian reform in the 1970s was much more defined than Frei’s had been in the 1960s, meant that the “free play” that Jameson describes as key to imagining utopia became limited by the reality that emerged; this caused major conflicts for the UP’s agrarian reform efforts: “Ironically, under Frei, collaboration among men was enabled by the limited and unfinished nature of the Christian Democrats’ land reform project, which had allowed campesinos of very different political tendencies and relationships to the rural economy to interpret the Agrarian Reform as something on which they could project fantasies of inclusion. Under Allende, the definition and possibility of realizing a particular utopian project became much more concrete. […] In part, the UP’s very success exposed the profound differences and conflicting interests among campesinos” (Tinsman 266, emphasis mine).

Still, as historians such as Loveman have pointed out, many of the goals of Allende and the UP were economically “unrealistic” in and of themselves (259): “despite short-term improvements in industrial production and in worker consumption, the UP’s programs of income redistribution in the context of a ‘transition to socialism’”—with capitalist owners still making investment decisions—led to shortages, rising prices, and black markets” (250). By that logic, they retained their utopian power, despite being implemented, because they were doomed to failure from the first.
extent) from the spheres of economics and public policy—they have the power to question and interrogate these multiple utopian economic and political projects. It should also be noted that the historical trajectory of utopia in Europe and the Americas is evidence enough of the fact that utopia is not simply an idea limited to the imagination; implementations of different versions of it have been attempted at multiple “moments,” and in Chile, utopian projects often contradicted with one another, struggling in the same way that those who defended them struggled amongst themselves. The temporalities of utopia during the UP years both reflect these struggles (about politics, economics, and gender norms), and also lie in the interstices between imagination and implementation themselves.

The “utopian moment” that Jameson describes is also problematic in another way that perhaps he did not anticipate. Sarlo, for one, points out that history—which she conceives in a mode inspired by the ideas of Walter Benjamin—consists of both the moment (utopian or not) in which certain movements took place, and the posterior representation of those movements (in art, history, literature, or other modes of expression). When examining the history of a utopian moment, then, we are pushed beyond the flash of inspiration that occurs just before that utopia’s playful ideals are captured and turned into policy, into a “double temporality” of history that combines that “flash” with retrospective meditations upon it and (artistic) representations of it (Sarlo 45). This double temporality problematizes the ways in which utopias are elaborated, politicized, and re-signified, because when analyzed historically (and aesthetically) with the distance of time, even the most convincing of utopias can take on a very different cast. Sarlo’s work is thus very appropriate for our purposes here: in retrospective representations of the utopian moment(s) of the UP 1970s, the moments of even the freest play—to use Jameson’s words—inevitably take on a double cast, when seen in light of how we know they ended up.
Boym, meanwhile, writes about the phenomenon of nostalgia, which she defines as “a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed” (xiii). This concept is particularly germane to the art and literature about Allende and the UP because the utopias they depict are rife with “unrealized dreams of the past and visions of the future that became obsolete” (Boym xvi). Unrealized dreams abound in the history and artistic representations of this time period, and many of them are intimately related to notions of masculinity: Allende’s steadfast adherence to democracy, the specter of leftist armed struggle within Chile and from Cuba, and protests for the UP to recognize gay rights are just some of the hypothetical futures as they were posited during that period, and also invoked later on as idealized pasts. They represented utopias which, when examined as a group, reveal how the political, economic, and sexual impulses depicted in the art and literature of the period clashed with one another in ways that became increasingly more complex as time passed between the original “flash” and its after-the-fact representations. In fact, more than Sarlo’s double temporality, utopia takes on an infinite number of temporalities—and perspectives. Allende, perhaps the figure of utopia par excellence, can thus be represented, alternatively, as a hero who chose to give his life for the cause of democracy, as an inflexible ideologue who refused to change an almost completely ineffectual set of economic policies, and as a weak figurehead who clung to democracy even when it was obvious that armed struggle against the Right was the only way to achieve true socialism.⁹ Rather than being a moment, utopia is actually a state that is always already past us, a temporality always fleeting, viewed from the constantly shifting perspective of the nostalgic gaze.

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⁹ See, for example, a 2004 article in the International Review, which states that “with the 30th anniversary of the overthrow of Allende’s ‘socialist’ government, the whole ‘democratic’ bourgeoisie has made full use of the occasion to try to derail workers from their own class interests. It has been trying to sell the idea that the only struggle workers should support is the defence of the democratic state against dictatorship and evil tyrants” (http://en.internationalism.org/ir/115_allende.htm).
That utopia always becomes so irrevocably mediated when it moves from imagination into practice, and from nostalgic past to a future of potentiality, suggests the impossibility of capturing a “pure,” unadulterated utopia in time and space, and the works I will discuss here reflect that ambiguity. I will begin with Patricio Guzmán’s documentary *La batalla de Chile* (1976-9), which starts with the military coup before looking backwards to document all the events that led up to the rupture of the country’s democracy; it then ends with images of the popular movements that spread during the time of the UP and longingly eulogizes the period as a paradise lost. The film also depicts, in sometimes stark imagery, the masculinist nature of the UP’s forward-looking, utopian policies: some men advocate taking up arms to defend the UP as it descends into crisis as the only way of “being a man,” while others turn to the different (predominantly male-led) institutions in Chile at the time (the Church, the Armed Forces, the Congress, and the “bourgeois” state itself) for guidance to preserve the ideal Chile that they envisioned. I will then turn to Jorge Edwards’ 1973 memoir *Persona non grata*, a pessimistic account of the Cuban economy that is filled with foreboding about the future of UP-era Chile; however, for all its veiled criticism of the Latin American Left, it was published after the coup, and reserves its fiercest critique for Chile’s oligarchy and the foreign interests that helped precipitate the downfall of Allende. As for masculinity, meanwhile, the book culminates in a showdown between Edwards himself and Fidel Castro, each man representing a different economic vision for both Chile and Cuba, in a scene that sums up the extent to which leftist intellectualism in the Latin American seventies was a male-dominated phenomenon that left little room for women. I will conclude the chapter by moving to a representation of the UP years created much longer after its fall. Pedro Lemebel, in *Loco afán* (1996), sought to rewrite the history of the late 60s and early 70s as a time in which gay men enjoyed fleeting freedoms of
expression, participating openly in new ways in the economic and political apparatus established by the UP; however, homosexuality was highly taboo at the time in Chile. Few, if any, gays in Chile experienced the liberation that Lemebel imagines for them, as Víctor Hugo Robles (2008) has pointed out (12), but I will argue that a nostalgic reconstruction of a more liberated past for gays in the UP serves as a utopia which—at least in the way Sarlo conceives of it—has the potential to broaden the history of narrowly constructed, masculinist utopias that dominated the time.

When discussed together, these works—all of which invoke the UP from different standpoints, all of which are located in its aftermath—are the ones that offer the clearest insight into the relationship between different conceptions of masculinity and utopian thought during the Allende years. They allow for an interrogation of the relationship between economic and gendered forms of utopia, while also offering a glimpse into how art and literature have the power to problematize the temporalities of utopia from outside the realm of its practical implementation. They are particularly effective at doing this because they were all created (or conceived of, at least) during the utopian stirrings of the UP but finalized and made public after it was over, giving them the power of hindsight. Located thusly in this “impossible” utopian time—between imagination and actuality, between an argument and its counterargument, between documentation and representation, between past and present—they serve as both evocations of utopias and also as elegies to them, offering a recognition of their failures that sometimes bleeds into critique. They are models of Chile’s rhetoric of exemplarity during this period, showing how the country’s positioning of itself as a model of democratic socialism correlates with a vast array of masculine “exemplars,” and in doing so, captures the tensions between utopian imagination and praxis.
Historical Background: Masculinities and Economies That Never Were

A brief historical outline is in order, to examine what these utopias were, what their implications were for the economic changes of the period, and how they impacted the masculinities that manifested themselves in Chile’s cultural production. Allende, for one, sought to effect a revolution that would re-appropriate Chile’s existing republican traditions and create from them a new, utopian social democracy. His presidency was exceptional in that it was a socialist government that had taken power democratically—an unprecedented development, particularly given the influence in Latin America of the Cold War-obsessed Nixon administration, which abhorred socialism in all its forms and did everything in its power to weaken leftist movements in the western hemisphere. Soon after his election, Allende took (or tacitly allowed for) a number of measures that directly impacted US interests: expropriations, popular occupations (known as tomas), and nationalizations—of some foreign- and domestically-owned farmland, factories, and other natural resources, including the copper mines. The state sought to bring as much of the economy into its control as possible, even to the point of implementing a computer system known as Cybersyn to control the day-to-day operations of the country’s factories from a central location. The utopia of “people’s empowerment” (poder popular) imagined for Chile by the UP had a huge impact on the political scene. In addition, Allende’s political legacy was exceptional in the sense that it has proved to be such a lasting one: in a speech entitled “El más alto ejemplo del heroísmo” given 17 days after Allende’s death, Fidel Castro was already raising Allende to the level of masculinist hagiography, praising “la voluntad y la decisión de un hombre de honor” (Castro 48), and to this day, there are avenues

10 For more information about the fascinating Cybersyn project, see Eden Medina’s 2011 volume Cybernetic Revolutionaries: Technology and Politics in Allende’s Chile.
named for Allende, and statues memorializing him, in many of the principal cities on earth. Allende cut a figure that inspired utopian futurity while he was still alive, and in death, nostalgia for his government constituted a utopian temporality of its own—one that was inseparable from gendered notions of heroism espoused by revolutionary masculine icons such as Che Guevara and Castro himself, as we shall see below.

The UP’s eventual downfall was due to a complex series of factors, most of them economic in nature. First of all,

the monopolistic structure of Chilean industry, rapidly expanding demands by workers for expropriation of farms and factories, and the corresponding distrust by private investors of the government’s ultimate intentions toward private firms, all militated against substantial new private investment (Loveman 250).

Meanwhile, inflation rose, due to capital flight, deficit spending, and “escalating emissions of currency” (Loveman 250). As a result of hoarding (in the hopes that prices would rise), as well as the cutting off of supplies (due to transport strikes) and decreased imports from abroad, there were many shortages. Chileans had to resort to rationing many goods: “thousands of private supply and price committees, juntas de abastecimiento y precios (JAP) were organized to cooperate in local distribution of articles of consumption to urban neighborhoods” (Loveman 250). Lines formed throughout Santiago of people waiting to buy small quantities of staple goods. Strikes were commonplace: at different times during the Allende years, right-wing public transportation, trucking, and mining unions held labor stoppages to cripple the government.

Allende himself, in a 1973 speech before the UN General Assembly (Allende 244-247), as well as Edwards, refer to a dispute between the Chilean government and the US-owned Kennecott Mining Company, whose mines were nationalized and expropriated by the UP; Kennecott, which considered that it had been insufficiently compensated for its loss of the mines, took its case to Paris’s Tribunal de Grande Instance in 1972 (Edwards 1974: 442). Because of Chile’s
dependence upon “financial, industrial, and commercial relations with the United States,” the fact that it incurred the wrath of major US corporate interests led to an “invisible blockade” by the US, which was intended to “‘make the [Chilean] economy scream,’ as Nixon had previously ordered” (Kornbluh 83). The CIA poured funds into covert propaganda efforts in Chile, concentrating on the country’s newspaper of record, El Mercurio (Kornbluh 88-89). After an unsuccessful attempt at a military coup in June of 1973, known as the Tancazo (Loveman 256), military forces took power in a more coordinated coup on September 11, 1973. Allende committed suicide in the presidential palace that day, after refusing a “perfunctory” (Kornbluh 113) offer to be flown into exile.

In contrast to the agenda of the UP, the interests of US corporations and Chilean oligarchs (as well as those of the Chilean and US militaries) also constituted a utopia of sorts, both in terms of economics and of masculinity, through which aspirations for a non-UP future were articulated. Not surprisingly, the measures taken by the UP were extremely unpopular with the national oligarchy and the foreign interests that owned the expropriated assets. The United States government, worried about UP-like ideology spreading to other countries in Latin America, soon began working to undermine Allende. The possible implications of the developments in Chile for surrounding countries were certainly not lost on Henry Kissinger, who, concerned about the exceptionalism of Chile, wrote a memorandum about the “‘insidious’ ‘model effect’ of Allende’s democratic election” (Kornbluh 80, emphasis mine). Just as Chile had moved to the left, US government authorities felt, so now it could influence other countries to do so in new and dangerous ways. President Nixon, for his part, pledged to “move in hostility from a low-key posture” (Kornbluh 81) as far as the UP was concerned. A number of clandestine communications to this effect have since been uncovered between the United States and the
Chilean opposition to the UP, although, as Loveman points out, “American or other outside pressures could not by themselves have ensured” the failure and downfall of the UP (259). Reacting against the egalitarian pretensions of the UP, the United States moved to articulate what it considered to be a more ideal version of the future for Chile: the re-establishment of the rules that had been in play under the Frei Montalva administration, namely order and class hierarchy in the context of a patriarchal system.

Within Chile, the actions of right-wing elements that allied with the US to re-establish a previous economic order were explicitly related to masculinity. Historian Margaret Power (1997) has written extensively about right-wing movements in Chile, and quotes an article in La Tribuna newspaper from December 1971 that describes how when some women took the streets to protest against food shortages under the UP by banging empty pots, those who opposed them were called “miricones.” This word was a play on the word “maricón,” since, according to the newspaper clipping, “obvio es recalcar el nombre que reciben quienes atacan a las mujeres. Ellos se acercan mucho a la verdadera calificación [‘maricón’]” (Power 265). Right-wing elements in Chile equated the desire for equality in the country with an amalgam of weakness and homosexuality, according to Power’s research. Critics of the UP registered their displeasure with the situation by holding up as their ideal a utopia of class and gender hierarchy, in which heterosexual male prowess ensured a clear-cut order of servility and patriarchal providence. For these actors, the UP did not just constitute a threat to their personal patrimony; it also threw their preconceived notions of masculinity completely out of balance. Their reaction, then, was to advocate for a return to these hierarchies.

The relationship between masculinity and these clashing “utopian” visions for the Chilean economy had massive implications abroad; Chile came to be positioned both as an echo
of structures already in place in countries like Cuba, and also as a possible model to yet other countries. Meanwhile, as Diana Sorensen (2007) has pointed out, the effects of these leftist movements on the performances of masculinity by certain Latin American intellectuals could hardly be ignored.\footnote{11} The influence of Cuba could be broadly felt throughout the Chilean art and literature of the UP era, in the way that Fidel Castro’s Cuba had been extremely influential for the UP’s political and economic policies. Castro had overthrown previous president Fulgencio Batista in 1959,\footnote{12} and so by Allende’s election in 1970, Cuba’s revolutionary apparatus was firmly entrenched. Particularly in the late 1960s, a number of important cultural events were held in Havana, hosting important artists and intellectuals and winning the sympathy to its cause of a large part of the global left. Despite the political repression that was commonplace there (particularly after 1967), Cuba had won over a number of high-profile male Latin American intellectuals to its cause by 1970, including key “Boom” writers Gabriel García Márquez and Julio Cortázar, indicating the extent to which masculinist and revolutionary rhetoric at the time were intertwined. Jorge Edwards had spent time in Cuba in 1968 as a member of the jury of a literary prize, and his professed sympathies towards Castro were what caused him to support Allende, which led to him receiving the diplomatic post in Havana. A small channel of cooperation between Chile and Cuba, which provided for the exchange of ideas and people—Allende himself traveled to Cuba in 1961 (Cardemil 316)—had opened up and gained importance throughout the sixties, but during the UP years this channel widened greatly as a succession of Chileans traveled to Cuba to learn more from Cuba’s experiences and try to catch a glimpse of what Chile could become, economically (Edwards 1974: 183).

\footnote{11} I discussed this idea in greater depth in the previous chapter vis-à-vis José Donoso and other members of the Boom generation, but more information can be found in Chapter 5 of Sorensen’s book. 
\footnote{12} More information about the Cuban revolution itself can be found in a number of sources, including Marifeli Perez-Stable’s \textit{The Cuban Revolution: Origins, Course, and Legacy} (1998).
The influence of Cuba upon Chile manifested itself most notably (and notoriously) in Chilean cultural production and politics in the form of the possibility of armed struggle—a key way to understand the relationship between utopian leftism and masculinity at the time. The idea of armed struggle—which, of course, had been successful in Cuba in 1959—was propagated mainly by sectors to the left of the UP, particularly the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria, or MIR, which “rejected electoral politics” (Loveman 246). The MIR was led by Miguel Enríquez, a now-legendary figure who advocated for a break with the bourgeois state apparatus that the UP was occupying at the time. In Chile, Enríquez’s vision emerged as both a political and a gender alternative: a way to break with the politics of the UP, but also an image of masculinity that many men on the left found extremely appealing. It was an image also propagated by Che Guevara in his 1965 article El socialismo y el hombre en Cuba, published in the Uruguayan magazine Marcha. There, Che exhorted “new men” to come together to combat bourgeois, individualistic ideas, and served as a reference point for Chilean activists, writers, and artists at the time. Stating that the title “pudiera ser interesante para los lectores uruguayos” (Guevara 3)—and by extension, for readers around South America, where Marcha had considerable circulation—Guevara added that “Cuba es la vanguardia de América y…ocupa el lugar de avanzada…indica a las masas de América Latina el camino de la libertad plena” (15).

Che’s awareness of the power of his and Cuba’s discourse to influence other countries in Latin America demonstrates to what extent the Cuban revolution functioned as a specter in the region.

13 The 2007 documentary Calle Santa Fe is about the legacy of Enríquez, as told by the film’s director Carmen Castillo, who was his girlfriend at the time that he was arrested and disappeared by the military dictatorship in 1974. Enríquez’s legacy was also on display (although in a muted form) more recently, because he is the biological father of 2009 Chilean presidential candidate Marco Enríquez-Ominami. According to Florencia Mallon, Enríquez “had an impressive talent for public oratory and personal drama, something he already demonstrated in 1964, when at the tender age of twenty he publicly stood up to a visiting Robert Kennedy at the University of Concepción” (180).

14 More information about Marcha’s influence and circulation in Latin America and the world can be found in Luisa Peirano Basso’s Marcha de Montevideo (2001).
in that period. For Che, the “new man” would, in part, exemplify to others (within Cuba and beyond) how to maintain patriarchal values—both in his family, since the “new man” was a heterosexual father and husband as well as a citizen: “Si un hombre piensa que, para dedicar su vida entera a la revolución, no puede distraer su mente por la preocupación de que a un hijo le falte determinado producto…bajo este razonamiento deja infiltrarse los gérmenes de la futura corrupción” (Guevara 16). In this sense, it is impossible to think about the transnational circulation of leftist utopian thought in this period without viewing it in the context of heteronormative ideals of masculinity.  

Indeed, this heterosexist influence of Che and the “new man” was widely felt in Chile. Edwards states that members of the MIR were close followers of Fidel and Che: “El MIR seguía de cerca algunas tesis de la Revolución cubana y en especial del Che Guevara, cuya imagen, de boina y cabellos largos, con la vista fija en el horizonte, presidía las salas de estudio, las veladas y las fiestas de la juventud chilena rebelde” (Edwards 1974: 16). Edwards’ focus on Che’s physical attributes as much as on his revolutionary economic rhetoric is quite telling: the image of masculinity that Che conveyed was just as powerful as any of his economic or political rhetoric. The iconography of the bearded guerrilla fighter was very tempting for those who felt that the UP was not carrying out its reforms fast enough. Florencia Mallon (2003) has discussed this in her writing about the MIR, its Cuban predecessors, and its implications for masculinity: “the young mirista leadership deployed a transgressive masculinity that resonated broadly with the various forms of gendered rebelliousness…that had already taken shape in popular political culture” (181), and also “drew directly on the combination of the Cuban barbudo…and the emerging ‘hippie’ rebels who preached free love…and stormed the barricades of the bourgeois ________________________________________

15 María Josefina Saldána-Portillo critiques this idea in her chapter on Che Guevara in her book The Revolutionary Imagination in the Americas and the Age of Development (2003).
state” (Mallon 180). Cuba’s influence was felt far and wide in Chile under the UP, with inevitable consequences for Chile’s economic, cultural, and gender development—not to mention its impact on countercultural and revolutionary movements all over the world.

The rhetoric and imagery of the armed struggle constitute a political and gendered utopia that hovered over the UP throughout the Allende presidency as a possible outcome. For many within the UP, it was an undesirable future that threatened the advances of Allende’s coalition in terms of democratic reform and gender equality: a May 1973 article in Ramona, a magazine for young people published during the years of the UP, entitled “Guerra civil: La gran amenaza,” condemns any possibility of uprising (from the left or the right) because “el país sufriría pérdidas irreparables, daños que nadie puede calcular” (23). Still, John Beverley (2009) highlights the positive impulses of the armed struggle, which “revealed Latin American in its most generous, creative, courageous, and diverse aspects” (58).16 Also, he adds that Latin America is “the only region in the world today where socialism is on the agenda, even as a rhetorical possibility” (49), a result he attributes directly to the presence of armed struggle there. Although my analysis of the utopia of leftist armed struggle (as manifested in Chilean cultural production) as destined to failure is far from being “an acceptance of, or identification with, the powers that be—something like a Latin American version of the neoconservative turn in postsixties U.S. culture” (Beverley 59), it is important to emphasize that the elements that advocated for armed struggle in Chile were anti-democratic, and posed a direct challenge to the project of Allende and the UP.

16 Beverley does admit that the “relation of the revolutionary vanguards to indigenous populations or to women and gays” was “sometimes problematic” (56) and that there were “residual colonial prejudices, voluntarism, authoritarianism, sublimated machismo, and even racism within the revolutionary Left of the sixties and seventies” (58)—and, indeed, a number of critics have pointed out that this focus on the “new man” elides sexual difference and relegates women to the background. Beverley’s argument is somewhat contradictory, because even though he states that the armed struggle needs to be “recuperated and represented” (59) as if it had been relegated to oblivion, he points out that “it continues unabated in large parts of Colombia” (52), as well as in Mexico and southern Chile, where indigenous groups have “resorted to violent protests” (53).
Beverley acknowledges as much: “with the exception of the Chilean Popular Unity, the Latin American revolutionary Left…did not give enough thought or credence to the question of mass democracy and political hegemony” (55, emphasis mine). Still, despite Beverley’s admission that the case of Chile weakens his argument, he persists with it. Chilean ideas about leftist armed struggle were thus utopian in the finest sense of the word: they comprised an outlier in a largely democratic political spectrum, firmly couched against that democracy. Accordingly, the cultural production of the UP constantly refers to revolutionary armed struggle as a project to rupture a democratic order, controlled by men who have little regard for popular will (at least as manifested in the ballot boxes).

Literature, history, and popular lore often refer to the UP period as one of sexual revolution in Chile; however, this interpretation of events seems idealized at best. It was a time in which traditional gender roles experienced great upheaval, but conventional ideas of masculinity couched in R.W. Connell’s “reproductive arena,” discussed in depth in the introduction and previous chapter, continued to bracket this phenomenon; this limited the possibilities of sexualities that were perceived as somehow threatening to the UP. Tinsman, for one, writes about some of the contradictory visions of gender ideals under Allende. Women—particularly young women—were inducted into service work for the UP (Tinsman 219), and proved that “labor militancy was not exclusively masculine” (Tinsman 272). With more and more women working outside the home, they had more opportunities for autonomy from their families, and more opportunities for sexual experimentation and choosing what kind of gender roles they wished to play. This went hand-in-hand with UP sexual education programs, which were related “to issues of personal self-understanding and sexual fulfillment” (Tinsman 223). These opportunities for women to envision ways to emancipate themselves from previous
patriarchal traditions notwithstanding, however, Tinsman points out that the UP continued to be very much a male-dominated organization. Conventional wisdom in the UP was that women were generally more politically conservative than men, and so the militant rank and file “felt it owed its slim victory margin to the support of working-class males” (Tinsman 214). This led to something of a self-fulfilling prophesy, in the sense that “[m]ale opposition to female involvement in politics and many women’s acceptance of this position resulted in 25 to 30 percent fewer campesina women voting in 1970 than campesino men” (Tinsman 215). Another contradictory aspect of gender relations in the UP was that, on one hand, men were encouraged to participate more in domestic tasks and give women greater financial and political autonomy—an outlook that Tinsman calls “gender mutualism” (219-220)—but on the other hand, whatever sexual revolution that was to take place in the UP would do so within the patriarchal and heterosexual discourse of the “new man.” For example, the campesino unionization and agrarian reform efforts that “had long celebrated men’s sexual prowess as an integral part of worker militancy, and the heightened political mobilization of the late 1960s and early 1970s provided men with ample opportunities to avoid the scrutiny of wives and to meet other women” (Tinsman 274), which were tacitly approved, despite Allende’s concerns about the UP being associated with sexual profligacy. After all, as Power has pointed out, “el símbolo primario de [la UP] era el rudo y musculoso hombre trabajador” (1997: 257), a model of masculine power which can hardly be read without sexual connotations. Power (2006) has also written about how despite the fact that some women had a particularly visible role in opposition to the UP, they were used by men who were able to paint the ensuing military coup as the gesture of “true gentlemen [who] answered the pleas of women—medieval knights to the rescue of the damsel in distress. Their action simultaneously removed the Allende government and asserted proper, patriarchal gender
roles” (Power 2006: 375). Despite the fact that women had new opportunities to participate in the public sphere—which, in turn, opened the doors for other new, previously marginalized political actors to participate, as we shall see below—the UP, and opposition to it, was still a man’s world. While it may have been a time for many to imagine utopias of sexual liberation, concerns about such liberation descending into libertinage prevented many such utopias from becoming a reality.

Sexualities in the UP that were peripheral to the reproductive arena, such as homosexuality and feminisms that rejected motherhood, were marginalized much more unambiguously, because they constituted specters of rebellion against the UP that were as potentially damaging as the images of the bearded MIR rebels. However, these currents of rebellion are utopias of gender comportment that deserve examination, because of how they manifested themselves in the cultural production of and about the period. For example, Virginia Vidal’s 1972 pamphlet *La emancipación de la mujer*, which offered a critique of “machismo y la exaltación de la maternidad” (Vidal 76), was considered “too critical of men and never distributed” (Tinsman 226). Homosexuality, meanwhile, was almost completely taboo. Power has pointed out that one of the right’s most stinging insults to leftists was that they were gay:

> Cuando los simpatizantes de la Unidad Popular se oponían a las mujeres anti-Allende, la derecha…lo definía como un ataque a la maternidad. Como ningún hombre “normal” sería capaz de oponerse a su madre, entonces los que lo hacían tenían que ser “hombres antinaturales;” en otras palabras, homosexuales (Power 1997: 262).

Although the right used intimations of homosexuality as an insult to the left, homophobia was hardly limited to those who opposed the UP. As Robles has written, “en pleno Gobierno socialista de la Unidad Popular, los homosexuales eran vistos como escoria, sus demandas no existían, ni siquiera estaban contemplados en los cambios políticos, sociales y culturales que ambicionó implementar el presidente Salvador Allende” (13). This made it all the more
surprising when, in April of 1973, a group of about 25 homosexuals held a protest in the Plaza de Armas of Santiago to demand a number of civil rights, including the right to marry (Robles 15). This protest was not isolated from the economic realities of the time: the fact that its protagonists “eran un grupo de homosexuales que poco tenían que perder” (Robles 11) meant that they felt solidarity with the demands for participation in public affairs made by other proletarian groups, but also that gay members of wealthier socioeconomic sectors of society did not participate at all. Although the protest seems not to have been repressed by the police at the time, the leftist press—not to mention the rightist press—reacted virulently. Robles quotes extremely disparaging coverage of the event in the Chilean newspaper Clarín, which was otherwise generally sympathetic to the UP: “‘Pero ligerito [los manifestantes] se soltaron las trenzas y sacaron sus descomunales patas del plató y se lanzaron demostrando que la libertad que exigen, no es más que libertinaje. […] Con razón un viejo propuso rociarlos con parafina y tirarles un fósforo encendido’” (Robles 16). An October 10, 1972 article in Ramona sums up attitudes towards gays in more moderate, but still negative, language:

Para reírnos de los maricas, para inventar chistes y echar tallas, los chilenos de todas las clases sociales tenemos bastantes energías. […] La razón de este comportamiento tan irracional es sin duda el ambiente cargado de machismo en que nos hemos educado. […] El mundo se divide rígidamente en dos: los hombres machotes por este lado y los maricas al otro. Y punto. […] El tema da para mucho y estamos dispuestos a desarrollarlo con bastante calma (“La homosexualidad es así,” 38-9).

Despite the magazine’s stated intention to calmly discuss the topic, in its next issue (October 17, 1972) it asserts that “Para que una persona se lance por el camino de las experiencias homosexuales, hace falta que la base en la que recibió las pautas de comportamiento sexual…sea
muy defectuosa” (“La homosexualidad es así,” 39). Attitudes about homosexuality at the time were at worst harshly homophobic, and at best rather misinformed. For this reason, Lemebel’s chronicle of the UP as a time of hope for gays is key, because it reflects both the utopian impossibility of, and growing demand for, gay rights during that period of history.

This chapter will examine the multiple tensions related to utopia as they occurred in the cultural production of the period: tensions between ex-post-facto UP narratives and of-the-moment UP narratives; tensions among different ideals of the Chilean economy, whether utopian or not; tensions between the imagination and implementation of those utopias; and tensions among the different conceptions of masculinity that corresponded to these economic ideals. A closer look at the three works critiqued below will offer insight into how these tensions operated, since they stand apart from other works created during (and about, after) the UP by offering, I argue, the clearest evidence of a) the rhetoric of the Chilean economy, and Chilean masculinities, as “exemplary,” on a transnational scale, in their utopian aspirations; b) the extent to which economic and political utopias, and challenges to them, can (and should) be primarily framed in the terms of masculinity; and c) the tensions inherent when masculinities and economics look forward to ideal futures while simultaneously being portrayed retroactively in nostalgic ways. By moving away from utopias of masculinity and economics that surged in situ from the rich and vibrant cultural scene of the UP, to similar idealizations of the UP as utopia created not in the moment but rather after the UP was overthrown, it may not be possible to “capture” a utopian moment in time, but is it possible to challenge essentialist and singular preconceptions about gender and economics in the UP.

17 An article in Ramona from the following week (October 24, 1972) about lesbians is entitled “Y existen, además, las ‘homosexualas,’” and mentions that “existe en ellas casi siempre una alteración familiar que no supo dar un cauce normal a sus inclinaciones” (39).
La batalla de Chile: Masculinities Struggling for a Utopian Present

Patricio Guzmán’s three-part documentary La batalla de Chile: La lucha de un pueblo sin armas was a watershed event—it’s reels of film smuggled out of Chile under dictatorship, exhibitions of the film held all over the world offered a glimpse of the noble aspirations of the by-then defunct UP and generated interest in Chile and its struggle to recover democracy. The film “embodies” the multiple ideological, economic, and political conflicts surrounding the contentious final period of the UP in its subjects—most of whom are men. Moreover, all the men portrayed offer performances of conventional, heterosexual masculinity. Its images distill the roiling conflicts of the time into (masculine) “models” of the subjects who participated in them, including the overwhelmed, beleaguered functionaries of the bureaucratic and “bourgeois” government, who were figuratively menaced by the hierarchical, disciplined ordering of military bodies (that turned out to overthrow the state) and by impassioned speeches from leftist leaders (who advocated for a Cuba-style overthrow of the state), and physically menaced, onscreen, by the popular movements of campesinos and workers whose demands are portrayed as too powerful to be channeled by the UP.

The film follows the final six months of the UP government, covering the political conflicts (at both the elite and popular levels) that led up to the coup; however, the curious order of its composition has attracted the attention of many critics, and offers a good jumping-off point for my discussion. It begins with a powerful image so well-known and widely disseminated that it has since been raised almost to the level of fetish, as Federico Galende (2005) has pointed out

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A number of works that analyze La batalla de Chile offer further insight into the curious history behind its exhibition and production, including the way its reels of raw footage were smuggled out of Chile with the help of French filmmaker Chris Marker; for further reading, see Ruffinelli (2008 and 2010), and Burton (1977), among others.
La Moneda, Chile’s presidential palace, in flames after being bombed by the military during the September 11 coup (see Figure 11).19 Meanwhile, the film ends with exhortations for an alternate ending to the narrative of the UP, a popular uprising against the bourgeoisie that never effectively took place: one worker, when asked if he feels that the time has come for a “firm hand” (as opposed to protracted politicking), answers that “el gobierno tiene que tomar las riendas…es ahora o nunca, compañero.” The fact that this film begins its first part, La insurrección de la burguesía (which premiered in 1975) at the very moment of the UP’s downfall, and ends its third part, El poder popular (which premiered much later, in 1979) (Ruffinelli 96-110), with an outcome for the UP that never was, is just one of many indicators of how problematic the temporality of utopia can be.20 The fragility of the utopian images of a doomed government we see on screen are all the more so in light of Guzmán’s admission that as he filmed, he was almost certain that the UP would end either in leftist armed struggle or in a coup by the right, but would certainly not end peacefully (Burton 41). In fact, at the end of the film, the narrative voiceover—Guzmán’s own voice—states that “ante la imposibilidad de que el presidente Allende pueda seguir avanzando, mucha gente intuye un final trágico.” All of the temporalities represented in Guzmán’s documentary constitute political and economic utopias (and dystopias), however fragile, and their fragility is reflected by the different masculine subjects that appear onscreen who embody those utopias. The film, meanwhile, is perhaps the most important representation of this relationship between utopia and masculinity from the Left: a model of how that Left constructed its ideal models of masculinity.

19 This is the way two of Guzmán’s later documentaries open as well: Chile, la memoria obstinada (1997) and Salvador Allende (2004).
20 The second part of the film, entitled El golpe de estado, premiered in 1976.
My focus on the masculinities represented in this documentary does not take place to the exclusion of any women who appear onscreen; this exclusion has already taken place. Women do appear throughout the film, but the opinions they espouse echo opinions first expressed by men, particularly when they are identified with the Left. The only exception to this is when women are asked about how UP policies have affected their domestic economy: for example, they are often asked how they are managing to keep food on the table at a time when food rations are so commonplace. As Power has pointed out (although not in connection to La batalla de Chile), the Right held “binary definitions of gender” (2006: 373), but the same would appear to be true for the Left as well: when mentioning the major events that took place during the UP, women are largely relegated to the background. This may be because the most visible political leaders at the time—La batalla de Chile focuses particularly on Senator Luis Corvalán, MIR leader Miguel Enríquez, MAPU21 leader Jaime Gazmuri, and MAPU Secretary General Oscar Guillermo Garretón—were men; in any case, a number of writers and artists have critiqued the masculinist tradition of the Chilean Left, including Lemebel, Carlos Leppe, Roberto Bolaño, and

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21 MAPU was a splinter group of the Christian Democratic Party who felt that the DC was too right-wing to represent them.
Carmen Castillo. Even Guzmán, in Burton’s 1977 interview, admitted to relegating women to the background in his film:

The daily lives of the Chilean masses, for example, the changing relations between men and women...all this was also in the original outline. We were unable to film but a small part of this however. [...] I would have loved to have really immersed myself in what the people were doing that time on a personal level, in what they were feeling...in their experimentation. In this sense, the Chilean people were very advanced. The country was on the way to abandoning its macho tradition, for example. [...] It would have been very important to show this, particularly in light of the heavily macho tradition in the rest of Latin America (Burton 67-68).

The film thus shows the primary ideological struggles of the period to be primarily masculine ones: for example, at one point, amidst images of men (and only men) marching (see Figure 12), Guzmán’s narration analyzes the differences within the UP:

Para un sector de la Unidad Popular, encabezado por los Comunistas, la expropiación arbitaria de fábricas constituye un error, pues debilita la imagen legal del gobierno. En cambio, para el otro sector, liderado por los Socialistas, la ocupación de las industrias representa una forma útil de movilización, que ayuda a preparar la lucha que se avecina. Este sector de la Unidad Popular afirma que el choque armado con la derecha es completamente inevitable, y que la única forma de enterrar un golpe es con la organización de las masas y el poder popular...

The implication of this scene is that the debate over this key difference dividing the UP—whether to rise up and fight the right, or to stay within Chile’s legal and constitutional framework—is one that has taken place primarily among men.

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22 Lemebel’s critique of the sexism of the Left will be discussed presently; Leppe’s critique will be discussed in chapter three; Bolaño’s critique will be discussed in chapter four; Castillo’s 2007 documentary Calle Santa Fe will not be discussed in this thesis, but it lays bare the sexist beliefs of some members of the MIR.
The democratic present of the action of the film is vulnerable and fleeting as long as it appears onscreen: Guzmán’s preconceived notions about the fate of the UP color the present as it is presented to the viewer. Indeed, Ana Lopez (1990) points out that “the events presented by the film are thus constructed as leading to a foreknown closure” (281), and Camilo Trumper (2010) has alluded to the fact that the image of La Moneda Palace on fire in the film’s opening scene “gives the narrator the power of hindsight, the objectivity that comes with distance from the event, of an outcome foretold” (123). The editing process of the film affects our perception in this way, as well: Pedro Chaskel edited the film at ICAIC, the Cuban Film Institute (Burton 61), after Guzmán smuggled the raw footage out of Chile. The final product, then, in Guzmán’s words, “se debe… a la influencia de la revolución cubana” as well as to “el trabajo conjunto de todas las fuerzas políticas de resistencia chilena que han visto la película y la aprueban” (Ruffinelli 94), following the elimination from the film of what Ruffinelli calls “lo políticamente inoportuno” (94). The film’s narrative is mediated not only by the knowledge that the UP eventually failed, but also by the ideological influence of Cuba. Guzmán has also stated that in

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23 Julianne Burton’s 1977 interview with Guzmán, “the most comprehensive to appear in any language to date,” in the words of Guzmán and producer Federico Elton (38), offers valuable insight into the conditions of production of the film. For example, Guzmán points out that Jorge Müller, the cameraman of La batalla, was arrested and disappeared in 1974; the film is dedicated to him. Guzmán himself was arrested for a time but then released (Burton 58). Later, in exile in France, he sought funding to edit the project through contacts in the government there, but an encounter with two members of ICAIC in Paris led him to take his project to Cuba.
the process of filming, a number of people participated in creating the outline that his crew made of the “key points” of the struggle that would be the focus of the film, including “the editorial team from the magazine *Chile Hoy* and in particular Marta Harnecker” (Burton 46).\(^{24}\) The film can be viewed, then, as a chronicle of the fleeting temporalities of utopia as they played out in the UP: in it, the film’s democratic (and, to many, ineffectual) “present” struggles with two different futures. One is the future that actually occurred—the military coup that ended Allende’s government and his life, the foregone conclusion that Lopez and Trumper mention—but the other future is the one idealized by the filmmaker, even after all hope of such a future reaching fruition is gone. Guzmán imagines a popular struggle that surpasses the limits of the government: a “power of the people” that takes its politics beyond the “superstructure” of the UP to the workers, who, in Guzmán’s words, “undertake—with utmost calm—the discussion of what the future will look like,” even when limited “within the bourgeois state apparatus” (Burton 41).

Jerónimo de Azcoitía and Humberto Peñaloza clamored for masculine recognition, notoriety, and status in *El obsceno pájaro de la noche* by obsessing over their “faces,” out of fear that without a “legacy,” they would disappear into the oblivion of obscurity; in *La batalla de Chile*, however, the opposite is the case. The faces depicted on camera—along with their class, labor, political, military, or religious affiliations, their clothes, and their general comportment—are the only “legacy” left behind by the subjects of the documentary. We are thus left with “types,” particularly of men but also of women, the implication being that, as viewers, we are to surmise the subjects’ aspirations, reasoning, and beliefs from the information that we receive about them. The subjects of *La batalla de Chile*, then, represent “models” of political affiliation, particularly of men but also of women, the implication being that, as viewers, we are to surmise the subjects’ aspirations, reasoning, and beliefs from the information that we receive about them. The subjects of *La batalla de Chile*, then, represent “models” of political affiliation, particularly of men but also of women, the implication being that, as viewers, we are to surmise the subjects’ aspirations, reasoning, and beliefs from the information that we receive about them.

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\(^{24}\) Harnecker, who studied in Paris with Louis Althusser and was later married to Cuban revolutionary Manuel Piñeiro, also aided in the editing process years later in Cuba (Ruffinelli 91). Piñeiro had a major role in the Cuban government’s spying and surveillance apparatus, as shall be discussed with regard to Jorge Edwards’ memoir *Persona non grata*. *Chile Hoy*, meanwhile, published an article, written by Hans Ehrmann in 1972, about Guzmán and his film about Allende’s first year in office, *El primer año.*
but also “models” of gender comportment. A reading of these “types” can serve as a way of reading how masculiniti
es manifest themselves throughout the film and correspond to the multiple utopian temporalities that coexisted in the time of the UP. It is likely for this reason that many critics, including Lopez, Ruffinelli (98-99), and Trumper (125), have focused on the film’s sequence shots, particularly in the first part, that serve to contextualize the subjects within their surroundings, while supplementing their words with images of their possessions and other objects, often to signify class and political affiliations. Lopez states that these shots “provide a wealth of detail and evidence of the directiveness of filming that belies the careful orchestration of the ‘raw’ materials of the real” (278). Despite this focus on Guzmán’s sequence shots as a way of decoding political affiliations, however, these critics have not made note of how Guzmán’s subjects’ onscreen performances of gender relate to different political ideologies, in the way that critics such as Teresa de Lauretis (1984) have done apropos of films such as Michael Snow’s film Presents or Nicolas Roeg’s film Bad Timing.

Perhaps the most emblematic case in the film of a sequence shot as an interrogation of gender performance takes place during the first part of the film (see Figure 13). Lopez describes the scene as follows:

…the filmmakers enter a right-wing apartment, pretending to be representatives of Channel 13 TV. While the microphone interviews the lady of the house, the camera, after remaining on her face for only a few seconds, takes a tour of the well-appointed apartment. What we see underlines the presumed coherence between what she says and her environment. […] This presentation of information—the visual indictment of the bourgeoisie—simultaneously positions the spectator as a reader/observer of the ‘real’ and

25 Trumper does come close to saying this, pointing out how the scene inside the apartment, for example, serves as “a treatise on the way in which politics and class intertwine, how the material world reveals these ties….La batalla closely examines the relationship between body, clothing, gesture, and accent as the material reality by which class is articulated and reinforced” (125). The elements he mentions have to do with gender, but he stops short of extending them beyond the implications of class.

26 See chapters 3 and 4 of de Lauretis’ book Alice Doesn’t: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema.

27 As does Lopez, I should point out here that Channel 13 was controlled by right-wing elements in Chile at that time.
as the observer of a preconstructed, intentional operation, directed as a fiction is directed (Lopez 279-280).

It is here where we can begin to see how, as Judith Butler (1993) put it, one particular temporality can be “materialized” in the realm of aesthetic representation (10-11). The camera pans over the amply stocked bar in the house, the multiple knickknacks displayed on mahogany shelves, and the view outside, and unambiguously signifies the woman and her family as members of the bourgeoisie. The subject admits that she voted for Jarpa, the candidate from the right-wing National Party, and is thus designated as representative of a future that did, in fact, come to fruition: “todo se tiene que arreglar,” she says, and this “ arreglo” turned out to be the coup. The fact that the documentary positions her as a representative of the habitus of the Right, spouting clichés such as “la democracia va a triunfar” and making semi-infantile gestures and expressions, marks a ridicule of her political perspective and the future to which she aspires (with the accompanying implication that all right-wing people are superficial, compulsive accumulators of consumer goods). Moreover, the shot feminizes the Right and its aspirations, implying that voting for Jarpa is an abandonment of the masculinity most idealized by the director.

Figure 13.

This use of sequence shots to signify not only class affiliation but also gender comportment appears throughout the film. On the other end of the ideological spectrum, another
scene in Part 1 depicts a union leader denouncing the owners of a factory expropriated by the government. The owners have, according to him, stolen the machines out of the facility, thereby rendering the factory useless: as he speaks, the camera pans upwards to a portrait of Che Guevara with the words “¡Viva Cuba!” on the wall behind him (see Figure 14). The fiery rhetoric spouted by a table where only men, and no women, are sitting is an evocation of the rhetoric of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, which was, in itself, a performance of a certain type of masculinity: a man who takes up arms to defend himself and his pueblo, if necessary. By linking the subjects of this shot with the political situation in Cuba, their performances of masculinity are duly classified while also intimating their aspirations for the Chilean economy: they are more than willing to overthrow the political apparatus of the UP to achieve the justice that they feel that the owners of the expropriated factory have violated. The “threatened” temporalities of utopia that the film explores have their counterparts in the subjects that appear onscreen: Guzmán’s masculine subjects are positioned to embody the different utopias that the film examines.

One telling scene in Part 2, a televised debate from the final months of the UP, between two male Congressional representatives (diputados), is indicative of the extent not only to which performances of masculinity and political and class affiliation can be intertwined, but also of how these gendered and classed bodies struggle with one another for control of the country’s
economic and political agenda. In an increasingly heated exchange, Alejandro Rojas, from the Communist Party, and Víctor García Garzena, from the National Party together embody this conflation of gender performance, temporalities, and political outlooks. Rojas begins by challenging García to deny his sympathies with the organizers of the late June Tancazo. García responds that he himself is not in favor of any such coup, but that he can “understand” those who are, particularly when they find themselves in dire economic straits, like “el pobre camionero pisoteado, que toma una piedra.” García’s invocation of such a masculine-identified gesture, and figure, to signify a political stance against the Left is just the first way in which masculinity and economic aspiration are related here. García goes on to address the viewers of the television program directly, asserting his own credibility and denigrating that of Rojas by alluding to their respective physical appearances: “Pero mírenlo a él, y mírenme a mí. Miren esa vida, y miren la mía. No sé cómo no se han caído las cámaras de vergüenza.” Alluding to Rojas as a “student” and as a “revolutionary,” García’s implication—that Rojas’ informal dress means that he is some sort of disheveled libertine—is a way of making a case for his own respectability over his interlocutor’s; it is also a way of avoiding actually addressing the charges that Rojas has leveled against him, namely, that he likely did in fact support the Tancazo. And, indeed, García is dressed much more formally in a conservative suit and tie, while the (considerably younger) Rojas is shown with an open-necked shirt, smiling, relaxed, and smoking a cigarette (see Figures 15 and 16, respectively). Like his opponent, Rojas’ response also alludes to physical appearance: he states that García “se ha retratado de cuerpo entero. Ha mostrado el rostro sedicioso, el rostro golpista, del Partido Nacional.” García, after repeated provocations by Rojas, tells him that “usted parece que fuera boliviano,” which he clearly intends as a racial and ethnic insult. As

28 Rojas is now a professor of Applied Biology at the University of British Columbia. García died in 1986.
Rojas would have it, the ideal towards which García looks is one in which not only do men dress formally to indicate their commitment to order and hierarchy, but also one in which the Right takes back power by force. Rojas, meanwhile, is portrayed by García as the very embodiment of dissolution and disorder that Allende feared the UP would be associated with—an image that García racializes, to boot. The fact that each one makes use of references to the other’s physical attributions in order to discredit them is an indication of to the extent to which a one’s performance of masculinity—one’s dress, race, and physical appearance, in this case—was attached to one’s political and economic beliefs.

Much less is known about most of the subjects of La batalla de Chile, however; instead of focusing on well-known characters, the film often makes use of quick shots of anonymous subjects in order to show the relationship between political and economic outlooks, gender performance, and physical appearance. One scene, for example, is a wide shot of a march of
male members of the fascist “patrulla de choque” Patria y Libertad. In a thinly veiled comparison to Nazism, the camera zooms in at one point on a blond and muscular young man, who crosses his forearms above his head in a gesture of defiance and provocation (see Figure 17). This man remains anonymous, but the viewer’s concept of this man’s political and economic convictions is heightened by his physical appearance: he is clearly willing and able to commit physical violence against others for the cause he believes in, and his physical features contrast starkly with those of the more indigenous-looking campesinos occupying agricultural lands owned by Chile’s wealthier citizens. Later, a group of women is seen screaming “maricón!” outside the home of Army Commander in Chief Carlos Prats during a manifestation to show the lack of support for his leadership at the uppermost levels of the military: not only are they critiquing Prats’ loyalty to the UP, they are also stating that his loyalty is an indicator that he is not conventionally manly. Part three includes two other “types” of men key to the UP: the intellectual and the worker. Towards the end of the film, we see a series of speeches by men in front of a blackboard, grappling with the contradictions of the UP’s agenda: a “bourgeois state” at “seditious war” with the “people’s government;” a popularly-elected labor union that should undemocratically overthrow the state; “a revolutionary process that isn’t a revolution;” and “empresas del área social dentro de la estructura de un estado burgués capitalista, donde los mecanismos de opresión y dominación siguen estando en manos de los burgueses.” A well-dressed, professorial type lectures for a particularly long period of time, trying to explain the difficulties of completing a socialist revolution with only “44%” of the popular vote (see Figure 18). The didactic quality of his speech suggests the rationalized discourse of the intellectuals behind the UP, and the extent to which that rationality was masculine in nature. At another point in Part 3, a factory worker

29 Maricón, in Spanish, can mean either “cowardly” or “gay,” both of which connote non-normative forms of masculinity.
wearing a hard hat is asked what needs to be done in order for the UP to be successful; his answer is completely tied to his masculinity:

No atenernos a la disposición de los momios,\textsuperscript{30} que únicamente y exclusivamente lo que ellos desean es ahogarnos, asfixiarnos, aprovechando la oportunidad de que los norteamericanos quieren pisotear nuestra dignidad de chilenos; ellos también se embarcan. Y nosotros no podemos aceptar como chilenos, como trabajadores, \textit{como hombres}… de actuar conforme a lo que ellos desean. ¡No! Ni ahora ni nunca. Todo lo contrario. Siempre nuestra disposición será luchar por un nuevo Chile, libre económica y políticamente (emphasis mine).

For this worker, Chilean nationalism, the economic sovereignty of the UP, and masculine integrity are all tied together: he has staked his honor as a man on doing his part at work to ensure the success of the UP’s project. Even though viewers never learn more about the man in the Patria y Libertad march, the intellectual at the blackboard, the factory worker, or the women screaming at Prats, each are depicted in the film as representatives of larger political and economic movements, from which gender implications can hardly be detached.

\textit{Figure 17.}

\textsuperscript{30}\textit{Momios} was a term used to insult members of the Right in Chile. Different versions exist of the etymology of this term, but it is likely the result of an analogy between what was perceived to be the Right’s political intransigence and the immobile nature of mummies.
At the core of *La batalla de Chile* lies the retroactive representation of a struggle between three temporalities: that of the present democratic framework of the state, that of a future in which democracy would be overthrown by the Right through a military coup (which effectively occurred), and that of a future people’s uprising from the Left (which the film can only imagine). The film shows how men representing these three factions—all of whom, it could be stated, act with utopian intentions—struggled against one another to make a reality out of the particular temporality (and accompanying gender performance) they believed in. There are several telling scenes in which these struggles take place. About midway through Part 3, a group of *campesinos* that have taken over a piece of land in the Santiago-area district of Maipú confront two government functionaries from CORA (the Corporation for Agrarian Reform) who assert that their *toma* has been declared illegal, that the original owners of the land have initiated proceedings against them in the courts, and that there is nothing that the government can do about it: the issue “se nos va de las manos a todos nosotros,” one CORA functionary states, making it clear that the government is powerless to remedy their situation. In response, the voiceover asserts, “los ocupantes se atreven a enfrentar la burocracia estatal con plena energía.” A “trial of the people” is held on the spot, in which the *campesinos* take one of the functionaries to task for not working hard enough on their behalf, having been unable to solve “a single thing”
in the area. The defendant stammers with his head down to the large number of *campesinos* surrounding him in a subtly menacing way that he made the mistake of trusting the central government too much. For the purposes of the film, the functionary embodies the democratic UP, powerless against the “energetic” popular movements at its base (see Figure 19). The *campesinos*—all men—surrounding him are more numerous and much more powerful, and render him physically and politically irrelevant vis-à-vis their demands. The prospect of a democratic path to socialism is too bogged down in bureaucracy, the film seems to say: it is utopian in the sense of being impossible to sustain in light of the (masculine) power of the *pueblo*.

![Figure 19.](image)

On the other end of the ideological spectrum, the military is shown, particularly in Part 2, as a group of men who stake their masculinity on very different plans for Chile’s future. One scene, which takes place before the coup, is particularly telling, as Jacqueline Mouesca (1988) has pointed out:

…hay una escena difícil de olvidar. El Edecán naval del presidente [Arturo Araya Peters] ha sido asesinado. Lo entierran en Valparaíso con honores militares. La cámara realiza un movimiento panorámico mostrando a los asistentes a la ceremonia. Autoridades civiles y militares. Los rostros de estos últimos nos producen, viéndolos ahora, un inmediato sobresalto: sus ojos muestran de modo inequívoco el signo de la traición. El cineasta no tenía consciencia de que estaba en ese instante recogiendo en sus imágenes una prueba testimonial del golpe de estado que ya estaba en marcha (73).
A long sequence shot pans across the military officers at Araya’s funeral in late July of 1973, with Chopin’s “Funeral March” playing in the background. They all look at the camera with shifty eyes, and they seem to interrupt their conversations with one another as they see the camera, as if to avoid letting their words be registered on film (see Figure 20). Although, as Mouesca states, Guzmán may not have known at the moment of filming this scene that many of the men present were likely already planning the impending coup, he did know it to be true as he edited this shot. For these men, the UP is a moral and economic nightmare that needs to be quashed, and had aspirations for a new Chile—utopian for them—in which morality, capitalism, and hierarchy were the key values. In the scene, we see how their bodies are positioned in strict order, divided by the branch of the service to which they belong. A sign—marked “JEFES”—demarcating where they should stand so as to remain separate from the others offers a strong contrast to the chaotic popular manifestations of the UP in other scenes. The men of the military are positioned to embody the aspiration for a right-wing political economy.31

31 Eduardo Cadava’s (1997) discussion of the debate about the relationship among fascism, aesthetic images, and politics during the years of Nazism is pertinent here: Cadava reads Walter Benjamin’s essay “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” as “a critical response to the fascist effort to mobilize works of art—including photography and film—toward both the production of an organic community and the formation of this community (the German people or nation) as a work of art itself. Benjamin’s insistence upon the disintegration of the auraic character of the artwork, for example, belongs to his effort to deconstruct the values of originality and community at work within the fascist program of self-formation and self-production” (45-7). Just as Joseph Goebbels wrote about art as creating an ideal form for the national community to follow—an insidious sort of model that could “expel the sick trends and make room for the healthy to develop,” in his words (Cadava 45)—the orderliness and hierarchy of military bodies so valued by the military leaders in the images Guzmán provides were evidence, for the military, of a “healthy” sort of masculinity, a “utopia” (for them) that was antithetical to the sorts of masculinity idealized by other male leaders like Miguel Enríquez, or by Guzmán himself, for that matter. Meanwhile, as we shall see below, Jorge Edwards’ nostalgic evocation of the hierarchical positioning of male bodies so prized by the Chilean military was also mobilized in opposition both to what he saw as lackadaisical, unresponsive service by Cubans, and also to the possibility of anarchy and communist “laziness” becoming the norm in Chile under the UP.
In footage filmed directly from the television on the night of the coup (Burton 57), the four men who led the military *junta*—Gustavo Leigh, César Mendoza, José Toribio Medina, and Augusto Pinochet—claim their victory over the UP (see Figure 21). Pinochet positions himself as the patriarchal protector of the nation who achieved the defeat of the “chaotic” economic management of the UP to which he had long aspired, stating that “Las Fuerzas Armadas y de Orden han actuado…sólo bajo la inspiración patriótica de sacar al país del caos que en forma aguda lo estaba precipitando el gobierno marxista de Salvador Allende.” Leigh, meanwhile, points out that

> después de tres años de soportar el cáncer marxista que nos llevó a un descalabro económico, moral y social, que no se podía seguir tolerando, por los sagrados intereses de la patria, nos hemos visto obligados a asumir la triste y dolorosa misión que hemos acometido. […] Pero tenemos la certeza, la seguridad, de que la enorme mayoría del pueblo chileno está con nosotros. Está dispuesto a luchar contra el marxismo. Está dispuesto a extirparlo ¡hasta las últimas consecuencias!

Making use of the language of disease—which, as Mary Pratt (1996) has pointed out, was a common rhetorical trope among southern cone dictatorships (148)—Leigh’s statement is particularly telling because it conjugates gender normativity with the economic and political temporalities the film is grappling with. He invokes the utopian ideal of the “sacred interests of the homeland” and contrasts it with the “moral and economic disaster” of the UP—a particularly “moral” disaster, one might presume, because of its purported embrace of libertinage. For the
four men in uniform—one of whom would soon become known throughout the world as an example of what it means to be a notorious dictator in Latin America, the latest in a long line of male caudillos—a key aspect of overthrowing the UP had to do with restoring a more conservative form of masculinity to Chile. Their “utopia”—more like a dystopia that ended up becoming a reality for Chile over the following seventeen years—was one in which patriarchal power would be able to destroy immoral “cancer” and “chaos.” Thus concludes Part 2 of La batalla de Chile.

Part 3 of the film, Poder popular, returns to the UP before the coup, and centers on the popular movements that overwhelmed the democratic state apparatus, which many of those who participated in these movements considered irrevocably bourgeois and weak. As Trumper has stated,

the decision to leave ‘popular power’ in a separate section reveals that the film’s narrative and organizational structure…points to the failure of a representational mode that leaned on the language of modernity—articulated as…an unshakeable belief in the progress of history (129).

Part 3 represents Guzmán’s attempt to articulate a utopia of the people, unsullied by the bourgeois mechanisms of the state, in which participation could be heightened to its maximum level. This was something of a double-edged sword, however, because to remove itself from the state, this popular power would have to undertake an armed uprising. This ideal is portrayed on
film as primarily masculine: first, in the form of the worker who shoulders the burden of popular power, and second, in the form of the guerrilla warrior—in the tradition of Cuba, Vietnam, and other countries—who takes up arms. Perhaps the most visible “model” of this revolutionary warrior was Miguel Enríquez (see Figure 22), whose personal charisma Mallon describes as “perhaps the most dramatic and relied substantially on the youth, good looks, and revolutionary moustache that so deeply resonated with the young idealists at the time” (180). In an example of strategic use of what Mallon, quoting Hernán Vidal (1999), describes as “a political style that…drew on the romantic theatricality of light and shadow to present…good looks, virility, youth and daring” (Mallon 180), Enríquez appears in Part 2 of La batalla, advocating for armed struggle: “los revolucionarios y los trabajadores, deben…impulsar el poder popular…autónomo de los poderes del estado. […] Y en ese caso, todas las formas de lucha serán legítimas. Entonces…tendrán el derecho a construir su propio ejército: ¡el ejército del pueblo!” Here, Enríquez proposes that those who consider themselves to be “authentic” revolutionaries need to physically struggle for their beliefs, both with those who adhere to the state and with those who want to overthrow it militarily. Enríquez’s ideal of armed revolutionary masculinity struggled with other specters as well, such as sexualities from outside of the reproductive arena—heterosexuality was “compulsory” in the MIR, from which gays were summarily expelled (Mallon 194)—and also the “class, ethnic, and gender hierarchies” inherent to Chilean society that, as Mallon points out, were reproduced within the MIR even though the MIR was “supposedly founded to erase” them (183). The sort of masculinity idealized by the armed Left was vulnerable to a number of other threats than those mentioned in Enríquez’s incendiary speech, as quoted above.
Guzmán’s depiction of “popular power” also carries with it a different connotation of masculinity, however, and Jameson’s ideal of utopia, one in which its maximum power lies in its unfeasibility, is relevant to its illumination. Although Jameson states that the implementation of utopian ideals are what makes them lose their power, he is speaking about these ideals in their more institutional sense, as policy. By this logic, as discussed above, Allende’s political initiatives did lose their power once implemented. I would propose, however, that Jameson’s utopian imaginary also applies to the bodies that appear on screen. In fact, aesthetized, nostalgic images abound in Part 3 that evoke the power of (male) workers who aspire to directly control their own political destiny. At one point, elegiac Andean flute music plays in the background of a long sequence shot that follows a worker pulling a cart behind him. The cart is extremely large, piled high with cargo—including another man sitting in the back—and so the man pulling it must counter it with his own weight. The counterweight almost pulls him completely off the ground, so he ends up practically gliding: a notably fluid, poetic image of strength and agility. The camera, meanwhile, keeps up with the cart; the landscape that flies by is clearly from a poorer neighborhood of Santiago, and campaign propaganda for Communist Senator Volodia Teitelboim (elected in March of 1973) painted on the walls suggests that the area is a UP stronghold. After a long moment with nothing more than music, the narrative voiceover chimes in and talks about how
…casi todos los movimientos de base están vinculados al poder popular. Es una iniciativa canalizada por el gobierno, pero que no se origina en el seno de éste. A menudo, este poder causa una gran inquietud en algunos partidos de izquierda, que se alarman frente a ciertas actitudes espontáneas de la población.

The body of this worker is positioned as a stand-in for all “movements in the base” of the UP: a powerful set of factions that manage to operate with dignity, spontaneity, and fluidity despite the cumbersome weight of a government whose institutions cannot adequately channel its base (see Figure 23). Although this strength was never translated into public policy, the viewer catches a glimpse of a utopia, a future passé, a flash that—as Sarlo has written—makes history interchangeable with its subsequent representation(s).

La batalla de Chile moves from the utopian present of the UP—the outcome of which proved its political and economic fragility, as well as the temporal fragility that envelops it onscreen—to its twin futures, of dystopian (for most) dictatorship and of utopian revolutionary popular struggle. Although the film excludes many of the revolutionary ethnic and gender subjectivities in ferment at the time, it is clear that each one of the utopian temporalities presented correspond to models of masculinity. The process of debate and struggle among these models and temporalities offer another dimension that problematizes existing critical questions

Figure 23.

La batalla de Chile moves from the utopian present of the UP—the outcome of which proved its political and economic fragility, as well as the temporal fragility that envelops it onscreen—to its twin futures, of dystopian (for most) dictatorship and of utopian revolutionary popular struggle. Although the film excludes many of the revolutionary ethnic and gender subjectivities in ferment at the time, it is clear that each one of the utopian temporalities presented correspond to models of masculinity. The process of debate and struggle among these models and temporalities offer another dimension that problematizes existing critical questions

32 In addition to the already stated exclusion of gays and, by Guzmán’s own admission, the lack of emphasis on women, Dennis West (1978) critiques La batalla for leaving a number of other issues untreated, including “economic pressures on the middle class,” and “the role of…marginal elements (e.g. Mapuche Indians)” (14).
about what Guzmán calls the “fifteen or twenty battlegrounds within the larger conflict” that offer “a dialectical version of what is going on” (Burton 46).

**Persona non grata: Transnational Utopian Masculinities in Confrontation**

Because of its critical treatment of Castro’s Cuba, Jorge Edwards’ memoir *Persona non grata* (1974) was controversial from the time it was first published, and continued to generate controversy for many years afterwards. The memoir documents Edwards’ three-month stay in Cuba as a commercial attaché in late 1970 and early 1971, following the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Chile and Cuba brought about by Allende’s election, and describes his increasing disillusion with Fidel Castro and the Cuban revolution. Again, the multiple temporalities of the UP period are embodied in masculine form: in the Chilean soldiers who visit Cuba and see there what they clearly consider to be a dystopian future for their own country, in Fidel himself, who intends to do what he can to extend the Cuban revolution southward, and in the narrator, whose epilogue—while mostly written during the events it portrays, Edwards published the memoir after the coup, from exile in Paris—critiques the Left but excoriates the “imperialist,” anti-democratic Right. Edwards positions himself during the events described in the memoir as a “reasonable,” intellectual foil to Castro’s arbitrary and authoritarian ruling style, and lays out this conflict within the Left in the traditionally masculine terms of physical confrontation, athletic prowess, and general urbanity and worldliness.

The controversy generated by the memoir is indicative of the vitality of intellectual debate at the time throughout Latin America, and offers an initial insight into the relationship

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33 Even though most of the action described in *Persona non grata* takes place in late 1970 and early 1971, Edwards kept the manuscript in a bank vault belonging to the Spanish literary agent Carmen Balcells, and published it after the overthrow of the UP in 1974 (Edwards 1989: 35).
between Edwards’ definition of himself as an intellectual and the ways in which intellectual exchange was an almost exclusively masculine phenomenon at the time. Prominent Boom intellectuals sympathetic to the Cuban revolution, even those who had criticized the revolution in their own way, gave Edwards the cold shoulder upon its publication. Alfredo Bryce Echenique stated that “hasta un hombre tan bueno y comprensivo como Julio Cortázar le quitó el saludo” (Vila 94) following the book’s publication, even though Cortázar himself had signed a letter published in Le Monde critiquing Castro (a propos of his handling of the Padilla case, as we shall see below). Ariel Dorfman, in an incendiary 1978 article in the Mexican periodical Plural, called Edwards a “counter-revolutionary” and a “traitor,” and concluded with the lapidary pronouncement that “su libro es una prueba de que existen gusanos” (Dorfman 80). On the other hand, the book was also unpopular with the right: as Mario Vargas Llosa (1974) pointed out, “el gobierno de Pinochet había expulsado a Edwards del servicio diplomático por haber denunciado el golpe militar contra Allende y se apresuró a prohibir la circulación de Persona non grata en Chile” (289-90). Indeed, as Michael Moody (1985) states, “Persona non grata enjoyed the dubious distinction of being censored from circulation in both Castro’s Cuba and Pinochet’s Chile” (38), and Edwards became caught in the middle of two fiercely opposed ideological factions. This was a position that he clearly relished, though, despite the risks of ending up friendless: he states in the introduction to Persona non grata that his intention in writing his “memorias heterogéneas, a la vez políticas” (Edwards 1974: 10) was to help “superar el actual primitivismo político de América Latina,” which he saw as caught up in “Manichaeism” (11). Despite the criticism of Cuba that appears in the book, Edwards had previously been very sympathetic to Fidel and the island’s government, having been invited to Havana by La Casa de Las Américas “en un momento, en enero de 1968, en que las relaciones de Chile con Cuba,
además de rotas, estaban congeladas por algunas declaraciones públicas de Fidel Castro en contra de Frei” (Edwards 1974: 29). Edwards presents himself as a diplomat, a government functionary who has to be sensitive to the prevailing political leanings of the Chilean government at any given moment (e.g., whether the president is Frei or Allende), but at the same time he also seems to see himself as something of an iconoclast, publicly breaking with official state opinions when he feels strongly opposed to them. He points out, for example, that he “era uno de los pocos que en la campaña presidencial de 1964 no había adherido a la candidatura de Frei sino a la de Salvador Allende. Incluso había firmado…con gran escándalo del mundillo ministerial, el manifiesto de los intelectuales allendistas” (Edwards 1974: 18). He was certainly no stranger to the controversy that was stirred up later on in the seventies by intellectuals like Cortázar and Dorfman, and in fact, he participated wholeheartedly in the polemic, publishing invectives as late as 1989 in periodicals such as Vuelta in Mexico, defending the positions he first outlined in *Persona non grata*.

Like *La batalla de Chile*, *Persona non grata* displays utopian impulses that are both gendered and economic. Edwards’ intention to rise above binary politics is, of course, a utopia in itself: published at such a polarized political moment, one year following Chile’s military coup, his memoirs managed to exacerbate ideological rhetoric all along the political spectrum, rather than transcend it. He also spends quite a bit of time in the memoir defending another kind of utopia, one in which intellectuals can count on the freedom to express themselves freely, independently of the political situation of the state in which they find themselves. Edwards’ quixotic attempt to somehow reconcile artistic expression with state politics raises a key question that can be classified within the ongoing debate in Latin America about intellectuals and the
governments that fund their activities and creations;\textsuperscript{34} to what extent are the values traditionally associated with the ideal, independent artist (one who enjoys economic self-sufficiency and freedom from censorship, among other things) also traditionally patriarchal values? Can Edwards’ attempt to achieve a utopia of intellectual independence from both the Cuban revolution and the UP also be classified as a type of utopian masculinity, as well as a utopian intellectualism? The “rugged independence” that he sought by breaking with both the Left and the Right was an act of daring that few women would have been able to carry out at the time.\textsuperscript{35} The economic and gendered ideals to which Edwards aspired were, in this sense, both economic and masculinist, and call to mind the Aristotelian concept of the hero. Positioned against a number of adverse circumstances—extreme leftism and rightism, dystopian futures and overly nostalgic pasts, consumerist excess and communist scarcity—Edwards portrays himself as an individual whose intellectual capacity somehow manages to prevent him from falling into any of these Manichean traps. His utopian ideal—a heroism of middling, plodding centrum—is, I argue, a position that can only be achieved by men, and is pitted against other utopian ideals that are also embodied exclusively by men.

Indeed, the risks evidently involved in seeking such independence are dangerous enough that women tend not to take them in Edwards’ memoir, and Edwards’ own actions while in Cuba border on the reckless at times, evoking scenes from spy novels. His associations with Cuban writers critical of the revolution, such as José Norberto Fuentes, Anton Arrufat, and especially Heberto Padilla, generated great suspicion within the Castro regime, which responded with a

\textsuperscript{34} This debate has, of course, been examined by a number of Latin American thinkers, including Arcadio Díaz-Quiñones (2006), Nicolás Casullo (2007), and others.

\textsuperscript{35} For example, Licia Fiol-Matta (2002) has written extensively about Gabriela Mistral’s difficult relationship with the Chilean state, which constantly sought to classify her poetic discourse to its immediate political needs. Although Mistral’s discourse was never explicitly political the way Edwards’ was, her economic dependence on the state as a career diplomat inevitably affected her ability to express herself.
number of cloak-and-dagger techniques to keep Edwards under surveillance. Despite the attempts of these men to gather and freely discuss literature and politics as peers—“acostumbrados a la marginalidad irresponsable que suele ofrecer la vida literaria, pretendíamos seguir en el mejor de los mundos” (Edwards 1974: 181)—Edwards acknowledges that in Cuba, every word uttered can be construed as a critique of the revolution, and he is fully aware that they are being observed. In one scene in the memoir that takes place in the Habana Riviera Hotel where Edwards is living (and where the Cuban government has granted Padilla a privileged suite nearby, ostensibly to encourage his writing), the stress of the surveillance that the writers are under becomes too great for Padilla:

…al final de una tertulia en mi pieza en que se había bebido bastante, [Padilla] se puso a gritar en dirección a los supuestos micrófonos empotrados en los rincones: “¿Escuchaste, Piñeiro? Y toma nota de que aquí estaba X., que guardó silencio pero no discrepó de lo que decíamos. ¿Me entiendes?” Yo tomaba a Padilla del brazo y lo sacaba de la habitación con suavidad, en tanto que X., intensamente preocupado, movía la cabeza y seguramente se decía en su fuero interno que mi situación no tenía remedio, que más valía no aparecerse por ahí (Edwards 1974: 312-3).

Padilla directly addresses Manuel Piñeiro, the head of Cuba’s state security apparatus, who is likely spying on the group through microphones planted in the wall. When Edwards has to delicately lead Padilla out of the room, he makes the tacit admission that the utopian ideal of an intellectual being able to speak freely about Cuban politics is impossible as long as he is on Cuban soil, at least. Even the most daring attempts to gain intellectual independence that these

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36 Padilla was jailed two days before Edwards was to leave the country (Edwards 1974: 357), accused of showing the latter “una imagen negativa de la situación cubana” (Edwards 1989: 35). Edwards finished his tenure in Cuba on March 22, 1971, and on April 27 of the same year, Padilla was set free (Casal 8) and forced to make a speech in which he invoked the masculine camaraderie of the war trench to emphasize the fact that the revolutionary work of writers and intellectuals is to fight against enemies in opposite trenches who criticize the revolution, rather than critique existing structures of power: “¡Que seamos soldados de nuestra Revolución, y que ocupemos el sitio que la Revolución nos pida! […] Porque, compañeros, vivir y habitar una trincheras asediada de toda clase de enemigos arteros, no es fácil ni es cómodo, sino difícil. Pero…eso es el precio de la soberanía, ese es el precio de la independencia, ¿ese es el precio de la Revolución!” (Casal 104). The masculine component of Edwards’ utopia of intellectual freedom of expression within a state apparatus—amidst bureaucratic procedures, jeux de salon, and urbane feats of mild daring-do—greatly contrasts with the bellicose rhetoric of the Cuban revolution appropriated by Padilla’s April letter.
men make over the course of the novel are quashed by the Castro regime. Edwards, after all, was only able to tell his own story freely once he left Cuba. The (utopian) economic independence and freedom of expression that the intellectual often desires from the state, whether that state be left- or right-leaning, are likely to be articulated in traditionally masculine terms, such as trench combat and late-night whiskey sessions. Meanwhile, Edwards’ and Padilla’s wives evidently stayed home and took care of their children.37

The utopias represented in Persona non grata bridge a number of possible times—nostalgic pasts and utopian futures: the memoir takes place in the earliest days of the UP, and Edwards’ concern that Chile could end up like Cuba through an armed proletarian uprising against the bourgeois state permeates the action; however, it was published after the downfall of Allende, and its narration is inevitably tinted by nostalgia for the now-defeated UP.38 Edwards is suspicious and critical of attempts—particularly by US-controlled mining interests—to economically undermine the UP, but he is also extremely skeptical about the vision for Chile espoused by Fidel Castro, namely, of armed struggle and grandiose, Soviet-era economic development projects. Dorfman touches on the complicated timing of the novel in his article, asking “¿Por qué tanta avidez en dar a conocer una obra que esperaba desde hacía 18 meses sin que su autor hubiera querido publicarla? ¿Por qué no la entregó a sus expectantes lectores a mediados de 1972?” (77). He goes on to answer his own question, making the inference that “Edwards dudó, calculando que por último el pueblo bien podía triunfar en Chile, en cuyo caso no resultaba muy prudente editar estas memorias” (Dorfman 77), but this is unlikely, considering

37 Edwards’ wife is only mentioned a handful of times in the memoir, and never by name, even though she was with him in Cuba most of the time. Padilla’s wife, Belkis Cuza, appears slightly more often.
38 For example, Edwards quotes a 1972 letter from Pablo Neruda, who writes about heaping plates of seafood and “very happy chirimoyas” (Edwards 1974: 474). Neruda’s account contradicted reports of scarcity spread by the right-wing press at the time, but Neruda—as a member of the Chilean elite—surely had access to resources that poorer people did not.
the fact that the UP was—as Guzmán has shown in *La batalla de Chile*, and Robles has pointed out in *Banderá hueca*—tolerant of dissent and protest almost to a fault. Edwards’ reasoning for publishing the memoirs when he does is to call upon the Left to rethink itself following the coup:

El maniqueísmo que todavía domina en la izquierda exigiría que su transcripción a papel permanezca guardada bajo siete llaves, a fin de “no darle argumentos al enemigo.”[^39] [...] Y sin embargo los acontecimientos demuestran que el enemigo...no se hace escrúpulos por cuestiones de argumentos, en tanto que la izquierda, ella sí, tiene una necesidad imperiosa de reflexión y maduración (Edwards 1974: 477).

Edwards’ critique of the UP is based precisely on its utopian impulses—its “tendencia a confundir los deseos con las realidades” (Edwards 1974: 187)—but he also denounces the dictatorship for its extreme violence (Edwards 1974: 465-476). Looking to the past (his time in Cuba) to denounce repression there, critique a possible future for Chile (an armed struggle led by the Left), and express hope for a future time in which the Left can take what he feels to be a more reflexive posture, Edwards takes a balance—from the perspective of 1974—of what has been lost (democracy in Chile) and what can be gained (a reduction of Manichean thought).

Meanwhile, the possible futures and bygone eras of Chile that clash together in the narration also correspond to differing masculinities, which take on heroic proportions and greater economic and political implications in the text, as critics such as Vargas Llosa and José Otero (1990) have stated. Edwards and Castro are positioned in direct confrontation with one another in the narrative, each man representing a different economic and political vision for Latin America, Chile, and Cuba. This confrontation plays out as a number of attempts by each man to physically and intellectually dominate the other. Dorfman’s article, supports this argument in a way, although perhaps not as he originally intended; portraying the struggle between Fidel and

[^39]: Here, Edwards anticipates Dorfman’s accusation, made four years later, of indirectly supporting the Pinochet dictatorship with the publication of *Persona non grata*: “Es sintomático que Edwards decida publicar el testimonio de ese alejamiento [de Cuba] precisamente en el momento en que desde Chile la Junta ataca a Cuba, convirtiéndola en el blanco favorito de su ofensiva” (Dorfman 79).
Edwards as one between different ideals of manhood, Dorfman shows how the political and economic worlds that collided in the memoir are inseparable from ideas about masculinity:

[Para Edwards.] Cuba sirve para leer...el desastros porvenir que espera a la patria bajo la conducción de Allende. […] Tal como en los cuentos de Edwards, las fuerzas del pasado, el peso de la noche ancestral, las figuras tradicionales, caerán sobre los rebeldes y volverán a poner orden, aunque sea un orden sangriento, autoritario, represivo. Chile también confirma, para Edwards, su irrevocable ley eterna: el que trata de liberarse será devorado por Chile antiguo y señorial, por la sombra de los antepasados (Dorfman 78).

Dorfman’s tirade against Edwards, while inexact, contextualizes this ideological struggle as one of manhood, between a traditional (patri)lineage of a seigneurial order and rebels who fight to liberate themselves. Each faction had a different political and economic ideal for what they wanted Chile to be—a model that they held up as utopian—and those ideals were definitively gendered. *Persona non grata* is, in fact, a chronicle of the search for some sort of utopian equilibrium: between the two “Manichean” political factions of the time, among economic pasts and futures, between artistic expression and political independence, and between a bourgeois, non-confrontational model of masculinity and a masculinity that resorts to armed resistance to manifest itself.

Edwards and Fidel Castro first come face to face in a classroom at none other than Princeton University, where Fidel was invited in “March or April” of 1959 to give a talk in Professor R.R. Palmer’s class on the American Revolution. There, in the “quarantine” (Edwards 1974: 58) of a small room in the building of the Woodrow Wilson School—rather than a larger one, in order to “evitar que la charla…diera pie a una manifestación estudiantil de apoyo

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40 This is evidently a nod to Edwards’ 1965 novel *El peso de la noche*, which, far from validating the power of “old, seigneurial Chile,” is actually quite critical of the entrenched patriarchal norms of the country’s bourgeoisie.

41 Edwards does not say whether he went to see Fidel’s speech because he was sympathetic to the revolution at the time, but one can surmise that his enthusiasm for it was greater in 1959 than it was by 1970. The possible discrepancy between Edwards’ 1970 skepticism towards Fidel and his (at least possible) enthusiasm for him in 1959 is worth noting, in terms of the discussion at hand about the interactions of past and future, utopia and nostalgia, and masculinity. It is important, though, to point out that the Cuban revolution was still very much a work in progress at the time of this speech; Cuba’s alliance with the Soviet Union was not yet on the horizon.
a Cuba revolucionaria” (Edwards 1974: 53)—Fidel gives “un largo alegato en favor [sic] de la colaboración entre Estados Unidos y el nuevo gobierno de Cuba” (Edwards 1974: 56). Fidel’s main proposal of the day, about which Edwards would remind him twelve years later (1974: 377), is to enact an agrarian reform in Cuba that would maintain individual property ownership, with citizen landowners who “constituirían un poder de consumo decisivo para el desarrollo industrial de la Isla, además de un mercado interesante de importación para los productos del Norte” (Edwards 1974: 57). Fidel, accompanied by “una fila de barbudos en uniforme verde olivo, con los largos cabellos amarrados en una trenza, que avanzaron por el pasillo central con una sonrisa irónica o con un bamboleo displicente de los cuerpos juveniles” (Edwards 1974: 55), is a model of revolutionary masculinity. An authoritative orator, he manages to gain command of the room, and “su actitud era más segura, más serena; su presencia se imponía por una especie de superioridad incluso física” (Edwards 1974: 55). Fidel captivates his audience, at least for the moment, and even among the most critical members of the public, his capacity for control over Cuba is undisputed: “He is going to destroy the economy,” one student remarks afterwards (Edwards 1974: 59), in the only English sentence that appears in the entire book. For Edwards, meanwhile, his description of Fidel’s speech is mostly about a number of things that he himself left unsaid: in contrast to Fidel’s bravado, Edwards is a hesitant bystander and passive observer. His response to the aforementioned student’s comment about Fidel is little more than a weak rejoinder: “Pude haber empleado los términos de Michelet42 cuando afirma…que no debería hablarse de Revolución sino de Fundación. Pero me faltó el apoyo de Michelet y el estudiante,

42 Roberto Ampuero (2006) talks about Michelet’s History of the French Revolution as a model for Edwards, precisely for its non-authoritarian narration, “como infinitos relatos, a menudo contradictorios y antagónicos, narrados por multiplicidad de actores en lucha, y que nunca cesan de ser narrados ni re-interpretados” (67). Meanwhile, he speaks of Edwards’ memoir as the initiator of a “subgénero de la novela o el testimonio crítico de la revolución cubana a nivel mundial” (Ampuero 117) that has served as a model for his own writing, particularly his memoir Nuestros años verde olivo, about his own time living in Cuba.
que tenía una soberbia intelectual a prueba de balas, me lanzó una mirada irónica y se encogió de hombros” (Edwards 1974: 59). In this scene—a metaphorical weigh-in the two main protagonist-contenders of Edwards’ memoir, a prelude to the matching of wits that would come later—the lines dividing their performances of masculinity from their economic visions are difficult to define. This first meeting—in a place where Fidel is something of a fish out of water, but where it is Edwards who finds himself hesitant to act—serves as foreshadowing to the final confrontation between the two, which takes place in Cuba twelve years later.

Indeed, Edwards’ text is constructed as an ongoing confrontation not only between two visions for Latin America’s, and Chile’s, economic future, but also between two men, Edwards and Fidel. Otero points out how the two characters take on heroic proportions—Edwards himself compares Fidel to Neptune (1974: 303), a sort of all-powerful creator, and Otero compares Edwards to Ulysses, a “hero-traveler” (52)—that go beyond their place as simply two characters in a memoir.43 Vargas Llosa, meanwhile, adds heroic dimensions to the story without resorting to Greek mythology; he points out that

el verdadero héroe de la historia no es Heberto Padilla, quien, a fin de cuentas, queda bastante despintado…sino Fidel Castro, ese gigante incansable que se mueve, decide y opina con una libertad envidiable, y cuyo estilo directo e informal, su aire deportivo y su dinamismo contagioso Persona non grata recrea espléndidamente (297).

From the moment Fidel extends to Edwards his offer to help Chile overthrow its democratic institutions, on Edwards’ first evening in Cuba, Edwards paints Fidel as a worthy adversary whose heroic masculinity carries with it the promise of political and economic change: “Fidel me

43 Still, Otero’s use of Greek mythology to highlight the “dimensiones histórico-personales” (52) of Edwards’ personal experience aims solely to universalize what he seems to think would otherwise only be too local of a story; he does not seem to think that the greater economic and gender implications of each character’s position give them “heroic” enough proportions as it is. After all, Otero spends a significant amount of time writing about how stressful Edwards’ time in Cuba was, and how the only way to explain his survival is to compare him to Ulysses: “Jorge, a manera del héroe viajero, se confronta intelectualmente con este héroe [Fidel] […]. Confronta una serie de obstáculos físicos y tortura sicológica, pero sobrevive” (Otero 52).
dijo que no vaciláramos en pedirle ayuda si teníamos problemas de intervención armada. […]

‘¡Seremos malos para producir, pero para pelear sí que somos buenos!’” (Edwards 1974: 69).

Edwards’ ongoing defense of Chile’s democratic institutions, however—an “institucionalidad burguesa” (Edwards 1974: 376) that offers him certain protections44 rather than limiting him—is a constant throughout. These conflicting views on the viability of bourgeois state institutions represent just one example of how Fidel’s and Edwards’ conflicting political and economic views are placed in confrontation with one another throughout the text.

Despite this portrayal of Fidel’s masculine vitality and revolutionary enthusiasm, however, it soon becomes clear that Edwards views so much bravado as folly, at best. Quoting a conversation he has with a Chilean sailor onboard the Esmeralda, a Chilean navy ship that sails around the world every year for training purposes, and which docks in early 1971—for the first time in years—at the port of Havana, Edwards makes it clear that Fidel’s messianic tendencies are overblown: “‘[Los cubanos] no creen en Dios’, me dijo el guardiamarina, que observaba de reojo, con aire de pocos amigos, a Fidel-Neptuno elevado entre los cordajes del espolón de proa, ‘pero él es como si fuera Dios, así que han cambiado a un Dios por otro. ¿Entonces?...’” (Edwards 1974: 303). Perhaps the most telling portrayal in the memoir of Fidel’s economic pretensions, though—and the masculine bluster that went along with them—is Edwards’ narration of a visit to a model farm on the outskirts of Havana, where a delegation of Chileans tastes a number of products produced there. “Probamos un ‘camembert’ cubano. No se podía negar que era excelente, aun cuando más suave y más cremoso, con un sabor menos acentuado que los ‘camembert’ de Normandía. ‘Vamos a lograr un camembert mejor que el francés’, dijo

44 For example, Edwards points out that even if his work as a diplomat were politically unsatisfactory to any particular president, he still could not be fired without “un sumario administrativo en regla, aprobado por la Contraloría General de la República” (Edwards 1974: 276). These “bourgeois institutions” are precisely what many of the subjects of La batalla de Chile chafe against.
Fidel” (Edwards 1974: 275). In a country where milk is extremely scarce, as an acquaintance of Edwards later states, where “[l]os niños tienen una cuota estrictamente racionada, hasta que cumplen siete años de edad, y los adultos tienen que probar que sufren de úlcera” to gain access to milk (Edwards 1974: 277), Fidel’s heroic attempts to create camembert cheese seem extreme and useless, little more than “islas de progreso en medio del deterioro y del atraso” (Edwards 1974: 324). In all, Edwards states, the young people working on the model farm “tenían un aspecto saludable, optimista, que no se encontraba nunca en las calles de La Habana Vieja” (Edwards 1974: 324), but this healthiness and efficiency does not stretch beyond the farm. He laments the difficulty that the revolution is experiencing, and longs for a future in which the model farm were representative of the rest of the country: “Y ¿cómo convertir a la Isla entera en un proyecto universitario, en una empresa juvenil?” (Edwards 1974: 325).

Perhaps, for Edwards, the most damning evidence against Fidel lies in what he sees as the latter’s complete disregard for, and ignorance about, literature.45 On a visit to the Esmeralda,

Fidel examinaba un calendario impreso en Chile donde había un fragmento de poesía chilena al frente de cada mes. Su escaso aprecio por los autores se manifestó en las exclamaciones burlonas o sarcásticas que le merecía cada fragmento. Uno de Nicanor Parra le produjo gran hilaridad. Gabriela Mistral describía en sus versos escuetos, elaborados y ásperos, un erizo.46 “¡Qué tiene que ver con un erizo!”, lanzó Fidel, encogiéndose de hombros y doblando la página (Edwards 1974: 255).

Edwards’ representation of Fidel’s disregard for literature extends further, to all sorts of intellectual thought. In a generalized invective against thinkers, Fidel states that “‘[n]osotros en Cuba no necesitamos críticos. […] Criticar es muy fácil. Cualquier cosa puede ser criticada. Lo

45 It should be mentioned, however, that Fidel, by many accounts, was actually quite an avid reader and literature enthusiast, and Che Guevara (who goes unmentioned in Edwards’ account, presumably because he was out of the country at the time) was as well.
46 To date, I have been unable to find a poem by Mistral that mentions this “erizo” (in English, a hedgehog or porcupine); however, a prose quotation from Gabriela Mistral: Su prosa y poesía en Colombia (2002) contains a reference to “el pueblo raso que mira todavía al libro como al erizo de púas o a la tortuga pesada de las Galápagos” (59)—which is actually quite apropos to Edwards’ depiction of Fidel. Thank you to Claudia Cabello for this tip.
diffícil es realizar una obra, formar un país. Eso es lo que necesitamos: realizadores, constructores de la sociedad’” (Edwards 1974: 321). According to Edwards, praxis is clearly the highest priority for Fidel, who considers the role of literature to be ancillary and under the purview of those who only join the revolution once the hard work has been done: “‘En nuestros países siempre había un poeta’, me dijo Fidel, ‘que no había hecho nada por la Revolución y que más tarde se subía al carro, desde afuera, y componía el himno nacional’” (Edwards 1974: 291).

Edwards portrays Fidel as someone who believes art and literature to be the expressions of men who privilege words over actions; literary and artistic work, meanwhile, are weaker pursuits that contribute nothing to the revolution. Although Edwards’ version of events—in which Fidel speculates that the fickle political sympathies of artists and writers are due to their inability or refusal to fight—is certainly backed up by Padilla’s post-jail mea culpa, which used military metaphors so liberally, it says more about his own ideas about masculinity than it does about Fidel’s.

Edwards, meanwhile, portrays himself as heroic in his anti-heroicism; he reserves his demagoguery for the pages of his memoir, but in the moment he strives consistently against anything that could possibly be construed as Manicheism. Early on in the memoir, he points out that it is precisely this suspicion of clear political positions that cause him trouble as soon as he arrives in Cuba; they are what set him apart as a “model” of intellectual forbearance:

…yo no era o estaba destinado a no ser persona grata a los detentadores del poder real del régimen. Bastaban, probablemente, cinco minutos de conversación conmigo para que un observador experimentado se diera cuenta. Mi excesiva franqueza y mi forma dubitativa,

47 Later, Fidel criticizes writers who “turned their backs on the revolution” when “the situation became more difficult” (Edwards 1974: 365). Just weeks after Edwards’ departure from Cuba (and Padilla’s arrest), a group of intellectuals including Simone de Beauvoir, Italo Calvino, Cortázar, Marguerite Duras, Carlos Fuentes, García Márquez, Juan Goytisolo, Octavio Paz, Jean-Paul Sartre, Jorge Semprún, and Vargas Llosa published a letter to Fidel in Le Monde, in which—from a position of solidarity “con los principios y objetivos de la Revolución Cubana”—they request a reexamination of Padilla’s case and denounce “el uso de medidas represivas contra intelectuales y escritores quienes han ejercido el derecho de crítica dentro de la Revolución” (Casal 74-5).
interrogativa de plantear los problemas, mi anti-dogmatismo vocacional y temperamental, eran, sin la menor duda, eminentemente sospechosos (Edwards 1974: 67).

As a man of letters who prefers to sit back and observe rather than impose himself upon others, Fidel would obviously place Edwards into the category of those intellectuals who are too weak to contribute their talents (or their fists) to the revolution in a concrete, practical way. Still, despite Edwards’ apparent admission of his own weakness in contrast to Fidel’s vitality, it is the former who is in control of the narration at all times. His self-deprecating manner stands in contrast to his constant attempts to position himself as the tragic hero of the narrative.

Even if Edwards’ presentation of himself is not as full of bravado as Fidel’s, however, the former still has a very set notion of masculinity—one which is closely tied to his preferred vision for Chile’s economic future. The hierarchical structure of the Chilean military, as displayed by the men that arrive with the *Esmeralda*, offers a pattern of masculinity that Edwards finds appealing. As the ship docks, a sensation of nostalgia overcomes him:

El sentido jerárquico y clasista que advertía antes de que el barco atracara en la diferencia, de uniformes y de actitudes de oficiales y marineros, era de un anacronismo evidente. Ese anacronismo, sin embargo, me producía una desconcertante sentido de alivio, un sentimiento de vuelta a lo conocido que los comisarios políticos [cubanos] no habrían vacilado un segundo en calificar y condenar (Edwards 1974: 236).

Edwards confesses to a feeling of “anachronism” that washes over him as he sees representatives of the extremely hierarchical Chilean military appear on the docks of egalitarian Havana. This is a curious use of words, considering that this hierarchical regime would become the hegemonic norm in the future—Edwards knew at the moment he published *Persona non grata* that this regime was hardly a thing of the past. In fact, he has many positive words to say about this

48 The military’s close association with the right would soon manifest itself in Chilean culture and politics through non-democratic means; the *Esmeralda* was even used for the interrogation and torture of political prisoners during the dictatorship. The specter of democracy’s demise is therefore inseparable from the military’s hierarchical performance of masculinity, which is also on display in *La batalla de Chile*. 146
hierarchical vision of masculinity, particularly when he eats a meal onboard the *Esmeralda*, which is “servido por hombres de nuestro pueblo que se afanaban, silenciosos…que mantenían…las actitudes sumisas y criollas de un mundo bien jerarquizado” (Edwards 1974: 241). Even though this hierarchical masculinity may have seemed to be in danger of extinction at the time Edwards enjoyed the benefits of it, it reaffirmed itself upon Chile soon enough. The visit of the *Esmeralda* to Havana may even have helped precipitate the coup two years later, because most of the sailors were evidently quite critical of what they saw on their shore leave: “¿Era éste el modelo que les ofrecía la Unidad Popular? El ochenta por ciento de los marinos rasos, si no más, sintió nostalgia de las vitrinas de las sociedades de consumo, por inaccesibles para ellos que fuesen” (Edwards 1974: 295). The supposedly negative memories of these sailors of their time in Cuba could well have led to them supporting the officers who rose up against Allende, in the name of the same hierarchical masculinity of the Chilean military that Edwards praises in his memoir, and the economic system that went with it.

Soon enough, the salvos that Fidel and Edwards fire against one another begin to escalate, precipitating the inevitable final confrontation between the two. A golf game in which both participate, played with Chilean military officers during the visit of the *Esmeralda*, is another scene in which Edwards builds up to this confrontation. Fidel starts it by predicting, out loud, that Edwards will play over par at each hole:

The passive-aggressive exchange between the two men is indicative of the subtle way in which they try to undermine each other. Fidel makes it clear that he has little esteem for Edwards’ golf abilities, and his recommendation of a “conservative” strategy is likely a derisive way of indicating how he sees Edwards politically. Meanwhile, Edwards’ mention of Fidel’s December 1970 speech—which, earlier in the text, he calls “el peor de la vida de Fidel,” showing his “debilidad,” and serving as “el signo de que la Revolución pasaba por una de sus crisis más graves” (Edwards 1974: 55)—likely serves as a subtle reminder to Fidel that he does not hold the latter’s opinions in very high esteem. And even though Edwards—typically bumbling and hesitant—loses at that particular hole, he gets a hole-in-one at the final hole of the course: “Mi golpe arrancó aplausos y exclamaciones. Fidel dio un verdadero salto de asombro. ‘¡Después de esto,’ exclamó, ‘ya no necesitas jugar golf en un año!’ Reconoció mi triunfo con un fuerte apretón de manos” (Edwards 1974: 268). This time, Edwards comes off as the victor, despite Fidel’s attempts to undermine him. Clearly, this exchange is about more than a competitive face-off; each man represents an entire economic and political vision, which they each try to impose upon the other through traditional masculine rituals such as golf.

The final confrontation between the two, however, is far less amicable. Edwards is summoned at 11:30 pm on the night before his planned departure from Cuba to the building of the Foreign Ministry, where Fidel and Raúl Roa, the foreign minister, await him. Although the discussion never becomes physical, it is fraught with physicality: “nos paseábamos en sentidos

49 A curious anecdote about this scene: in the memoir, Edwards states—twice—that Roa wore a military uniform at the meeting (361). In his 1989 article, however, he adds a clarification: “Después de la publicación del libro, Raúl Roa me mandó un recado [...] : ‘Dile a Edwards que se equivocó en un detalle. En la reunión de la última noche con Fidel y conmigo, yo no estaba vestido de uniforme verde oliva sino de terno azul oscuro.’ Como se puede apreciar, la rectificación de ese ‘detalle’ resultaba confirmatoria del resto” (Edwards 1989: 36). Even close to twenty years later, Edwards maintained the accuracy of his telling of the decisive confrontation between he and Fidel. Roa’s close analysis of Edwards’ narrative was probably typical of the scrutiny to which many other readers subjected it; the fact that it has held up to such scrutiny is indicative of its veracity.
opuestos—el tiene el hábito de conversar caminando, sobre todo en los momentos álgidos de la charla, y yo también” (Edwards 1974: 376). The language Edwards uses to describe the scene is also one of physical aggression: at one point Fidel tells Edwards that he has given Allende a negative report of Edwards’ performance in Cuba, thinking that this revelation would serve as “un golpe definitivo, abrumador” (Edwards 1974: 362, emphasis mine), and that “me aplastaría” (Edwards 1974: 375, emphasis mine). Later, Fidel states that the “attacks” of left-wing intellectuals on the revolution are of no importance to him (Edwards 1974: 372); and at another point Fidel suggests “con toda claridad, quizás para amedrentarme…que la política cultural de la Revolución ingresaba en un periodo stalinista” (Edwards 1974: 373, emphasis mine), which would evidently privilege “proletarian culture” over its “bourgeois” counterpart. The language of physicality that Edwards uses indicates how aggressive the confrontation between the two is: this is “un encuentro decisivo” (Edwards 1974: 356), where each man will seek to (at least figuratively) crush the political and economic raison d’être of the other. Fidel makes it abundantly clear, for example, that he has no faith at all in Allende’s economic program: “Allende hasta ahora sólo ha conquistado el gobierno, pero eso significa llegar nada más que a los primeros contrafuertes del poder. Cuando se trate de conquistar el poder, el enfrentamiento será inevitable,” he states (Edwards 1974: 367). Edwards, meanwhile, maintains the position that the UP needs to remain democratic, because resorting to armed struggle would be a repetition of what he sees as Cuba’s mistakes: “Por eso mismo no quisiera que se repitan en Chile algunos de los errores que he observado en Cuba. Porque esos errores, precisamente, harían que la experiencia chilena sea mucho más frágil y mucho más vulnerable,” he asserts (Edwards 1974: 367).
Later, Fidel attacks Edwards’ skills as a diplomat, implying that his emphasis on intellectual exchange rather than more concrete contributions to the revolution have affected his ability to foster diplomatic exchange between Chile and Cuba. “El paso es difícil, pero…los intelectuales burgueses ya no nos interesan, ¡no nos interesan nada! Yo habría preferido mil veces que Allende, en lugar de mandarnos un escritor, nos hubiera mandado un obrero de una mina” (Edwards 1974: 372-3). While Edwards admits that “[l]a razón de Estado y la poesía se contradicen” (Edwards 1974: 371), he defends his associations with writers such as Padilla as those that would occur among members of a family, in a way similar to how Sorensen (2007) described the links among Boom-era writers: “[l]os escritores, sobre todo en América Latina, formamos una especie de familia que se conoce de un país a otro. ¿Cómo evitar que nos viéramos en Cuba? Por supuesto que hablábamos mucho, y que somos deslenguados por naturaleza…” (Edwards 1974: 378). Despite Fidel’s best efforts to provoke Edwards, the conversation proceeds calmly, which surprises the former: “¿Sabe usted lo que más me ha impresionado en esta conversación? […] ¡Su tranquilidad!” (Edwards 1974: 380). In the end, Fidel has to admit that “es hasta buen diplomático” (Edwards 1974: 378), and Edwards is able to walk out of the Foreign Ministry triumphant, despite the fact that Fidel has kept him there until 2:45 am. The confrontation ends with Edwards having calmly stood up to Fidel’s aggressive verbal attacks, and having (at least according to Edwards’ version of events) successfully defended the economic and political path of the UP, despite Fidel’s insistence that the “Chilean way to socialism” is weak and suboptimal.

Edwards states at this point in the text that a copper miner would hardly be as favorable to the Cuban revolution as Fidel imagines: “habría tenido decepciones más graves que las mías al ver el ausentismo, el trabajo voluntario convertido en imposición…los muros descascarados, los vidrios de las ventanas rotos.” However, he decides to refrain from saying this to his interlocutor, giving the reason that “yo no podía ser insultante, aunque Fidel lo fuese” (Edwards 1974: 373).
As in *La batalla de Chile*, Edwards’ memoir of his time in Cuba portrays the clashing and uncertain possible futures of the UP as among men. From his initial, tense interactions with Cuban writers in the Hotel Habana Riviera, to his nostalgic interlude with Chilean sailors on the *Esmeralda*, to his final showdown with Fidel, Edwards meditates upon the potential political and economic changes that Chile could experience in the terms of sociability among men. The ways in which masculinities manifest themselves in *Persona non grata*—in Edwards himself, as well as in the other male characters—always have implications for Chile’s past and future. Edwards’ account of the UP period also shares with Guzmán’s its view of that present as fleeting: darker times are on the horizon (perhaps they will be times of Cuban-style armed conflict, or perhaps they will be the result of capitalist exploitation). Still, Edwards’ knowledge of how the UP was defeated at the time the memoir was published also inevitably colors his account, even though he states in its final section—the “Parisian Epilogue,” written after the coup—that he has sought to continue to rise above Manicheanism:

> El maniqueísmo que todavía domina en la izquierda exigiría que...lo del socialismo debería ser escrito en color de rosa y lo del capitalismo en caracteres como el carbón. Y sin embargo los acontecimientos demuestran que el enemigo, llegado el caso, no se hace escrúpulos por cuestiones de argumentos, en tanto que la izquierda, ella sí, tiene una necesidad imperiosa de reflexión y maduración (Edwards 1974: 477).

Edwards may consider himself able to rise above political divisions, but his representations of his own adamant rejection of Manicheism—and his heroic moderation—are positions that are as eminently masculinist as the supposedly more demagogic stances against which he constrasts his own. As with *La batalla de Chile*, Edwards’ memoir stands apart as a key piece of retrospective evidence of a time in which the utopian longings of the UP years were sublimated into a series of economic aspirations that were all embodied by men, to the exclusion of women.
The Loca Obsession with Past and Future

The first crónica in Lemebel’s Loco afán is entitled “La noche de los visones (o la última fiesta de la Unidad Popular),” and although the final chapter of this thesis will return to more work by Lemebel, for now I will focus primarily on this particular piece. Despite my tight focus for the moment, however, the title Loco afán is quite pertinent to my discussion. Jean Franco (2002) states that the title “refers to a poem by…Quevedo” (229) but Angeles Mateo del Pino (2010) corrects her: it actually “procede del tango ‘Por la vuelta’ (1937), letra de Enrique Cadicamo y música de José Tinelli” (227). She later points out that the title could also come from José de Zorrilla’s Don Juan Tenorio (228).51 Mateo del Pino’s point is that for the locas52 of Lemebel’s 1996 compilation of urban chronicles about homosexuality and AIDS, desire is often followed closely on its heels by death, and the title of the collection reflects this. Lemebel first uses the phrase “loco afán” when describing the desire that is evident in the photo that lies at the center of “La noche…” for which a group of locas, many of whom later end up dying of AIDS in the 1980s and 90s, pose on New Year’s Eve of 1972: the “locas que rodean la mesa [están] casi todas nubladas por la pose rápida y el ‘loco afán’ por saltar al futuro” (Lemebel 18).

Eduardo Cadava (1997) has written about the link between photography and death: all photographs offer “a glimpse of a history to which we no longer belong” (xxviii), since they not only mark the end of a moment (the technological analogue to Sarlo’s historical “flash,” Cadava having been inspired, as she was, by Walter Benjamin’s writings on history) but also render that...

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51 The quote from Zorrilla is as follows: “¡Doña Inés! Sombra querida,/ alma de mi corazón,/ ¡no me quites la razón/ si me has de dejar la vida!/ Si eres imagen fingida,/ sólo hija de mi locura,/ no aumentes mi desventura/ burlando mi loco afán” (Quoted in Mateo del Pino 228).

52 I will use the Spanish term locas to describe the main subjects of Lemebel’s text from here on out, because this word takes into account the ambiguous way in which they position themselves. As I stated in a previous (2009) article, loca is “an umbrella term in Spanish that, broadly conceived, encompasses drag queens, queers, homosexuals, and transvestites” (Fischer 58).
moment as eternally signaling a future in which it can be reproduced.\textsuperscript{53} This is why the title of the collection is so important: the photo, which has decayed over time, is a testament to an “época de utopías sociales” (Lemebel 21), a time of unprecedented political participation in the public sphere of the UP for the locas. It shows how they were once hopeful about their future, even if this hope about the potential to freely fulfill their (political and libidinal) desires eventually ended with political turmoil and the AIDS virus.\textsuperscript{54} Once again, the reader is presented with a nostalgic portrait of the UP as a utopian present that is vulnerable to a possible dark future to come. Accordingly, “La noche…” is wrought with portentous signs of this inevitable future, even as it celebrates the hopes of locas for “su futura emancipación” (Lemebel 21). In this sense, Mateo del Pino’s discussion of the title is quite pertinent, and a good starting point for my discussion as well.

The particularity of the locas’ “unruly desire” (Franco translates the title as \textit{Mad Urgency} (229)) to both look to the future and to the past is why Lemebel’s evocation of the UP needs to be read alongside Edwards’ and Guzmán’s. It shares with its predecessors a retelling of a time that has since been lost, and Lemebel’s knowledge of the impending defeat of the UP suffuses his descriptions of the aspirations of his chronicle’s subjects with a melancholic feeling of a present as an unsustainable, fleeting past. On the other hand, though, “La noche…” differs from the other retellings of the UP in important ways. In addition to the fact that it was published

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\item As such, Cadava is able to go on to discuss the idea of the photograph as a mode of prophesy: “There can be no passing moment”—this moment being, presumably, eminently photographable—“that is not already both the past and the future: the moment must be simultaneously past, present, and future in order for it to pass at all. This is why this eternal repetition does not mean ‘the return of the same’ but rather the return of what is never simply itself” (31). Commemorating “what is no longer there” (Cadava 37), the photograph at the center of Lemebel’s chronicle evokes a moment that can alternately mourn a bygone past and point to a utopian, as yet unrealized, future of liberation for locas in Chile, since what once came to pass has the definitive power to be reproduced once again, as if it were a photo.
\item Many critics have pointed to the parallel that Lemebel draws between AIDS and the dictatorship as two factors that limited gay liberation, including Fischer, Fernando Blanco (2010), and Mateo del Pino.
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153
many more years after the overthrow of the UP than the works by Guzmán and Edwards were, Lemebel’s testimony offers a valuable glimpse of how gays experienced the UP, a perspective that is sorely lacking in other historical descriptions of the time (with the exception of Robles). “La noche…” opens in late December of 1972, in front of the UNCTAD building in central Santiago.55 We find ourselves in medias res, with a group of upper-class blond women on one side clamoring against the UP by beating empty pots and pans—just as Power describes—and a group of workers on the other, leering at them with disgust and desire simultaneously (Lemebel 11). Meanwhile, a group of locas moves between the two factions, cruising the workers and gossiping amongst themselves. They are planning a party at the house of La Palma, who has invited locas rich and poor alike to celebrate New Year’s Eve. The fact that the locas first appear between members of the upper and lower classes is surely no coincidence: Lemebel insists throughout Loco afán on the liminal position of the loca, between rich and poor, past and future, and, of course, masculine and feminine. Meanwhile, as I have shown above, the official discourse of the UP certainly subscribed to fairly prescriptive gender ideals, and so Lemebel’s retelling of the way the locas move freely around the UNCTAD, “simulando perder el vale de canje, buscándolo en sus bolsos artesanales…hasta encontrarlo con grititos de triunfo, con

55 This building is a key trope throughout this chronicle, due to its location (near Plaza Italia in Santiago, the traditional dividing line where the “barrio alto” begins to the east and poorer neighborhoods end to the west), and also because its changing functions are reminiscent of Chile’s recent political shifts. The building was constructed for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in 1972, and even hosted the black American political activist Angela Davis when she visited Santiago that same year (Abarca 49). It later became known as the Diego Portales building, and served as the headquarters of the military government, and then, once democracy returned, it held “foros y seminarios sobre homosexualidad, SIDA, utopías y tolerancias” (Lemebel 16). When the Diego Portales building burned down in 2006, it was rebuilt and reopened in 2010 as the Gabriela Mistral Center. More information about the evolution of this emblematic building is available at http://www.gam.cl/gam/memoria/historia-del-centro/. This calls to mind Angel Rama’s discussion in La ciudad letrada (1984) of the rapid changes in the 19th century Latin American city: “…la movilidad de la ciudad real, su trááfico de desconocidos, sus sucesivas construcciones y demoliciones, su ritmo acelerado…todo contribuyó a la inestabilidad, a la pérdida de pasado, a la conquista de futuro. […] Difícil situación para los ciudadanos. Su experiencia cotidiana fue la del extrañamiento” (Rama 77). In fact, as Lemebel says of his chronicle: “De aquella sinopsis emancipada, sólo quedó la UNCTAD” (16).
miradas lascivas y toqueteos apresurados que deslizaban por los cuerpos sudorosos” (Lemebel 11), is somewhat lacking in verisimilitude. Still, the fact that the locas can be protagonists of Lemebel’s utopian description of this free expression of non-heterosexual masculinity is fitting, because of their position “in-between” fantasy and reality.

The reality of the time, as described in the magazine Ramona, was that homosexuality was a taboo, even amidst the liberatory impulses of the UP. Many Chileans “las tenemos para indignarnos y hasta para pegarle un par de coscachos a algún homosexual atrevido que se equivoque de clientela,” (“La homosexualidad es así,” October 10, 1972, 38), as an article of the time read. This reality of gay bashing and oppression is not the only thing that threatens to encroach upon the utopian fantasy at the beginning of “La noche…”; ominous signs of a darker, dictatorial future ahead can be seen throughout. Beverley’s critique of retrospective representations of the armed struggle as doomed from the start—despite the fact that, as I have shown, many considered it to be a doomed enterprise at the time, as well—could be extended to a critique of retrospective representations, like Lemebel’s in “La noche…”, of the inevitability of dictatorship (not to mention AIDS). These threats take many forms. For example, after the initial scene of the chronicle, the action flashes forward to the party itself: the transvestite prostitute Chumilou and her friends meet up on New Year’s Eve (again, in front of the UNCTAD building) with Pilola Alessandri and her more upper-class friends, and then together they take a city bus to La Palma’s house in the lower income (at that time, at least) Santiago district of Recoleta.

56 To have the last name Alessandri in Chile is to be immediately marked as a member of the country’s elite: two presidents of Chile have had that last name (Arturo Alessandri Palma, who was president from 1920 to 1924, and then from 1932 to 1938; and Jorge Alessandri Rodríguez, who was president from 1958 to 1964). Lemebel also mentions the last names of Pilola’s friends, “La Astaburuaga” and “La Zañartu” (13), who are thus clearly marked as belonging to the Chilean elite as well. These more upper-class locas are treated with disdain in the chronicle: Pilola’s mink coats are stolen, and as the first loca in the chronicle to get AIDS (following a trip to New York), Lemebel portrays Pilola and her wealthy coterie as traitors (of sorts) to the more innocent, autochthonous, and indeed utopian expressions of homosexuality that were supposedly prevalent in pre-dictatorship Chile.
Indeed, the chronicle does acknowledge the threats of persecution that the *locas* experienced from the *Carabineros* (policemen known in Chilean slang as *pacos*), when it describes how the wealthier ones took the lead of the group, after meeting up at the UNCTAD, thinking that their class privilege would protect the rest from any harassment: “Al cruzar el grupo frente a una comisaría, las regias se adelantaron para no tener problemas, pero igual los pacos algo gritaron. Entonces la Chumilou se detuvo, y haciendo resbalar el visón por su hombro, sacó un abanico y les dijo que estaba preparada para la noche” (Lemebel 13). La Pilola has been goaded by Chumilou into bringing two of her mother’s mink coats with her. Chumilou states that the coats, which give the chronicle its title and which end up getting stolen at the party, will surely add to the fantasy and cachet of the evening: “El blanco para despedir el 72, que ha sido una fiesta para nosotros los maricones pobres. Y el negro para recibir el 73, que con tanto güeveo de cacerolas, se me ocurre que viene pesado” (Lemebel 12). When they arrive at La Palma’s house, however, all the food has been eaten; La Palma’s explanation is that “estas locas *rotas* son tan hambrientas, no dejaron nada, se lo comieron todo. Como si viniera una guerra” (Lemebel 13). Here, already, both Chumilou and La Palma have prophesied a dark future: a coup d’état is coming, but so is disease. And despite the fact that eventually “los matices sociales se confundieron en brindis, abrazos y calenturas desplegadas por el patio” (Lemebel 13-14) at the

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57 Although, as Nelly Richard (2004) has written, a key aspect of the “queer aesthetic” in Chilean cultural production is its element of fantasy, lights and shadow, More and other utopian thinkers—not to mention Allende himself—eschewed such conspicuous consumption as frivolous, bourgeois, and even (sometimes) anti-revolutionary. The place for such fantasy-oriented notions of “glamour” in leftist thought and cultural production is clearly a point of contention for Lemebel, and a key aspect of what he seeks to accomplish in “La noche...”: a “queering” of strictly masculinized notions of the Left.

58 Oscar Contardo makes use of this particular word in Chilean slang to explain some of the nuances of the country’s classism in his book *Siútico:* “la palabra ‘roto’ es una bala, un cuchillo […]. Su origen más probable está en los militares rotos—harapientos, desharrapados—de la guerra de Arauco. […] Pero también figura en figura humorística criolla: el roto desdentado, con ojotas, sonriente, picaro, alcoholizado. Verdejo pobretón, consumido en una fatalidad que no se nota porque se le supone feliz en la rusticidad de su asentamiento menesteroso en los arrabales de la ciudad. […] El ejercicio de ‘rotear’ no tiene más objetivo que distanciarse […]. La mujer dice: ‘Yo no soy una rota, estoy por encima de eso, soy mejor.’” (19-21).
party, an ominous light filters into the house on the morning after: “Y esa luz hueca…de humo flotando a través de la puerta abierta de par en par. Como si la casa hubiera sido una calavera iluminada desde el exterior” (Lemebel 15). Not only is war on the horizon as 1973 approaches; AIDS is on its way, as well. The loca utopia of the UP is under constant ideological, sexual, and temporal threat, and Lemebel’s depiction of these threats to the utopia that the locas supposedly experienced during the UP are a way of better articulating that utopia.

Sure enough, from there the chronicle flashes forward again to arrival of AIDS in Chile, and one by one, the locas who were at the party (and in the picture) fall victim to it: first La Pilola, then La Palma, and finally Chumilou, who dies on the same day that democracy is voted back into Chile in the 1988 plebiscite (Lemebel 20). For Lemebel, this victimhood of the locas cuts two ways, because the arrival of dictatorship in Chile preceded the arrival of AIDS only by relatively few years; he makes a number of comparisons between the two. First, they both brought death in their wake: “el tufo mortuorio de la dictadura fue un adelanto del SIDA, que hizo su estreno a comienzos de los ochenta” (Lemebel 16). Lemebel later makes it clear that AIDS is also the byproduct of the new economic model that the dictatorship imposed in reaction to the UP’s management of Chile, too. After all, La Pilola, the wealthiest loca in the photo, the one most closely allied with the neoliberal regime of the dictatorship, is the first to get it: “Ella se compró la epidemia en Nueva York, fue la primera que la trajo en exclusiva, la más auténtica, la recién estrenada moda gay para morir. La última moda fúnebre que la adelgazó como ninguna dieta lo había conseguido” (Lemebel 16). The opening up of the Chilean economy wrought by neoliberalism is what caused AIDS to enter the country in the first place, according to Lemebel. With a sardonic tone, he ties AIDS to the economic policies of the Pinochet regime, making the utopian innocence of the locas during the UP era stand out all the more, in contrast.
Meanwhile, AIDS was not the only effect that these changing economic policies had on Chilean men; in light of how the Chilean economy changed after the fall of the UP, Lemebel makes it clear just how utopian the ways the locas had of expressing their sexuality during the early 70s really were. Despite a greater political presence by locas in the public sphere during the UP years—which, for Lemebel, brought about at least the possibility to broaden what it meant to be both masculine and leftist—such possibilities were cut short by the onset of dictatorship. The result was a restriction of leftist discourses of masculinity, many of which manifested themselves in *La batalla de Chile* and *Persona non grata*: the “new man,” the MIR revolutionary, the bearded rebel ready to fight. Lemebel offers up a fierce critique of the narrowness of these discourses in “Manifiesto (Hablo por mi diferencia),” a speech that he gave at a political protest in Santiago in 1986, he “mock[s] the apparently fixed dichotomies of politics and masculinity” of the left (Fischer 66):

No sabe que la hombría/ Nunca la aprendí en los cuarteles/ Mi hombría me la enseñó la noche […]/ Esa hombría de la que usted se jacta/ Se la metieron en el regimiento/ Un milico asesino/ De esos que aún están en el poder/ Mi hombría no la recibí del partido/ Porque me rechazaron con risitas (Lemebel 87-8).

In the *Manifiesto*, Lemebel acknowledges the tensions implicit when gender norms end up tied to political and economic ideals. The loca is able to insist upon the importance of challenging “the…ideological and political categories that seek to recruit her for their respective causes” (Fischer 67), and thanks to her “roaming metaphor of superimposed and interchangeable identities, presents ‘one of the most potentially subversive challenges’ confronting systems of univocal characterization of normative identity” (Richard 52, quoting Olalquiaga 7-10).

However, Lemebel does not simply critique all parties and walk away; according to Palaversich, there is a model of masculinity that he does find to be worthy of emulating:
Disillusioned by the projects of a stagnant, unimaginative left and by the conservative gay movement, Lemebel finds a potential political idea in the Zapatistas and in Subcomandante Marcos, exemplars of a revolution that diverges from strict Marxist models—one in which discrimination on the basis of ethnicity or class is regarded as one among many injustices to be rectified. […] Both Marcos and Lemebel practice a perpetual ‘queering’ of sociopolitical space and possess a broad vision of revolutionary agency (109, emphasis mine).

Lemebel’s interrogation of the effects that the economic and political aspirations of otherwise apparently united coalitions can have on the bodies of individuals is made more explicit in his “Manifiesto,” but these effects can be seen in a more oblique form in “La noche…”.

For Lemebel, the photo at the center of “La noche…” serves a double function: it is both the record of an era in which the locas were supposedly full of hope, and it also serves as a reference point of nostalgia for them later on, when many of them are dying of AIDS, and also for the narrator of the chronicle him/herself. First of all, the photo marks the focal point of Lemebel’s attempt to theorize how masculinity and economics interacted during and after the UP; a vestige of feathers and laughter during a period supposedly free from the contaminating importation of outside ideologies and diseases. The locas were hardly immune to the masculinizing impulses of the UP—as evidenced by the pacos who yelled epithets at them as they pranced past a police station on New Year’s Eve—but at least those impulses came from within Chile, rather than from abroad. Secondly, the photo is a site of nostalgic longing for the continuation of an economic and political past that never was—a way of “drawing the present’s attention to everything that was left unaccomplished and mournful in the past” that Avelar describes as the “will to reminisce” (2). This nostalgia for a lost utopia is made all the more acute in light of the AIDS crisis, which becomes clear when La Palma, on her deathbed in the eighties, makes reference to the photo:

En otra fiesta nos vemos, dijo triste mirando la foto clavada en las tablas de su miseria. Y antes de cerrar los ojos, pudo verse tan joven, casi una doncella sonrojada empiñando la
copia y un puñado de huesos en aquel verano del 73. Se vio tan bella en el espejo de la foto... que detuvo la mano huesuda de la Muerte para contemplarse. Le dijo a la Pálida espérate un poco, y se agarró un momento más de la vida para saciar su narciso empielado (Lemebel 17-18).

For La Palma, the photo is a reminder not only of a time of youth and beauty, but also of a period of greater freedom of expression and a lack of worry, thanks (in part) to the policies of the UP. Although she may have been full of “loco afán” back in late 1972 to look ahead to the future, things have changed by the late eighties, when her parting thought is occupied by longing for a return to the past. So it is that this utopia fades away like a yellowing photo, an expression of a certain kind of gay masculinity whose future was doomed by the encroaching presages of neoliberal economic policy.

And yet, this utopia described by Lemebel was just that—an imagined state that, according to all available evidence, was hardly a time of liberation for locas. Perhaps therein lies the power of “La noche...”: it re-imagines the manifestation of a series of masculinities that never existed quite so openly. Whether or not Lemebel’s queering of the history of the UP is a faithful account is therefore unimportant, because—aside from Jameson’s insistence on the fact that the imagining of utopia is the most important aspect of it, much more important than its actual implementation—it hardly matters whether locas were allowed to freely gather in front of the UNCTAD, since they were swept away by AIDS and military repression in the end anyway.

By theorizing a way for alternative masculinities to insert themselves in the discourse surrounding the UP, even in an unfeasible, impossible way, Lemebel opens up a new way in which gender and the economy can interact in Chile: a critique of leftist economic orthodoxy, but also a nostalgic hearkening back to a gay masculinity unadulterated by foreign models whose importation was made possible by the right. The performances of masculinity that the locas in the photo espouse are a testament to the enduring power of utopia to bring into play fleeting
moments of gender expression and political participation, and to insert new models of masculinity into Chilean history that will endure long after the political debates surrounding it have died down.

Conclusion(s)

Boym warns against the way nostalgia can lurk at the heart of ideology, inducing an emotional desire for some sort of idealized return to the past. This, of course, is what conservatism is all about, in her opinion: “Algía—longing—is what we share, yet nostos—the return home—is what divides us. It is the promise to rebuild the ideal home that lies at the core of many powerful ideologies today, tempting us to relinquish critical thinking for emotional bonding” (Boym xv-xvi). This phenomenon is key if we are to explain the forces behind the clashing evocations of different models of masculinity that came to the fore in the cultural production that was made public in the aftermath of the UP. The performances of masculinity of all those who could be classified within these models—from the young workers evoked by Allende; to the servile members of the military commended by Edwards; to the bearded, fighting “new man” of Cuba and the MIR; to the locas at the UNCTAD; to the pensive, balanced intellectual espoused by Edwards; to the fascist shock troops depicted by Guzmán—had vast political and economic consequences. Looking back upon these different models of masculinity, and the economic models that they promised and/or portended during the years of the UP, it is clear that utopia, and the different forms of nostalgia for it, are primarily sexual and economic phenomena, in ways that Thomas More would likely never have imagined. Analyzing the art and literature that examine the UP years after the fact offers the potential to capture the ambiguities of different utopian imaginaries of masculinity as they disappear into time: they look backwards
(nostalgically or not) and reflecting upon how the utopian future(s) of the UP were espoused primarily by men (and the exclusions that resulted), in the case of La batalla de Chile and Persona non grata; and they examine a temporality of queer masculinity that was so utopian it likely never existed, in the case of Loco afán. Although Jameson maintains that the “free play” of imagining utopias for which literature and art allow is what makes utopia such a powerful tool, it is also important to keep Boym’s prescient words about the ideologies inherent to nostalgia in mind, in order to nuance these seemingly limitless potentialities. Instead of using past and (unfulfilled) future temporalities to invoke the economic systems to which they were attached—whether a destruction of the bourgeois state, or a military coup, or Allendian Marxism—literature and art can attest to the models of masculinity that came into being in conjunction with them. These models of comportment—and the political and economic possibilities that went along with them—are, in the end, all that remains, long after these political and economic temporalities have faded away. Positioned as they are between the “free play” of theory and the fixity of implementation, and between the past and the present, these models of masculinity offer a window into aspects of the history of this period that have heretofore been ignored.
Chapter 3

Simulated Masculinities: Dictatorship, Postmodernism, and Neoliberalism, 1973-90

Introduction: “Purity” Re-signified

Soon after September 11, 1973, the day a coup overthrew the government of Salvador Allende and imposed military rule, the right-wing press made a point of not just demonizing the UP as a whole, but leveling its attacks primarily at Allende himself. The historian Steve Stern (2006), for instance, discusses an article in the magazine Ercilla that reported on a search of Allende’s private home, known as El Cañaveral, and used the evidence found there to portray him as a fraud. Allende was called “a man who proclaimed loyalty to the poor and democracy while wedding himself to a life of bourgeois opulence, moral laxity, and political violence” (Stern 39), and the article included a discussion of the house’s underground stores of food and liquor “worthy of a supermarket”; a giant detached kitchen, “fit for a hotel,” for a private army that required 150 sleeping cots; closets and storage boxes stuffed with expensive imported clothes and liquor; a safe containing nearly 9,000 US dollars...[an amount] far beyond justified presidential expenditures or salary; and a bedroom filled with pornographic magazines and erotic paraphernalia (Stern 41).

This list deserves to be quoted at length because the items on it offered a material destabilization of the utopian sexual and economic goals of the Unidad Popular government, as articulated by Allende himself from the first day of his term onwards (and enumerated in the previous chapter): his early calls for sexual rectitude among Chilean youth were seemingly exposed as hypocritical in light of the contents of his boudoir, and the UP’s advocacy for the socialization of resources

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1 Particularly gripping visual and written testimonials of the coup itself, from a variety of different perspectives, can be found in Patricio Guzmán’s La batalla de Chile, especially its second part; Luz Arce’s 1990 declaration before the Chilean National Truth and Reconciliation Commission (excerpted in Michael Lazzara’s 2011 volume Luz Arce and Pinochet’s Chile: Testimony in the Aftermath of State Violence); Gonzalo Leiva Quijada’s 2008 compilation of photographs AFI: Multitudes en sombras; and Augusto Pinochet’s 1982 memoir The Crucial Day, which will be discussed at some length below.
rang hollow when it seemed to turn out that the president himself was stockpiling food, imported goods, and hard currency, all of which were quite scarce in Chile in 1973. The press and the military government—which worked in tandem to control the distribution of information in the media throughout the dictatorship\(^2\)—made it seem as though Allende was practicing the same immorality and economic exploitation that he had decried in his inaugural address. These concentrated, ad hominem media attacks and exposés, along with the so-called Plan Z revelations—“documentary discoveries of secret war plans and assassination lists…weapons arsenals, guerrilla training camps, war clinics and hospitals, and underground tunnels and storage depots,” all of which supposedly indicated plans by the UP and the MIR to “lop off the military leadership and take control of the country” (Stern 42)\(^3\)—seemed to undermine the very elements to which the UP had pointed in order to show how exceptional it was. In order to overturn the sexual and economic politics of the entire UP, the dictatorship set out to discredit Allende personally: by “exposing” the fact that the UP’s masculinist discourse of “conquering” women for a leftist “revolution” (Tinsman 219) was supposedly rooted not in youthful exuberance but rather in the immorality and libertinage of the country’s leader, and the violent and antidemocratic pretensions of the Left as a whole, the Right could call into question the ways in which the UP had projected itself abroad as a unique example of upstanding, sober, democratically-elected socialism.

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\(^2\) Stern discusses media control and censorship under the dictatorship at several points; see pp. 60-2, 147, and 301-7, to name a few examples. Kornbluh also points out the fact that *El Mercurio*, Chile’s most important newspaper, received funding from the CIA in the early period of the dictatorship to help the latter “consolidate” (Kornbluh 214-15). It played an important role “reeduca[ting] middle-class, professional, and upper-class sectors on the rationale and benefits of neoliberal reforms” (Stern 168). See also Ignacio Agüero’s 2008 documentary *El diario de Agustín*, which narrates the broader history of *El Mercurio*’s complicity with dictatorial politics.

\(^3\) Although most, if not all, of these supposed discoveries were subsequently discredited (Stern 48), they provided justification at the time for the military-led repression of the Left.
The fact that the Right directed its attacks at Allende’s sexual practices in particular is an indicator of the extent to which reproductive sexuality and masculinity were key elements of the political and economic realm. For the Right, the UP had allowed for “chaos” in the sexual realm as well as in the economic one: from its leader’s dissolute sexual practices all the way down to the protests by gay members of the proletariat demanding marriage, the reproductive arena under the UP had become a place where economic and political power was no longer exclusively in the hands of those who sought to form families in conventional ways. Part of what the Right would have to do in order to restore order to the “chaos” the UP had supposedly left, then, was to take control of that arena. It is thus no coincidence that a discourse of purity—economic, sexual, and otherwise—was prevalent in the early days of the military dictatorship. In fact, just hours after bombing La Moneda Palace, the four members of the new ruling junta—Gustavo Leigh, César Mendoza, José Toribio Merino, and of course, Augusto Pinochet—appeared on television to address the country and justify their actions in the name of that purity. In a mise-en-scène chillingly captured in the second part of Patricio Guzmán’s documentary La batalla de Chile, each man spoke a few words about duty, honor, and Chile’s future, but Leigh’s language was the most incendiary of the four: he stated that

después de tres años de soportar el cáncer marxista que nos llevó a un descalabro económico, moral y social que no se podía seguir tolerando…tenemos la certeza, la seguridad, de que la enorme mayoría del pueblo chileno…está dispuesto a luchar contra el marxismo [y]…extirparlo hasta las últimas consecuencias (Guzmán).

Leigh used the metaphors of illness and eradication, contamination and cleansing, which were common to southern cone dictatorships, as Mary Louise Pratt (1996) has pointed out (162). In

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4 See the previous chapter for more discussion of this; for more complete information, see Víctor Hugo Robles’ 2008 volume Bandera hueca.
5 The fact that Leigh’s tone was so provocative at this particular moment in time is somewhat ironic, considering that he was removed from the junta in 1978 due to the moderate stance he took in favor of an early end to the dictatorship (Stern 142-3).
this early case, the “extirpation” mentioned by Leigh was of an economic nature, but the
dictatorship’s discourse of purification could take sexual forms as well.

Six months later, in March of 1974, in a glossy edition with translations into English,
French, and German and clearly meant for circulation abroad, the junta published its
Declaración de principios del gobierno de Chile, which clearly laid out the duties and rights of
the ideal (male) citizen of the “new” Chile. By prioritizing the individual good over the
collective, men and masculinities become depersonalized and almost de-gendered,6 instead
becoming discursive fields upon which ideal economic and political subjects are defined. The
masculinity envisioned in the rhetoric of the Declaración—a document commonly attributed to,
but left unsigned by, Jaime Guzmán, the framer of the country’s 1980 Constitution (Stern 58)—
is one in which the roles of men and women are clearly delineated and circumscribed. While
men are to focus on ownership of property and the means of production, it is up to women to
uphold the more sacred aspects of these values: “El referido derecho de propiedad privada, tanto
sobre bienes de consumo como sobre medios de producción” (8-9). Women, meanwhile, serve as
“pilares de la reconstrucción nacional”: “En la familia, la mujer se realza en toda la grandeza de
su misión, que la convierte en la roca espiritual de la Patria” (21). Stern points out how the
rhetoric of dictatorship promoted a much more binary-oriented view of gender: “…high military
men played the individual roles as heroes who rescued a nation. […] Women played a group role
as voice of a people in need of rescue” (Stern 63, emphasis in original). As Pratt, who along with
Jean Franco (1992) and Nelly Richard (2004) has made valuable contributions to criticism

6 I say “almost” de-gendered, because of course Guzmán and Guevara invoke “man” and “men” largely in a general
sense—as human beings. Still, I would not go so far as to argue that the previous quotes could be equally applied to
both women and men. Both Guevara and Guzmán are making a case for male subjects more than female subjects,
since because Guzmán, at least, makes explicit reference to the role of women separately, after he talks about that of
men. Rather than as participants in the negotiation of individual liberties over the collective in the public sphere,
women are relegated to a more “spiritual” position in this declaration, and their “duty” now is to “sacrifice”
themselves for the good of the nation.
related to the Pinochet dictatorship’s rhetoric of gender, puts it: “citizenship consists, as Pinochet loved to say, in either ordering or obeying, and only those who do one or the other well are useful to the state” (151). The dictatorship’s sexual rhetoric called for a particularly sinister type of purity: a cleanup of any messy ambiguities that could have prevented a “clean,” binary gender ideal from emerging. Now that these binaries—which had never been very seriously challenged by the Left, in any case—were firmly recovered by the military government, ideal reproductive masculinity and the patriarchal norms that went along with it could once again be under the exclusive purview of the Right.

The dictatorship’s obsession with the appearance of “purity” required it to go to great lengths to erase everything that it considered dissonant with its new outlook. Within the country—and soon enough, beyond its borders7—that “erasure” took on the extremely violent forms of imprisonment, torture, disappearance, and murder. The junta—conscious of, among other things, the foreign interests that its coup had been conceived, at least in part, to attend to—was just as concerned with how Chile’s appearance of orderliness and purity was projected beyond its borders, as it was with those who were in Chile. A particularly striking visual registry of the mechanisms of this projection outward of the idea of dictatorship Chile as a “model” of stability can be found in the book Chile ayer hoy (1975), in which photos of UP “chaos” were placed alongside photos taken after the coup of the same spaces, which had since been cleaned up.8 These contrasts were clearly meant to show foreign audiences how Chile had been

7 These attempts to eliminate dissent included the assassinations of critics of the dictatorship abroad, such as former Army Commander-in Chief Carlos Prats and his wife Sofia Cuthbert in Buenos Aires in 1974, of Allende’s former Foreign Minister Orlando Letelier and Ronni Moffitt in Washington, DC in 1976, and the attempted murder of Christian Democratic leader Bernardo Leighton and his wife Anita Fresno in Rome in 1975 (Stern 106).
8 The volume was curiously devoid of any mention of authors or photographers—not to mention page numbers, or even a date. As Horacio Fernández (2011) writes: “Following the coup, Quimantú was taken over by the army and later reconstituted as the Editora Nacional Gabriela Mistral. It was never very successful and finally went bankrupt at the beginning of the 1980s. Chile ayer hoy has no credits, but its authors functioned within the orbit of the
“purified” of dissent and disorder originating in places like Cuba and the Soviet Union. In fact, the last page of the book contains text that remains untranslated into French or Spanish; it is aimed squarely at Anglophone readers:

The free world owes Chile a lot. Do not fall in the web of communist propaganda. Give Chile a chance. Let Chileans do their work to build their own future. Chileans have the faith to do it. The Communist echo boxes\(^9\) are screaming at the United Nations and everywhere. They invent all sort of lies [sic]. This is the price Chile is paying for not having accepted Russia at its God Father [sic] (last page).

The dictatorship’s message is twofold: by asking English-speaking readers to “give Chile a chance,” it makes it clear both that Chile has freed itself of communism, and also that the country is ripe for capitalist investment. \textit{Chile ayer hoy} shows the lengths to which the dictatorship was willing to go in order to tamp down any dissent that was certainly afoot when the volume was published, while simultaneously projecting an image abroad of supposedly depoliticized tranquility, free from foreign interference.

In its projection abroad of Chile’s newfound “purity,” however, the dictatorship found itself in multiple rhetorical binds. On one hand, it sought to change how Chile projected itself abroad as a model of economic management by erasing all traces of its previous regime of democratic Marxism and emphasizing how friendly it was to foreign capital; but on the other, its rhetoric of having “purified” Chile of outside economic influences seemed to ring false in light of its newfound openness to capital investment. Since the supposed goal of Plan Z had been for Chile to “join ‘the Moscow orbit’” (Stern 43), dictatorship officials claimed that they had saved

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\ \DINAC, which in 1974 was under the direction of Colonel Virgilio Espinoza Palma; the following year he was succeeded by Colonel Orlando Jerez Borges, and the organization became known as DINACOS, which would remain the feared name of censorship in Chile until 1990” (103).
\footnote{This phrase is evidently a literal translation of the Spanish term “cajas de resonancia”; the term “echo chambers” would be more correct, but perhaps “apologists” or “spokespeople” would have been preferable renderings.}
Chile from foreign economic domination by the Soviet Union\textsuperscript{10} by setting their coup into motion. Thus “free” of these outside influences, dictatorship apologists argued, the economy would be able to thrive: the hoarding, the food lines, and the scarcities of the UP years would all be things of the past. This economic jingoism was particularly misleading, however, due to the fact that the dictatorship restructured the country’s economy almost immediately following the coup precisely so that it could open it up to foreign trade:

Led by the “Chicago Boys” economists,\textsuperscript{11} the junta moved toward free-market-oriented policies that scaled back state spending and protective tariffs, devalued the escudo and set aside price controls, and dismantled labor rights and resistance. In April 1975, a “shock” policy announced by Finance Minister Jorge Cauas sealed this transition by cutting money supply, state spending, and public employment drastically. The Cauas plan set the stage for Chile’s emergence as Latin America’s pioneer of neoliberalism and privatization (Stern 75, emphasis mine).

The dictatorship’s economic rhetoric was tinged with the suggestion of patriotic, nationalist purity—not to mention the same sort of exceptionalism that had been used in previous years to highlight Chile’s previous economic plans—but it was simultaneously advocating for infusions into its economy of investment from abroad: its rejection of Marxist internationalism was simultaneous with its embrace of the global marketplace of capital. Positioning Chile as a “model” of receptiveness to incoming capital, dictatorship officials found themselves in the odd position of having to portray the country’s economy as unique in its derivativeness, or pure in its impurity.

The rhetorical bind of purity in which the dictatorship found itself extended beyond the economic sphere as well, however, and this was part of its re-signification of the “official” rhetoric in regards to reproductive sexuality. On one hand, the dictatorship had to say that it was

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{10} Pinochet made reference in 1974 to “an alleged remark by Allende when praising his hosts at a state dinner in Moscow” in 1972, by rejecting “the idea that Chile had ‘big brothers’” (Stern 70).
\textsuperscript{11} For a detailed history of the imposition of the economic ideals of Arnold Harberger and Milton Freedman, as well as other economists from the University of Chicago, in Chile, see Juan Gabriel Valdés’ 1989 volume \textit{La escuela de Chicago: Operación Chile}.
\end{footnotesize}
eradicating traces in the country of any official sanction of non-reproductive sexuality—which under the UP had often came in the form of feminism and other gender politics, as discussed in the previous chapter—to make Chile a “model” of gender binaries and normative, reproductive sexualities. On the other hand, however, in its move to open Chile up to foreign markets, it had to allow for the “reproduction” in the third world of certain models of masculinity that were idealized in the first—hardly the “purity” it professed to value. Jaime Guzmán’s equation of feminism with lesbianism, for example—he considered that the (only occasionally feminist) gender politics of the UP were imposed from abroad and contradictory to the reproductive norms valued by the dictatorship—was typical of one aspect of the rhetoric of gender purity during the dictatorship. Despite the fact that feminism had a long trajectory in Chile, Guzmán saw it as an external force that interfered with the family-oriented values of the dictatorship. His sister Rosario’s 1991 biography of him, a combination of his writings and her own personal anecdotes about him, says as much:

Debo hacer una distinción: a Jaime le gustaban las mujeres femeninas pero no feministas. Nunca sintió empatía por aquella defensa de la igualdad de los sexos que, a su juicio, más que proteger los verdaderos derechos de la mujer, coloca a ésta en un escenario en el que…esa igualdad le añade a su deber de madre y esposa, aquellas responsabilidades que terminan muchas veces por agobiárla. […] “Creo que el feminismo…le ha hecho un gran daño a la causa de la mujer […]. Por lo demás…muchos sostienen que un algo porcentaje

\[\text{See, for example, the feminist writings of Elena Caffarena (1952) and Julieta Kirkwood (1986). Feminism in Chile can trace its roots back to the anarchist Luis Emilio Recabarren, whose newspaper } \text{El Despertar de los Trabajadores} \text{ published a number of editorials in favor of women’s rights (Caffarena 109-112). Kirkwood cites the Belén de Zárraga Cultural Centers in Chile’s northern mining cities as the first feminist institutions to arise in the country (Kirkwood 105). Recabarren and de Zárraga, who lived together in northern Chile in the early decades of the 20th century, are considered the pioneers of feminist thought in the country.} \]

12 In Mala onda (1991), Alberto Fuguet’s coming-of-age novel that takes place in 1980—just as the new Constitution is subject to approval via plebiscite—his protagonist, Matías Vicuña, refers to Jaime Guzmán in negative terms that are directly related to a certain discourse of masculinity: “Odias a Jaime Guzmán, lo admites. A veces tienes pesadillas con él. Sueñas que te vas a convertir en su doble: blanco, transparente, virgen, cartucho, calvo, mal vestido, con esos anteojos horrorosos. El perno más perno de Chile” (183). Matías’ dislike of Guzmán, in addition to being related to Guzmán’s conservative sexual agenda, is also related implicitly to the market. Guzmán’s conservatism vis-à-vis the encroachment of less traditional gender norms that came with an increasingly liberalized market is contrasted to Matías’ total embrace of imported goods and ideas, particularly those of the United States.
de mujeres feministas terminan en el lesbianismo, lo cual lleva a pensar que ha de haber una falla estructural en la base de dicho pensamiento” (R. Guzmán 144-5).

Guzmán may have seen feminism as a threat from abroad to the “purity” of women’s “duties” as mothers and wives, but the dictatorship’s relentless importation of foreign goods could only result in the importation of some of the same gender mores that Guzmán decried. Pedro Lemebel concludes his 1996 chronicle “La noche de los visones” (discussed in the previous chapter) by gazing upon a photo depicting a group of gay men towards the end of the UP and contrasting “el plumaje raído de las locas aún torcidas, aún folclóricas en sus ademanes ilegales…un carrusel risueño, una danza de risas gorrionas tan jóvenes, tan púberes en su dislocada forma de rearmar el mundo” (Lemebel 22) from that period with a new, more normative model of masculinity that was brought to Chile from abroad during the dictatorship:

el modelo importado del estatus gay, tan de moda, tan penetrativo en su tranza con el poder de la nova masculinidade homosexual…esos músculos, esos bíceps que llegaban a veces por revistas extranjeras, eran un Olimpo del Primer Mundo…junto al molde de Superman, precisamente en la aséptica envoltura de esa piel blanca, tan higiénica, tan perfumada por el embrujo capitalista. Tan diferente al cuero opaco de la geografía local (Lemebel 22-23).

For Lemebel, the UP was a time for a more folkloric, autochthonous expression of gay masculinity, less vulnerable to the influences of imported ideas and suffused with a frisson of social awareness and activism. Once the UP fell, however, this optimism was replaced by a more antiseptic model of gay masculinity that came from abroad—one that was racialized and suffused with class implications, as well as foreign.14 This new “First World” model offered an

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14 This comparison is not without its contradictions, many of which do not go unacknowledged by Francine Masiello (2001): “A paradox of inversion is apparent here: if dictatorship insisted on the virility of the state, it nonetheless permitted the social presence of the loca […]; neoliberalism, with its supposed tolerance for difference, imposes a masculine imaginary even upon its most deviant subjects. Now the masculinized image of gayness, copied from U.S. models, supplants the earlier aesthetic” (193). While Masiello takes account of the dictatorship’s simultaneous permissiveness towards, and imposition upon, the locas, she does not acknowledge the fact that this insistence upon the “virility” of the state was a characteristic of the UP and previous governments as well. Eighties and nineties neoliberalism was hardly the first economic regime in Chile that had major implications for masculinity.

171
idealized version of masculinity that seemed to fit Chile’s capitalist aspirations, and it was not solely applicable to gay men, either. The dictatorship’s rhetoric of gender firmly classified masculinity and femininity in binaries, such that even gay masculinity was safely couched in the smooth, pure logic of foreign capital. Lemebel, then, takes the opposite tack of Guzmán, making the case that Chile’s gender politics were more “pure” and unadulterated before the dictatorship restored conventionally reproductive sexual politics to the forefront, rather than afterwards. The dictatorship was forced to position Chile as a place of “pure,” clearly demarcated gender roles and normative reproductive sexualities, while at the same time making concessions to an influx of foreign capital that complicated its rhetoric of exalting only certain, idealized models of reproductive masculinity and capitalist investment. The maneuvers it was forced to undertake would have consequences for the models of gender comportment that appeared in the art and literature of the time, as all these aforementioned actors sought to gain control of the narrative of “model” economic management that Chile sought to project. These disputes for control over what it meant for Chile’s economic and gender ideals to be “pure” had major implications for the construction of historical narratives about the country that was taking place as the dictatorship progressed.

The works under discussion in this chapter deal with the consequences for masculinities and aesthetics of Chile’s sudden, unprotected insertion of itself into the global marketplace, while mediating the problems that inevitably arose as a result of Chile positioning itself as an ideal, US-friendly, third-world economy: an importer of manufactured goods from the first world, an exporter solely of raw materials, and a source of cheap, non-unionized labor. Carlos Flores Delpino’s 1984 documentary El Charles Bronson chileno tells the story of Fenelón Guajardo López, a Chilean man who wins a television contest searching for Charles Bronson
lookalikes, and chronicles Guajardo’s quixotic attempts to make a contribution to the circulation of Chilean art abroad through his virtuoso impression of the American movie star. In the film, Flores shows not only how foreign models of masculinity had imposed themselves in Chile under the dictatorship, but also how they were absorbed and even exported again as evidence of how obsessively closely the economy had sought to foment those models. Meanwhile, Carlos Leppe’s performance art pieces *El happening de las gallinas* (1973-4), *El perchero* (1975), *Sala de espera* (1980), and *Prueba de artista* (1981), challenged Chile’s artistic censorship as part of the *Escena de avanzada*. By showing the effects on his body of “new media,” such as video and (often imported) ready-made objects, Leppe denounced what he considered to be the logical conclusion of these economic “developments”—overexposure, violation of personal space, alienation—as creating dissonance between idealized, foreign models of masculinity and their lack of fulfillment in Chile. Finally, Alberto Fuguet’s 1990 novel *La azarosa y sobreexpuesta vida de Enrique Alekán*, created out of a series of columns written in *El Mercurio* in the final days of the dictatorship, unproblematically embraces the first-world aesthetics that pervaded the economic discourse of the military regime—particularly in its later years—and offers up an idealized model of yuppie, masculine prosperity embodied in the character of Alekán. These works represent the opposite of what Idelber Avelar calls the “untimely,” a Nietszchean term that presupposes that the past is always contained in the present in an allegorical way (20-1).

The cultural production created within Chile during the dictatorship grappled with how the government was reproducing foreign masculinities and economic principles while simultaneously disavowing the fact that they were foreign—“naturalizing” them as “pure.” George Yúdice (1992) points out that “radical avant-gardes exposed modernity’s ideological strategies of ‘naturalization’ and inverted the paradigm, transforming innovation—*ruptura*—into
a continually self-supplementing process” (22). Others, meanwhile, helped to naturalize the “tradition” with which the avant-gardes sought to completely break. Whether artists and writers chose to parody this process or unabashedly participated in the ruse to naturalize the dictatorship’s “pure” modernity, they always related Chile’s promotion of itself abroad as a “model” of these newly “purified” economic and sexual values with the creation and representation of new “models” (and anti-models) of idealized masculinity. By shifting, for this chapter at least, away from a diasporic view of Chilean cultural production, I hope to show how the impact of foreign “models” of masculinity and economics upon Chilean art, literature, and film in the country during this time was much more nuanced, sophisticated, and “original” than a simple copying of those models, in contrast to what many feared would happen if neoliberal economics were allowed free reign there.\textsuperscript{15} Although the next chapter of this thesis will focus on the postdictatorship in Chile, and as such will follow Avelar’s assertion that “all witnessing is a retrospective construction that must elaborate its legitimacy discursively, in the midst of a war in which the most powerful voice threatens to be that of forgetfulness” (3), for now a focus on a more immediately (and locally) created archive of objects will offer fertile ground for a reexamination of the ways different currents of sexual and economic thinking sought to perpetuate themselves into the future, in the context of the dictatorship. As an open target for foreign goods and ideas, Chile projected itself as the perfect, pure destination for the investment of foreign capital—while trying to mask the unseemly, totalitarian underbelly of the dictatorship. Meanwhile, the art and literature created there at the time performed a similar type of “judo,” debating—despite the censorship and brutality so common at the time—between the

\textsuperscript{15} Two critics in particular who espoused this view about the supposedly devastating impact foreign popular culture—particularly that of the United States—would have on Chile were Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart. A longer discussion of their argument can be found below.
“reproduction” and the “interruption” of aesthetic and sexual questions raised by the dictatorship’s interventions in history.

**Historical Background: Revolutionizing Reproduction, Reproducing Revolution**

The coup against Allende was just the beginning of a series of repressive actions on the part of the military. On September 11, 1973, a series of Hawker Hunter aircraft flew over La Moneda Palace and bombed it. Salvador Allende committed suicide inside the palace after an inspiring last address, which he delivered via radio. Over the course of the next seventeen years, as Peter Kornbluh (2004) puts it, “the Chilean military would be responsible for the murder, disappearance and death by torture of some 3,197 citizens—with thousands more subjected to savage abuses such as torture, arbitrary incarceration, forced exile, and other forms of state-sponsored terror” (162). Although Pinochet was only one of four members of the military junta that led the coup initially, he “moved methodically to distinguish himself from the rest of the Junta and usurp powers the coup plotters had intended to share” (Kornbluh 163): the four members were initially going to rotate the presidency of the country, but by mid- to late 1974, Pinochet held the leadership of the entire army and Chile itself. Targets of the dictatorship’s repression were held incommunicado at “approximately twenty detention camps scattered around the nation” (Kornbluh 162). The violence was hardly limited to Santiago: a group of five military officers—a “death squad”—were dispatched to travel to the northern Chilean cities of La Serena, Copiapó, Antofagasta, and Calama to “‘expedite’ justice in the cases of political prisoners—regional representatives of the [UP], mayors, police chiefs, prominent trade unionists, and civic

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16 La Moneda was eventually rebuilt, and reopened in March 1981 (Stern 176).
17 Kornbluh adds that “the U.S. intelligence community and the State Department appeared to underestimate Pinochet’s individual ruthlessness” (163), and Pinochet refers, in his memoirs, to such underestimations of him as something he repeatedly used to his advantage, as I will discuss below.
leaders” in those areas, in what became known as “La Caravana de la Muerte” (Kornbluh 163).

Meanwhile, a number of important cultural institutions were closed and affected by the dictatorship, as José Joaquín Brunner (1981) points out:

> centros universitarios…fueron clausurados después de 1973 […]. Se calcula que alrededor de un 30% de los docentes de las universidades chilenas fueron expulsados entre el 73 y el 78 […]. En el caso de la prensa y la radio el proceso ha ido más allá, puesto que todos los diarios y revistas con una orientación de izquierda fueron clausurados después del 11 de septiembre y las concesiones radiales caducadas (Brunner 82).

The dictatorship tamped down on all possible centers of dissent against its policies, with a systematic strategy of censorship¹⁸ and anti-intellectualism. This had major implications for civil society as a whole. Meanwhile, Kornbluh has shown that the American CIA was systematically complicit with the dictatorship’s human rights violations, in the sense that it was well informed about them (Kornbluh 162) and due to the fact that it collaborated with Chile’s secret police “soon after it was covertly created” (Kornbluh 168). The DINA, as this police force was known—for Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional—was notorious for its brutality, even among the other violent intelligence units in the Chilean armed forces. Agents not only coordinated and conducted interrogations, but also carried out systematic clandestine raids and arrests, while building a network of secret detention and torture centers to extract information from supporters of the former Allende government, terminate and disappear them (Kornbluh 167).

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¹⁸ In terms of censorship, Brunner points out that “el modelo cultural del autoritarismo ha venido realizándose en Chile a través de cuatro grandes conjuntos de políticas: políticas de exclusión (represión de los agentes disidentes); políticas de control (clausura del espacio público); políticas de regulación (por medio del mercado); políticas de producción (ideológico-cultural)” (81). Brunner’s work was published too early for him to make any overarching pronouncements about the way history was processed during the dictatorship, but Stern writes about how the dictatorship’s use of this apparatus of control worked in tandem with its attempts to carry out deep interventions in the country’s historical, economic, and gender narratives (see p. 170, for example). Idelber Avelar (1999) makes the connection between dictatorial control and capitalist development much more explicit: “[g]rowing commodification negates memory because new commodities must always replace previous commodities, send them to the dustbin of history. The free market established by the Latin American dictatorships must, therefore, impose forgetting not only because it needs to erase the reminiscence of its barbaric origins, but also because it is proper to the market to live in a perpetual present” (Avelar 2). Seen from the perspective of the postdictatorship, neoliberalism was almost as effective as censorship in tamping down dissent against the military regime’s policies.
When the DINA was dissolved in 1977, it was replaced by the CNI, or Centro Nacional de Informaciones. The CNI was associated with a more “modern” institutional framework more fitting to a Chile that had supposedly, by that time, stabilized itself (Stern 139)—even though secret tortures and disappearances continued. The dictatorship was a time of terrible conflict and division, and it lasted until March 11, 1990, when Patricio Aylwin finally took over as the country’s first democratically-elected president since Allende.

Just as the political repression of the dictatorship itself evolved over the course of those seventeen years, so did its ideological underpinnings. It initially received great support from Jaime Guzmán’s gremialista movement, which had formed in the Catholic University in the late sixties and early seventies in response to the leftist reforms of Frei Montalva and Allende.

Stern’s definition of gremialismo, which continues to provide the underpinnings of Chile’s most right-wing political party, is particularly clear and concise:

*gremialistas* promoted the politics of antipolitics. Professional, university, and trade associations self-identified as “guilds” (*gremios*) yearned for an organic society of nonpoliticized corporate groups, able to pursue their needs without turning into instruments of political ideology or party—and protected by authoritarian government—against the excesses of liberal democracy and professional politicians. Guzmán saw in Francisco Franco an admirable authoritarian who had saved Spain from Communism and

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19 “Cumulative political pressure” exerted upon the regime to moderate its brutality “had pushed Pinochet, too, into seeing the DINA as a liability” (Stern 139).

20 Loveman (2004) shows the extent to which Guzmán was influenced, in his framing of the 1980 Constitution, by Chile’s “tradition of ‘authoritarian liberalism’—intellectual and political efforts of achieve order and liberty, especially economic freedom guaranteed by authoritarian politics, from the time of the presidency of Manuel Montt (1851-61) to the beginning of the twenty-first century. But it was also inspired by the political theories of Carl Schmitt and Luis Sánchez Agesta, important theorists of authoritarianism and fascism in Europe” (2004: 113). Loveman’s article, particularly pp. 130-2, offers more detailed information about corporatism in Chile, particularly the struggle between corporatists and neoliberals in the dictatorship. For more information about Guzmán’s political influences, as well as about his keen abilities to negotiate between these competing flanks within the government, see Renato Cristi’s 2000 volume *El pensamiento político de Jaime Guzmán: Autoridad y libertad*, as well as Guzmán’s sister’s biography, in which she quotes a 1962 letter from her brother, written while in Spain on a school trip: “Estoy archifranquista, porque he palpado que el Generalísimo es el Salvador de España, porque me he dado cuenta la insigne personalidad que es, lo contenta que está la gente con él, lo bien que se trabaja y el progreso económico que se advierte” (R. Guzmán 80). I thank Eduardo Sabrovsky and Melissa Teixeira for offering me valuable information about corporatism.
built a conservative corporatism that worked—one that fused modernization with traditional Catholic morality, fostered liberty within order (Stern 57).

This more corporatist style of authoritarian economic management was what many military leaders, including Leigh and Air Force General Nicanor Díaz Estrada, favored when the coup first took place (Stern 142), and in fact, as Brian Loveman (2004) has pointed out, corporatism was part of what Chile used to justify itself as a model of economic management in the early to mid-20th century: “corporatist-like institutions…were blended, sometimes overtly and other times almost invisibly, with the apparently democratic institutions that made Chile ‘exceptional’ in Latin America” throughout the country’s history (Loveman 2004: 112). Slowly, however, a different kind of economic management began to gather more currency within the government, due to the increasing dominance in Pinochet’s cabinet of “Chicago Boys,” economists trained at the University of Chicago. In addition to the changes to opening up the country to foreign imports, the Chicago Boys advocated for a much smaller state in general: they “dismantled fundamental labor and social welfare rights…and turned policy making into a game of fiat by economic technicians and ideologues—not a set of options to be considered within a broader political conversation about wise social policy” (Stern 142). Over the years of the dictatorship—particularly the late seventies and early eighties, with Sergio de Castro at the helm of the Finance Ministry—Chile moved from being a model of corporatist economic management to one of neoliberalism.²¹ Jaime Guzmán’s ability to conciliate disputes between the former and the latter, aided by his ties to the Catholic University and also his belief in government by fiat rather than through democracy, meant that he was able to play a prominent role in the government

²¹ For more information about the nuts and bolts of the dictatorship’s economic policies, see “El ladrillo”: Bases de la política económica del gobierno militar chileno (1992), a publication of the Centro de Estudios Públicos (CEP) with a prologue by “Chicago Boy” de Castro, who was finance minister for the military government from 1976 to 1982.
throughout, even as its economic outlook evolved and those who advocated for corporatism gradually fell out of favor.

The neoliberalization of the Chilean economy had vast, far-reaching consequences. By 1980, these reforms included “labor flexibility to fire workers more easily and cheaply,” the transfer of state enterprises to private ownership (although CODELCO, the National Copper Company, remained public after being nationalized by Allende), and privatizations of social security, healthcare, and education (Stern 169). This led to an economic boom that lasted until 1982, and which “rendered the [dictatorship’s] rhetoric of successful modernization resonant” (Stern 170). In 1982, however, a painful economic crash was made all the more painful by an almost total lack, by that time, of any government safety net.22 By the late eighties, when the dictatorship was coming to a close, there were major debates about whether the government’s economic policies had been worth the painful adjustments in the long run, and whether they had outweighed the terror caused by its human rights violations: “Was Chile the land of [dictatorship collaborator and ‘Chicago Boy’ Joaquín] Lavín’s confident consumers23 and Pinochet’s grateful beneficiaries? Was it the land of…desperately poor people trapped in economics by and for the rich?” (Stern 371). The model of economic management that eventually became dominant in the

22 Stern elaborates: “In 1982 the gross domestic product fell a seventh (14.1 percent), and domestic demand dropped a fourth (24.1 percent). Open unemployment shot up from the already high rate of 11.3 percent to 19.6 percent […]. The lower middle class turned poor, and the poor turned indigent” (225).
23 This is a reference to Lavín’s book Chile: Revolución silenciosa. Luis Cárcamo-Huechante (2007) offers a reading of how the book served as a way to “nationalize” Chile’s incipient globalization (120-1, 126), that is, explain neoliberal reforms to popular sectors who had less of a stake in them and less knowledge about them. It also served to dissociate these changes from dictatorial policy (126)—a move that Tomás Moulián has called central to postdictatorship Chile, as shall be discussed in more depth below. Cárcamo-Huechante also highlights the religious elements of Lavín’s book (and Lavín, it should be pointed out, is an active member of Opus Dei), in which “es como si una teología y una teleología transmutara el libre mercado para dotarlo de un poder ‘milagroso,’ posibilidad de salvación de la nación” (151). In La azarosa y sobreexpuesta vida de Enrique Alekán, which I will discuss below, Fuguet makes an explicit reference to Lavín’s volume in regard to changes that take place in his life: “Esto ha sido una revolución. Y nada de silenciosa” (Fuguet 1990: 191).
country under the dictatorship not only stuck as a nodal point of the debate about the dictatorship’s effectiveness; it persists today.

The increasing pervasiveness of the marketplace in Chilean society would have a major impact on gender, as well. Brunner goes so far as to say that “el mercado viene a ocupar…el lugar central como mecanismo de coordinación de los intercambios entre los individuos” (88).

Although Brunner’s analysis excludes “la regulación de las relaciones interpersonales más íntimas” (89) from the purview of the market, the military regime was clearly interested in regulating gender within this new market-oriented logic. Nowhere was the (de)politicization of many aspects of the public sphere within the philosophy of gremialismo more clear than with the military government’s gender politics. Deploying the market and retracting the public sphere as the space in which “the most intimate interpersonal relationships” were regulated, the government managed to regulate sexuality without seeming to. In addition to how this played out in the Declaración de Principios, which advocated for certain types of reproductive sexualities within an anti-Marxist framework, even if it was conceived more within the context of corporatism than that of neoliberalism, Robles points out how the military government’s embrace of free market economics had a profound impact on sexuality:

pese al estricto control de la sexualidad que se intensificó con la militarización de la sociedad, la ideología de libre mercado permitió el surgimiento de las primeras discotecas gays y de bares topless en la capital […]. Sin embargo, aquello no significó un cambio rotundo en la postura oficial respecto al tema, sólo el reconocimiento tácito de un mercado económico (20).

24 The Declaración de Principios del Gobierno de Chile, for example, offered a discourse of economic individualism: simple, pristine, and isolated from the potentially messy interests of the “state,” a term synonymous by that time with the Marxist government that the dictatorship had recently eliminated, Chileans would be “free” to pursue the accumulation of wealth with minimal or no interference from the state. This was in line with the narrative established by the dictatorship, which “defined military intervention…as salvation from ruin and restoration of an authentic Chile” (Stern 34). Even if this narrative “did not reconcile smoothly with the idea that Chile had become a divided society, poisoned by the sowing of hatred” (Stern 35), people would be able to experience a “liberation” from the country’s supposedly subversive elements into “an austere, protective, and patriotic path which would build a new Chile on an old foundation” (Stern 58).
The mercantilization of all spheres would affect all aspects of family life, however, not just the sex trade and the gay circuit. The reference by Stern to Lavín’s “confident consumers” had implications for the way gender patterns were constructed in all homes, as Lavín triumphantly reports in his 1989 treatise *Chile, revolución silenciosa*, which, among other things, proclaims Chile to be “un país líder” (93):

> las compras en el supermercado se han transformado, para la familia, en un verdadero paseo. […] Especialmente en las tardes, y a toda hora los fines de semana, la familia entera, con el matrimonio y los hijos, va de paseo al supermercado. […] Entre tanto, el padre podrá probar los licores, papas fritas y numerosos otros productos que simpáticas jóvenes le ofrecerán en los stands de degustación (75).

This treatise, which outlines a number of ways in which the Chilean economy has “modernized” under the dictatorship—this, apparently, being the “silent” component of a much larger, bloodier, and noisier revolution—details a number of ways in which the economic reforms of the late seventies and eighties also changed the ways families interacted with one another. In keeping with the binary gender politics of the dictatorship, however, Lavín is quick to address the concerns expressed by Jaime Guzmán about encroaching foreign gender ideas, and ensures that these changes offer no threat to patriarchy and traditional family unity. The family still goes to the supermarket together, and the supermarket makes concessions to heterosexual masculinity by offering the father the diversion of *promotoras* whose drink and snack samples can distract him from the drudgery of choosing the regular groceries—his wife can take care of that. The

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25 Tamara Spira’s work on “low-intensity neoliberal conflict,” both in Chile and beyond, is key to my analysis in this sense. See, for example, her 2012 article “Neoliberal Captivities: Pisagua Prison and the Low-Intensity Form,” in which she argues that “the doctrine of low-intensity warfare comes to articulate a logic and form crucial to capitalism’s recovery and power’s diffusion in the wake of revolution—and one that…is critical for contemporary struggles for justice to reckon with. This holds particularly true in the case of Chile toward the formal end of Pinochet’s regime in 1990, when…it became clear that the dictatorship in its current form could no longer be sustained — although this logic of revolution’s co-optation as a cornerstone of neoliberal ideology and practice was certainly not unique to Chile” (129, emphases in original).

26 As the Chilean economy has become more liberalized, the trope of the supermarket has outpaced that of the *casa patronal* as a key space in which Chilean cultural production is mediated, and Lavín’s mention of this space is one of the first signs of this change. Rubí Carreño (2009) discusses this transition in further detail.
dictatorship’s implementation of neoliberalism had a major impact on gender, but its apologists never openly challenged reproductive masculinity in their economic interventions; any such challenges could be attributed to “the invisible hand,” thereby releasing Lavin, Guzmán, or any of the other functionaries of the era of any accountability. This, among many other reasons, is why it is difficult to separate the dictatorship’s political ideology from its economic policies. The impact of the country’s neoliberalization on the construction of gender is a key aspect of the interventions that the art and literature of the period made.

The dictatorship was aware of how it was being “read” abroad, and as such it was constantly concerned with its image. It desired to project itself abroad as a model of economic stability, and so it would systematically tamp down all revelations of information that could paint it in a negative light. For Stern, this “tamping down” was a battle staged largely in terms of memory, between what he calls “memory as salvation,” the dictatorship’s insistence that the September 11 coup had rescued the country from chaos and violence, on one hand, and counter-hegemonic “memory knots” (Stern 67) created by the Left to counter the official narrative, on the other. While this is true for the way the dictatorship addressed these “memory knots” within Chile, the way it projected its rhetoric beyond its borders was structured around less private ways of managing information. For example, when 119 members of the MIR were reported killed in a Brazilian newspaper in 1975, the apparatus of information control that consisted of government officials and government-friendly media tried to write it off as the result of violent infighting within the MIR (Stern 109). When Catholic-led dictatorship opposition groups managed to discredit this information, Pinochet “deployed a familiar insinuation: the political beneficiaries of human rights scandals were themselves suspect as authors of the problem. The news of the 119 dead Chileans was ‘another way…to attack us, looking always to cause damage and a bad image
of Chile” (Stern 111). Similar rhetoric followed the release of a public letter released by several “prominent,” “centrist” jurists denouncing human rights violations during a 1976 meeting in Santiago of the Organization for American States (Stern 118): Ricardo Claro,27 a prominent right-wing businessman and “Chile’s coordinator of the OAS Assembly, denounced the group. ‘To me it is a rotten thing to present this kind of document to foreigners, attacking the president of the republic and the government’” (Stern 119). The government was extremely preoccupied with the way it projected its image abroad as a “model” of stability, economic and otherwise.

This discussion of the history of the dictatorship will conclude, suitably, with a discussion of the history of the dictatorship’s interventions in history. Seemingly ever-aware of the power of history to judge their actions in the future, dictatorship ideologues worked tirelessly to manipulate the history of the period even as it was taking place to paint themselves and the regime as the epitome of “modernity.” Meanwhile, the cultural production of the period, and the literary criticism that addressed it, can be read as responses to this manipulation. Stern—whose historical analysis offers valuable insight into the increasingly blurry line between narrative and history during this period—writes about the dictatorship’s manipulation of time itself: throughout the eighties, in response to growing civic outcry against the dictatorship’s policies, Pinochet would invoke the specter of a return to the sharply divided times of the early seventies, in what Stern calls “a sense of time travel” (321). For example, “before the November 1984

27 On the other hand, Claro had no qualms with making public attacks against the images of others when he himself found it convenient. One of the most notorious moments in recent Chilean media history occurred when Claro appeared on television in 1993 and played a tape recording of then-presidential candidate (and current president) Sebastián Piñera using extremely derogatory language against Evelyn Matthei, who was also running at the time for the nomination of their party, Renovación Nacional (RN). A video of the episode, which marked the beginning of a scandal that later became known as “Piñeragate,” can be seen at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7TSVdPbElkY&fmt=18. Claro evidently wanted to undermine both their candidacies in favor of a candidate from a less liberal wing of the Right. Matthei—the daughter of a prominent Air Force general who himself supported Pinochet and who served as minister of health for a time during the dictatorship—is currently the minister of labor in Piñera’s administration. Claro died in 2008.
declaration of a state of siege Pinochet warned, ‘At any moment I can repeat the 11th of September’” (Stern 323). This constant hearkening back to the past was a way for the dictatorship to maintain a sense of urgency that justified its repression, but, as Stern has pointed out, “Pinochet’s choice of ‘Me or chaos’ was a fiction” (173). Meanwhile, institutions like the National History Museum, reopened in 1980, “followed the traditionalist mold of Great Man History (great leaders as makers of history), and glorified the military past, especially heroes of the War of the Pacific” (Stern 174, emphasis mine). The government sought to embellish the legitimacy (and the legacy) of Pinochet by equating him with the military leaders like Arturo Prat and Carlos Ibáñez del Campo, while he was still in office. These interventions in contemporary history by the dictatorship had pedagogical implications as well: a 1979 government directive mandated that Chilean schools teach history so as to “promote ‘national unity’ as it focused on the formation of nationality and peoplehood” (Stern 174), as opposed to a focus on any particular political parties or identitarian factions. The dictatorship operated with full consciousness of the place in history it sought for itself as a “modern,” “united” place, and a major aspect of its policies was the orientation of historicization accordingly.

These historical manipulations by the dictatorship were largely what writers and artists either reinforced or contested during that period. Although Brunner echoes a sentiment often shared by many literary critics who read the artistic production of the dictatorship, namely that “la intelectualidad orgánica del autoritarismo no ha logrado generar ningún movimiento

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28 This episode curiously foreshadows a more recent incident, in which the 2012 editions of some Chilean history textbooks called the Pinochet government a “military regime” instead of a “military dictatorship.” A member of the body that approved the new editions justified their decision thus: “Elizabeth Lira dijo que el cambio no es ‘relevante’ y que es legítimo considerando que el gobierno está conformado en un 50 por ciento por ‘gente que era partidaria de Pinochet’” (El Mostrador, January 4, 2012).

ideológico o cultural significativo nacionalmente, con excepción, tal vez, de la difusión de una concepción autoritaria del mundo centrada en torno a la ideología del mercado” (93), the dictatorship was actually quite a productive time for art and literature. Many critics have focused on the postdictatorship as a time in which critics reckoned retrospectively with the art and literature of the dictatorship—and by extension, its history—but given the dictatorship’s interventions in history as it was taking place, it is important to also focus on the ways in which literary and artistic creation took place in a more immediate response to these interventions. Although much of the work produced in Chile during the dictatorship has been largely ignored by critics—whether due to a lack of knowledge about it or to the prioritizing of work perceived to be more “important” to the canon—a focus exclusively on it offers a new way of “historicizing” the period.

(Mis)appropriating the Historical and Sexual Lineages of Dictatorship

Under Chile’s dictatorship, the regime insisted upon espousing a narrative of modernization and “progress.” This was particularly true in the run-up to the adoption of the Constitution, when Pinochet officially projected his government forward indefinitely. He saw

30 The issue of the dictatorship’s literary and cultural “canon” is best analyzed in retrospect, however, and in the following chapter I will draw connections between postdictatorship notions of memory and mourning like those of Avelar (1999), on one hand, and canon formation by such critics (and writers) as Eugenia Brito (1990), Michael Lazzara (2002), Pedro Lemebel (1996), and Roberto Bolaño (1996), on the other.

31 Stern offers a number of interesting discussions of literary and artistic creation during the dictatorship, such as the ICTUS Theater Collective (Stern 308 and 331) and autobiographies by Carlos Prats (310) and Pinochet himself (174). I will discuss the Pinochet autobiography below, but not ICTUS; for an interesting reading of ICTUS, along with the work of Juan Radrigán, another Chilean playwright from the dictatorship period, see Rodrigo Cánovas’ Lihn, Zurita, ICTUS, Radrigán: Literatura chilena y experiencia autoritaria (1986).

himself as a figure positioned in the context of modernity, who had established a “new dawn” of order and was now saddled with the “obligation” to project this order into the future. At this moment in time, then, an acceptance of a historical discourse of modernity and progress for Chile meant embracing the market, not to mention the authoritarian aspects of dictatorship. In response, literary and cultural criticism took a de-historicizing, anti-chronological turn. This was a way of countering narratives of foundation, continuity, and progress that had been part of the dictatorship’s discourse since Leigh’s incendiary words the night of the coup, in which he promised that the revolution that the military had instituted would be projected into the future, to its “final consequences.” This aesthetic and critical debate between the progression of modernity, on one hand, and the anti-teleological denial of modernity, on the other, is a useful way of looking at Chilean cultural production during the dictatorship; this debate took on gendered dimensions as well.

The military government was waging a rhetorical war as much as a physical one, and cultural criticism took it to task: dictatorial discourses of “purity,” “perpetuation,” and of course “modernity” would run up against the rhetoric of “ending” and “interruption” common to postmodern thought. Frederic Jameson (1991) outlined postmodernity—in an evident response to Marshall Berman—as “an attempt to think the present historically in an age that has forgotten how to think historically in the first place,” and “what you have when the modernization process

33 The appropriation of the logic of the modern by those complicit with dictatorship continued long after the dictatorship ended, as Michael Lazzara (2006) has pointed out. Discussing a 2003 initiative by Pablo Longueira, a member of the UDI (a political party that counts many former dictatorship collaborators among its members), to put an “end” to controversial invocations of Chile’s violent past and “move forward” towards a more “peaceful” future, Lazzara writes that Longueira “recommended, in the interest of national reconciliation, that all pending court cases against military officials be closed, that the 1978 Amnesty Law be applied, and that the government make reasonable financial reparations to the families [of the disappeared] to help heal their wounds. His ‘La Paz Ahora’ [Peace Now] proposal not only hoped to establish a definitive political solution to the human rights problem, thus freeing his party from the pinochetista stigma that historically had been attached to it, but also to renovate the UDI’s image and place the political right in better electoral position for the 2006 presidential race” (Lazzara 2006: 21).
is complete and nature is gone for good” (ix). In fact, for Jameson, postmodernism is closely intertwined with “late capitalism” (1991: xviii), and with a discourse of “ending” (Jameson 1990: xii), or loss of progression. The complicated rhetorical maneuvers the dictatorship had to undergo in order to justify its economic and gender politics within the framework of modernity coincided roughly with the rise of postmodernity in cultural criticism, which involved similar discursive somersaults. Although conceived as a refutation of the dictatorship’s rhetoric of modernity—at least as espoused in Chile—postmodernism found itself in the same kind of rhetorical double binds the dictatorship did. As a “return to narrative as the narrative of the end of narratives, this return of history in the midst of a prognosis of the demise of historical telos” (Jameson 1991: xii), postmodernism played an important role in helping to critique the narratives of historical progress espoused by the dictatorship, but its suspicion of such narratives undermined its attempts to establish new ones of its own. This is in line with what Yúdice has written about postmodern thought: because it is such a diffuse idea, its only specificity lies “in the rethinking of how modernity has been represented, how alternative sciences, morals, and aesthetics, as well as different sociocultural formations, have all contributed to the constitution of modern life” (7). This debate would prove quite productive for artists, critics, and writers living and creating in Chile in the late seventies and eighties.

The clearest way to think about the disputes over Chile’s historical narratives is to start at the beginnings of those narratives. For Hannah Arendt (1961), traditions are forged in the context of successful revolutions, even if that means previous traditions are destroyed. In this way, Arendt continues, the most conservative traditions often have their root in the most radical

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34 Jameson defines “late capitalism” as a time of both “a tendential web of bureaucratic control” and “the interpenetration of government and big business…such that Nazism and the New Deal are related systems” (1991: xviii).
revolutions, and revolutions—even the most groundbreaking and rupturist among them—often immediately seek to establish staid traditions upon which to justify their legitimacy and project themselves forward in perpetuity. The two phenomena, for Arendt, are thus inseparable, despite the fact that they seemingly contradict one another:

…the revolutions of the modern age appear like gigantic attempts to repair these foundations, to renew the broken thread of tradition, and to restore, through founding new political bodies, what for so many centuries had endowed the affairs of men with some measure of dignity and greatness (140, emphasis mine).

Arendt places tradition in a more modernist, historicist framework, in which historical narratives, and the “foundations” of political traditions—themselves products of revolutions past—are under constant bombardment from newer revolutions. Arendt points out that revolution is thus a cyclical phenomenon as much as it is one of “the modern age,’’35 in which something that may constitute a signpost for the “dignity and greatness” of tradition for one political subject could, for another, stand as target for revolutionary rupture. Yúdice points out that Octavio Paz held similar beliefs, understanding “modernity in relation to the ‘tradición de ruptura y ruptura de tradición’” (18), and Yúdice’s critique of Paz’s “nostalgic aspiration for a return to unalienated modes of life” (18-19) could very well be extended to Arendt’s work. Despite its complications, however, Arendt offers a productive way to begin to think about the “lineages” of historical traditions under discussion here.

The idea of revolution is thus a key lightning rod for my analysis of aesthetic responses to the historicizing narrative(s) of the dictatorship, because the “traditions” in which the military

35 This tension between circularity and progression is a key nodal point in discussions of “modernity,” particularly as they have related to Latin American cultural studies. As Ericka Beckman (2012) has pointed out in regard to Gabriel García Márquez’s 1967 novel Cien años de soledad, “[t]he novel’s circularity is frequently interpreted as belonging to the order of myth, in opposition to the progressive-linear logic of modernity; what this reading doesn’t recognize, however, is that progressive-linear logic already contains elements of circularity and myth. In terms of material history, Giovanni Arrighi notes, the time of capital is one of ‘discontinuous change,’ wherein repeating cycles of growth and crisis are much more typical than progressive development” (148).
government (and the governments that followed it, in the opinion of Tomás Moulián (1997)\textsuperscript{36}) intervened when seeking to establish or perpetuate the country’s capitalist “revolution” are the very same traditions that postmodernists seek to interrupt, in the name of a different kind of revolution. These traditions also become the “models” to which the dictatorship (not to mention Moulián’s concept of “Chile Actual”) appealed in order to justify and promote its (modernist) narrative of historical exceptionalism, in Chile and abroad. For Moulián, however, the origins to which Chile’s dictatorship referred when justifying and promoting itself are nothing but empty forms, devoid of any actual function, and as such, the “revolution” it sought to institutionalize and project into the future is illegitimate. For example, he writes about the legal framework used by the military government to justify its repressive actions:

> el derecho se fundaba en procedimientos absolutamente formales, autonomizados de toda fuente de legitimidad…la capacidad de legislar de concentra en un “aparato” de las [Fuerzas Armadas] y no en un poder estatal diferenciado…el saber teórico, orientado a guiar las opciones políticas, no funcionaba como sistema de proposiciones confrontables sino como sistema dogmático, como ortodoxia (Moulián 171).

Moulián’s analysis deconstructing the myths of origin of the dictatorial “revolution” has proven extremely useful for thinking about resisting the dictatorship’s will to project those origins forward in time, while a more Arendtian, historicist perspective on this particular “revolution” offers the possibility of closely examining and critiquing the origins that sought to form the

\textsuperscript{36} Sociologist Tomás Moulián’s \textit{Chile actual: anatomía de un mito} is the most important economic and sociological analysis of Chile’s dictatorship to date. In it, he points out the extent to which the Chile of 1997 was the product of the economic policies of the dictatorship, despite attempts by “militares, intelectuales neoliberales y empresarios nacionales o transnacionales” (18) to mask this fact. Moulián deconstructs the rhetoric of Chilean exceptionalism as a “simulation” (30) and as a forgetting (“olvido”) (18) of something much more sinister. Seeking to dispel attempts to whitewash these origins of today’s Chile (“Chile Actual,” in his terms), Moulián undoes triumphalist historical narratives that try to construct a seamless transition from dictatorship to postdictatorship: the dictatorship’s interruption of democracy, he states, opened up the discursive field for many more interruptions in historical narratives that have sought to pass themselves off as coherent and “modern.” The narrative of apparent “progress” that “Chile Actual” creates for itself, Moulián argues, is actually the product of a disruption that changed the country profoundly and permanently: “El Chile Actual proviene de una revolución capitalista y de una duradera dictadura revolucionaria de ese tipo. […] A esto hay que agregar, además, el peso de una ideología, la de la necesidad de una revolución” (24). Eduardo Sabrovsky (2010) writes in more detail about how fraught the concept of “revolution” is for Chilean thought, particularly in light of Moulián’s analysis.
beginning of that “thread” of dictatorial tradition. On one hand, postmodern thought has consistently denied the possibility of a revolution having a “pure” origin, and thus tends to dismiss origins outright as part of its suspicion of tradition in general; to critique the origins of dictatorship is to critique the models of economics and gender that its cultural production sought to perpetuate. On the other hand, the logic of modernity takes the idea of origins more at face value; while this can result in an unproblematic embrace of dictatorship, as critiqued by Moulián and others, it allows for an examination of why those origins held so much currency at the time. Since the ways in which the cultural production of the time grappled with these origins lie at the heart of my analysis, these dueling views about the historicism of the dictatorship are key to understanding the debate about its legitimacy.

These continual attempts by the military dictatorship to “legitimize” itself by simulating a rule of law and instituting drastic economic changes by force—all in the name of “modernity”—are curiously related to non-reproductive (queer) sexuality and its inability (or refusal) to reproduce and perpetuate itself (in the name of “postmodernity”). Moulián, Yúdice, and Jean Baudrillard (1994) all draw important parallels among the historical, economic, aesthetic, and/or sexual aspects of dictatorial “traditions” as they question or deconstruct their projection into the future. In Simulacrum and Simulation, Baudrillard dismisses the myths of origin that lie at the heart of revolutions not only as simulacrum and simulation—which he defines as something “never exchanged for the real, but exchanged for itself, in an uninterrupted circuit without reference or circumference” (6)—but also as so much masculinist, patriarchal posturing. Baudrillard asserts that the goals of simulacra have the tendency to dovetail with those of revolutionary discourse, because “the era of simulation is inaugurated by a liquidation of all referentials […] It is a question of substituting the signs of the real for the real” (2). He does
recognize the desire for models upon which to project traditions forward, but he critiques this
desire as part of a larger obsession with capitalist accumulation: “[w]e require a visible past, a
visible myth of origin, which reassures us about our end. Because finally we have never believed
in them” (10). Critiquing archaic currents in anthropology and archaeology, such as Egyptology,
related to the preservation of the past as a way of “othering” and objectifying ancient cultures,
Baudrillard adds that

[t]he West is seized with panic at the thought of not being able to save what the symbolic
order had been able to conserve for forty centuries, but out of sight and far from the light
of day. Ramses does not signify anything for us, only the mummy is of inestimable worth
because it is what guarantees that accumulation has meaning (9-10).

This desire for “pure” originals is a western obsession, which in addition to being rooted in
imperialist traditions, is also embedded in capital. The invocation of simulacrum and simulation,
then, is a way of critiquing these threads of tradition as inventions by those whose interests are
vested in propping up oppressive and unequal ideas about capitalist accumulation. It is likely
because of this that Baudrillard concludes his introduction by asserting that “this situation will no
doubt end up giving rise to socialism” (26, emphasis in original). Yúdice puts this in a more
moderate way when he works to dissociate modernity from state projects that seek it out at the
cost of indigenous Latin American traditions:

…modernization, that is, the eradication of traditions whose “enchanted” or “auratic”
modes of life may prove inimical to coexistence with others or to the projects of elites
and their allies. The problem is, of course, that modernization has severely handicapped
many groups who hold to these traditions. And the problems have only gotten worse with
the turn to the right under the aegis of neoconservatism (23).

Yúdice’s analysis can be extended to avant-garde projects in Chile, such as the ones under
discussion in this chapter, whose discourses of anti-modernity (not to mention of
“postmodernity”) were as political and economic as they were identitarian. Baudrillard’s,
Moulián’s, and Yúdice’s methodologies are similar in the sense that their respective critiques of
“modern” tradition are rooted in a suspicion of the capitalist projects of elites, but also in a questioning of the logic of patriarchal lineage (reproduction) itself.

In fact, a number of parallels can be drawn between capitalist “revolutions” that take place in the context of “modernity” and the masculinist obsession with origins and legacy. Baudrillard’s concern with perpetuation and reproduction becomes apparent in his discussion of totalitarian dictatorships in Europe and China:

Hitler, Franco, Mao, having no “legitimate” heirs, no filiation of power, see themselves forced to perpetuate themselves indefinitely—popular myth never wishes to believe them dead. […] Everything happens as if Mao or Franco had already died several times and had been replaced by his double. […] No one would grant the least consent, the least devotion to a real person. It is to his double, he being always already dead, to which allegiance is given (25-26, emphases in original).

Drawing an important link between the economic and gendered aspects of simulacrum and simulation, Baudrillard makes the case that “real” origins and the simulation of those origins are often undistinguishable from one another, and that attempts to project totalitarian regimes forward in history—within the logic of modernity, as discussed above—are often based on falsified claims of paternity. Meanwhile, Moulián also uses a gendered metaphor to explain the dictatorship’s falsifications of its origins: “[l]lamo ‘transformismo’ a las operaciones que en el Chile Actual se realizan para asegurar la reproducción de la ‘infraestructura’ creada durante la dictadura, despojada de las molestas formas, de las brutales y de las desnudas ‘superestructuras’ de entonces” (Moulián 145). The term transformismo in Spanish refers, in Moulián’s work, to how Chile’s democratic governments and other actors worked to mask the dictatorial origins of the economic policies of the 1990s, “transforming” Chile into a more palatable “model” of economic management; however, transformismo is also the word used (in Chile, at least) for cross-dressing or drag. Moulián’s use of this particular term to demarcate Chile’s transition to democracy, as opposed to another one like “simulation” or gatopardismo (which he uses to flesh
out his definition of *transformismo*), is likely meant to disqualify the ability of “Chile Actual” to project itself forward by examining it in sexual terms. These ideas about “legitimacy” (Baudrillard) and *transformismo* (Moulián) are useful ways of thinking about the incursion of dictatorial politics and economics into Chile’s reproductive arena.

By projecting an aura abroad of the country as both a “model” capitalist economy and a faithful copy of capitalist regimes like that of the US, the dictatorship entered into a dynamic of “reproduction.” This was related to its discourse of family unity, as Robert Neustadt (1995) has pointed out:

Nuclear families were to support the great “national family,” *la patria*, as directed by Pinochet, the father figure purportedly serving the will of God. The *discurso pinochetista* deployed the image of the ideal woman within the symbolism of the Catholic church, the Madonna, in order to (re)produce *la patria* (220).

Modernity, then, was also a very gendered discourse, as far as the dictatorship was concerned. An example of this comes in Pinochet’s own memoir, *The Crucial Day* (1982). In it, in contrast to descriptions of Allende as effeminate and decadent—“wrapped…in blue cloak with a blood-red lining and a wide fur collar….as though Mephistopheles himself had come” (Pinochet 105)—Pinochet paints himself as a father figure, protective of Chile. Another anecdote in the memoir is particularly telling in this sense. Just two days before the coup—to which the book refers, of course, as a “pronouncement”—was Pinochet’s daughter Jacqueline’s birthday. The party provides a pretext for the conspirators to meet: “In the evening several guests came, whom no one could accuse of plotting, since they were coming to celebrate my daughter’s birthday” (Pinochet 114). In effect, Pinochet’s position as patriarch and paterfamilias offers him the perfect alibi to plan the coup in his study with Leigh. Later, “[w]hen I returned to the living room someone enquired about so many military guests, and I answered my daughter was receiving many gifts that day. My calm demeanor and the birthday celebration allayed any suspicion”
The coup—to Pinochet, both a “modernization” and a return to Chile’s traditional origins—is thus firmly rooted in the reproductive arena; Allende’s libertinage has gone far enough. By replacing the bloody origin of its “revolution” with one of “whitewashed” (Moulián 18), patriarchal legitimacy, the dictatorship’s vision of Chile’s modernity allowed both for reproductions of images of reproductive masculinity imported (sometimes from abroad, but not always) and then passed off as “original” and projected forward, and also for an erasure of previous “models” of masculinity in discord with the new origins it wanted to project forward.

While Arendtian thought takes the idea of a revolutionary idea (or regime) having a coherent myth of origin at face value as part of a larger “metanarrative” of national (or economic) tradition, postmodernity posits that the myths of origin at the heart of these traditions are often false, and therefore undermine the entire traditions. The perceived authenticity or falsehood of these origins is key: masking origins while simulating new ones, the tactics of the dictatorship show that the projection of historical narratives into the future can be effective—brutally so. Postmodernity’s advocacy for the deconstruction of any simulacra of “pure” origins can thus offer an important antidote. In fact, Nelly Richard (1986) has pointed out that the Escena de avanzada, to which Leppe belonged, did just that:

…in their reformulation of the signs that pertained to art, the avanzada had to revise every expedient of verification, they had to deconstruct every artifice of representation serving tradition and its slight of hand. The tradition which they inherited fraudulently resurrected the past for the sole purpose of founding an origin and continuity for current social practice. Thus it was necessary to contest what seemed definitive for this tradition (18).

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In this sense, Yúdice’s description of Paz’s ideas of modernity are particularly apropos; this is not to say, however, that Paz—an avowed supporter of democracy—would have ever supported Pinochet’s coup.
Indeed, as Yúdice argues, “debates on postmodernity are often about the possibilities for establishing a democratic culture” (9): the avanzada sought to democratize art and complicate the representations of modernity put forth by the (decidedly anti-democratic) dictatorship.

On the other hand, however, postmodernity can end up being complicit in dictatorship, since both it and neoliberal dictatorship have their origins in the same breakdown of historicist frameworks: the dictatorship “[f]ue la resultante indirecta de la afirmación de la crisis de los ‘grandes relatos’ que pertenecían todos a una episteme historicista […]. El socavamiento de esa razón historicista abrió espacios para…el pensar neoliberal” (Moulián 199). The ambiguities of postmodernism, particularly as they relate to Latin America, were perhaps best captured by the work of Santiago Colás (1994), who was aware of the problematic implications of imposing ideas about postmodernity, an “unsatisfactorily homogenizing term,” on the cultural practices and “heterogeneous local forms” (17) of Latin America. Colás states that “the most suggestive Latin American contributions to the postmodernism debate” have been “a rhetoric of impurity” (Colás 11, emphasis mine), undoing dualistic distinctions between “modernization and dependency theory” (Colás 12), “‘metropolis’ and ‘satellite’” (Colás 13), and—most importantly—the fact that “the real operation of those economies misleadingly designated…as ‘free market’ or ‘state planned’” has been freshly examined to reveal that no such pure economies have existed in the postwar era” (Colás 13). How, then, to use postmodernity to (re)establish a “thread” of anti-dictatorial tradition, and then project it forward without complicity with the modernity-oriented discourse of dictatorship, was evidently a concern for

38 Moulián’s mention of the end of history’s “grandes récits” is a reference to Jean-François Lyotard’s (1984) famous definition of postmodernism as “incredulity toward metanarratives” (xxiv). This is a definition that Jameson critiques, even as he confesses to having used it, stating that those supposed “master narratives” are “eschatological schemata that were never really narratives in the first place, although I may also have been incautious enough to use the expression from time to time” (xi).

39 In this sense, corporatism (which Colás does not discuss) could be the most “postmodern” economic model of all, in Latin American terms, as a “third way” between capitalist and state-planned economies.
Colás. His concept of “postmodern politics,” which he calls “the formal articulation of this tension between local difference and global totality” (18), is a way of addressing how to think historically in a way that takes into account the best of both modernity and postmodernity. This rhetorical somersault was similar to that experienced by the dictatorship in Chile, which invoked patriotism to decry supposed foreign interventions in its economy while eliminating tariffs, importing foreign goods (and ideas about economic management), and requesting investment; eliminated democracy while simultaneously attacking the left for supposedly planning to do the same; attacked homosexuals while allowing for the importation of first-world models of gay masculinity; and praised women while also restricting their roles in the public sphere. Curiously, then, postmodernity both allows for and discredits the ideas of “purity” that underlie the ideas that came about under the aegis of the dictatorship’s “revolution” of economic accumulation and investment, with corresponding ambiguities for both reproductive masculinity and aesthetic production, as we shall see below.

*El Charles Bronson chileno: Reproduction and/as “Originality”*

Carlos Flores’ 1984 documentary *El Charles Bronson chileno,* also known as *Idénticamente igual,* was one of the only films to be produced in Chile during the dictatorship, and stands in contrast to critical preconceptions, outlined above, that the dictatorship was a time in which cultural production was defunct. The film offers a profile of a man named Fenelón Guajardo López, who achieved some semblance of fame in Chile—including appearances in an advertising campaign for Wrangler jeans—because of his resemblance to the American movie

[40 This is evidently an answer to Jameson. To quote Colás at length: “One response to Jameson’s work might then be to confront his projected concept of global totality with the details of various local forms of cultural politics. In this way, certain global categories within Jameson’s model (or other global models of postmodernity) can be provisionally rewritten with greater flexibility to assist us in understanding and articulating the heterogeneous forms of resistance culture functioning around the world today” (18).]
star Charles Bronson. Far from standing as a testament to the end of Chilean cultural production and an unmitigated invasion of foreign mass culture, however, the film was borne out of a cultural ferment that has received very little critical attention. Although dictatorial repression had a devastating impact on the departments of humanities and social sciences at the University of Chile, a more low-profile group of humanities academics at that university were largely spared, due to their less militant (although still leftist) political stances. Carlos Flores, despite being a member of the MIR, moved in these circles; so did a number of participants in *La escena de avanzada*, which will be examined below and which has received much more attention from literary and cultural critics than the work of Flores and his immediate contemporaries (such as Jorge Guzmán and Enrique Lihn, to name but a few). Lihn and Jorge Guzmán, meanwhile, were affiliated with the Departamento de Estudios Humanísticos, which had been created by Cristián Huneeus within the University of Chile’s (much less “subversive”) Facultad de Ingeniería. The department was home to a number of other important artists and critics who ended up not going into exile, including Nicanor Parra, Lihn, Patricio Marchant, and Ronald Kay; Diamela Eltit, Eugenia Brito, and Raúl Zurita began their careers there as well, the first two as students and the latter as an affiliated artist. In fact, far from being a place where culture was dead, Chile in the late seventies and eighties was a place of debate, creativity, and dissent, if fairly veiled.

An example of this budding cultural scene can be found in a 1984 article written by Lihn for *Cauce*, a magazine aimed at challenging the supremacy of the dictatorial news apparatus. In it, Lihn describes a “happening” of sorts in which a number of artists in Chile at the time, including painters Gracia Barros and Patricia Israel, came together to commemorate the death of the month before of Johnny Weismüller, the actor who had played Tarzan in twelve of Edgar Rice Burroughs’ films. Lihn states that “podía ser un ‘punto de unión de todos los chilenos’ contra la dictadura (Tanzán tuvo la suerte de dominar a los gorilas)...y como denuncia irónica de la inserción de imágenes..."
opposed to critics who have glossed over *El Charles Bronson chileno* as one of the few exceptions to the “rule” their articles concentrate on, namely Chilean films created in exile (Schumann 1979: 13, Pick 1987: 15-6, King 1997: 409 and 416), it is my contention that Flores’ film is one of a select number of works of Chilean art created within the country during the dictatorship that were able to avoid the pitfalls of the aesthetic derivativeness that reigned in a dictatorship that celebrated imported mass culture (Berríos 293) and achieved some semblance of originality. In fact, as was common for cultural production during this and other repressive times and places, *El Charles Bronson chileno* makes a number of delicate maneuvers, navigating between parody and documentary, between Left and Right, between the historical temporalities of modernity and postmodernity, and between the notoriety of its central character and the erasure and effacement of itself as a work of art. Its precarious production values mirror the precarious line it treads between the reproduction of US mass culture and the “inventive potential of imitation,” as María Berríos (2009) calls it (292): a flirtation with reproduction which, as I will show, would also have implications for the ways normative sexualities were mediated at the time.

From Sarmiento to Martí to Borges, Latin American critics, writers, and artists have been debating about a uniquely “Latin American” literary and cultural tradition for centuries, particularly in light of the images such traditions project abroad; their concerns are evidently shared by Flores. Carlos Alonso’s 1990 study of the costumbrista novels of early 20th century Latin America, to which I referred briefly in Chapter 1, makes a key intervention in these questions by examining the tension between the desire for the cultural production of that period to be essentially “Latin American” (Alonso uses the term “autochthonous”) and the fact that “the

hollywoodenses en el ‘inconsciente colectivo’ latinoamericano” (32). Flores made a film of the event, and there are several images of it published in conjunction with Lihn’s article.
absence of particular cultural traits identified as such in a text...could provide the strongest evidence of autochthonous production” (3, emphasis in original), and therefore, “modernity.”

This concept becomes all the more contradictory in light of the fact that when a text (or any product) that displays essentially and uniquely “autochthonous” characteristics is subject to export—and in the context of (neo)liberalism, a country exploits its comparative advantage(s) by exporting a product it can reasonably expect to be competitive in the global marketplace, as stated in the 1992 text Bases de la política económica del gobierno militar chileno (78-82)—that text, or product, trades on precisely those autochthonous characteristics to distinguish itself in that marketplace. In fact, it is a desirable product abroad (or at least it hopes to be) because of its uniqueness and autochthony, and ideally this desirability will translate into profits for its vendors, and, by extension, into economic prosperity (and modernity) for their country. The aspects of a text or a product that make it autochthonous cannot be explicitly named or “brought to consciousness”—to examine such aspects that “by definition can only exist in...absence” would be to undermine them, according to Alonso (3)—but they are what give it currency in the global marketplace. Indeed, this is likely why the essayist Francisco Mouat included a 2004 profile of the “Chilean Charles Bronson” in his 2011 compilation of profiles of “famous” Chileans entitled Chilenos de raza. Most of the personalities profiled in his collection have, in some offbeat way, brought (or tried to bring) international distinction to Chile for their “Chileanness”: for example, Jenaro Gajardo Vera, who took out a title deed to be owner of the moon, or Leontina Espinoza (the only woman profiled in a notably masculinist line-up), who

43 In his introduction, Alonso cites Jorge Luis Borges’ text El escritor argentino y la tradición, which famously stated that the Koran was authentically “autochthonous” text because of its lack of gauche cultural references like camels, as evidence of this.

44 Oftentimes, a product only becomes desirable for domestic consumption after distinguishing itself as properly “unique” when being traded abroad: in literary terms, José Donoso’s and Pedro Lemebel’s work are evidence of this; perhaps a more commercial counterpart for this argument would be Carmenère wine, which went unnoticed in Chile until French connoisseurs began buying it.
sought a place for herself in the Guinness Book of World Records for supposedly having given birth to close to fifty children, all by the same man (this turned out to be an exaggeration, and she was duly expelled from the Guinness Book). Fenelón, meanwhile, became famous on Don Francisco’s television show Sábados Gigantes in 1975 for his physical likeness to the US film actor Charles Bronson—a product for export that would hopefully make a name for Chile (just like Don Francisco, Mario Kreutzberger, and Sábados Gigantes itself, which is now beamed via satellite from Miami to all of Spanish-speaking America). As with Pablo Larraín’s 2008 film Tony Manero, in which a character named Raúl Peralta seeks to win a television contest seeking lookalikes of Tony Manero (the name of John Travolta’s emblematic character in John Badham’s 1977 film Saturday Night Fever), Fenelón achieves fame for his likeness to an icon of US popular culture in the context of a dictatorship that allowed for the mass importation of John Travolta and Charles Bronson films. “Creía que lo habían importado [a Chile],” says a woman who observes Fenelón walking down the street in Flores’ documentary, “como ahora que todo es importado.” In terms of the Chilean economy, Fenelón is both the antithesis of autochthony and also a source of pride for his compatriots who see him triumphing (possibly abroad) and making a name for their country.

This tension between “autochthonous Chileanness” and the “invasion” of mass culture was explored broadly around this time, particularly before the coup. Among the many critics to express concern about this “invasion,” as Berrios points out, were Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart, whose 1972 book Para leer al Pato Donald: Comunicación de masa y colonialismo uses Disney cartoons as an example of an example of a type of popular culture “donde la burguesía industrial puede imponer sus leyes a todas las actitudes y aspiraciones de los demás sectores…utilizando ideológicamente el sector terciario de la actividad económica como utopía,
como proyección sentimental, como único futuro” (Dorfman and Mattelart 133-4). Later, once the coup hit, US popular culture became (for better or for worse) not only the “official culture” of the dictatorship (Berrios 293), but also a way for “working-class Chileans [to]…retreat from the realities of life under dictatorship into fantasies of other lives and other identities,” as Jonathan Romney (2009) has pointed out in a review of Tony Manero for Sight & Sound (46).

Larraín, meanwhile, calls the Chile in which both his film and El Charles Bronson chileno take place a society whose hands are covered in blood, but which tries to look stylish and trendy, dancing under the flashy lights while ignoring the suffering of others. A country that turns its back on itself in exchange for the dream of progress. […] But attaining this modernity—moving up the social scale—is impossible (Larraín 2009: 47).

Larraín’s argument is similar to that of Alonso’s: the lack of “autochthony” in Chile that Tony Manero portrays is what prevents it from achieving true “modernity.” Berrios, however, offers another take on this issue in her discussion of Lihn’s avant-garde novel Batman en Chile (1974), El Charles Bronson chileno, and the “happening” Adiós a Tarzán. Her discussion contrasts the ideas of Dorfman and Mattelart (whom she calls “paternalistas” and “casi mesiánicos” (292)) about the invasion of US mass culture with the “potencial inventivo de la imitación” (292) offered by the three works she analyzes. She goes on to argue for the originality of El Charles Bronson chileno, which she calls “un experimento conductista sobre la subjetividad, la continuidad del yo y la pérdida de identidad” (293, emphasis mine). By emphasizing the experimental, avant-garde nature of Flores’ film, Berrios is able to make a case for its originality and autochthony. Like Raúl Peralta in Tony Manero (Figure 24), Fenelon is both an imitator and an original: a specimen that could only exist in the context of the Pinochet dictatorship, but someone who has only become famous because he looks like a member of the US industrial film
complex that has filled Chilean movie theaters to such capacity that there is little room for the exhibition of domestic film productions.\(^{45}\)

![Figure 24.](image)

This tension between the autochthonous and the derivative has implications for Fenelón’s performance of masculinity, as well. The film arcs from Fenelón’s descriptions of his experiences fighting and getting into danger, to his description of how he wants to make a movie portraying some of these experiences; the film ends with a sequence, directed by Fenelón himself, of the kind of action movie that he feels Chile needs. Fenelón’s cinematic ideal is one of both mass consumption (resulting, of course, in economic success) and also one in which the violent aspects of normative masculinity are prominent:

Me gustaría…realizar un cine positivo, en bien de nuestra patria…[para] que nos admiren en el mundo. Cine a nivel internacional, no a nivel casero. […] Y que el mercado sea más grande: si nuestro mercado es chico, bueno, se va a agradar porque la admiración va a venir de afuera, y van a solicitar esa cinta…donde esté mezclado lo fuerte con los temas románticos y los temas tiernos […]. Quiero llamar la atención. […] Porque en el fondo somos…sádicos, crueles, nos gusta la violencia […].

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\(^{45}\) In the only existing review of *El Charles Bronson chileno* written the year it came out—a short piece in *La Segunda*, an afternoon daily owned by *El Mercurio*—Italo Passalacqua laments the lack of infrastructure to support local Chilean films, referring to “los problemas típicos de un medio que…no posee una legislación acorde con las necesidades” (27): ChileFilms had been dismantled shortly after the coup, as had the Center for Experimental Cinema (for more information see Salinas and Stange (2008), particularly pp. 141-4). In 1984, the film was shown, for one night only, at EspacioCal, which is not an actual movie theater but rather more of a performance/gallery space. Berrios’ article brought my attention to Passalacqua’s review, whose existence I would have never known about otherwise.
In this long disquisition (Figure 25), Fenelón calls for the creation and export of Chilean films that are copies of foreign ones, and makes the case that violent US action films—Charles Bronson’s 1974 film *Death Wish* is one such exemplar (see Figure 26)—are actually essentially Chilean because of his compatriots’ affinity for sadism and violence (an ironic assertion in light of the sadistic, violent dictatorship currently in power). By appropriating both notions about the economics of the global entertainment industry and foreign models of masculinity, Fenelón’s performance (both in the cinematic and gendered senses of the word) is what distinguishes him publicly as a man and as a product for export. His appropriation of the foreign is, paradoxically, the very thing that makes him autochthonous and unique.

![Image](image.png)

*Figure 25.*

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46 Earlier in the film, Fenelón’s manager Juan Meza makes this intention explicit: he and Fenelón are working on a television program to “difundir el arte chileno fuera de nuestras fronteras,” and have already put out a recording in Argentina as proof of their intention to encourage “intercambio cultural.”

47 Far from being oblivious to the violence dictatorship, Fenelón was acutely aware of it, even though he makes no explicit reference to the regime in Flores’ film. In Mouat’s text, however, he is much more forthcoming: “…usted debe saber que Charles Bronson a mí me salvó la vida. […] Pero usted no se confunda, porque yo no tengo nada que ver con política. Resulta que una noche me quedé fuera de mi departamento en el centro…pero estaba todo cerrado porque había toque de queda…y de lejos veo a un grupo de militares y uno de ellos me dice: *Alto, ahí, conchatumadre, párate, huevón…* y yo obedezco…y entonces ahí yo le dije señor, *yo soy el doble de Charles Bronson, el de los programas de Don Francisco.* […] Y el tipo saca el carnet y ve: Fenelón Guajardo. ‘Fenelón, te pedimos disculpas, pucha, Fenelón, amigo,’ y se me acerca un milico…y me vuelve a pedir perdón. […] Por eso digo que a mí me salvó Charles Bronson, a él le debo la vida, porque yo iba a ser fusilado” (262-3, italics in original). The sole fact that Fenelón had been the impersonator of Charles Bronson was enough to completely excuse his violation of the curfew—proof of the extent of the dictatorship’s official celebration of the importation of US mass culture.
The existential irony of Fenelón’s words is that they are heard not in a film to be distributed as widely as, say, *Death Wish*, but rather in a film that went straight to video and was shown publicly for one night only and not even in a real movie theater; Flores’s film walks a thin line between irony and earnestness in its portrayal of Fenelón. *Tony Manero*, which was exhibited much more widely (including at Cannes, the Toronto Film Festival, and BAFICI) and brought widespread attention to a Chilean film industry that experienced an upswing in productions in the first decade of the 21st century, comes much closer to Fenelón’s ideal of a uniquely Chilean film that reflects the influx of foreign ideas and capital that the dictatorship wrought. In fact, the oscillation between irony and earnestness in Flores’ film is constant. On one hand, the final vignette of *El Charles Bronson chileno*, the film-within-a-film in which Flores and his crew give Fenelón carte blanche to make his ideal action movie, is a complete disaster: the audio is badly dubbed, the production values are almost laughably poor, and the action
(Fenelón, with his arm in a cast, beats up a number of criminal characters in a cabaret located in Chile’s northern mining country, while a transvestite tends bar in the background) is sordidly improbable (see Figures 4 and 5). The occasional lapses of Fenelón’s spoken Spanish into an Argentine accent, at moments when he is trying to portray himself as particularly “bravo,” add to the film’s ridicule of him. On the other hand, however, Fenelón is surrounded by a number of people who seem to earnestly care about him and hope for his success: in Mouat’s chronicle, Fenelón describes Don Francisco’s supportive words to him when he appeared on Sábados Gigantes (“para callado, con el micrófono abajo…me dice quédate tranquilo, porque todos esos premios que estás viendo ahí van a ser tuyos” (Mouat 255, italics in original)); his manager, whose intense gaze upon Fenelón belies his (possibly homoerotic) admiration for him (Figure 6), has clearly hitched his fortunes to those of his client; and Fenelón’s family (Figure 7) believes in him as well (in Mouat’s profile, Fenelón recounts how he resisted going on Sábados Gigantes until his daughter “se sentó en mi falda y me dijo papito, hazlo por mí, y botó una lágrima […]. Ya, dije, por ti lo voy a hacer” (253-4)). In contrast to Raúl Peralta, who has very few family ties and whose only sexual relationship is a dysfunctional, impotent one, Fenelón is placed (and places himself) squarely within the reproductive arena as a respectable family man. His wife and children serve to ratify the good intentions, credibility, and even innocence of his imitation, whereas Raúl is an “entirely self-serving” character (Romney 46) who is incapable of maintaining relationships (sexual and otherwise) and betrays and even kills some of the people around him. While “Tony Manero associates sexual dysfunction in the individual with political dysfunction in the state” and “a society in the throes of collective denial” (Romney 46), El Charles Bronson chileno offers a much more oblique perspective: Fenelón may be an imitator,
but his earnestness shows a novel approach to the way his imitation plays out—one that is linked to his role as a paragon of reproductive sexuality.
In the end, then, one’s interpretation of Fenelón’s performance of masculinity is the fulcrum upon which the ambiguities of the film rest. On one hand, *El Charles Bronson chileno* can be read as a parody that excoriates Fenelón’s attempt at gaining notoriety, fame, and capital through a pathetic attempt to copy a model of foreign masculinity, while suggesting that self-effacement is the optimal way of resisting the seduction of neoliberalism that had become so dominant in Chile by the mid-1980s. The very traits that distinguish Fenelón’s aped performance of masculinity are the same ones that exemplify his accession to the power of neoliberal capital, and therefore must be caricatured and then dismissed. Berríos, for example, argues for this idea of effacement as resistance to capital, stating that Flores’ film’s lack of distribution and relative obscurity is evidence of how “se practica y concibe el anonimato como un lugar social críticamente productivo” (295). On the other hand, the film can also be read as the sincere portrait of a family man, thrust into the spotlight because a twist of nature and fate caused him to resemble a famous American movie star, who tries to make the best of his situation in a difficult economic time. Fenelón’s obvious devotion to his family, and thus his firm commitment to normative, reproductive sexuality—we see him sitting with his wife and children in the early

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48 This is a perspective shared by Carlos Leppe and many of the other artists in the *Escena de avanzada*, as I will discuss at length below.
eighties, and we know his family was still intact in 2004 when Mouat wrote his article and Fenelón was approaching 80—is what prevents the viewer from seeing him in a completely ridiculous light. Thus, gendered ideas about reproduction—in the sexual and mimetic sense—place the film and its protagonist at the interstices of capitalist spectacle (a sort of spectacle installed by the dictatorship, which brought along with it the idea of appropriating “Great Man” historical narratives of modernity), on one hand, and the (postmodern, anti-dictatorial) parody, interruption, and effacement of such lineages and narratives, on the other. And, against Berrios’ reading, the legacy of the Chilean Charles Bronson will live on even if the effacement of the film is complete: Mouat’s chronicle is proof of that.

Carlos Leppe’s Performances: A Model of Sterility Deferred

Carlos Leppe’s first piece of corporeally-based art was created in 1974,49 and since he was the first Chilean artist to use his body as a medium, he provided an “origin” of sorts for a tradition of performance art that persists in Chile today; however, that is not the only thing his work modeled. Leppe was part of a larger group of performers, artists, and writers making art during the dictatorship, known together as La escena de avanzada,50 which—in the words of

49 There are some discrepancies about the date of Leppe’s first work, known as El happening de las gallinas (to be discussed in further detail below). According to Nelly Richard (1986: 65-6) and Cristián Huneeus (2010: 460-2), the performance was first held in the Carmen Waugh Gallery in 1973; Gaspar Galaz and Milan Ivelic (1974), however, state that it was first held in the Central Gallery in 1974 (191). Either way, however, Leppe was unquestionably the originator of performance art in Chile: the next person to do it was Raúl Zurita in 1975, who attempted to burn part of his face in an “act of self-atonement…thus initiating the form of poetry which he later on came to develop in his first book Purgatorio (1979)” in an untitled performance (Richard 1986: 66). In my discussion of El happening, I will locate the date as 1973-4.

50 In Chile and abroad, the best-known wing of the avanzada was the Colectivo de Acciones de Arte, or CADA, which sought to deconstruct “el comportamiento social para expresarlo a través de nuevos sistemas de producción y difusión artísticos,” including but not limited to the body (Galaz and Ivelic 209). CADA’s members included Carlos Altamirano, Eugenio Dittborn, Gonzalo Mezza, Lotty Rosenfeld, Diamela Eltit, and Raúl Zurita. To date, the most complete discussion of CADA’s work—which was mostly created from 1979 to 1982—can be found in pp. 205-19 of Galaz and Ivelic’s 1988 volume. Although Eltit’s and Zurita’s works were perhaps the best-known interventions associated with CADA, I will mention them only peripherally here and in the next chapter. Leppe was only loosely
Richard—sought to interrogate “every artifice of representation serving tradition and its sleight of hand” as a reaction to “the coup that shattered the preceding framework of social and political experiences” and “all the language and models of signification by which those experiences could be named” (1986: 17-8, emphasis mine). Working to replace old models with new ones, the members of the avanzada firmly inscribed themselves as an avant-garde movement, in that they worked to “sublate” art into “the praxis of life where it would be preserved, albeit in changed form,” as Peter Bürger (1984) has written (49). The fact that Leppe was at the avant-garde of this avant-garde, so to speak, is indicative of the extent to which inscribing oneself as a model of anything (in Leppe’s case, for future performance art) can be read as an avant-garde gesture. In addition, Leppe firmly inserted himself into a fertile crosscurrent created between the Latin American neo-avant-gardes and postmodernity:

…the difference between metropolitan and European avant-gardes and Latin American/peripheral avant-gardes revolves around how the aesthetic practice that serves as a model for a new everyday practice is construed. [...] If we rethink peripheral avant-gardes as the endeavor to create new life praxes by re-articulating local traditions…it may prove too hasty to have declared the death of the avant-garde (Yúdice 14, emphasis mine).

Leppe’s work is thus important as an interruption and contestation to the dictatorship’s appropriation of modernity in its creation of Chile’s historical narrative, particularly considering Richard’s assertion that the avanzada sought out “alternative ways to recover the meaning of that history that had been replaced by the Grand History of the Victors” (17, emphasis mine).

Meanwhile, of course, Leppe’s work coincided with economic changes in Chile to which artists were compelled to respond, as Gaspar Galaz and Milan Ivelic (1988) point out:

affiliated with CADA, although he did collaborate with Zurita on a performance piece entitled Visualizaciones del Purgatorio de Raúl Zurita in 1979 in the Cal Gallery (for more information about this collaboration, in which Dittborn and Altamirano also participated, see Richard 1986: 78).
La economía pasó a ser una especie de trascendental ontológico en torno al cual giró toda la actividad nacional; el ser se definió y actuó conforme a este nuevo trascendental descubierto por una generación de jóvenes economistas neoliberales. [...] El verbo tener se conjugó masivamente. Las expectativas económicas que se abrieron provocaron una reacción en cadena que afectó a la sociedad al generarse una psicosis de posesión, de exhibicionismo consumista, de vocación mercantilista. [...] Pues bien, las acciones de arte...se originaron en este contexto y proponían un discurso sideralmente alejado de esa “realidad chilena.” Fue...un contradiscurso que surgió de un marco teórico común, fruto del esfuerzo intelectual e interdisciplinario [...]. Se trató de una posición que se redituaba frente al espectáculo que ofrecía el país, evitando las luces, los brillos y el maquillaje que lo envolvían y lo disfrazaban (Galaz and Ivelic, 205-8).

Leppe’s work, in this sense, sought to counter the overwrought, amped-up discourse of capital that had flooded Chile thanks to the work of the military and the Chicago Boys. Also, given that his work was coded to complicate the traditional representations of gender put forth by the dictatorship, it can also be read as contesting a new model of masculinity by making use of confessional motifs and new media practices to imagine alternatives to the militarized and uniformed imagery, repression, and censorship that had become so dominant in the mid- to late seventies. For all these reasons, Leppe’s work warrants a closer look than it has received until now.

Since Leppe was the first in Chile to make use of the body as a vehicle for avant-garde artistic expression, a brief discussion of the body as an artistic medium would seem to be in order. A number of different cultural theorists have written about the body as “the stage” on which “the division between the public (the sphere of social productivity) and the private (everything outside that sphere)” “leaves its mark” (Richard 1986: 65, emphasis in original).\(^{51}\) Richard goes on to say that since “the body is at the boundary between biology and society...it is the site par excellence for transgressing the constraints of meaning or what social discursivity

\(^{51}\) I have chosen to quote Nelly Richard’s words to this effect here for reasons of concision, but other theorists and philosophers have explored this division in great detail, including Plato (in *Phaedon* and other texts), Friedrich Nietzsche (in *The Gay Science*), Georges Bataille (in *Visions of Excess*), Michel Foucault (in *The History of Sexuality*), Severo Sarduy (in *Escrito sobre un cuerpo*), Julia Kristeva (in *Powers of Horror*), and Peter Brooks (in *Body Work*).
prescribes as normality” (Richard 1986: 65, emphasis in original). As a mode of both repression and revelation, censorship and confession, Leppe was able to use his body to make groundbreaking statements that were economic, political, and sexual at the same time. Richard (2004) has written that “visual arts were the first space [in Chile] to introduce the theme of a gay aesthetic as a form of questioning sexual identity and social repression, patriarchal culture and liberating utopias of revolutionary desire” (44), and points to Leppe’s work, along with that of Juan Dávila,\(^{52}\) as a “decisive precedent” in this sense. Leppe’s performances, particularly the earliest ones, took a confessional mode, in which he publicly admitted his homosexuality in a coded way in order to break with “the suppression of meaning or the positions of power in official discourse” (Richard 1986: 72). The gestures of the body are the only way, according to Richard, for “any superfluous discourse or unspoken pressure which escapes or undermines the syntax of the permitted” to manifest themselves, particularly in situations of censorship (1986: 72). The political implications of Leppe’s work went far beyond any statements against censorship, however: like the rest of the avanzada, he was working against the dominant economic model in Chile as well. Inscribing his work within a long tradition of using the body as a medium for transgressing traditional artistic limits, Leppe contested the dictatorship’s economic, political, and sexual rhetoric in one shot.

Another aspect of the avant-garde implications of Leppe’s work was that he incorporated the writings of art critics such as Richard, Adriana Valdés, and Cristián Huneeus within it. This integration of art theory with the praxis of art mediated the instantaneity of the performance with

\(^{52}\) Juan Dávila’s work includes a 1993 painting entitled *The Liberator Simón Bolivar*, a portrait of Latin America’s hallowed forefather in drag and with silicone breasts, which was shown in the Chilean Embassy London in 1994, using government funding. Pedro Lemebel writes about this infamous episode in *Loco afán* (1996). Francine Masiello discusses the painting as a “suggestion to viewers that even marginal citizens have the right to interpret their national hero, thereby reversing the common symbolic legacies that have included considerations of gender” (54).
a “discurso teórico que…problematiza, se interroga, pone en juego conceptos críticos destinados a la revisión de la estructura lingüística y las implicancias textuales” (Galaz and Ivelic 201). This performance of *différance* (Derrida 1986)—appropriate, as Richard points out, for “a country like Chile, where the possibility of any transformation of the real [was] endlessly deferred” (1986: 79) during the dictatorship—was an innovative, productive way for Leppe to both differ from and defer the signification of dominant narratives of gender, economic, and national history as they were being produced. Despite the avanguarda’s position of almost total exclusion from the official art world as it stood in Chile in the seventies and eighties, Leppe led his peers, as well as performance artists who came afterwards, to propose new ways of using the body to produce *différance* in relation to the attempts of the dictatorship to appropriate historical discourses of economic, sexual, and political “modernity” in the country. Interrupting the “modern” historical teleologies of the dictatorship with an insistence on instantaneity while simultaneously mediating that very instantaneity through theoretical debate, Leppe made an important intervention in the ways in which historical discussions of the dictatorship could take place.

53 Richard explicitly positions the work of the avanguarda as “unofficial” (1986: 17) in the introduction to her discussion. One exception to the exclusion of the work of the avanguarda from official art spheres in Chile, however, was the work of Zurita, whose “Purgatorio, and the works which follow, paradoxically retained their official acceptance at the same time as providing a key for both the avanguarda and various sectors of the opposition….because of the contradictions inherent in his work: on the one hand, his Catholic brand of humanism…was easily adapted to the idealism of [El Mercurio literary critic Ignacio] Valente, while on the other, the critical materialism assumed by his writings was in conflict with Valente’s position” (Richard 1986: 26-7). It is likely due (at least in part) to this official acceptance that Roberto Bolaño, in *Estrella distante*, parodies Zurita’s performances—particularly one in which five airplanes wrote verses of his poem “La vida nueva” in the skies above Queens, New York on June 2, 1982 (Galaz and Ivelic 213-5)—as so inscrutable as to be fascist (Gareth Williams 2009 offers an interesting discussion of this viewpoint). Ignacio Valente, by the way, is the pen name of José Miguel Ibáñez Langlois, a priest and “el crítico literario más influyente de la época, a pesar de haber sido vocero de la cultura oficialista durante la dictadura,” in the words of Catalina Forttes (2010: 18). It is worth mentioning that Ibáñez Langlois was the inspiration for Sebastián Urrutia Lacroix, the protagonist of Bolaño’s 2000 novel *Nocturno de Chile*.

54 In the final years of the dictatorship, Las Yeguas del Apocalipsis, a performance art duo made up of Pedro Lemebel and Francisco Casas continued the tradition of corporeal art. For more information about Las Yeguas, see Francine Masiello (2001) and Fischer (2009).
Leppe was the author of more than ten performances held between 1973 and 2001, but my analysis will focus primarily on four of them: *El happening de las gallinas* (1973-4), *El perchero* (1975), *Sala de espera* (1980), and *Prueba de artista* (1981). These four works offer the most illuminating examples of the ways in which Leppe brought an innovative, gender-oriented bent to the work of the *Escena de avanzada*. In *El happening*, Leppe sat on a platform, wearing regular clothing but with a funeral wreath of flowers around his neck. The public was invited to circulate around him, amidst life-size plaster hens that had been distributed throughout the floor (Figures 31 and 32). Behind the platform was a large wardrobe (possibly a veiled reference to the “closet,” whose epistemological implications for gay art and literature have been discussed at length by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (1990)), on whose shelves had been placed a number of eggs; a cello placed next to the wardrobe completed a space that Galaz and Ivelic describe as “irreal, cuidadosamente ideado” (196). Different critics have read *El happening* as a performance of the desire for (in the case of Huneeus, 460) or the simulacrum of (in the case of Galaz and Ivelic, 196) death during the act of laying an egg.

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55 The title of this work was a reference by Leppe to the tradition of avant-garde performances, known as “Happenings,” that originated in the New York area in the late fifties and early sixties. For more information about this current in modern art, see Michael Kirby’s volume *Happenings* (1965).
Aside from being the first work of Chilean performance art, *El happening* was groundbreaking in a number of other ways. Even though Leppe did not make use of the practice of integrating criticism directly with his work until later performances,\(^\text{56}\) he was indirectly able to

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\(^{56}\) It was not until two 1977 works, entitled *Serie de la policía: documentos* and *Reconstitución de escena* (both performed in the Cromo Gallery, and not discussed here), that Leppe began incorporating art criticism into his work in earnest. Many of the texts that were created for these performances, some of which I have quoted here because they also include useful discussions of Leppe’s work before 1977, were compiled into the volume *El revés de la*
use criticism in this new way even earlier, by calling attention to the repressions the art world and art critics performed, and drawing parallels between those repressions and that of the dictatorship. Patricio Marchant (1983) has written about the effect *El happening* had on its spectators: “struggling for existence, the gay work of art presents itself in this coming-out presentation as a struggle against official truth, as rage…against a truth which—as it must assert—is simply falsehood” (77). In effect, the coded reactions of the critics of *El happening* reflect the cryptic manifestation of the performance itself. Galaz and Ivelic’s text, from which I have primarily taken the description of the work, is extremely circumspect when it comes to the central theme of the piece, which is Leppe’s homosexuality:

La fecundidad frustrada…abrió la primera interrogante pública respecto a la crisis de la identidad sexual. Su tácita confesión planteó aquella tensión a la que nos referimos entre el cuerpo privado del artista y el cuerpo institucionalizado de la sociedad. El conflicto se objetivó en el gesto del público de apoderarse de las gallinas de yeso y comerse los huevos, arrasando con la instalación de objetos que acompañó su acto (196).

Galaz and Ivelic only make reference to a “tacit confession,” and Huneeus is similarly enigmatic, calling the performance a “manifestación revelatoria” (460) without saying of what. By examining the dialectic between repression and revelation, a fertile area for cross-pollination between psychoanalysis and the Chilean political situation, Leppe’s innovation was such that “it was no longer psychoanalytic theory that interpreted the work of art…but rather artistic discourse that revised and critiqued the reductionism of psychoanalytic readings of art conceived as the *reformed formation* of a conflict and not as a *deforming form*” (Richard 2004: 44,

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*trama: Escritura sobre arte contemporáneo en Chile* (2009), edited by Daniella González Maldini. As Richard has pointed out, the incorporation of criticism within the work of art was an avant-garde practice, but it had very pragmatic implications as well: since the dictatorship sought to “keep the production of meaning under surveillance” (1986: 23, emphasis in original), artists were “forced to negotiate, from within the work, the conditions of their institutional participation” (1986: 24), but this meant that they could also control those conditions more closely. This dialectic has also been examined productively in regards to torture; see Elaine Scarry’s *The Body in Pain* (1985) and Idelber Avelar’s *The Letter of Violence* (2004), particularly its first chapter on Pinochet’s Chile.
emphasis in original). The work was able to encourage new methods of interdisciplinarity, innovatively bridging theory and praxis.

Another way in which *El happening de las gallinas* bridged gaps in unexpected ways was by placing its form and content in dialog, particularly vis-à-vis the issue of reproducibility. As Galaz and Ivelic point out, one of the principal aspects of performance art is its ephemeral nature, due to the fact that the body returns to its habitual functions once the work of art has concluded: “cuando el cuerpo del artista pasa a ser el soporte, la ‘obra’ es efímera: el cuerpo retorna a la condición de cuerpo (en blanco), una vez finalizada la autopresentación….no hay relecturas: es irrecuperable” (192). Other than through photography, *El happening* could never again be seen as it was when it was first performed; at the same time, *El happening* itself was about the frustration of (sexual) reproduction. In an article primarily written about Diamela Eltit’s “art actions,” Neustadt makes an important intervention in the idea of performance that allows for a new way of thinking about its implications for gender and sexuality: “I use the concept of ‘performance’ not only in terms of theatrical or dramatic representation, but also in the sense of accomplishment, achievement, and success” (Neustadt 220). Leppe literally performed a failed performance, and this failure had political and economic implications: because of the dictatorship’s adherence to the normative, family-oriented discourse of the reproductive arena, his public confession (however oblique) to having homosexual tendencies that would prevent him from performing heterosexual acts and thus be “successful” a reproductive sexuality paradoxically allowed him to “differ” from and “defer” the historical discourse of the dictatorship.

58 It is important to point out that, perhaps for this very reason, many performance artists in Chile—such as Eltit, Zurita, Casas, and Lemebel—later turned to less ephemeral cultural production, particularly literature, to express themselves.
Leppe’s second installation was entitled *El perchero*, and was held in 1975 in the Módulos y Formas Gallery in Santiago. The work consisted of three life-sized, full-body photographs of the artist (Figure 33), which were hung from hangers (Figure 34)—another reference to the idea of the closet. Two of the photos were of the artist wearing a 19th-century-era dress complete with ruffles and petticoats; in one, two female breasts protrude from the dress, and in the other, just one breast protrudes. In both of these, the artist is hiking up the dress, revealing legs bandaged up to the knees. The third photo is of the artist naked, except for two bandages covering his nipples and a third covering his genitals. In all three photos, Leppe has his head bent over backwards, but he is still recognizable; he has made no attempt to use makeup to disguise his identity or the unshaven features of his face. The three photos were placed inside transparent plastic sheeting and then hung on coat hangers such that the portraits were folded at the height of the artist’s waist. The viewer could thus never see the entire bodies at the same time; he or she had to look at the body either from the waist down or from the waist up. Once the photographs were hung, it appeared as though the artist’s face were aimed squarely at the floor.

Galaz and Ivelic point out that the use of prosthetic breasts on the dresses, and the use of the bandages on the naked body, “disimularon su identidad sexual y simularon al mismo tiempo un acto de castración” (197). For Huneeus, meanwhile, the work is about the punishment of the artist’s desire for androgyny: “en la irrupción de un pecho único fuera del corsé, en la castración de pechos y falo parchados…[y] en la emergencia final de ambos senos, éxito quebrado como por un boomerang en la destrucción de las piernas envueltas en vendajes” (463). While not a performance per se, since the presence of the artist’s physical body was unnecessary for the work to be fully understood, *El perchero* marked a continuation of the motifs of sexual ambiguity,
repression, and critique of dictatorial economics that had become dominant in Leppe’s artistic oeuvre.

The use of photography in *El perchero* was the first of many attempts by the Escena de avanzada to incorporate this medium, which—as Galaz and Ivelic point out—can help to mitigate the fleeting nature of performance art. Still, however, they continue by saying that photography “adquiere las mismas características de mediación que la pintura o la escultura,” while warning that “la fotografía, el cine y el video son registros parciales, insuficientes” (Galaz and Ivelic 192). In a more detailed discussion of photography, Richard states that it
rompe la complicidad del hombre frente a la realidad, cuidadosamente consolidada durante siglos por la pintura [...]. La intervención de...Leppe frente a la realidad fotografiada, ya no compromete su habilidad expresiva. Lo que compromete, categóricamente, es su actitud frente a lo social (1977: 470).

Later, she wrote that “photography ensures that the transformations of the scene reproduced are symbolically transferred to the real” (1986: 36), and it can serve as “a critical tool for revealing how the work responds to the pressures of its social context in counteracting the effects of visual manipulation by the dominant apparatus of communication” (1986: 35). As we shall see, photography offered a way for Leppe and other artists from the avanzada to focus less on their own self-expression, and more on the way their bodies operated in the larger context of the social.

In contrast to the exhortations of Pinochet, Lavín, and Jaime Guzmán that reproductive masculinity is the most important way for a man to be a subject in the kind of history being written by the dictatorship—one in which patriarchal norms are the quickest way to form a legacy and a telos—Leppe opted for anonymity, interchangeability, and sterility in El perchero. The work also marked another attempt to complicate the appropriation of modernity by the historical discourse of the dictatorship. As Richard points out,

…el cuerpo de Leppe es cuerpo-referencia a...su condición estéril [...]. Por...la obstaculización de las relaciones planteadas, vueltas improductivas; la proximidad de los elementos resulta infructífera, por su incomunicación. La intervención de sus relaciones...conduce siempre a la infecundidad (1977: 470-1).

Galaz and Ivelic write that the idea of anonymity, at least, was one that was embraced by many artists who opposed the dictatorship at the time; they quote the folklore artist Eduardo Peralta in this sense: “‘Noto una impresionante pulsión por la expresión que requiere espacios adecuados para manifestarse. [...] Despectacularizar significa también desmitificar al artista, abandonar lo mesiánico para buscar juntos’” (208). Peralta expressed a desire to create art outside of any
circuits that were complicit in the avalanche of publicity, capital, and “spectacle” of the period. Anonymity—a total rejection of “Great Man” history, focused on the victors, that Stern and Richard refer to and which the dictatorship took great care to promote—was thus a key mode of expression for artists who, like Leppe, were working outside of (and against) official circles at the time; Galaz and Ivelic add that CADA, too, wanted to make “trabajos de arte en forma colectiva, obviando los nombres propios” (208). Although Leppe did not embrace anonymity altogether when creating *El perchero*, his cross-dressing masked his identity partially so as to reject the “afán de figurar” that had become the dominant mode of the dictatorship’s economic and historical discourse, while exposing the extent to which those discourses were overtly masculinist.

Leppe’s performance *Sala de espera*, held in Santiago’s Sur Gallery in 1980, was a tour de force that included a number of disparate elements, “challenging” viewers to “encontrar una lectura que le[s] permitiera relacionar los múltiples signos que articulaban la puesta en escena” (Galaz and Ivelic 204). Once again, Leppe’s physical body was absent, but the objects installed in the gallery space made for a different sort of irreproducibility: once those objects were removed, the performance could never be the same again (and, in effect, only two components of it have been preserved, according to Galaz and Ivelic (204)). The space was illuminated with 40-watt neon tubes, with all the wiring exposed, making for “una atmósfera artificial de iluminación” (Galaz and Ivelic 202). A number of televisions were set around the room; one was tuned to a regular commercial station, and then there were three others showing a video entitled “Las cantatrices,”⁵⁹ which included shots of the artist made up as a woman and wrapped in a

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⁵⁹ “Las cantatrices” was “un trabajo colectivo con la participación de especialistas en televisión, en música y en traumatología. La dirección…fue de Juan Enrique Forch y Nelly Richard; la asistencia traumatológica del Dr. Víctor Henríquez y la selección de óperas a cargo de César Secchi y Carlos Leppe” (Galaz and Ivelic 202).
plaster cast (Figures 35 and 36), and footage of Leppe’s mother talking about him and their life together, all the while with the music of various Wagner operas playing in the background. The space was complimented by a clay object made to look like a television that was actually an altar (known in Chile as an “animita”) with the Virgin Mary, photos of the artist as a child with his mother, and other objects from his childhood. There was also a projector that showed slides of Leppe’s “ámbito familiar” (Galaz and Ivelic 202-4). As Fernando Balcells (1980) has pointed out, Sala de espera is a continuation of many of the major tropes in Leppe’s work, including sexual identity, psychoanalysis, and social criticism:

…it is not an act of exhibitionism or of personal liberation (which is proven by the plaster cast), but a statement on the fragmentation of identity. […] Its aim extends beyond the…analogy between masculinity/authority and femininity/affectivity […]. The work of Leppe points to the establishment of a creative subject capable of recognizing in his own body the social conflicts which traverse him and which make him conform to society (quoted in Richard 1986: 72-3).

By making extremely clear the binds that the reproductively-oriented discourse of dominant sexuality coming from the mass media had on his body, while also parodying discourses about homosexuality coming from that society (ie, the boy is effeminate because of his overbearing mother and absent father), Sala de espera made a multidisciplinary impact on performance art in Chile. Meanwhile, because of the year it was performed, which coincided with the plebiscite in which voters overwhelmingly chose to maintain Pinochet and his government in power for eight more years, Sala de espera can be read as a performance of waiting for the dictatorship to end while working to defer the devastating impact it had on queer, different bodies.

60 The cast left “parte del pecho y vientre descubiertos como símbolo de lo potencialmente femenino” and “el cuerpo inmovilizado intentó mover los brazos en un gesto que se tornó aún más patético por el dramático intento de gesticular. La boca, entre tanto, permanecía abierta debido a un instrumento metálico que impedía cerrarla” (Galaz and Ivelic 201).
61 In the video, Leppe’s mother talks in graphic detail about the actual mechanics of the birth of her son. Some of the text is available in a footnote in Galaz and Ivelic’s volume (202).
The last work by Leppe to be discussed here is *Prueba de artista*, which was performed at the Taller de Artes Visuales in 1981. In it, two shirtless men embrace, one of whom has wet paint on his chest; a stencil with the word “ACTIVO” on it is placed between them such that the other man, once the embrace is finished, ends up with the word “ACTIVO” painted in reverse on his chest (Figure 37). This performance has been read in the context of the avanzada’s avant-garde mission: its desire to expand the format of art necessarily implied the destruction of the compartmentalization of cultural works into different academic disciplines […]. This desire to eradicate the boundaries—or as Eltit says, to ‘commit incest’—between the genres of art was expressed, in the most significant works of the period, by a whole range of displacements (Richard 1986: 75, emphases in original).

This breaking down of barriers could extend to those that lay between art and life, Richard points out, but they also broke down the distinctions between original and copy. Works like *Prueba de*
artista, then, “questioned that body of academic teaching whose only role is to canonically repeat the past, by forcing its limits of acceptability, by testing its framework of tolerance” (Richard 1986: 75, emphasis in original). By critiquing and parodying attempts to achieve artistic “originality” through re-workings of the canon—that is, within the strictures of accepted artistic conventions—Leppe again addressed the problematic of reproduction. Richard quotes Eugenio Dittborn’s reading of Prueba de artista:

the hierarchical, essential and author/itarian relationship between an original and its innumerable copies is broken: with the first copy, it is possible to obtain a second original. Thus the notion of original here coincides with the source of contagion in plagues, epidemics, and infectious diseases…each contaminated person is himself a contaminating agent, in the same way that each copy is an original, decentralized and proliferating, which can be found at each point of contagion, in each of its printed reproductions (Richard 1986: 76-7).

Dittborn’s reading opens up Prueba de artista to another set of questions about the intersection of sexuality, history, and economics in Leppe’s work. By comparing the trope of artistic reproduction to that of contagious disease, Dittborn joins the long list of critics making veiled references to homosexuality in regards to Leppe’s art. It is certainly no coincidence that 1983, when Dittborn wrote his article, was the same year that AIDS was beginning to spread quickly through circles of gay men around the world—a new kind of contagion that problematized the relationship between “original” and “copy” all the more. Prueba de artista, then, can be read to model a different, more sinister type of reproduction related to gay sexuality: eschewing offspring through the reproductively “sterile” act of sexual penetration between two men, but “successfully” (in Neustadt’s terms) achieving the reproduction of disease (at least potentially). This is likely why the word Leppe chose to stencil is “ACTIVO”: in Spanish, this is the word for the penetrating partner when two men are having anal sex (in English, the “top”). The embrace between two men that ends with the imprint of the stenciled word yields the word “ACTIVO”
written backwards: a “queering” of reproduction that still retains its power, particularly given that he who has it written backwards on his chest can, in turn, embrace another, and the word will be written correctly on that chest once again. *Prueba de artista* is thus an attempt by Leppe to contest the historical and economic ramifications of reproductive sexuality with an artistic representation of anonymity and interchangeability: an act of reproduction of sorts that does not end in the continuation of anyone’s legacy, whether sexual or historical. The only thing passed on here is the “contagion” (the modeling, to put it a different way) of “de-spectacularization” (to use Peralta’s term).

![Figure 37.](image)

The work of Leppe, along with the other members of the avanzada, to interrupt the forced teleology that the dictatorship had created to legitimize itself historically—work that can be classified within the taxonomy of postmodernity—operated simultaneously on the planes of sexuality, the economy, and aesthetics. In this context, Leppe’s work is key because of how innovative he was: as the first performance artist in Chile, Leppe used his body to perform the
identitarian aspects of the rupture of the Pinochetista historical telos. By offering his body as a model of frustrated—or re-signified—reproduction, Leppe explicitly related the lack of a legacy that resulted from his rejection of reproductive sexuality to the anonymity and absence of spectacle that resulted from his rejection of the dictatorship’s logic of capital. Paradoxically using his body to perform anonymity, and using video footage to draw attention to his absence from his own performances (particularly in the cases of El perchero and Sala de espera), Leppe literally modeled différance by displaying a body so repressed as to have its expression deferred. The invocation of the word reproducir, the word used in Spanish for the verb “to play” a video (as well as “to reproduce” in Anglophone parlance), is an apt way to conclude this discussion of Leppe’s work. Making his body visible using a video image that can only be played back, his rejection of reproduction is possible only through the “reproduction” (in the Spanish-language sense) of images that have always already been filmed. By modeling an endless deferral (of originality, of the spectacular recognition that comes with fame and notoriety) with his body, Leppe’s performances threw the monkey wrench of sexual difference (the lack, or rejection, of reproductive sexuality) into the dictatorship’s capitalist-oriented, teleological “great man” history, making for an endless deferral of the all-encompassing nature of its power.

La azarosa y sobreexpuesta vida de Enrique Alekán: The Temptation of Neoliberal Patriarchy

Critical readings of Alberto Fuguet’s work have often classified his novels, short stories, and films as paeans to Chilean neoliberalism, and therefore complicit with the dictatorship. Although this is a somewhat simplistic mode of analysis of Fuguet’s work, it is not entirely unfounded. In effect, Fuguet’s best-known novel, Mala onda (1991), about an adolescent
growing up under the dictatorship, ends with the protagonist in a brothel with his father—who has made quick money thanks to the favorable economic climate of 1980 and close ties with the military regime—a gesture that has been read as one of complicity with the corruption of neoliberalism. 62 Another reason for associating Fuguet with the dictatorship is that his work generated unease in the highly politicized Chilean literary and cultural circles of the Left during the transition to democracy, since neither Mala onda nor Sobredosis (a 1990 compilation of short stories) were “lo suficientemente explicitos en su planteamiento politico como para ganarse la aprobación de los jueces culturales del momento” (Forttes 18). A third reason to equate Fuguet’s political outlook with that of the dictatorship is his and Sergio Gómez’s manifesto “Presentación del país McOndo” (1996)—the prologue to an anthology of young Latin American writers that explicitly refuses to apologize for excluding women from the field of those selected—which gained worldwide notoriety with a vision of Chile and Latin America that firmly embraces an economy that allows for the importation into Latin America of McDonald’s, Macs, and condominiums. With this manifesto, Fuguet took a critical distance from Macondo, the fictional town of García Márquez’s novel Cien años de soledad and, by implicit extension, from García Márquez’s leftist political beliefs. It was also a way of marking the distance of the young narrators anthologized in the collection from the magical realism tropes that had previously been considered (by some, at least) to be the dominant motif of Latin American literature at the time. 63 After even a close reading of Fuguet’s oeuvre, it would thus be logical to conclude, as does Luis

62 Catalina Forttes’ entire reading of Mala onda is as a novel of “deformation,” instead of as a traditional bildungsroman, in which the political and economic situations mean that “la gente por lo general evita el cambio y prefiere el doble estándar y la hipocresía antes que modificar sus vidas” (86).
63 In a curiously patriarchal twist to this rejection of his literary forefather, however, Fuguet points out that García Márquez’s own son Rodrigo, a known filmmaker, is as much a citizen of McOndo as Fuguet himself: García’s 1999 film Things You Can Tell Just By Looking At Her “reeks of suburbia and all things American” and is “a perfect example of a certain new Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) sensibility” (Fuguet 2001: 68).
Cárcamo-Huechante (2007), that “en los relatos…se produce un cruce especular entre el mercado americano y el chileno” (186), and that Fuguet’s work “constituye una literatura cuyo lenguaje resulta aplanado por (y en) el tráfago de la circulación: la envolvente cultura del libre mercado” (234). Cárcamo-Huechante claims Fuguet for a canon of neoliberal, globalized writing in Latin America, making use of Baudrillard’s theories to argue that Fuguet “no sólo tematiza sino que incorpora la retórica y la trama de signos del libre mercado: el libre mercado adquiere así el estatus de ficción literaria. Producto y proceso, ficción y ficcionalización del mercado como espacio(s) de intensiva circulación” (165). Although Cárcamo-Huechante does not necessarily make a case for Fuguet as an apologist for dictatorship, his criticism closely aligns Fuguet’s work with neoliberalism—so much so that the novels become secondary to the economic logic in which they are inscribed.

On the other hand, other critics, as well as Fuguet himself, have stated that readings like Cárcamo-Huechante’s have focused too much on Fuguet’s possible economic and political opinions, and not enough on the content of his work. Perhaps because such readings concentrate so heavily on the impact of Washington consensus-style neoliberalism on his work that they presuppose its practical obliteration of Chilean culture—indeed, Cárcamo-Huechante argues for Fuguet’s “afán de abstraer e idealizar los espacios de circulación transnacional y, por consiguiente, de obliterar las contingencias perturbadoras de lo local” (227)—Fuguet has offered acidic responses, which have been directed principally at what he considers to be the excesses of

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64 To be fair, Cárcamo-Huechante makes these pronouncements based on just three works by Fuguet.
65 Forttes cites an interview with Fuguet in which he expressed his dissatisfaction with critical reactions to the McOndo manifesto and anthology: “…cuando se habla de ‘McOndo’ no se habla del libro. Esa es la principal razón por la cual nunca se va a reeditar. Jamás se comentaron los cuentos, el libro no se transformó en una antología literaria con la convicción tipo ‘nace una generación’ […] Cuando se habla de ‘McOndo,’ se habla del prólogo que hicimos. Los cuentos o no fueron leídos, o fueron bien leídos, o fueron olvidados o una mezcla de todo eso” (Forttes 37).
North American cultural studies-oriented readings of Latin America in general. This is likely why Catalina Forttes (2010) critiques readings like Cárcamo-Huechante’s as “lecturas sociológicas que anteponen la crítica a la instauración de un sistema neoliberal de mercado al análisis literario e histórico de la obra” (22): to focus too much on Fuguet’s economic and political outlook would be to ignore the local, Chilean aspects of his writing. Instead of reading into Fuguet’s political motives, then, Forttes places her own analysis of Fuguet within the Chilean literary context—either as a bildungsroman like Martín Rivas (Forttes 32, quoting Maria de las Nieves Alonso), or as an example of 21st century novels in which “las posturas ideológicas ya no pueden ser entendidas en los clásicos términos de izquierda o derecha política, sino por medio del nivel de autoconsciencia que el escritor tenga de su relación con el mercado”

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66 Fuguet characterizes such critics as those who call his vision of Latin America “neoliberal, or even fascist,” and who say that he is “suggesting that the poor had been all but erased from the continent and that the new Latin American fiction was no more than the rants of U.S.-style alienated rich kids” (Fuguet 2001: 71). In his 2010 novel Aeropuertos, for example, he makes a sly, if somewhat implausible, reference to “los cientos de estudiantes de colleges americanos…que…leen biografías de Rigoberta Menchú” in the waiting room of the Cancún airport (17). His (understandable) suspicion of North American universities only extends so far, however: the 2011 film Música campesina/Country Music, which he wrote and directed, was co-produced by Vanderbilt University’s Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS).

67 Cárcamo-Huechante, according to Forttes, “se beneficiaría de una lectura de la forma en que los personajes leen ‘los signos e imágenes’ a su disposición de forma pasiva ya que representan a los consumidores ideales de un orden económico…neo-liberal que se solidifica en la posdictadura” (29).

68 Because of criticism for his ambivalent politics, and also because Fuguet himself has taken a number of steps to legitimize his own place in that canon, much has been made of Fuguet’s place in Chilean literature. A graduate of José Donoso’s literary workshop in the 1980s (where Diemela Eltit also studied), Fuguet has stated multiple times his affinity for Donoso’s work. A letter from him to Donoso, posted from Iowa City, Iowa (where Fuguet was studying at the Iowa Writers’ Workshop, which Donoso had begun) dated September 19, 1994 and available in the Princeton University archives, is proof of that, as is an in-depth allusion to Casa de campo (1974) in Mala onda, and a rather adulatory chronicle that Fuguet wrote about Donoso, reprinted in Primera parte, a 2000 compilation of his journalistic texts (53-6). In Entre paréntesis (2004), Roberto Bolaño famously wrote of those who “veladamente o no, se reclaman sus discípulos” (101) as “los donositos” (100), although it is unclear whether he would count Fuguet among them, particularly since later on in the text, he mentions Fuguet among other writers such as Alan Pauls, Pedro Lemebel, Mario Bellatin, Daniel Sada, César Aira, and Juan Villoro as those “sin los cuales no se entendería esta entelequia que por comodidad llamamos nueva literatura latinoamericana” (313). One last curious piece of trivia: in Mala onda, Matías makes reference to “las mellizas Garmendia” (190), and in Bolaño’s 1996 novel Estrella distante, the principal motive that the narrator of the novel has for attending Juan Stein’s literary workshop at the beginning of the text is “las hermanas Garmendia, gemelas monocigóticas y estrellas indiscutibles del taller de poesía” (15). Bolaño’s mention of twin sisters named Garmendia, five years after the publication of Mala onda, could well be a coincidence, however.
Rather than focusing so much on Fuguet’s politics, these critics recommend an emphasis on the “literary” aspects of his work, as if his work’s mediation of market forces were not in itself a sufficiently literary operation.

While some critics have focused on reading Fuguet as the chronicler of a Chile that has internalized neoliberalism and globalization to such an extent that it is indistinguishable from anywhere else, others have pointed to Fuguet’s place within the Chilean literary canon to make a case for the persistence of the local, despite the bombardment into the country of foreign models of economic management. Models of masculinity are, of course, another aspect of this mediation, particularly in light of Fuguet’s citations in Mala onda of the iconic images of foreign masculinities portrayed in J.D. Salinger’s novel Catcher in the Rye, the films Saturday Night Fever and American Gigolo, and the music of Jim Morrison and The Doors. However, this debate about Fuguet’s role in the marketplace is much more about his politics than perhaps critics like Alonso, Carreño, and Forttes would like to admit. Fuguet’s mediation of these foreign models of masculinity and capital, which had gained a firm foothold in Chile by the time he was writing, is a political decision to the extent that to include so many models is to align oneself with at least the economic aspects of the dictatorship’s political platform. On the other hand, as many critics have pointed out, Fuguet is hardly a right-wing ideologue: the principal critical

69 Although Forttes does not mention his work, she would likely classify Cristián Opazo’s (2009) argument that Fuguet’s characters express their affinities with non-normative sexualities (Opazo uses the unfortunate wording “desviados”) through coded language that cites previous Chilean literature, rather than through explicit identity politics, in the same way. Opazo writes: “las glosas y las tachaduras a los libros de José Donoso, Jorge Edwards o Alfredo Gómez Morel inscritas en los relatos de Fuguet, ofrecen a sus personajes un conjunto de figuras retóricas, de citas, de máscaras y de disfraces que les permite decirse ‘desviados,’ ‘homosexuales (de clóset),’ ‘misóginos,’ ‘perdidos,’ pero de manera oblicua” (82). Fuguet’s work is more focused on popular culture and new media, but for Opazo, Angel Rama’s lettered city is far from dead: in order to “truly” understand Fuguet’s political and identitarian positions, Opazo states that one has to be extremely well-versed in the Chilean literary tradition, instead of (it would seem) wasting time thinking about whether or not Fuguet’s work fits into the categories of North American identity politics. Only then, Opazo concludes, will readers be able to see just how “desviado” (a rather unfortunate use of words) Fuguet actually is.

70 Saturday Night Fever holds a particular place in the popular imaginary of dictatorship Chile, as can be surmised following my analysis, above, of El Charles Bronson chileno.
current underlying many analyses of his work is precisely its anti-patriarchal, anti-authoritarian streak (Urbina 87; Cánovas 1997: 79; Ortega 102)—a direct contestation to the dictatorship, his affinities with the dictatorship’s market-oriented policies notwithstanding. A focus on Fuguet’s mediation of these foreign models will prove instructive for understanding how the dictatorship had impacted the literary and cultural construction of masculinities in Chile by the time it was coming to an end.

The problem with these debates is that they have been primarily centered around just three of Fuguet’s novels, Sobredosis, Mala onda, and Por favor, rebobinar (1998). The first novel he wrote, however, despite the fact that it is hardly every mentioned by critics,\(^71\) is La azarosa y sobreexpuesta vida de Enrique Alekán. Even though the novel was published in 1990, just after Chile’s return to democracy, it is actually a compilation of more than sixty columns, entitled “Capitalinos” and originally published in Wikén, the Friday entertainment supplement to El Mercurio, from June 9, 1989 to May 4, 1990. Fuguet published the novel version after the end of the dictatorship, but most of the columns upon which it is based were published before the return to democracy, under the pseudonym Enrique Alekán,\(^72\) who also functions as the narrator of the action. In the introduction to the compilation, Fuguet points out that the columns “captaron de alguna manera lo que ahora ha pasado a llamarse ‘la transición’” (13). They also, however, offer a snapshot of the culmination of the dictatorship era in Chile, where neoliberal economic

\(^{71}\) In her dissertation, Forttes says Mala onda is his first novel, even though it was published a year after Enrique Alekán (88), although she does offer a short historical discussion about it. Cárcamo-Huechante dedicates no more than two sentences to it (167). Both critics spend much more time discussing Mala onda.

\(^{72}\) Only in the introduction to the compilation does Fuguet finally assume authorship of the columns: “sí, soy yo. Yo soy Alekán. O, al menos, yo soy el que le dio vida” (13). The name Enrique Alekán comes from Henri Alekan (1909-2001), a French filmmaker associated with the Nouvelle Vague who worked closely with Jean Cocteau, Wim Wenders, and—interestingly—Raúl Ruiz. The back flap of Fuguet’s 1990 novel includes a photo and a biography of Alekan, describing him as “el más grande fotógrafo clásico del cine galo” and a “maestro de la iluminación y los efectos ópticos.” This is a tribute (Fuguet had previously worked as a film critic in El Mercurio, and more recently he himself has become a filmmaker) and almost an attribution of co-authorship, considering that Fuguet’s own biography and photo occupy the front flap of the novel.
policies had begun to create a class of young, urban professionals with disposable incomes and
time on their hands. Fuguet repackaged the columns—which he cleared of “la censura y la
autocensura,” which “ya no corren” (13), and edited for quality and “progresión dramática”
(13)—into a novel that could serve as “símbolo o recuerdo de esta etapa” (13). Although
“Capitalinos” was originally conceived as a space in which to simply discuss “los lugares que
estaban haciendo noticia entre los jóvenes” (Fuguet 1990: 12), it continually alludes to the
historical changes taking place in Chile at the time. In what follows, I will focus on La azarosa y
sobreexpuesta vida de Enrique Alekán (as opposed to Fuguet’s later work) for three reasons: its
political stance offers insight into the previously outlined debates about Fuguet’s politics (and
economic vision) in a way that his later works did not; it makes a novel intervention in the
conflicting historical narratives of the dictatorship, and it does so in “real time,” during the
dictatorship itself; and its political and historical visions have major implications for the way it
constructs a snapshot of fin-de-dictature masculinity.

Enrique Alekán introduces himself early on in the novel as a model of prosperity,
attractiveness, and savvy. He describes himself as a well-to-do yuppie living in Santiago, newly
separated (though not divorced, since that was illegal), and handsome:

Veamos: tengo 29 años, soy bastante alto, me preservo bien…y soy gerente de marketing
de una importante empresa transnacional […]. Mi nombre, por cierto, no es exactamente
Enrique Alekán pero casi. Creo que es mejor el anonimato, así me va a ser más fácil
opinar y rondar los lugares in. Trabajo en el centro (en el Wall Street capitalino) […].
Bueno, digamos que estoy casado pero ya no vivo con mi cónyuge debido a que ella me
abandonó… (Fuguet 1990: 21-2).

Alekán is so forthcoming with the details of his private life—even though the function of the
column is ostensibly to talk about “in” places to go in Santiago—not only because identifying

73 The novel version also eliminates the practice, in the column, of putting references to brands and places to eat in
boldfaced type, which was presumably the result of advertisements paid for by different companies to appear
associated with the columns (the constant references to brands remained in the final version, however).

231
himself as relatively wealthy will lend the places he frequents an aura of exclusivity and attractiveness; his is a narrative voice eager for his readers to identify with him. He establishes himself as an exemplar of sorts, either because others live like him or because they want to. He makes this desire for identification explicit later on in the novel, when responding to letters that his readers have written to him: “NO ESTOY TAN SOLO…hay muchísima gente allá afuera que piensa más o menos como yo y que ve la vida parecida” (Fuguet 1990: 51). This becomes important later on in the novel, as Alekán takes on increasingly divisive political, economic, and social issues (as well as participating in risqué sexual escapades): he becomes increasingly vehement about the fact that although some of his opinions and actions may seem controversial amid the conservative atmosphere of the dictatorship (and the fledgling democracy that came next), they are more common than some might think. Meanwhile, Alekán’s status as a “model” of prosperity, masculinity, and political iconoclasm extends also to his mediation of foreign ideas and their insertion into Chile. He makes this explicit when describing his work as an executive: “…si ellos me habían contratado, era por mi talento, mis contactos; en definitiva, por mi know how. […] Yo nunca tan perdido y sé cuando una campaña [de marketing] es una copia de Los intocables, de Nueve semanas y media o de un comercial inglés” (Fuguet 1990: 163). Alekán knows how (and how not) to adapt foreign ideas into the Chilean context, thanks to his linguistic abilities and cultural knowledge—abilities shared by Fuguet himself, who had lived in the US as a child and was well versed in global popular cultures, thanks to his work as a film critic. As an exemplar in Chile of masculinity, marketing savvy, and wealth, Alekán establishes himself as an authority (both within Chile and abroad) on the political and economic changes taking place at the end of the dictatorship, and appoints himself as an arbiter of how to mediate all the foreign
ideas—about sexuality, economics, and other things—flooding the country at the time thanks to neoliberal reforms.

Alekán’s politics are somewhat ambiguous, but not for that reason any less fervent. In a reference to the 1983 Woody Allen film, a friend of his calls him a “Zelig” at one point (Fuguet 1990: 108) for having attended both a pro-Concertación rally and also one for Hernán Büchi, who ran for president in 1989 and lost to Patricio Aylwin. In fact, as a joke, Alekán creates a fictional political party in one vignette of the novel, in keeping with the spirit of the election campaigns taking place (for the first time since 1973) around him: “¡Alekán diputado! Yuppies renovados al Congreso; aquellos que nunca hemos votado para presidente, nos uniríamos” (Fuguet 1990: 77). His platform is one of market economics with social openness. The connection is made all the more explicit with the title of this particular vignette: “Alekán es el hombre,” reminiscent of Büchi’s actual campaign slogan, “Büchi es el hombre.” Alekán calls for the legalization of divorce, modern campaign jingles to be broadcast on FM radio, the end of censorship, more cable channels, the legalization of “all kinds” of contraceptives, incentives to promote nightlife and ski resorts, and the protection and subsidy of cultural initiatives like university radio stations, local films, and musical groups (Fuguet 1990: 77-8). As a friend of Alekán’s points out to him, Büchi offers hope for a new, more flexible kind of masculinity to take the helm of Chile—the implication being that Alekán does as well: “estás apoyando a un tipo que, a pesar de representar a los más conservadores, tiene una vida privada que poco tiene que ver con la que predicen tus padres” (Fuguet 1990: 46). At the same time, however, Alekán

74 Although the action I will discuss in my reading of La azarosa y sobreexpuesta vida de Enrique Alekán did first appear in column form, my discussion will be based on the more definitive, novelized form these stories took. I will refer to the sections making up the novel as “vignettes” or “episodes” rather than “columns” in order to reflect that. My reading will, however, take into account the columns upon which the novel was based—particularly when highlighting any differences between the two versions that have implications for my analysis of the novel’s vision of masculinities, the economy, and the history of the dictatorship and the transition.
offers a sympathetic portrait of the Concertación. Its supporters and sympathizers, for example, are portrayed as intelligent, progressive, and liberated: “Mujeres solas, intelectuales...estupendas y seguras de sí mismas” (Fuguet 1990: 57). The reactions of his readers to the politics of his work are similarly ambiguous: he mentions that some of them identify him with “lo peor de la clase dirigente” (Fuguet 1990: 49), stating that he is the spokesperson for “un cúmulo de mensajes subliminales hechos por la burguesía para mantenerse cohesionada” (Fuguet 1990: 154). Meanwhile, however, others identify his active social and dating life with the decline of morals among Chilean young people (Fuguet 1990: 135); hardly as a paragon of conservatism. It is this political ambiguity that would later lead to so many debates among Fuguet’s critics and readers.

Alekán’s Janus-faced attitude about the political changes taking place during the transition are reminiscent of how political factions fought amongst one another at the time to appropriate the idea of historical progress to their own respective political agendas, and what the implications of this were for gender and sexuality. The concept of “progress”—a linear narrative that, as Arendt discussed, connects the past to the future in the context of modernity—was one that both the dictatorship and its opposition sought to appropriate for themselves, and strip of their opponents. Because the idea of “postmodernity” was thus often invoked as a reaction to totalitarian appropriations of the term “modernity” and shape historical narratives accordingly, these two terms, as they played out in Latin America and Chile, were being hotly counterposed.

75 Pamela, the woman with whom Alekán has the longest relationship in the novel, works for the Aylwin campaign and is explicitly identified as a literate intellectual when she buys Alekán a copy of Donoso’s 1986 novel La desesperanza: “Mira, Alekán, estamos en la transición,” she tells him. “Más vale que atinís” (Fuguet 1990: 91).

76 This was a critique that came in a more elaborate form, from the conservative side of the Chilean literary establishment, a few years later. Forttes quotes a 1992 review in El Mercurio of Mala onda by Ignacio Valente: “El autor se especializa en lo más tonto que el alma adolescente pueda albergar, rindiendo un culto desproporcionado a lo más efímero de la moda juvenil del día. Porque no es con la prosa de Fuguet que me he estrellado, sino con la persona, la atmósfera, la tipología humana y el mundo de sus protagonistas, sobre todo del principal, petimetre papanatas infatuado de su propia decadencia” (18).
and debated at the time *Enrique Alekán* was being written. The fact that the very first line of the first vignette of the novel uses this terminology—Enrique gazes upon a young woman he used to date and pronounces, albeit somewhat misleadingly, that “ella es lo que se podría denominar una chica posmoderna” (Fuguet 1990: 19)—is symptomatic of a dialectic within the text, between the task of thinking about the present historically (postmodernity), on one hand, and a longer-term, more mediated view of what is taking place, on the other. The “postmodern” aspects of the novel are related to anxieties expressed about the unknown future of a society undergoing an impending transition to democracy—a possible interruption of the “progress” that the dictatorship had worked so hard to make. These concerns are voiced, in the novel, by a group of conservative military families conversing at a cocktail party after the last Viña del Mar Song Festival before the return to democracy, fretting about the inevitable democratization of Chilean culture:

> Mientras toman sus pisco sours, hablan de lo bello que fue todo, de lo pesos que es que todo se acabe. El próximo año…ya nada será igual. En vez de camarones y palmitos, van a servir vino caliente […]. Rusia y Cuba enviarán representantes y los Quila[payún], los Inti [Illimani] y la Mercedes Sosa serán el show (Fuguet 1990: 148).

On the other hand, however, the novel often switches to a more sanguine position in regards to the historical changes, placing them in the context of the progress that is inevitable to a rapidly modernizing society: democracy will bring with it more liberated ideas, which will dovetail nicely with the open marketplace established by Pinochet. Alekán expresses his optimism when Aylwin wins the presidential election: “…y me alegro. De verdad. […] Yo voté por Büchi…y…casi no lo hice porque estoy en la anti-continuista. […] Primero estuvimos en la

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77 Colás has written about the overuse, at the time Fuguet’s column was being written, of the term “postmodern”—“Consider the introduction, in the pages of Vogue (in early 1988), of the ‘postmodern ski jacket’: What was the ‘modern ski jacket’? Was there a ‘realist ski jacket’? Surely this dissolved the critical significance of the term for observers of contemporary culture” (Colás ix, emphasis in original)—and it is quite possible that Fuguet was using the term in a similarly diluted fashion. Still, my contention is that he uses it much more correctly than he perhaps even intended.
calle...muchos lloraban y yo no pude menos que emocionarme” (Fuguet 1990: 107). At the very least, Alekán concludes, this “anti-continuity” does not have to be a bad thing. The postmodern girl at the beginning of the novel “ha pasado por varias ondas, más de las que quisiera recordar” (Fuguet 1990: 19), having disco danced, participated in protests, and attended new wave parties, but in the end, “está de vuelta, asumiendo ‘su tiempo y su destino’” (Fuguet 1990: 19). The dialectic of progress and interruption that this girl has experienced reflects the novel’s questions about whether the end of the dictatorship will mean a “postmodern” interruption in the narratives of economic “progress” promoted by the military, or if it will be the natural progression of a newly opened, “modern” economy with new spaces for different expressions and freedom.

Because the dictatorship had spent seventeen years trying to position itself as the avatar of progress in the country, Alekán’s advocacy of a different kind of progress was particularly novel, especially considering that Fuguet was writing from the tribunal of El Mercurio, the de facto media mouthpiece of the military regime. Alekán’s Büchi-like political campaign offers a preliminary glimpse into what later become more explicitly expressed beliefs about the political trajectory he desires for Chile. Although he embraces the neoliberal marketplace—just as Büchi, who had served as Pinochet’s last Finance Minister, did—he envisions a break in the dictatorship’s rhetoric of conventional family narratives, which he sometimes even portrays as antiquated and authoritarian. In fact, for Fuguet, the idea of attributing the value of historical progression to the newly-elected democratic government, rather than to the dictatorship, is closely related to a questioning of the family values most commonly associated with the military regime. The vignette about the inauguration of Aylwin is particularly telling in this sense: Alekán watches it on TV with his family, and becomes angry at their reactions:

Mi madre lloraba por Pinochet, que lo iba a echar de menos, que ya iba a volver, era cosa de esperar no más. Mis otros hermanos y yo queríamos ver el cambio de mando
tranquilos, en especial porque yo estaba más que enganchado y feliz con el nuevo Presidente y con el Congreso y, la verdad, estaba muy emocionado porque me di cuenta que en realidad era un momento histórico […]. Pero mis viejos y los invitados…se pusieron en la más agresiva y faltó poco para que lamentaran que no hubiese un nuevo golpe de Estado y yo me enfurecí…de repente los años de autoridad y represión familiar pasaron por mi lado. Choqueado, asqueado, me levanté de la mesa (Fuguet 1990: 170).

In this episode, Enrique explicitly identifies his family’s values and beliefs—earlier, he had made reference to his house as a place where “las mujeres que estaban separadas o tenían mala fama no podían entrar” (Fuguet 1990: 46) and where his father enforces an atmosphere of “incomunicación” (Fuguet 1990: 115)—with the dictatorship, and condemns them for it. The dictatorship is repeatedly identified, in the novel, with outdated family values. The historical changes taking place in the country are positioned by Fuguet as a departure from the idea of the conventional family: progress may be a continuation of neoliberalism for him, but it is also an interruption of the patriarchal values of Alekán’s family.

The outdated vision of Alekán’s family for Chile’s economic progress is contrasted with the more liberalized ideas imagined by Alekán and his immediate circle; this debate manifests itself in the reproductive arena, where Alekán ponders how to ensure that it is his vision of Chile’s history that gets passed on to younger generations. In an early scene, Enrique’s younger brother takes him to a discotheque in one of the more exclusive neighborhoods of eastern Santiago, close to the Andean foothills—the so-called “barrio alto,” “allá arriba donde el aire está tan congelado que corta” (Fuguet 1990: 32). At the disco, which, as it turns out, is more of a scene for younger adolescents—“el local no estaba lleno de mujeres solas, sino de niñitas” (Fuguet 1990: 32, emphasis in original)—a high school girl starts dancing with Enrique, confessing to him that she likes older men, because they remind her of her father (Fuguet 1990: 33). After this disastrous, embarrassing experience, Enrique concludes: “Debo dormir. […] He involucionado doce años. Creo que ha llegado la hora de crecer. No va a ser fácil” (Fuguet 1990: 170).
The time has come to grow up, Alekán concludes, but this progression is going to be difficult because of the extent to which dating and mating are imbricated within the economy of neoliberalism. Later, his relationship with a Concertación sympathizer marks a step towards this maturity—a building of consensus that Forttes has mentioned—but this relationship also fails. It is Alekán’s desire to have children that marks his greatest step towards maturity, but his desire takes place increasingly outside of the conservative family values of the dictatorship. At first, he refers to himself as a particularly marriageable candidate—a “buen partido” (Fuguet 1990: 25)—because of the fact that he has an apartment, a car, and a good job (the implication being that these are the main requirements for someone to succeed in a marriage in his circle). Later, however, when taking care of the son of a friend of his, he imagines himself as a single father, raising a son outside of a conventional family: “me lo imaginé más grande: pidiéndome prestado el BMW (que yo debería tener en unos 18 años más) para salir con una mina [a la] que desea impresionar. Me vi en su graduación, enfermo de orgulloso, hablándole a todas las viejas: ‘Lo crié solo, sin ayuda de nadie’” (Fuguet 1990: 176). Although this particular flight of fancy includes a German luxury car, Alekán imagines a new vision for reproductive maturity and legacy in the context of Chile’s economic progress: one that means a significant departure from the Pinochet-associated values of his own family.

Enrique Alekán is also never considered by critics to be Fuguet’s first novel because it does not fit very neatly into the aforementioned critical narratives of Fuguet’s work. Forttes, for example, offers an interesting gender studies-based reading of the early phase of Fuguet’s work as a series of bildungsromans: Mala onda, by this logic, is a novel of “deformation,” in which the young protagonist realizes that the world is “falso e hipócrita y…en lugar de cambiar el orden de las cosas, aprender a negociar un espacio en un mundo con esas características” (86).
Fortes adds that this process of “aprender a empatizar y a hacer consensos” is “precisamente la proclama electoral con la que la Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia logra llegar al poder” (122). In Fuguet’s first novel, however, Alekán is already an adult, and hardly in need of any kind of (de)formation: by the end of the novel, instead of reconciling with the contradictory aspects of transition-era Chile, he leaves the country and moves to New York City. Interestingly, this novel is much more rooted in the immediate moment of the end of the dictatorship, when there was still hope that the transition to democracy would bring about much more radical social change: Alekán calls for “la instalación de la movida—así a la española—destape incluido” (Fuguet 1990: 79). The historical progress that Fuguet imagines for Chile in *Enrique Alekán* has less to do with accommodating oneself within the context of the legacy of the dictatorship’s economic and social system—which remained much more entrenched after the return to democracy than Alekán or Fuguet could have imagined at the time the novel was published—and more to do with breaking completely with its social system while fully embracing its economics. The central tension in the novel, then, is related to the gendered implications of its oscillation between a “postmodern” stance—the interruption of conventional ideas about reproductive masculinity—and its embrace of the economic development installed by Pinochet as one of “progress” and modernity, in which new, foreign ideas about masculinity can flood the marketplace and offer new models for comportment. In this sense, Cárcamo-Huechante’s work is relevant because of the impact of Chile’s neoliberal economy on “local” ideas—particularly those related to sexuality, which he leaves out. Rather than as a linear *bildungsroman*, *Enrique Alekán* is a chronicle of how the tensions related to how to mediate the history of the Chilean dictatorship had implications for the construction of masculinity as it stood by the time Pinochet left office.
Conclusions

When Allende died, the attempts by the dictatorship’s informational apparatus to discredit him as a libertine beholden to Moscow were a powerful mode of linking sexuality to the global currents of capital and mass culture that were circulating at the time. By casting Pinochet’s family values and the stable gender binaries of Lavín’s supermarket as the “pure” ideal for Chile, the dictatorship sought to inscribe itself as the optimal guiding light for the (strictly teleological) advancement of the country’s history. Postmodern thought was able to challenge this vision of history, sexuality, capital, and mass culture, however. By exposing the temporal inconsistencies of the dictatorship’s linear and “modernist” appropriation of Chile’s historical narrative, the impossibility of completely dismissing non-normative sexuality as “foreign,” the lack of correspondence between neoliberal capital and the strictures of patriarchal sexuality, and the shades of grey in the seemingly stark dichotomy between autochthonous and derivative cultural production, Flores, Leppe, and Fuguet were able to bring the contradictions of postmodernity that Colás mentions into sharp relief. Using the concept of reproductive masculinity as a central axis of critique, these three artists—all of whom were working in Chile during the dictatorship, which allows for a more unvarnished look at how global currents of capital and mass culture affected the representation of masculinities within the country, without the mediation of exile—call into question the rhetoric of the dictatorship itself. Their critiques were subtle and oblique, given that they had to work within the very real confines of censorship, but they were immediate, which is an important point to make in light of an apparent critical consensus that the dictatorship was a time in which cultural production within Chile had practically ground to a halt, and that the postdictatorship period was the time in which Chilean
cultural production truly came to terms with the violence of the Pinochet era. The next (and final) chapter of this thesis will interrogate postdictatorship literary and cultural criticism, but for now I will close by appropriating the anti-teleological historical discourse of postmodernity to my own work. By reading the work of Flores, Leppe, and Fuguet in conjunction with more recent works that look at the dictatorship with a bit more distance (Flores’ film with Tony Manero, Leppe’s performances with the work of the artists in the Escena de avanzada who continued working after the dictatorship, and Enrique Alekán with Mala onda), I have sought to interrogate the idea of historical narrative as an immediate, as opposed to an ex-post-facto, phenomenon: it is as close to Jameson’s ideal of “thinking the present historically” as I could manage, under the circumstances.
Chapter 4

Masculinities in Mourning: Sexual Teleologies, Postdictatorship Economics, 1990-2005

Introduction: Postdictatorship as Never-Ending Story

As a close observer of Chile’s recent history, I have often asked myself: when will the era of the “postdictatorship” end? What needs to happen in order for Chile to finally “move on” from a time in which its dictatorial past has to pop up at unexpected times, dictating (so to speak) the terms of public debate? Some critics (such as Blanco (2010)) have referred to the present moment as the “post-transition,” but the logic of the “post,” which hinges on that which is past (rather than present or future) remains. Others have said that the postdictatorship would end when all the “authoritarian enclaves” of the 1980 Constitution were removed (most were in 2005, except for the provisions related to the infamous binomial electoral system); others said that it would be when a woman (Michelle Bachelet, who was tortured during the dictatorship) was elected president in early 2006; still others said that it would be when a right-wing president was elected (this occurred in 2010). If the postdictatorship period has not yet ended, how should a narrative about it be created in a chapter that covers the years after the fall of the military regime? The creation of such a narrative (should it be called cultural history? Literary criticism? Cultural criticism?) would necessarily imply the creation of a periodization, a teleology. And, ______________

1 Blanco marks the post-transition as the moment when “la esfera pública chilena pareció ceder la hegemonía de su conducción del régimen…entre los años 1997 y 1998, [cuando] las narrativas imaginarias y los discursos públicos…van a comenzar a circular en diferentes formatos…para instalarlos como oferta de subjetivación unilateral para un actor social diferente” (2010: 65-6). In his most recent monograph, Blanco seeks to create a theoretical framework in which postdictatorship takes a backseat to the powerful forces of the market in the context of neoliberalism.

2 In Chile today, as Ricardo Lagos (2012) explains it, “two senators would be elected in each district—the first from the party that garnered the most votes, and the second from the party that took runner up. If one party took two thirds of the vote, the party that took the other third would still see one of its members enter the Senate. It was a system that we found absurdly favorable toward the minority coalition—which of course was no accident” (109-110). Although the right-wing parties in Chile are smaller than the left-wing ones, they are guaranteed almost the same number of seats in the Senate, which leads to many stillborn left-wing legislative initiatives.
because this thesis is about how masculinities in Chile have been mediated over time by the country’s economic discourses, these periodizations would have to have physical and biopolitical implications, forcing identitarian, aesthetic, economic, and political exclusions. Any teleology created here will always be in danger of being undone by practices of sexual difference, as has been shown in the previous chapters of this thesis. Discussing a period that took place a relatively short time ago—a period that, in fact, may not yet be over—is a delicate process, particularly if one aims to examine how that period might decant in(to) the future.

The term “postdictatorship” means that there has to have been a dictatorship, which is clear enough (see the previous chapter), but it also carries within it the possibility (or, dare I say, the imperative) for a time period in which the word “dictatorship” is no longer necessary to define the zeitgeist. This binary (“post” versus the possibility—as yet unnamed—of being post-“post”) leads to a number of other binaries that critics have examined at length; in fact, theory and criticism related to the postdictatorship is full of binaries. While I will examine some instances of this type of logic now, I do not mean to imply that these thinkers’ work can be reduced to those binaries; rather, I intend it as an initial approach to postdictatorship thought upon which I will elaborate presently. Idelber Avelar (1999), for example, has focused on the idea of mourning, which he uses to mean the search for remnants of the dictatorial past in the present, and the effort to remember those remnants even when the explicit function of the current neoliberal regime is to try to erase them:

Whereas the hegemonic political discourses in Latin America would like to ‘put a final stop’ to ‘the fixation in the past,’ the vanquished, those who were defeated so that today’s market could be implemented, cannot afford to have their tradition relegated to oblivion.

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3 “Mourning” is the psychological process first outlined by Freud in the article “Mourning and Melancholia” (1914-6) as “the reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one's country, liberty, an ideal, and so on” (242). In parallel with Avelar, a number of literary critics, such as Jacques Derrida (1994) and Judith Butler (2002) have expanded upon this notion in a number of different ways.
In the very market that submits the past to the immediacy of the present, mournful literature will search for those fragments and ruins…that can trigger the untimely eruption of the past (2-3).

The mourning to which Avelar refers concerns the remembrance of those who were “defeated” (politically, economically, psychologically, and spiritually), as well as those who were physically erased, by dictatorial regimes. What is forgotten includes certain aspects of the past, but also the very notion of memory itself in free market capitalism’s endless search for the new; to remember Leftist thought and action, then, is to snatch the history of the defeated from the jaws of regimes that function(ed) by forgetting. For Avelar, in fact, thinking about the postdictatorship means establishing a number of binaries: the “winners” versus the “defeated;” the (“untimely”) present versus the past; and remembering versus forgetting—all within the framework of mourning.

Michael Lazzara (2006), meanwhile, makes use of similarly dichotomous logic in his own analysis of memory discourses in the literature of Chile’s transition: “the coup turned Chile into a ‘nation of enemies’—a society of ‘winners’ and ‘losers,’ ‘victims’ and ‘victimizers’—embroiled in a bitter war of ideologies that, in the dictatorship’s aftermath, has played out as an intense struggle over how to remember the past” (12). Lazzara thus focuses on the different “discursive lenses” (13) through which memory narratives are constructed, in an important meditation upon representation both political and poetic. Meanwhile, Steve Stern’s 2010 analysis of the postdictatorship, though carried out from a more historicist perspective, constructs a narrative around the binary of authoritarian remnants in Chile (people, laws, and ideas), on one hand, and gestures of democratic opening, on the other: two sides engaged in a grueling state of

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4 Since Chile’s return to democracy, there have been a number of attempts to “mourn” for Allende and “remember” and perpetuate the legacy of the “defeated” in the country’s cultural production, including multiple documentaries (some directed by Chilean filmmaker Patricio Guzmán, such as Salvador Allende and Nostalgia de la luz (2004 and 2010 respectively) and others such as Sebastián Moreno’s La ciudad de los fotógrafos (2006) and Carmen Castillo’s Calle Santa Fe (2007)), and a number of memorial sites (see Nelly Richard’s discussion of these in her 2010 volume Crítica de la memoria); the work of Ariel Dorfman, Diamela Eltit, and other writers and artists can arguably be placed into this category as well.
constant negotiation that he refers to as “rolling impasse” (360). Francine Masiello (2001) and Blanco (2010) examine the “art of transition” from the dualistic lenses of market and state to see how the latter two can be “reconstituted” (Masiello 7) by “cultural practices [that] constantly subvert that discursive order, deregulating the seemingly fixed relationship between the real and its simulacra…testing the so-called authentic representations of ‘truth’ against creative recastings” (7): a binary (market versus state) within a binary (commercial and state “truth” versus artistic “subversion,” or in the words of Blanco, “perversion”). Perhaps the most pivotal contributor to thinking about the Chilean postdictatorship, however, has been Nelly Richard, whose magazine Revista de Crítica Cultural ran from 1990 until 2008 and made a number of key interventions in thinking about the postdictatorship. Like the other critics and thinkers mentioned here, Richard’s thought can hardly be reduced to any binaries, but by thinking about the postdictatorship in the binary terms of “official” and “unofficial” discourses, the Revista de Crítica Cultural did ensure that ideas coming from outside of the circles of economic, political, symbolic, and sexual power in the country have not gone unpublished (as well as the debates about those unofficial discourses from within, as Lazzara points out (2006: 26)). In the case of Richard and the others mentioned here, the dialectics of the binary have served as an important tool for thinking about the present from the present, and these critics have provided a foundation for my own thinking about the postdictatorship.

These critics have found a number of different ways to synthesize the dialectics that they have presented and thus complete their respective narratives (be they historical, cultural, theoretical, or some combination of those three). Most of these syntheses have, in one form or another, advocated for deconstructionist-style resistance, as Lazzara puts it, to any “totalitarian recastings” of the sociohistorical narratives of dictatorship: not to “arrest the sign a priori” or
“seal off meaning,” but rather “to question correspondences, to intervene signifiers that in other instances appear naturalized” (Lazzara 2006: 157). In short, all of the critics of this period have advocated against signifying (and therefore “closing”) a future in which the postdictatorship can “finally” end, and instead have called for a radical openness with regard to such a future.5

Building upon my discussion in the previous chapter of the debate between postmodernist and modernist thought, which examined how different groups sought to appropriate (or even hijack, in some instances) the historical narrative of Chile’s authoritarian turn as that very turn was taking place, in this chapter I will once again focus on the resistance to such “appropriations” of the historical narrative of the postdictatorship.

My own discussion of the period after dictatorship necessarily has to begin with another binary, even though I am establishing it only to immediately break it down. On one hand, the thinkers mentioned above have advocated for a form of “mourning” that resists closure, equating a gaze towards the (non-postdictatorial? post-postdictatorial?) future with semi-authoritarian discourses of “moving on” (or “punto final”). On the other hand, as José Muñoz (2009) points out, “a mode of utopian feeling” is “integral” to much of art, and is the “methodology” of hope itself (5); to look ahead to a better future can be an important aspect of historical and cultural criticism, much of which is “dominated by a dismissal of political idealism” (Muñoz 10), rejecting rather than proposing anything positive. In fact, Muñoz’s work is a response to a major line of thought in the Anglophone tradition of queer cultural studies at the present moment: the presence of the queer and his or her cultural and literary production in discourses of history, 

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5 Stern comes to a similar conclusion about his rolling impasse that never seemed to reach a conclusion: “Caught in the ambivalent dialectics of necessary synergies, however, [elites] found the memory question inescapable. It was like a cat with nine lives, somehow returning—not just active again but making trouble” (2010: 374). Avelar, meanwhile, also bases his analysis on the resistance of historical “closure”: “Those who work under the sign of the untimely do not engage the future attempting to predict or circumscribe it. Insisting on a radical discord with the present precisely in order to foreground the absolute, unimaginable, unrepresentable openness of the future, the untimely only experiences the later in the form of an open promise” (231).
particularly futurity. Lee Edelman (2004), for example, figures the queer, whose acts of “non-generative sexual enjoyment…without ‘hope of posterity’” (12) lie completely outside the reproductive arena. Because such practices and politics do not look ahead to any sort of future generation, they stand as the opposite of a politics that is (for Edelman) conservative to the extent that it imagines a set social order that is controlled by those who transmit values to their offspring—this politics is wrought with the idea of an unnamed Child, and the future that he or she represents, in mind. Edelman’s figure of the queer, then, is “inherently destructive of meaning and therefore as responsible for the undoing of social organization, collective reality, and, inevitably, life itself” (13): a form of “jouissance,” Edelman maintains (25), that defies syntax (24), teleology (31), normativity, and the seeming omnipotence of the Lacanian idea of the Symbolic itself (14). Muñoz, on the other hand, critiques the “antirelational” stance of Edelman and other critics like Leo Bersani (11), calling for an affective thinking in which that which is “queer” is positioned not as a hedonistic, eschatological “ending” in itself, but rather as something to be strived for in the future: “an ideality that can be distilled from the past and used to imagine a future” (1). For Muñoz, to look to a future in which queers are positioned however they “hope” to be is to “repair” teleology, repairing social bonds in such a (utopian, undefined) way as to create political alliances that take class (14) and racial (11) differences into account—differences he critiques Edelman for ignoring. This debate is similar to those that have been

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6 Judith Halberstam’s 2011 work The Queer Art of Failure, which will be discussed in further depth below, is concerned with the location of the “queer” in historical narratives, as is Lauren Berlant’s 2011 volume Cruel Optimism and Elizabeth Freeman’s 2010 work Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories.

7 Bersani’s volume Homos (1995) is an important example of this stance.


9 This is possibly the most powerful critique that Muñoz makes of Edelman’s work: it is “a distancing of queerness from what some theorists seem to think of as the contamination of race, gender, or other particularities that taint the purity of sexuality as a singular trope of difference. In other words, antirelational approaches to queer theory are romances of the negative, wishful thinking, and investments in deferring various dreams of difference” (11).
place around Chilean cultural production since the dictatorship ended, which have been about the idea of “looking ahead” as much as about “looking back.”

It is amidst these debates that I will locate my own intervention in how to “periodize” the historical and cultural narratives of the so-called “postdictatorship.” Can a future be imagined without falling into the trap of the “punto final,” that is, without closing off debate about the past? Can the art, film, and literature of this time period be read to imagine (or, as Muñoz would have it, “feel”) a “new” path forward? The lens (to use Lazzara’s term) that I am proposing for narrating this time of cultural production in the context of masculinity and the economy is the sign of resistance par excellence, and lies at the nexus of these debates about “queer futurity”: the loca.10 The loca is a particularly Latin American figure: born a man but simulating the gestures of a woman, her rejection of this primal hierarchy allows her to undermine others as well, as Néstor Perlongher (1997) has acutely observed.11 According to Richard, meanwhile, the loca is at once “active” (dominant) and “passive” (submissive), and this, she claims, makes the loca an apposite figure from which to critique a “regulatory and superficial” (2004: 43) military regime that tended to schematize late 20th century Chilean society and history into unproblematic binaries. For Richard,

10 The fact that I put the terms “queer” and “loca” side-by-side here does not mean that I necessarily think that they are interchangeable, and Sutherland offers an important discussion of the complicated (if not impossible) translatability of the term “queer” from English to Spanish (13-29). Edelman, working exclusively within the North Atlantic tradition of queer studies, defines the term queer as anyone “stigmatized for failing to comply with heteronormative mandates” (17), however, and this “failure” (or refusal) to comply with those mandates is something enacted by the loca as well.

11 Perlongher translates Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of “becoming,” which first appeared in A Thousand Plateaus (1987), to the queer Latin American context as the “devenir”: “Un ‘devenir homosexual,’ por ejemplo, tomará esa práctica corporal (la marginalización, la segregación, y sobre todo la diferenciación que ella misma acarrea) como un modo de salida del ‘deber ser’ imperante; estará referida a cierta axiomatica de las conexiones entre los cuerpos. En otro sentido, puede pensarse que ella…mina o perturba la ‘organización jerárquica del organismo,’ que asigna funciones determinadas a los órganos” (69). Masiello explains this process as the “minor(ity)” disrupting the logic of power of the majority: “the ‘minor’ both alters and gives strength to collective alternatives to power….becoming woman in opposition to the masculinity claimed by the authoritarian state, a feminine presence that is not necessarily fixed by one’s biological identity or sexual preference, but which constantly asserts itself in terms of staging alternatives and, therefore, never forecloses possibilities of meanings that erupt in politics or discourse” (39-40, emphasis in original).
[o]n one side of this double face, [is] the Chile involved in taking power and in armed intervention imposed a militaristic-patriarchal discourse...And on the other side...was the Chile submerged in obedience to the disciplinary model, submitting to orders, like a woman, in obligatory silence (2004: 43).

The simultaneous activity and passivity of the loca—both sexually and figuratively speaking—makes it possible for her to inhabit a number of spaces in Chilean society. The loca can move among rich and poor, between the statist ideals of the Left and the conservative, free-market capitalist logic of neoliberalism, as well as between complicity with the repressive military dictatorship apparatus and resistance to it. I am hardly the first person to use the perspective of gender to “read” the postdictatorship—the important, groundbreaking use of dissident sexual positions to complicate seemingly fixed market, state, memory, and aesthetic discourses made by Masiello, Blanco, and Juan Pablo Sutherland (2009) will be discussed in depth below. My contribution, however, will look to the future, beyond the apparently naturalized cultural, historical, and theoretical category of “postdictatorship,” in order to examine how the cultural openings in Chile in the nineties and early two thousands—in which locas have become more visible—have moved dissident masculinities from a position in which they simply mediated economic and political discourses from a peripheral position to a position where they lie firmly at the center of how those discourses are constructed. The loca, then, becomes an important point of inflection for rethinking not only the dichotomies constructed by previous postdictatorship critics, but also for the imagination of how the loca is a key figure in the way masculinities and economics inform one another in Chile and will continue to do so in the years ahead. As I conclude this thesis and Chilean history and cultural production continues out ahead of me, I have found it to be increasingly important to keep the loca at the center of my thinking,

12 As was the case in Carlos Leppe’s 1981 work Prueba de artista, discussed in the previous chapter, “activo” is the word used in Spanish to the man who takes the penetrative position in gay sex—in English, the “top.” For Richard (and others), the loca manages to confound this dichotomy.
mediating between the jouissance of non-closure that defies the idea of a future free from the political and economic qualifiers of “post” (as Edelman’s figure of the queer does), on one hand, and the imagination of a queer future in which affectivity and relationality are at the center, despite practices of difference that encourage “singularity”¹³ (as Muñoz puts it), on the other. Since, as I have argued in previous chapters, Chilean politics and economics are structured around the reproductive arena, the newly visible loca of the nineties will pose a greater threat to that arena than ever before, whether we choose to embrace Edelman’s critical apparatus or Muñoz’s.

This chapter is thus constructed around an archive in which the figure of the loca is central. First, I will briefly examine certain short stories by Pablo Simonetti, whose portrayals of gay life in 1990s Chile are oriented less at the “practices of difference” of the loca and more towards a “normalization” (and, unfortunately, a political and economic neutralization) of that which is queer: an example of how, as Masiello puts it, “[a]s the market becomes the new arena for the promotion and sale of ‘difference,’ alternative gendered identities lose their political thrust and are often considered commodities or tokens of exchange” (16). Pedro Lemebel’s representations of locas, from his early performances as part of the duo Las Yeguas del Apocalipsis to his chronicles of locas on the margins of Chile’s national, economic, and political discourse, will provide the foundation for the chapter, however. In fact, as in previous chapters, Lemebel’s work will serve as much as a theoretical apparatus as it is an object of theory. And finally, after a reading of a number of chronicles from Lemebel’s 1996 volume Loco afán, I will focus on one particular figure in those chronicles who resurfaces in the work of Roberto

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¹³ Muñoz quotes Jean-Luc Nancy’s idea of “being singular plural,” in which “the singularity that marks a singular existence is always coterminously plural—which is to say that an entity registers as both particular in its difference but at the same time always relational to other singularities. Thus, if one attempts to render the ontological signature of queerness through Nancy’s critical apparatus, it needs to be grasped as both antirelational and relational” (10-11).
Bolaño’s novel *Estrella distante* and a number of other works of art and film: Lorenza Böttner, a Chilean-born transgender performance artist whose remarkable life defied geographical, gender, media, and canonical boundaries. This interplay between the practice and production of difference, on one hand, and the “proceso de regulación de la moral sexual y estatal en el Chile transicional como un modo de producir las condiciones simbólicas necesarias que aseguren el piso institucional para la administración de las diferencias” (Blanco 2010: 18), on the other, would seem to be the optimal way of examining this period. However, I argue that rather than stand at the nexus of this interplay, as Blanco argues in the Foucauldian mode (the “perverse subject,” he argues, “opera como un constructor que posibilita el sostén de lo social” and “produc[e] las fronteras necesarias para la mantención del lazo social” (2010:18)), the *loca* actually defies that “lazo.”

**Chilean History: To Queer or Not To Queer?**

The dictatorship did not end with a clean break from Pinochet; there was a long process of negotiations and pacts that brought the regime to a gradual, institutionally-backed fade-out. The first stage of this was a plebiscite, held on October 5, 1988, in which Chileans (many of whom had never voted before in their entire lives) were given a simply choice: if they wanted Pinochet to continue in office for eight more years, they were to vote SÍ; if not, then they were to vote NO. The NO vote won out, and despite some speculation that Pinochet would disqualify the results, the military regime ended up admitting its defeat. A timeline was put into place for the transition: presidential elections would be held in late 1989, and the first democratically elected president since Salvador Allende would take office in March of 1990. This turned out to be Patricio Aylwin, a moderate Christian Democrat (and initial supporter of the 1973 military coup)
whose administration sought to “build a new convivencia—a living together in peace […].

Convivencia meant seeing the political adversary as interlocutor, not as enemy to be liquidated. It would yield a certain reconciliation” (Stern 2010: 16). Aylwin’s presidency included a truth and reconciliation commission and a number of other important gestures to come to terms with the violent horrors of the dictatorship, but it also adhered to the 1980 constitution and the economic framework that the dictatorship had established, and maintained constant dialogue with dictatorship-era officials. Pinochet, meanwhile, continued on as commander-in-chief of the army and then as a “designated” (that is, unelected) senator. Aylwin’s three most immediate successors—Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, Ricardo Lagos, and Michelle Bachelet, all members of the *Concertación de partidos de la democracia*, a political coalition that ran the gamut from Socialists to Christian Democrats—all continued in the same vein as Aylwin, although the terms of the negotiation changed over time. As Stern puts it:

> What was unthinkable or impossible in 1990—that Manuel Contreras, the former head of the DINA, could be jailed while Pinochet continued as army commander—was not so unthinkable in 1995. Likewise, the unthinkable in 1995—that Contreras would turn out to be the first in a string of high officers prosecuted for human rights crimes, rather than the exception that proved the rule of impunity—was indeed imaginable in 2005 (360).

The four *Concertación* presidents performed a balancing act between resistance to, and negotiation with, the legacy of the dictatorship: staying carefully within dictatorially-conceived institutions while gradually modifying them over time, backing controversial reports about the human rights abuses committed in the seventies and eighties and commemorating what Stern calls the “memory knots” of the Left while mediating Chicago Boys neoliberal orthodoxy with a social safety net,14 and moderating the tightly patriarchal, normative, family-oriented discourse

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14 Although *Concertación* policies did succeed in reducing the number of Chileans living in poverty from approximately 40% to 13.6% of the population between 1990 and 2006 (Lagos 197), Chile remains one of the most
of the dictatorship while still maintaining a relatively conservative stance on social issues.\textsuperscript{15} It is no wonder, then, that the debate over whether the “postdictatorship,” or “transition” period is over continues to this day: the timeline for it, once seemingly so clear in the immediate aftermath of the 1988 plebiscite, has stretched on ad infinitum. It is no wonder, then, that many critics are hesitant to look beyond it.

Over time, however, Pinochet gradually began to lose prestige as a political figurehead, and the favorable historical legacy that the dictatorship had fought so hard to cultivate (or simulate, as argued in the previous chapter) declined concomitantly. In October of 1998, ten years after the plebiscite and just seven months after making the transition from army commander to designated senator, Pinochet was arrested at a London hospital for the crimes of genocide, international terrorism, torture, and disappearance related to Spanish citizens who were victims of the dictatorship in Chile. Spanish Judges Baltazar Garzón and Manuel García Castellón, making use of the idea of “universal jurisdiction,” by which authorities can seek extraditions from any country for crimes against the citizens of their respective countries, had ordered his arrest.\textsuperscript{16} This unexpected turn of events (Pinochet was eventually allowed to return to Chile, where he never faced trial, but he was no longer seen as invincible or above suspicion), coupled with revelations in 2004 that Pinochet had held “up to $8 million dollars in disguised accounts” at the Riggs Bank in Washington, DC (Stern 2010: 299), led to the almost total discrediting of his image among the majority of Chileans, some of whom had supported him throughout his dictatorial rule and into the democratic years: “Pinochetismo had fallen hard from unequal countries in the world: former president Lagos (2012) admits that “[i]nequality has more than doubled just in the past 40 years” (251).

\textsuperscript{15} The Filiation Law, which eliminated legal distinctions between children born in and outside of wedlock, was passed in 2000; divorce was legalized in 2004; and full coverage of antiretroviral medications for HIV and AIDS came to be guaranteed by the government in 2005.

\textsuperscript{16} For more information, see Stern (2010), Chapter 5, as well as Patricio Guzmán’s documentary \textit{El caso Pinochet} (2001).
the two-fifths social base at the advent of democratic transition [by 2006]. Four of five Chileans (82 percent) now saw ‘a dictator’ instead of a great ruler, and they included a solid majority (60 percent) on the Right” (Stern 2010: 302). Pinochet’s waning credibility affected the entire political spectrum: Right-wing politicians who once fervently aligned themselves with the regime now either tone down their rhetoric or risk losing their voter base, and the tide of the “rolling impasse” of negotiations between Left and Right in Chile, as described by Stern, began to turn towards the Left. For these reasons, a look ahead to the future beyond the postdictatorship is increasingly justifiable, despite occasional eruptions of the dictatorial past.\footnote{One such “eruption” occurred in June 2012, when the head of the Directorate of Libraries, Archives, and Museums (DIBAM), Magdalena Krebs, suggested in a letter to the editor of the El Mercurio newspaper that the Museum of Memory and Human Rights, which memorializes and educates about the human rights violations of the dictatorship, should “contextualize” those violations within the “reining violence of the time” — a euphemistic way of saying that perhaps there was some justification for the dictatorship’s repression. This letter sparked major controversy.}

With a newly reestablished democracy and a firmly entrenched neoliberal economic framework, Chile was poised for major growth in the nineties and two thousands. Accordingly, many writers have focused on how Chile began to position itself abroad as a “model” of economic growth within the framework of free market democracy. Social scientists such as Daniel Wisecarver (1992), Iván Jaksic and Paul Drake (1999) have promoted this vision of Chile, while the sociologist Tomás Moulián (1997), whose work I discussed in more depth in the previous chapter, debunks Chile’s “model” rhetoric by examining the extent to which the country’s economic success owes itself to dictatorial brutality. Meanwhile, others have positioned the country as a model not only of good economic management practices but also of human rights-oriented reckoning: “Chilean memory struggles had an influential place in the epistemic and practical transformation of international culture,” Stern states (2010: 383), although he is quick to add that Argentina has also made many valuable contributions in this
sense as well (2010: 379). As Ricardo Lagos writes in his memoir *The Southern Tiger* (2012), a memoir whose title is reflective of the way Chile’s boosters have promoted the country’s neoliberal economic policies “balanced” with a modest social welfare net, “our small, far-flung country at the end of the world, reminds me every day what great hope there is for the progress of humanity” (199). Lagos’ extolment of “the Chilean way—the guiding principles that we follow” (199) is the latest in a long rhetorical tradition of positioning Chile as a monolithic model of economic progress. For this reason, the dominant historical narrative of the postdictatorship in Chile is a relatively unproblematic one, of economic growth and prosperity.

Simultaneous with Chile’s vertiginous growth, however, were other, “non-official” (to use Richard’s term) historical narratives that struggled to establish themselves, telling the story of Chile’s history from the perspectives of individuals who did not necessarily feel represented in larger, nationalistic accounts (of which Lagos’s is only the most recent example). This is why, for example, the principal axis of Gabriel Salazar and Julio Pinto’s rather prescriptive historical argument about masculinity in the most recent years of Chile’s history is the fact that it is expressed in the way “se resuelve…el momento crítico de la soledad” (107). Rather than a subversion of such narratives of economic success and prosperity, however, these dissident voices, some of which belong to sexual minorities, have found new ways to make their struggles visible (and even central) in public discourse thanks to neoliberalism’s privileging of individual

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18 Like Pinochet’s memoir from the eighties (discussed in the previous chapter), Lagos’ text, published in English, is clearly aimed at promoting one particular vision of Chilean history abroad to foreign, Anglophone readers. The title itself, which evokes the rhetoric of the “Asian tigers”—Southeast Asian countries that grew vertiginously in the nineties (before experiencing abrupt economic contractions, it might be added)—is exemplary of Lagos’ attempt to position Chile abroad as a model of economic growth.

19 This argument, rather than describe emerging trends in sexuality, lays out how young Chilean men *should* live in the coming decades of the century: “*necesitan asumir* que la identidad cultural es más importante y esencial que el rol social y los estatuses sociales. […] los cabros chicos y los cabros jóvenes saben *y tienen que saber* que, delante de ellos, en todo momento y lleno de sospechas amenazadoras, está el sistema neoliberal nacional y global” (104, emphases mine).
subjectivities, rather than in spite of it. Stern’s allusion to Greg Grandin’s critique of human rights discourse, for proving frighteningly “compatible with a neoliberal vision that tended to strip social rights down to the minimum: the bodily integrity of the rights-bearing individual, rather than visions of social democracy and community responsibility” (2010: 384), is illuminating in this sense, because while histories told from the perspective of the *loca* have opened up some new spaces, they are often subsumed into the logic of the market, as Masiello has pointed out. This in line with Blanco’s analysis of the increasing privatization of the public, and the reappropriation of the intimate by the mass media; he points out that “subjetividades…‘abyectas’…han ido ganando paulatinamente carta de ciudadanía” (2010: 121), but they have not redefined what it means to be a citizen. Sometimes, in fact, these (hi)stories are “successful” in the sense of gaining readership and creating a profitable (narrative) product, rather than effecting real political change (or undoing Chile’s heteronormative, market-oriented discourse). Still, they have managed to make sexuality a principal axis of historical arguments in postdictatorship Chile.

To extrapolate a complete revision of the cultural history of the postdictatorship period from an increasing visibility of dissident sexuality narratives, however, would not only be an untoward leap in logic; it would also result in the replication of the same rhetoric of “success” and “failure” that narratives of Chile’s success by its economic boosters have propagated. In *The Queer Art of Failure*, in fact, Judith Halberstam (2011) makes the connection between the writing of queer historiography and so much capitalist rhetoric: critiquing the way “we are so endlessly seduced by the idea that sexual expression is in and of itself a revolutionary act” (150), she cautions against the cliché of describing “early narratives of gay and lesbian life as ‘hidden from history,’” based on ideas that render “gay and lesbian history as a repressed archive and the
historian as an intrepid archaeologist digging through homophobic erasure to find the truth” (148). Those recovered are the “winners,” written into history and posterity; but Halberstam is also interested in the “failures” in queer history, that is, those whose narratives are not necessarily politically convenient or “palatable.”

Halberstam’s work is important to mine for a number of reasons: first, because she speaks of cultural history in terms of “models” from the past whom literary critics often “deploy,” in the terms of Foucault, to counter more hegemonic conceptions of those histories. Second, she puts queer history in the same terms as economic history, particularly as written by some of the figures mentioned above (particularly Lagos): a list of winners and losers, so that, for example, Chile’s economic system is a “winning” one, as are queers who manage to destabilize “straight” historical narratives. Third, and most importantly, her work is important to mine because she questions the way critics often unproblematically employ models of sexual difference in order to “queer” certain historical periods and conceive of them as more politically radical than previously thought, simply because of the previously unknown existence of those models. My aim here is to intervene in the queer cultural history, and the canon, of Chile’s dictatorship; however, I am going to be wary not only of writing a clichéd piece of work that, as Halberstam says, “locates the plucky queer as a heroic freedom fighter in a world of puritans” (150), but also of the way we use “models” (and

To their credit, the two main works of gay and lesbian history published in Chile make few attempts to hide less-than-flattering accounts of the struggles of Chilean LGBT subjects following the dictatorship. Victor Hugo Robles’ volume Bandera hueca (2008) describes the systematic legal and judicial discrimination of the Chilean state against Karen Atala, a judge who—after declaring herself a lesbian and divorcing her husband—was denied any custody or visitation rights of her three daughters in 2003 (193-206). Meanwhile, the chapter in Oscar Contardo’s volume Raro (2011) about the return of democracy to Chile (its final chapter, I might add) is mainly about the huge numbers of Chileans who died of AIDS, even after life-saving antiretroviral medications were available, because of a lack of activism and advocacy in favor of poorer patients (357). There was no civil society organization advocating for Chilean lesbians and gays until 1991 (380). Halberstam, meanwhile, puts forth a visual and historical archive of hypermasculine Nazi homosexuality in order to “push toward a model of queer history that is less committed to finding heroic models from the past and more resigned to the contradictory and complicit narratives that…connect sexuality to politics” (2011: 148).
“countermodels”) of gender comportment, often from literature, to invert the “winners” and “losers,” to use Halberstam’s terms, in historical and political narratives.

In Chile, as elsewhere in Latin America, the use of the artistic and literary archive to invert hegemonic historical narratives has been a major issue in literary and cultural studies—but the argument has still been focused more on “mourning” as a way to recuperate the memory of the politically oppressed, than that of those oppressed for their sexual dissidence. This is likely why Pedro Lemebel, for one, has been such a major proponent of a “queering” of Chilean cultural history. In a 2000 interview with Andrea Jeftanovic, Lemebel insists on the importance of exposing a “historia oculta” (Jeftanovic 78) of gay subjects on the periphery of the country’s “master narrative,” as Diana Palaversich (2002) has called it (102).21 Indeed, multiple critics have highlighted Lemebel’s role in queering ideas of the Chilean nation and Chilean history, including Lucía Guerra Cunningham (2000), Masiello, Palaversich, Blanco (2004, 2010), Bernardita Llanos (2004), and Angeles Mateo del Pino (2010). In this sense, Lemebel’s work can be read as theory as much as it can be read as literature; he is certainly conscious of the way theory works, professing familiarity with Lacan, Foucault, Kristeva, and Deleuze, as well as with Néstor Perlongher (Jeftanovic 75-76). In several chronicles in Loco afán, Lemebel “contaminates” the mourning of the thwarted, vaunted Left by conflating it with the memory of those who died of AIDS. The loca’s mourning contains the “agency” of her own individuality, body, and specific circumstances; it is not identical to mourning on the Left for the Left. Liminal by nature, the loca’s mourning lies between past and present, but also between a larger collective mourning for the loss of Allende’s Unidad Popular government and a smaller one for those who

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21 This is clearly also one of Lemebel’s reasons for writing “La noche de los visones” (the first chronicle in Loco afán, discussed at length in Chapter 2) in particular, whose concluding paragraph begins as follows: “Quizás, las pequeñas historias y las grandes epopeyas nunca son paralelas, los destinos minoritarios siguen escaldados por las políticas de un mercado siempre al acecho de cualquier escape” (Lemebel 23).
died of AIDS. Lemebel’s oeuvre tells a story, and problematizes the Chilean nation, but it also rewrites and retheorizes the ways in which masculinity interacted with the Chilean (and global) economy—before, during, and after the dictatorship.

Lemebel’s attempts to “queer” Chilean history can serve as an important corrective to the work of Avelar, whose study does not take into account the way this mourning for a defeated political struggle can change through the introduction of queer subjectivities and the experience of AIDS. Avelar glosses over the differences between constituencies within the monolithic category of the “vanquished” and the ways in which they have experienced different forms of victimization. As such, the strategies deployed to resist hegemonic forces of power to perpetuate each group—in short, the ways they mourn—are also likely to differ. During the dictatorship, great importance was placed on the Left presenting a “united front” of opposition, since it was thought that any exposure of divisions within it would weaken its credibility, both in Chile and abroad. In this sense, gays within the movement who resisted the dictatorship were encouraged not to speak out about their sexuality, so as not to distract from the larger resistance (Robles 39-42). Indeed, it is from one of these distinct perspectives that Lemebel writes: the subtitle of Loco aflán is Crónicas de sidario, and the text commemorates (and mourns) the role of the locas in the dictatorship. Lemebel cannot mourn for the defeat of democracy without also mourning for those who have died of AIDS in Chile, many of whom were homosexual.22 Just as the mourners that Avelar describes seek out fragments of the pre-dictatorial and dictatorial past in the present,

22 Cases of AIDS first began to appear in Chile in the early- to mid-1980s, not long after they began to appear in the US: towards the end of the Pinochet years. The chronicle “La noche de los visones,” discussed in chapter 2, makes this link between AIDS and the dictatorship explicit with the character of Pilola Alessandri, who comes back to Chile after a trip to New York City with a case of the disease. The chronicle’s satirizing Pilola Alessandri’s AIDS as a fad, as if it were just another consumer product imported into Chile, reflects how Lemebel locates AIDS as an aspect of the neoliberal market logic that the dictatorship imposed. As such, it is only natural that the loca’s mourning would take on different dimensions than the mourning of others who were “defeated” when the dictatorship took over.
Lemebel focuses on certain objects in the present that evoke those who died of AIDS, which often curtailed their potentially revolutionary fight against the dictatorship. In *Loco afán*, those who died of AIDS and those who died resisting the dictatorship become interchangeable at times. Bonds of solidarity are thus formed between those who suffered due to political oppression, and those who suffered from the disease. This solidarity in mourning serves to accentuate the voices of those who seek to write alternative histories of that period; however, the mourning of the *loca* for AIDS victims does not always fit comfortably into the agenda of those who mourn the defeat of the Left. The *loca* looks to remnants, fragments, and ruins of the dictatorial past in the present, but the purpose of this mourning process is not simply to underscore the larger mourning process carried out by the Left. Instead, it is a separate mourning process, in which the *loca* must fight to resist becoming subsumed into a collective form of mourning—which may come in the form of mourning in the Avelarian sense, or in the form of good intentioned modes of “human rights culture,” as Stern calls them, that comfortably dovetail with neoliberal individualism. Moreover, if the *loca*’s mourning manages to recover the “ruins” of her particular past, as is the explicit aim of Lemebel’s work, the result may end up being re-appropriated under the sign of market success (though never a bestseller per se, *Loco afán* was published in Spain after it garnered enough attention in Chile), and lose its position of non-hegemonic dissidence, and therefore its historical credibility. How, then, can Chilean history be “queered” without falling into the trap, exposed by Halberstam, of repositioning *locas* as “the real winners”—as the *true* protagonists of postdictatorship history and therefore as economic superstars within the neoliberal apparatus of nineties Chile?

As we have seen, Chile’s history in the postdictatorship period has been marked by the emergence of individual (sometimes sexually dissident) histories, but it has been difficult for
those histories to defy the all-encompassing logic of “success-ism” (exitismo) installed and made dominant by neoliberal economics. Can there be practices of sexual dissidence that resist even the risk of market success (and therefore appropriation, and therefore neutralization and erasure) that Lemebel’s historical narrative runs? And what about art and literature that extol practices of sexual dissidence even as they welcome with open arms the neoliberal logic that Lemebel and Avelar abhor, even if (or precisely because) such a thing would result in a certain complicity with the politics that erased the past of Chile’s “defeated,” including its locas? The historicity of queer sexual practice—that is, the ways in which society remembers and classifies sexuality outside of the reproductive arena—was wholly mediated by market logic by the time Pinochet left office, and the Concertación governments perpetuated his economic policies with little modification. Queering the history of this period, while also evading the neoliberal logic so dominant at the time, is a difficult task.

**Theory: Looking Forward to/as the Loca**

Placing the loca at the center of a discussion of the era of the postdictatorship offers a new way of interrogating the monolithic historical, political, and economic discourses that have dominated academic discussion of this period. By doing this, however, I am not aiming to effect any sort of historical “recuperation” of the loca in history; such work has already been amply done. Rather, I am conceiving my discussion in these terms because the loca’s exclusion from (or refusal to participate in) the reproductive arena gives her a unique (and, to date, unanalyzed) perspective from which to question the economic and political logic of futurity around which postdictatorship thought has been structured. Looking towards a period in which in which affective and identitarian ties are at least as important to the political and economic sphere as the
historicization of the postdictatorship is, I argue that the *loca* is at the center of such a discussion because of her dissident relationship to the discourse not of the past, but rather of the future. Multiple critics of this period, however, have seen things differently. Avelar, for one, has pioneered an approach to collective memory and history, but his analysis has more to do with the mourning processes of entire political groups rather than the specific and subjective mourning in which the *loca* is engaged. Richard, meanwhile, has focused more on the politics of the discourse of sexual difference and subjectivity in Chile without making use of critical currents that focus on the *loca*’s mourning as a way of unearthing and maintaining collective memory. Masiello’s work on the postdictatorship seeks a happy medium between the two by showing how actors (including *locas*) on the periphery of global economic and political concerns (including the politics of mourning) can question and “rearticulate” them; her important work, though somewhat geographically and thematically diffuse, is hugely important to my analysis of the situation in Chile. By looking at the ways in which *loca* subjectivities have exposed the inconsistencies and dissonances of much political, economic, and social thought, new ways of writing Chile’s postdictatorship cultural history can be examined and put into practice as we look to an as yet unnamed future.

As it turns out, debates about futurity have been as common in postdictatorship literary and cultural criticism as they have been in queer theory. The afterward of Avelar’s volume, which would seem as good a time as any to discuss how to move forward with postdictatorship criticism, includes a radical rejection of any definitions of such a future, even utopian ones. In it, he instead adheres to Jameson’s (1991) notion of postmodernity, in which capital has managed to co-opt even the future:

The untimely critic does not ever take the present as a given to adjust to it. S/he does not ever attempt to preserve a corner in a current configuration of things. Those who work
under the sign of the untimely do not engage the future attempting to predict or
circumscribe it. Insisting on a radical discord with the present precisely in order to
foreground the absolute, *unimaginable*, unrepresentable openness of the future, the
untimely only experiences the latter in the form of an open promise. Instead of “adjusting
to the new times” and searching for a theoretical position…I would rather insist on the
reflection on the conditions of possibility of literature’s very untimeliness in the current
marketplace (231, emphasis in original).

Avelar eschews any imagination of the future, because doing so would result in a closing-off of
utopian political possibility—another reference to Jameson’s work (2004). And yet, even though
Avelar takes a Nietzschean “untimely” position, he definitely adheres to the kind of political
futurity that Edelman critiques. By positing an archive of writers\(^23\) who experience and mediate
“the defeat of the political practices that could have offered an alternative to the military
regimes” (20), Avelar proposes a mode of mourning—a mode so urgent that “to elude the
defeat…[would be] for [Walter] Benjamin the most horrifying crime you could commit against
the memory of the dead” (21)—that seemingly leaves readers with little political alternative as
they remember the past. In his masterful introductory theoretical pitch, he effectively establishes
what Edelman might call a “civil order” (17) that dictates storytelling in the mode of mourning
as the only way to preserve the memory of the “defeated” for future generations. Herein lies the
paradox of Avelar’s thought: he refuses to embrace a future course for his critical program, but
he states that the only ethical narrative (and critical) option is to create a record (for the future) of
the “ruins” of the past. If you refuse to mourn, he invokes Benjamin to suggest that you are
committing a “crime;” but if you do mourn, you are doing it for a “general good” (Edelman 6)
that runs the risk of “normalization,” which is “susceptible to generalization” (Edelman 6).
Mourning becomes a monolithic political agenda for the Left, in which a refusal to enact it ends
up constituting a transgression of the memories of an unnamed future generation, not unlike

\(^{23}\) In this sense, Avelar reads texts by Ricardo Piglia, Silviano Santiago, Diamela Eltit, João Gilberto Noll, and Tununa Mercado.
Edelman’s nameless Child. But what about those who do not share that postdictatorship agenda, such as *locas* who have been burned by the homophobia of the Left? Edelman would conclude that queers have to commit to “figuring a refusal of the coercive belief in the paramount value of futurity” (6) and “the social order” on which such modes of mourning are based (6): a total rejection of mourning. This would, admittedly, be a somewhat extreme response—*locas* have a great deal to mourn in the aftermath of dictatorship too—but, as we shall see, a certain amount of skepticism on the part of *locas* in regards to this Leftist agenda of mourning is common. While not a total rejection of futurity, as Edelman might figure it, a healthy skepticism of it offers one way in which *locas* can critique monolithic political and economic examinations of literary and cultural production, such as Avelar’s, from outside the reproductive arena.

Before discussing the power of the critique that the *loca* is particularly poised to make, however, it is important to note that a rethinking of futurity from the perspective of sexual dissidence is not the only form of gay politics in the postdictatorship. In my previous discussion of Lagos’ memoir, I alluded to the connection between the self-congratulatory side of *Concertación* politics and its orientation towards a future of negotiations and pacts—to be more precise, a comfortable place within bourgeois state politicking—24—which in the case of Chile has largely meant complicity with the neoliberal economic apparatus that has been so dominant there since the dictatorship. Although the *Concertación* successfully mitigated some of the toughest neoliberal provisions of the dictatorship with social welfare policies, the social unrest that has

24 Although Lagos did make a courageous stand against US foreign policy when Chile opposed the Iraq war as part of the UN Security Council in 2003, which he describes in the perversely titled chapter “Bush, Saddam, and Me” (Lagos 200-41), his description of earlier trade negotiations with the Bush administration is indicative of Lagos’ pragmatic, self-congratulatory approach, in which Bush calls him and tells him that “‘there’s nothing for us to discuss this morning, Ricardo, because everything is sorted out. All we have to do is applaud!’ He was jubilant, throwing in a few Spanish words here and there as we talked. I was pleased too. We’d done what we had set out to do” (Lagos 184).
characterized Chile since the beginning of the Bachelet presidency\textsuperscript{25} is proof of the fact that these policies have hardly been sufficient. Even Lagos admits that the opposition prevented him from doing much of what he wanted to do, though he adds that “it was far better than if we had sat, arms crossed, and done nothing to rethink the injustices of our country” (199). Lagos’ ideal future is one in which Chilean people are making more money, despite the fact that, as he admits, the pursuit of this ideal has only increased inequality since even before Chile was an independent country: “The challenge for countries seeking to join the developed world is to prove that we can be prosperous without exacerbating the gap between rich and poor. So far, our track record augurs well” (Lagos 251). Lagos’ pragmatic, middling rhetoric finds its counterpart in postdictatorship LGBT politics in the figure of Simonetti, a novelist who turned activist who established a foundation known as “Iguales” in 2011. This foundation advocates for a vision of homosexuality firmly rooted in the logic of capital, so much so that it has even created a project entitled “Todo Mejora,”\textsuperscript{26} a Chilean version of the US project “It Gets Better,” in which gay adults upload videos onto a website to show LGBT youth that there is a future beyond the bullying to which they may be subjected in school (and dissuade them from committing suicide): as the Todo Mejora website states, LGBT youths “no pueden imaginar lo que será su vida como adultos. No pueden imaginar un futuro para sí mismos. Por lo que les mostraremos cómo son nuestras vidas” (emphasis mine).\textsuperscript{27} The images, both in the US and Chilean versions, show

\textsuperscript{25} Although these protests are, for the most part, outside of the scope of the time period covered by this thesis, they are proof of a political thinking that has moved past the logic of the postdictatorship to think less about the past and more about the future. For more information about these protests and the ideas behind them, see, for example, Podemos cambiar el mundo (2012), written by student leader Camila Vallejo Dowling. Lagos also relates these protests to Chile’s persistent inequality (249-50).

\textsuperscript{26} More information can be found at www.todomejora.org and www.itgetsbetter.org.

\textsuperscript{27} See http://www.todomejora.org/sobre.html. It is impossible to think about the “It Gets Better” project outside the logic of capital: it has spawned a bestselling book, and its creator, Dan Savage, who was catapulted to national visibility when a spate of young LGBT suicides became big news in the US, has since come to star on his own television show for MTV.
LGBT adults who have “made it,” in the economic sense. They become models of ideal gay citizenship within the context of neoliberalism, in a way reminiscent of what Muñoz critiques about the LGBT movement in the United States: “inclusion in a corrupt and bankrupt social order. […] An assimilationist gay politics [that] posits an ‘all’ that is in fact a few: queers with enough access to capital to imagine a life integrated within…capitalist culture” (20). This appropriation and sanitizing tendency in gay politics—one that tends to neutralize “militancy”—has always been a cause for anxiety among queer Chilean artists and activists such as Sutherland, who expresses his qualms with projects like Simonetti’s thusly: “…siempre habrá quienes intenten…poner la bella palabra correcta de una diversidad sin rostros. Las estrategias son muchas…pero siempre habrá por ahí un deseo precario y militante…sin claudicar por las deudas históricas de la izquierda con las minorías” (39). Even though Fundación Iguales was established very recently, its principles are more than evident in Simonetti’s literary work, to be discussed in some depth below, which establishes a homonormative, assimilationist portrait of gay life in Chile following the Pinochet years. Just as Lagos proposed an anti-discrimination law that included sexual minorities without ever managing to pass it, Simonetti’s foundation states that it “tiene como misión trabajar por la dignidad igualitaria de todos y todas los y las chilenos y chilenas, mediante el reconocimiento civil y la integración política y social de la diversidad sexual”: integration and assimilation above all, with no economic critique whatsoever, however “precarious” (as Sutherland puts it). The gay rights that Simonetti imagines are in total compatibility with the market-driven, North Atlantic images of gay masculinity that arrived in Chile thanks to its integration with neoliberal trade currents. In the context of the overwhelming neoliberalism of postdictatorship Chile, the market operates to co-opt all kinds of masculinity,

28 The anti-discrimination law was finally on its way to passage as of mid-2012; the issue of sexual orientation was a major sticking point in the negotiations surrounding it.
even some expressions of homosexuality that describe themselves as “activist,” offering a vision of queer “futurity” that is inexorably intertwined with the logic of capital promoted by 

*Concertacionismo.*

Richard’s work, meanwhile, focuses on how the *loca*’s particular performance of gender allows not only for a dissolution of seemingly inflexible (gender, economic, and other) normative binaries, but also for an infinite refuse of the closure of signs. Although Richard, like Avelar, also refuses to look ahead (to when the *loca* can “embody” a set political agenda), her work differs from Avelar’s because of its focus not on larger politics but on the small, “fragmentary” constituencies that (may or may not) comprise those agendas. In Richard’s theorization—which offers an important precedent for bringing marginal sexualities into the center of critical thought—“it could be that the ‘peripheral persona’ of the *loca*, with her roaming metaphor of superimposed and interchangeable identities, presents ‘one of the most potentially subversive challenges’ confronting systems of univocal characterization of normative identity” (2004: 52). With an “acidic parody,” the *loca*, in Richard’s words, “deceives the phalocratic discourse of Homo (homosexual/homological) self-representation by playing with couplings and uncouplings of meaning in a theater of uncertainty that is also a comedy of substitutions, starting with sexual markers that are as ambivalent as hypothetical” (2004: 51). Wielding a parodic critique of both the neoliberal regime and the equally militarized/disciplined opposition to it, Richard points out, the *loca* can find innovative, unforeseen ways to highlight the persistent remains of the past that recur in the present. The key to this complex spatiotemporal position, she states, is the *loca*’s transient identity: “By ignoring the traditional hierarchy between appearance and essence, interior and exterior, reality and simulation…they acquire an unknown mobility” (2004: 52). The *loca*’s defiance of any closure of signification makes for a never-ending devising
of new territories (between margin and center) and new times (between past and present); this is not an explicit rejection of a defined future (or a defined political stance), as Avelar might have it, but it does constitute an escape from the attempts of others to define such a stance for her.

This idea of “escape” is reminiscent of the work of Julia Kristeva (1982) on abjection, which—while discussed in regard to the European avant-garde tradition, not the Chilean context—I will briefly examine in order to further illuminate the work of Richard. Kristeva highlights how a subject’s rejection of attempts made by others to make her subscribe to certain ideologies can serve as a viable resistance tactic. Although the ideologies of both the Left and the Right are tempting to the loca, she rejects them, because belonging unequivocally to either of them would bring about the end of her liminal subject position that enables a productive and signification-rich mourning process: “a vortex of summons and repulsion […]. [W]hat is abject…draws me toward the place where meaning collapses” (Kristeva 1). The loca, too, must navigate a number of currents of thought without belonging to any of them, in order to protect herself from this collapse of signification. She becomes, in the words of Kristeva, a deject: “the one by whom the abject exists is thus a deject who places (himself), separates (himself), situates (himself), and therefore strays instead of getting his bearings” (Kristeva 8, emphasis in original). Kristeva underscores straying in order to resist being boxed into categories that would prevent unique and novel signification: “the deject never stops demarcating his universe whose fluid confines…constantly question his solidity and impel him to start afresh. […] And the more he strays, the more he is saved” (Kristeva 9, emphasis in original). This liberation of signification is, for Kristeva, that which produces literary discourse itself. She writes, “if one imagines…the experience of want itself as logically preliminary to being and object…then one understands that

29 Kristeva defines abjection as a state of ambiguity, of simultaneous attraction and revulsion, that offers a sense of freedom to those who must navigate treacherous, complicated situations.
abjection, and even more so the abjection of self, is its only signified. Its signifier, then, is none but literature” (Kristeva 8, emphasis in original). In order to resist any one label, the *loca* can construct a discourse of her own rather than allow other discourses to be constructed around her. The *loca* becomes a Kristevan deject. The abject position of the *loca* is what gives her the possibility of creating her own history, based on her body and free from interference from outside political agendas. While the work of Kristeva and Richard—similar in their close link to the French deconstructionist literary tradition—posits a position for a marginal figure such as the *loca* to withstand monolithic political, historical, and economic agendas that is sustainable in time, both critics are hesitant to look to a future in which this “resistance” has an actual result.

For Kristeva, abjection is a position without redemption; for Richard, the *loca*’s liminal intervention is too consciously ambivalent (particularly politically speaking) to commit to a programmatic “end.”

Masiello’s reading of postdictatorship art and literature, meanwhile, responds to Avelar’s in a way that is similar to Muñoz’s response to Edelman’s critique of futurity. In addition to keeping gender as a key axis of her argument (which Avelar does not do), she also questions the focus of critics like Richard on “fragmentary” discourses of the postdictatorship, in favor of a “reflection on alliance through critical thinking” informed by “a constant longing for completion” and a more willing embrace of futurity:

…we awaken to interpretation and the desire to travel *en route* to a conceptual whole, one which is not an allegorization of national quandary…but more likely a response to the flattening gloss of the market, the so-called waning of affect that has been identified with the times. […] Rather, I am urged to track the linkages between order and difference, their overlaps and points of conjuncture in order to show how a critical sensibility is shaped from the realm of cultural texts and offers the potential of a political future (13, emphasis in original).
Eschewing allegory, Masiello looks ahead to forms of art that both contest the hegemony of the market and also take into account the practices of difference that such political stances often ignore. In addition, she shows how “the gender issue”—by which she means one of the (multiple) sites “where different sets of expectations emerge, tracking the changing imperatives that determine a politics of representation against any ‘universal truth,’”—“instills a crisis in all epistemological certainties that stand on the global stage” (49, emphasis in original), including, I would imagine, discourses of “mourning.” The stated aim of her analysis, though, is not to highlight these differences, but rather to show how they can help intellectuals (north and south) work together to “acknowledge our engagements as social actors as we happen in contact with each other” (49). Calling for an “affective” (Muñoz would deem it a “collective” (26)) form of intellectual engagement, Masiello advocates for a community of interpretation that both embraces and transcends difference, towards a future that looks ahead without forgetting the past. She shows how this mode of thinking is relevant to locas in her analysis of Perlongher’s work (mentioned above), which, incidentally, prefaces her reading of Lemebel’s:

More than the “in-between” advantage\textsuperscript{30} that Perlongher suggests, gender considerations are “en route” toward change, in transit to sites of anticipated, future practice; with this, they open to the theoretical possibilities that can link an analysis of normative sexuality with democratic performance (Masiello 40).

While acknowledging that practices of gender difference have often met with difficulty (she does not use the word “defeat,” however), Masiello’s work resolutely refuses to be stuck in a mode of

\textsuperscript{30} Masiello’s mention of the rhetoric of the “in-between” is evidently a reference to the work of Silviano Santiago (2001), who talks about Latin American cultural production as a space “between the assimilation of the original model, that is, between the love and respect for what is already written, and the need to produce a new text that confronts and sometimes negates the original” (35). In fact, he critiques some literary and cultural criticism for valuing “the gradual imposition in another country of values rejected by the metropolis,” since those values are basically “objects that are out of date or obsolete in neocolonialist society, which is nowadays invariably transformed into a society of consumption” (29).
mourning that can easily slip into a never-ending form of melancholia.\textsuperscript{31} Instead, she writes about a way forward.

But what are these “theoretical possibilities” that this forward-looking thought can bring about, and what are their implications for postdictatorship thought? This realm of “potentiality”\textsuperscript{32} is also Muñoz’s concern, though he does not work with a postdictatorship literary and cultural archive for which “mourning” the past might be more apropos. His work on the idea of a political futurity in which the “queer” is central will prove decisive for my discussion, however. While Muñoz—following the work of Jameson—acknowledges that a utopian mode of thinking cannot be corralled into a programmatic series of recommendations,\textsuperscript{33} he does point the way towards a critical stance that I will take up: the idea that queerness has not yet been achieved, and that what we recognize now as “queer” is rather only an “avatar” of what will come (22).

Muñoz elaborates:

Such a hermeneutic would then be epistemologically and ontologically humble in that it would not claim the epistemological certitude of a queerness that we simply “know” but, instead…extend a glance toward that which is forward dawning […]. The purpose of

\textsuperscript{31} Freud, who early on outlined the concept of mourning as a form of understanding memory (and history), distinguished between mourning and melancholia by pointing out that unlike mourning, in melancholia the subject’s sense of self-regard is distressed: “the disturbance of self-regard is absent in mourning: but otherwise, the features [of mourning and melancholia] are the same” (243). Freud’s hypothesis was that the ego could be freed at the end of the mourning process: “when the work of mourning is completed the ego becomes free and uninhibited again” (244). But this does not happen in the case of melancholia, in which the ego itself is damaged. This resistance to conclusion that characterizes post-dictatorship “mourning” here makes it appear to blend into melancholia, and therefore never come to an end. Avelar would seem to agree: “postddictatorial literature finds itself…perennially on the brink of melancholia. […] Melancholia thus emerges from a specific variety of mourning, one that has looped back around to engulf the mournful subject” (232).

\textsuperscript{32} “Potentiality” is a term that Muñoz borrows from Giorgio Agamben’s 1999 volume \textit{Potentialities: Collective Essays in Philosophy} (Muñoz 21).

\textsuperscript{33} The idea that Muñoz opposes, in his first chapter, is that of “pragmatism” in LGBT activism in the United States, which, he says, is limited to “assimilationist” (20) calls for marriage equality that is, in practice, only for “queers with enough access to capital to imagine a life integrated within North American capitalist culture” (20). While this stance is, to say the least, important, I will not go further into it here except to say that this pragmatism, which Muñoz calls “a recent symptom of the erosion of the gay and lesbian political imagination” (21), is reminiscent of we see in the writings of Lagos and Simonetti, and stands in stark contrast to greater possibilities for gay liberation: a recent and extremely timely example of how great aspirations, when headed off into a concrete policy agenda, lose their utopian fervor.
such temporal maneuvers is to wrest ourselves from the present’s stultifying hold (28, emphasis in original).

By focusing not on the present but rather on what has yet to be, Muñoz posits that our lack of satisfaction with the present will cause us to stop limiting our critical thinking to dull, pragmatic politicking and focus on a greater picture: a glimpse of a moment “one feels ecstasy…and more importantly during moments of contemplation when one looks back at a scene from one’s past, present, or future” (32). Muñoz’s analysis looks ahead to these “potentialities” by returning time and again to the archive: his objects of study are what he points to as support for his argument. He knows queer utopia when he sees it, but to describe it would take away its potentiality.

And so: how can we know to recognize these “glimpses” (which is what critics should be able to do in order to anticipate a new turn in politics that has the loca at its center and the postdictatorship behind it), and how can they become a critical practice? One mode of critique that Muñoz proposes is the negation of anti-utopian thinking, but I submit cultural representations of the loca as sites where these glimpses can become practice. This is not to simply point to the loca as the avatar of queer futurity and leave it at that, in a sort of speech act in which practice becomes theory. Rather, by locating Muñoz’s argument in a specific moment of history—Chile, between 1990 and 2005—we can see how art and literature that place the figure of the loca at their center are uniquely able to move ahead to a literary and artistic canon of futurity in which the economics of postdictatorship Chile, and indeed the category of the

34 Muñoz focuses on a corpus of works that go from “accounts about pre-Stonewall gay bars in Ohio” to “the work of a contemporary club performer such as Kevin Aviance,” even though most of his objects come from “a cluster of sites in the New York City of the fifties and sixties that include the New York School of poetry, the Judson Memorial Church’s dance theater, and Andy Warhol’s Factory” (4).

35 Muñoz makes use of Herbert Marcuse’s idea of the “Great Refusal” (17) and Shoshana Felman’s “theory of radical negativity” (13) to literally negate negation (ie, the “anti-relationality” of Edelman’s and Bersani’s thinking), which “offers us a mode of understanding negativity that is starkly different from the version of the negative proposed by the queer antirelationalist. Here the negative becomes a resource for a certain mode of queer utopianism” (13).
“postdictatorship” itself, find their foil. The *loca*’s defiance of the reproductive arena is key to this: embracing hedonistic, “non-generative” sexual practices as part of a politics indifferent to future generations (in the words of Edelman), she can break not only with (homo and hetero) normative models of masculinity and sexuality, but also with the logic of the “model” itself, which has pervaded Chilean economic and political thought throughout the second half of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. The Chilean *loca*’s ability to look towards this unspecified future, while creating alternative affective ties that replace the bonds of the “pragmatic” present, can be observed in the work that I will be examining here.

This break with the “model” also has implications for cultural history of the period known as the postdictatorship. The *loca*’s defiance of all telos—as Edelman explicitly outlines in his “antirelational” polemic about the position of the queer, and as Kristeva implicitly argues in her discussion of the deject—is a powerful way to counteract years of history that have marginalized queers from different master narratives. On the other hand, however, in order to propose an alternative to the postdictatorship in which the *loca* throws present neoliberal economic policies off balance in favor of a more egalitarian, affective future, inserting *locas* back into existing master narratives is not enough; a new history has to be constructed. This is perhaps the central tension of this chapter: how to “recover” the *loca* in history in such a way that does not appropriate her body for some untoward economic, political, aesthetic, or historical agenda—even one that (re)locates her as a historical “winner” rather than a “loser.” The same goes for the “inversion” of the position of cultural production by or about *locas* within the canon to ensure their presence and prominence within it. The future is not so simple as that, and besides, to do so would replicate the rhetoric of “success-ism” that has been so prevalent in Chile since the eighties. In what follows, then, I will offer close readings of several texts in which
locas are central, in order to examine how they mediate ideas about political and economic futurity in Chile—both canonically and historically speaking.

Simonetti: The Loca as Historically, Economically, and Sexually Vulnerable

An engineer by profession, Pablo Simonetti came to notoriety after publishing a short story titled “Santa Lucía,” for which he won first prize in a contest tied to Paula magazine in 1997. “Santa Lucía” is included in Vidas vulnerables, an anthology of short stories that was Simonetti’s first published volume in 1999. Simonetti and his work have been consistently identified with Chile’s highest social class (Sutherland 2001: 13, Espinosa 54): the characters in his stories are usually very wealthy, and as such, Simonetti’s work has been described as conservative (Espinosa 54) because of attitudes in it about gender that are generally espoused by, and associated with, Chile’s most entrenched economic interests. Vidas vulnerables outlines what later came to be known as Simonetti’s political stance on gay rights in democracy: a liberal discourse of “inclusion” and equality that seeks to minimize the differences between the ways in which homosexuals and heterosexuals are treated in Chile. This discourse, meanwhile, is firmly in sync with the neoliberal economic system in place since the dictatorship, with no economic critique whatsoever. Simonetti himself, meanwhile, has exemplified with his own life the way he evidently feels that gays should comport themselves in Chile: projecting a conventionally masculine, homonormative image, he runs a gay rights advocacy organization and is a regular presence on the lecture circuit of several of Chile’s exclusive, private universities.36

36 The legal status of several of these universities vis-à-vis whether or not they are for-profit continues to be disputed today, but few would argue that their costs are prohibitive for the majority of Chileans without going into massive amounts of debt, the burden of which is one of the subjects of persistent student protests. Simonetti’s presence as a lecturer at some of them reinforces his image as aligned with the powerful economic interests that attend (and, indeed, own) these institutions. See, for example, this link from the website of the Universidad Finis Terrae:
Vidas vulnerables is a succession of short stories in which homosexuality is either normalized and thus politically (and economically) neutralized, or becomes a matter so private as to be close to inaccessible politically; practices of sexual difference on the economic margins of society, meanwhile, are completely exoticized, or even viewed with disgust. “Santa Lucía,” for example, is about the betrayal by homosexuality of the otherwise apparently peaceful existence of a conventional nuclear family. In it, the nameless protagonist is filled one winter evening with a “rara urgencia” (57) to go up to the nearby Santa Lucía Hill, the iconic natural landmark in the center of Santiago that is known as a cruising spot after dark. The protagonist’s “urge” and “fascination” (57) with the hill on that particular day—the word “desire” is never mentioned—comes from the fact that he has exchanged suggestive glances with a man at the entrance to the hill on his way back from work. First of all, it is a wonder that the family ever ended up living in this part of the city. After all, the narrator-protagonist states, the hill is “un lugar prohibido”: “Tanto Camila como yo sabemos que durante la noche lo habitan rateros y degenerados. […] Ella se opuso cuando tuvimos la oportunidad de arrendarlo; naturalmente imaginó que la falta de seguridad se extendía al resto del barrio” (57). He has doubts about the area around the hill because it is far from the areas of Santiago that the wealthy usually inhabit, and his family is clearly marked as wealthy and conservative: his wife, Camila, has blond hair (59) and is thus unambiguously racialized as non-indigenous; a crucifix hangs above the couple’s marital bed (67); and he himself is consumed by concerns about “la necesidad de guardar las apariencias” (66) of upper-class respectability. Simonetti has been accused of misogyny as an author (Espinosa 54), and this story is no exception: when the protagonist tells his wife that he is planning on going to the hill after dinner, her reaction is completely passive. At first, she protests

http://www.finisterrae.cl/carrera_teatro/noticias_detalle.php?idNoticia=2253&PHPSESSID=b123a938e71fccc7c9be3526e953e49d4
about the rain, as if it were completely unclear to her what his real reasons for going out are:

“Camila intuía de qué estábamos hablando, pero jamás se atrevería a explicitar sus temores” (59); she eventually resorts to “resigned frustration” (60), without ever asserting her objections to her husband’s impending foray into infidelity or voicing her concerns—until now, only “intuited”—about his sexual orientation. While Camila’s willful ignorance (and the fact that this is something the protagonist takes advantage of) may be interpreted as the story’s representation (and critique) of an ultra-conservative upbringing and culture that refuses even to name such transgressions, no effort is ever made to examine her side of the story. Eventually, the protagonist ventures back up the hill, where he has a sexual encounter with the man he had glimpsed earlier. When the encounter ends and the other man leaves, all he wants is “que apareciera Camila con una manta y me llevara abrazado hasta el departamento” (65); later, back at the house, when she draws him a bath, “[e]ra como una madre socorriendo a su hijo” (68). His evident concern for appearances belies his longing to be seen as the patriarch of a conventional family, which to him clearly means having a wife who will treat him exactly as his mother did, even after his sexual encounters with men. Misogyny is perhaps the only way to explain how Simonetti could try to realistically include a woman in his narration who would knowingly marry—and stay married to—a gay, pathological liar. At the melodramatic end of the story, Camila sees the blood coming from “beneath the legs” of the protagonist slowly changing the color of the water in the bathtub, and leaves him to sleep in their daughter’s room with nothing more than an “hasta mañana.” Repression, lies, and humiliation are clearly, for Simonetti, the only response the wealthy have to homosexuality, particularly when they have firmly cast their lot with the reproductive arena.
“Amor virtual,” another short story in the 1999 collection, portrays a more open practice of homosexuality, but only because it appears in the context of great wealth. The story’s characters move from New York lofts, to exclusive areas of coastal Chile, to Paris, all in seemingly casual, effortless ways—an experience only accessible to very, very few in a country whose monthly minimum wage is just over US$ 400. Again, it is narrated in the first-person by an unnamed protagonist, but this time the protagonist’s words have a clear addressee: a friend of his named Benjamín. Benjamín has recently died in an accident of some sort, and around him his friends mourn the loss; but this is an apolitical, privatized mode of mourning that takes place less in Chile than it does in New York, where Benjamín lived with his boyfriend Bill. True, the first site of mourning is at the cemetery in the wealthy coastal Chilean village of Zapallar, but later, the protagonist heads to New York City to spend time with Bill, as well as with Benjamín’s artist friend Lucrecia, an Italian marquise. In this world, the characters are free to mourn openly for their dead friend, but only in certain select and rich areas of Chile, or by taking a costly, eleven-hour plane ride to New York. Other than a brief reference to Benjamín’s escape from Chile’s “convivencia hipócrita” (133), the reasons why he felt he had to move to New York in the first place are left undiscussed. Benjamín and his gay narrator friend may have ended up excluded from most spaces in Chile—other than the cemetery, of course—but this is, for them, luckily not a problem, since New York and Paris are just a plane trip away, and they are more interesting anyway.

In “El baile,” once again we find ourselves among Chile’s most wealthy, this time at a New Year’s party at a beach house. Esteban (who narrates the story) and his wife Mariana are greeted at the door by their host, Miguel, for a seemingly routine evening of dinner and cocktails, 37

37 During the scene in which Benjamín is buried, Simonetti seeks to access a tradition of gay Chilean writing by invoking José Donoso, who is “en una tumba más atrás, sin vista, envidiándote para toda una eternidad” (130).
but Esteban is quickly jarred out of his comfort zone by the appearance of Cucho, the cook, “un hombrecillo” (Simonetti 99) whose overt effeminacy suggests practices of sexual difference that threaten Esteban’s sense of the hierarchies of the evening. The “authority” (100) and “informality” (99) with which Cucho addresses Miguel is completely incomprehensible to Esteban, who views Cucho with disgust. He describes the latter’s somewhat grotesque physical appearance in a way reminiscent of Donoso’s emblematic character La Manuela, discussed at length in the first chapter: “Profundas arrugas le cercaban los ojos negros como agujeros, una afilada nariz de gancho parecía a punto de soltar una gota y en su calva oscura florecía una multitud de pecas” (100). Esteban seems to be mostly worried that Cucho does not “know his place,” and that he seems to be transgressing his boundaries through his excessively friendly and close relationship with his employers: “Ser testigo de sus habilidades no hizo para mí menos incomprehensible el hecho de que un personaje como él trabajara para nuestros amigos” (101). If Cucho is so dismissive of the social distance between himself and Miguel, what else might he be capable of transgressing? Esteban’s worst fears seem to be confirmed after dinner, as the guests begin to dance and count down to the New Year and the champagne begins to flow more freely; suddenly, Esteban realizes that Cucho is dancing with him:

Me volví y me vi enfrentado al cuidador. Se contoneaba a no más de un metro de distancia. Aunque mantenía la vista baja, comprendí que yo era el foco de su baile. […] Sin duda exteriorizaba mi desconcierto y de algún modo pedía ayuda. Miguel me devolvió una mirada comprensiva. “Cuando toma, le da por bailar,” me dijo risueño. “No te preocupes, es inofensivo” (102).

Despite Miguel’s paternalistic reassurances, Esteban is completely taken aback by Cucho’s transgression of his “proper place.” And yet, by the end of the story, Esteban realizes that

38 This evocation of La Manuela in the character of Cucho is likely another attempt by Simonetti to insert himself in Chile’s queer literary tradition.
39 In an aside, another one of the guests at the party, Tomás, reveals that Cucho maintains a secret, abusive sexual relationship with a Carabinero (a military police officer); yet more evidence of Cucho’s transgressiveness, for both refusing a homonormative relationship model and also doing so in a prohibited way (Simonetti 101).
Cucho’s motives are “innocent” (104); that is, Cucho’s transgressions are “only” sexual, not economic. Once Esteban realizes that Cucho’s sexual difference poses no threat to the economic hierarchy of the invited guests at the party, he stops worrying about him; Cucho can do what he wants as long as he does not disturb Miguel’s paternalistic place as host, and his “talante de pretor romano” (99). At the end of the night, Esteban narrates, “secretamente bailaba con él. […] Debo haberme emocionado, porque me tomó un momento para recuperar el aire para decirle a su oído con audífono: ‘Feliz Año Nuevo, Cucho’” (104). The retrograde stench of patriarchy is thus thinly disguised as progressivism: a *locas* as grotesque and effeminate as Cucho can manage to win over even the most homophobic and traditionalist of the party’s guests. Hope for a decrease of homophobia among Chile’s wealthy ruling class remains, as long as the *locas* they tolerate do not transgress certain economic boundaries and hierarchies policed by those who have access to the reproductive arena. For Simonetti, therefore, if one has to be openly gay, the best place to do it is in New York; meanwhile, homosexuality within Chile is either subject to the bindings of repression, or it breeds *locas* of inscrutable social standing and hideous appearance and comportment, who might even be in abusive relationships. Simonetti poses homonormativity and repression as the only solutions if one is to live in Chile, because being openly queer poses a definite threat to existing structures of economic and familial privilege, and needs to be neutralized. Mourning is apolitical; practices of sexual difference that might be seen as economically threatening are defused; and the historical telos in which the narratives are inscribed keeps *locas* safely on Chile’s geographic, familial, and economic margins. *Vidas vulnerables* represents the tenets of conservative thought in Chile with regard to sexual difference.
**The “Unruly Desire” for the Future**

The fluid position of the *loca* in a society that rigidly divides and segregates its margins from its center—geographically, ideologically, and economically—is a key element of Lemebel’s book of chronicles *Loco afán*, whose central project deploys the figure of the *loca* to complicate the “dichotomous appearances” (Richard 2004: 43) of the geography in which she moves. I was unable to discuss the critical dynamics of the *loca*’s transcendence of Left versus Right in my shorter reading of one particular chronicle within *Loco afán*, entitled *La noche de los visones (O la última cena de la Unidad Popular)*, in the second chapter. There, my discussion centered upon how Lemebel’s nostalgia for the UP years allowed for a gendered reading of the political and economic utopias that had been imagined during Allende’s presidency; here, my focus will be more on how Lemebel creates history in the present of the postdictatorship, rather than retroactively, although I will still focus on how his addition of a gendered perspective to a larger, more politicized memory process enriches the way the history of the postdictatorship can be conceived by moving the reader’s frame of reference from a retrospective mode (mourning) to a more utopian one (futurity).

Lemebel worked extensively as a visual artist and photographer during the dictatorship when he was in his twenties and thirties. The visual aspects of his work are what first gained him artistic notoriety, and they are also what has allowed his work to be placed within the political categories of memory and mourning that have been the focus of “postdictatorship” literary and cultural critics. Continuing in the vein of a performance art movement that began during the military government, he formed a duo with writer and artist Francisco Casas known as *Las
Las Yeguas del Apocalipsis. In an era of harsh authoritarianism, Lemebel and Casas called theirs “una propuesta de desacato”: their “art actions” included riding a horse together, naked, through the streets of downtown Santiago de Chile as well as interrupting a communist party conference dressed in feathers typical of female burlesque performers (Herralde 38). Lemebel and Casas’s plan was to “carnivalize” the streets in order to advocate for frivolity in a society obsessed with profits, functionality and usefulness. Writing about this period, Lemebel recalls how “la gente creía que éramos miles. Decían vienen las Yeguas del Apocalipsis, a esconderse. […] Éramos cronistas visuales. La letra ya había pasado por el cuerpo” (Herralde 39). With the restoration of Chilean democracy in 1990, the interventions of Las Yeguas diminished over time, and eventually disappeared by the mid-1990s. Many of the chronicles that Lemebel wrote later, however, are based on practices that Las Yeguas had previously established, and were an important channel of resistance and expression during the dictatorship. Lemebel’s work, then, is inextricably linked to the visual arts, which—as Richard points out in a discussion of Carlos Leppe—were the first site in which a queer aesthetic was used to question the grands récits of Chilean culture and politics. At one point in Loco afán, for example, when the narrator looks back on a Las Yeguas intervention, the spirit of corporeality in which the text was created becomes clear. In a chronicle entitled “La muerte de Madonna,” a loca named La Madonna is introduced by a description of the impact she made at a Las Yeguas performance entitled Lo que

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40 In Chilean slang, a *yegua* not only refers to a female horse, but also a loud, dramatic, hysterical woman—a stark contrast to the jackboot-wearing soldiers so prominent on the streets of Santiago at the time.

41 In his seminal 1968 work *Rabelais and His World*, M. M. Bakhtin outlines the idea of the carnival as an atmosphere of crowded chaos, in which for a short time, social hierarchies break down and individuals feel like they are part of a collectivity or community, and cease to be themselves. Wearing a costume and a mask, he continues, an individual exchanges bodies and is renewed. The work of *Las Yeguas* in the city of Santiago was seeking to do precisely that: use costume and pageantry to subvert established social and economic structures.
el SIDA se llevó\textsuperscript{42} (see Figure 38, although La Madonna is not pictured) whose spectators were fascinated with “la picardía tramposa de sus gestos” (Lemebel 1996: 36). Here, the chronicle serves a double function: first, it memorializes the valiant efforts of Las Yeguas and others to resist the Pinochet dictatorship, and second, Lemebel places himself within a tradition of performance art that proved to be one of the few effective, non-violent modes of critiquing the dictatorship.\textsuperscript{43}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure38.png}
\caption{Pedro Lemebel (right) and Francisco Casas.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{42} This is a play on words: the Spanish language title of Victor Fleming’s 1939 movie Gone with the Wind is Lo que el viento se llevó (literally, “What the wind carried away”), and in the performance by Las Yeguas, the word in Spanish for wind, viento, is replaced by the Spanish word for AIDS, SIDA. The title of Las Yeguas’ performance does not translate very easily into English, but its closest approximation would be “What AIDS Carried Away”: a queer appropriation of the film starring transvestite prostitutes in Santiago’s “red-light district” (a denomination which must also be read with some degree of irony). Las Yeguas’ queer appropriation of such traditional (and heteronormative) iconography as that found in Gone with the Wind takes on even subversive undertones when we take into account the fact that this performance took place during the Pinochet dictatorship, which severely limited freedom of expression.

\textsuperscript{43} There were a number of other non-violent modes of opposition during the Pinochet years, including magazines (such as APSI) that offered a democracy-oriented editorial slant, the work of the Vicariat of Solidarity, and the visual arts of the Escena de avanzada. More information about this is available in the previous chapter.
Avelar repeatedly employs the terms “ruins” in his critique of postdictatorship literature, calling for readers to look for remnants of the defeated Left as a way of remembering it, but his discussion does not make provisions for other kinds of ruins, such as those invoked by Lemebel, that lie outside these larger political agendas. One example of such a ruin are the AIDS quilts described in the chronicle “El proyecto nombres.” This chronicle focuses on the Chilean version of the program that originated in the US in the 1980s and 90s to create quilts in honor of those who died of AIDS. The Chilean quilts “tampoco tienen la espectacularidad del primer mundo y nunca los autografiará Liz Taylor” (Lemebel 1996: 95), but they function as memorials to the Chileans who died of AIDS while also placing them in the context of an international circulation of both the disease and activism against it. The quilts also link deaths from AIDS with those wrought at the hands of the dictatorship, stitching together these two histories and creating links of solidarity among the “defeated”:

En uno de estos tapices…se lee “Víctor por siempre,” bordado de lana roja sobre saco de arpillera. Sin duda la primera lectura de este tapiz lo relaciona con Víctor Jara and su memoria de mártir en dictadura. Otras connotaciones proclaman estas expresiones locales, un cruce político inevitable, las succiona en una marea de nombres sidados o desaparecidos, que deletrean sin ecos el mismo desamparo (Lemebel 1996: 95).

In this narrative, the suffering of those who mourn for their loved ones who died from the repressive policies of the dictatorship is literally woven into that of those who mourn for loved ones who died of AIDS. The appropriation in the quilt of the iconographic singer Victor Jara—an almost sacred figure for the Chilean Left—represents a bond of solidarity and also serves as a

44 Víctor Jara was an activist, teacher, theater director and folk singer who reached artistic prominence during Salvador Allende’s presidency. He played a key role in the Nueva canción chilena (New Chilean Song) movement, writing and performing songs of protest that often strongly condemned the Chilean oligarchy while glorifying workers’ movements. Because of his leftist sympathies, the Armed Forces arrested him not long after the coup d’état, and then tortured and murdered him. He gained a rather iconic status for the Chilean and global Left following the efforts of his British wife Joan Jara to preserve his legacy by sneaking recordings of his music out of Chile and distributing them worldwide.
reminder that not all who sympathized with the Left and died prematurely under the dictatorship did so as a result of political persecution. Although it may be uncomfortable for the Left to have the politically motivated deaths of “its own” be closely identified with those who succumbed to AIDS, Lemebel insists on linking them together within the historical memory of the dictatorship.

Another example of a “remnant from the past,” to use Avelar’s terms, being complicated by Lemebel is the photograph described in the first chronicle of the collection, “La noche de los visones.” Gazing at a photograph of a group of locas at a 1972 New Year’s Eve party—the following year would bring the military coup led by Pinochet, which overthrew Allende’s Unidad Popular government—the narrator of the story recounts the destinies of the individuals pictured, most of whom were to die of AIDS in the 1980s. Therefore, the looming dictatorship is immediately linked with the impending AIDS epidemic. The photo functions as a window into the past, and the chronicle thus represents what Avelar describes as the “will to reminisce”: “drawing the present’s attention to everything that was left unaccomplished and mournful in the past” (Avelar 2). The chronicle’s narrator mourns by contrasting the remnants of the joyful past with the dire state of the present:

Del grupo que aparece en la foto, casi no quedan sobrevivientes. El amarillo pálido del papel, es un sol desteñido como desahucio de las pieles que enfiestan el daguerrotipo. La suciedad de las moscas, fue punteando de lunares las mejillas, como adelanto maquillado del sarcoma (Lemebel 1996: 21).

The mourning process described in “La noche de los visones,” then, is a nostalgic evocation of a lost Leftist ideal, as discussed in Chapter 2; however, the loss of political freedoms, something the locas share with their vanquished Leftist brethren, is, in the chronicle, tied together with the AIDS losses—something which is not part of the larger Leftist agenda in Chile. The deaths from AIDS of four locas portrayed in the photograph merge with the thousands of Chileans dead from political persecution, while also standing apart from them. This story informs its readers—as
well as all mourners of those who died in the dictatorship—that not all the “vanquished” are alike.

Although the figure of the loca walks a fine line between individual subjectivity and Leftist collectivity, at times her discourse must explicitly distance itself from the Left in order to be heard. The Chilean Left may cautiously embrace the homosexual under its umbrella of apparent inclusivity, but the loca sometimes finds that the expectations of belonging to the Left are too restrictive. In his 1996 chronicle “Manifiesto (Hablo por mi diferencia),” another text included in Loco afán but originally read by the author during a political protest in Santiago in September 1986 (Lemebel 1996: 90), Lemebel openly confronts the Chilean Left, proclaiming his specificity and refusing to be subsumed into any larger discourse.45 Utilizing the language of the Left—his speech is addressed to a collective compañero—Lemebel asserts a separation of the loca from the rest: “Y sospecho de esta cueca46 democrática/ Pero no me hable del proletariado/ Porque ser pobre y maricón es peor” (Lemebel 1996: 83). He presciently reminds his audience that the dictatorship, against which the entire spectrum of the Chilean Left had united in opposition, would not always be a sufficient force for unification. Referring to the Chilean law that outlaws public homosexual conduct as one of a number of so-called “malas costumbres,” Lemebel warns that the Leftist rhetoric of inclusion will likely be short-lived:

Malas costumbres/ Por mala suerte/ Como la dictadura/ Peor que la dictadura/ Porque la dictadura pasa/ Y viene la democracia/ Y detrasito el socialismo/ ¿Y entonces?/ ¿Qué harán con nosotros, compañero?/ ¿Nos amarrarán de las trenzas en fardos con destino a un sidario cubano? (Lemebel 1996: 84).

45 The controversial nature of this speech, in light of its historical context, cannot be overstated. That year, a weakening in the military regime led to an increase in its opposition, but the predominant feeling on the Left at that time was that various Leftist factions had to show a united front against the dictatorship in order to strengthen their own cause. Leftist partisans thought that any deviation from unity would weaken their efforts. Lemebel certainly understood the implications of a public critique of the Left at this time, which makes his speech all the more radical. 46 The cueca is the Chilean national dance.
Lemebel voices his suspicion that the moment gays cease to be useful in the struggle for democracy, the Left will abandon them. He goes on to mock the apparently fixed categories of masculinity in Leftist politics, referring to the ideas of Che Guevara⁴⁷: “¿El futuro será en blanco y negro?/ ¿El tiempo en noche y día laboral sin ambigüedades?/ ¿No habrá un maricón en alguna esquina desequilibrando el futuro de su hombre nuevo?” (Lemebel 1996: 85). Lemebel continues with a fierce critique of the simplistic discourse of masculinity espoused by the socialists:

No sabe que la hombría/ Nunca la aprendí en los cuarteles/ Mi hombría me la enseñó la noche […]/ Esa hombría de la que usted se jacta/ Se la metieron en el regimiento/ Un milico asesino/ De esos que aún están en el poder/ Mi hombría no la recibí del partido/ Porque me rechazaron con risitas… (Lemebel 1996: 87-8).

Here, Lemebel’s critique of the “phallocratic” Left explicitly distances itself from the organization in general, since he was rejected by the Socialist Party for being gay. His conclusion, then, is simultaneously a proclamation of the autonomy of all practitioners of sexual dissidence, and also a request for new spaces to be opened up by the Left for locas, present and future: “Y su utopía es para las generaciones futuras/ Hay tantos niños que van a nacer/ Con una alita rota/ Y yo quiero que vuelen, compañero/ Que su revolución/ Les dé un pedazo de cielo rojo/ Para que puedan volar” (Lemebel 1996: 90). The “Manifesto” is a proclamation of the power and transformative potential of the loca’s political autonomy. The loca simultaneously distances herself from the Left and keeps open the possibility for a more inclusive political coalition, in the way Muñoz theorizes. Lemebel shows how the loca can challenge the dichotomous ideological and political categories that seek to recruit her for their respective causes.

⁴⁷ I offer a brief, gender-centered discussion of the writings of Che Guevara in Chapter 2, but for further information see Josefina Saldaña-Portillo’s 2003 volume The Revolutionary Imagination in the Americas and the Age of Development.
Although the volatile nature of the loca’s position can provide her with a degree of political autonomy and power, this instability can also be a disadvantage if the loca does not maintain the specificity of her mourning. If the loca’s identity becomes so porous that it turns into a space in which she can be manipulated—either by the forces of neoliberal market capitalism or by a homophobic, chauvinistic Left—she will be vulnerable to untold persecution. Lemebel describes a number of cases of locas who fall into the trap of allowing ideologies to be imposed upon their bodies, thereby losing their ability to control their own political identification. Against their will, and sometimes without their realization, some locas become closely identified with the Left or the Right—or with both. One instance of an overarching political ideology that poses a threat to the loca in Loco afán comes in the form of AIDS, which Lemebel often positions as metonymic for the dangers of the neoliberal economic system imposed by the Right. In a society in which the wealthy classes tend to look abroad for their cultural and economic cues, new and especially imported goods bring status; it would seem that AIDS, perversely, is no exception. Lemebel writes about AIDS ironically as a status symbol that comes imported from the United States: the loca known as Pilola Alessandri, the scion of a well-known and wealthy family in Chile, was exposed to it on a trip to New York, and “fue la primera que la trajo en exclusiva, la más auténtica, la recién estrenada moda gay para morir” (Lemebel 1996: 16). The loca is as vulnerable as any consumer to the seductions of status that much of what comes from abroad—including AIDS—can bring her, especially if she can flirt with the neoliberal market-oriented regime that defeated Allende as a way to critique the Left. This anarchic rejection of political and economic categories imposed upon her is a move that Lemebel faithfully depicts, even when that flirtation with neoliberalism becomes lethal. Pilola Alessandri, the loca who wholeheartedly embraces the benefits that Rightist neoliberalism brings to Chile,
pays with her life for those benefits. Pilola has fallen victim to the sale and consumption of AIDS, which, as Lemebel says in the chronicle “Y ahora las luces,”

…da para instalar un súper mall, donde las producciones sidáticas se vendan como pan caliente. […] En un stand especial, a todo neón, el negocio SIDARTE de Benetton; donde no se sabe si el gringo previene asustando con el famoso póster de la Pietá cadavérica, o carnavaliza el uso del condón […]. Quizás este supermarket acentúa su perversa prevención cuando está dirigido a los homosexuales. Pareciera incentivar la enfermedad con su pornografía visual […]. Nadie se fija entonces en la precaución escrita… (Lemebel 1996: 67-8).

For Lemebel, AIDS represents the dark side of Chile’s idealization of, and orientation toward, the imported. If the loca falls into this seduction of neoliberalism, the result could be her death.

However, Lemebel refuses to completely discredit neoliberalism’s affinity for that which is brought in from abroad, and advocates instead for the participation of the loca in the kind of mass culture often imported into Chile. The chronicle entitled “La muerte de Madonna” is about a transvestite known as La Madonna, who, despite being a rather poor (in various senses of the word) imitator of the famous singer, is a hero who defies the brutal repression of the Carabineros police—known colloquially as “pacos”—during the dictatorship.

Nunca le tuvo miedo a los pacos. Se les paraba bien altanera la loca, les gritaba que era una artista; y no una asesina como ellos. Entonces le daban duro, la apaleaban hasta dejarla tirada en la vereda y la loca no se callaba, seguía gritándoles hasta que desaparecía el furgón… (Lemebel 1996: 34).

Later on, after the restoration of democracy, La Madonna is featured in a video installation at Santiago’s Museum of Fine Arts that is then censored because of the complaints of a Boy Scout

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48 This invocation of mass culture—whether as a parody of the hysteria of 1970s Leftists like Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart around imported North American popular culture, or as an outright embrace of it—has its roots in the work of the circle that worked, during the dictatorship, at the Instituto de Humanidades at the University of Chile; I discussed this at some length in the previous chapter.

49 This exhibition was held in 1990 in Santiago’s Museo de Bellas Artes, and served as a bellwether for the way the newly installed democratic government of Chile would address matters of freedom of artistic expression after sixteen years of censorship under the dictatorship. According to Lemebel’s description in the chronicle, museum director Nemesio Antúnez instituted a large-scale exhibition of different media entitled “Museo abierto,” and one element of it was a video entitled Casa Particular by Gloria Camiruaga. The video depicted a house of transvestite

288
leader who takes his troupe to visit the museum. Some of La Madonna’s gestures in the video are considered obscene, and she becomes a lightning rod for a debate about freedom of expression in Chilean art. The chronicle positively describes the liberties that La Madonna takes, not only in the context of the video installation but also in terms of her right to appropriate North American mass consumer culture—in this case, the gestures and appearance of the singer Madonna, who has been known to appropriate popular cultural elements of her own:

Cerrando los ojos, era ella la Madonna, y no bastaba tener mucha imaginación para ver el duplicado mapuche casi perfecto. Eran miles de recortes de la estrella que empapelaban su pieza. Miles de pedazos de su cuerpo que armaban el firmamento de la loca (Lemebel 1996: 34).

La Madonna is portrayed as heroic not just because of her resistance to dictatorial repression, but also because she maintains her unique performance (a mimesis, but also a parody, of a prominent figure readily exported by the culture industry) even when it brings discomfort to the head of the Fine Arts Museum under Chile’s fragile new democracy. La Madonna’s defiance of the dictatorship does not preclude her participation in what it brought to the country. Although the result of a loca’s participation in the neoliberal marketplace is often little more than a slightly grotesque simulacrum of the status she hopes to attain, Lemebel claims this simulacrum as another tactic on the part of the loca to assert her individuality. The remnants that the loca utilizes for her performance can serve another function, then: that of a past that persists despite the tyranny of the present exercised by neoliberalism, as described by Avelar. The participation of the loca in the logic of neoliberalism, then, is a form of resistance against the normative

prostitutes on San Camilo Avenue, the heart of Santiago’s mythical “red-light district,” in which the transvestite la Madonna appears. In the video, La Madonna appears naked, and although she initially has her penis hidden between her legs, she lets go of it and, as Lemebel puts it, “se suelta y un falo porfiado desborda la pantalla” (Lemebel 1996: 37). The chronicle goes on to describe how on the first day of the exhibition, a group of boy scouts is touring the museum and ends up watching the video of La Madonna, much to the horror of their leader, which Lemebel calls “Daniel Boom” [sic]. The leader demands that the video be censored, and Antúnez eventually does so, inciting a debate about the limits of censorship in democracy, in which the body of a loca was at the center—even though, as Lemebel points out, La Madonna herself “nunca supo nada” (1996: 38).
schematic of the Left, even when it occurs simultaneously with a resistance against the oppression of the Right. Although Lemebel’s somewhat grotesque descriptions of this phenomenon, like La Madonna’s doomed performance of the US singer’s persona, can also be read as an unmasking of the falsity of neoliberalism, it is important to highlight the double meaning of this participation as a way for the loca to appropriate this economic system for her own use, even if it means testing the limits of freedom of expression in a newly established and vulnerable democracy.

Just as with his performances as a member of Las Yeguas, Lemebel and the locas he portrays in the chronicles offer humor and carnival as ways of subverting the sober, productivity-oriented schematic of the Right’s neoliberal, authoritarian regime. The tragedies of the locas who die of AIDS are interspersed with unexpected and darkly comic episodes, such as towards the end of the chronicle about La Madonna, which describes the way she continues to prostitute herself even after AIDS has taken its toll on her body.

Desde ese momento, su escaso pelo albino, fue pelechando en una nevada de plumas que esparcía por la vereda cuando patinaba sin ganas, cuando se paraba en los tacoagujas toda desabrida, a medio pintar, sujetándose con la lengua los dientes sueltos cuando preguntaba en la ventana de un auto ¿Mister, yu íovmi? (Lemebel 1996: 39)

Within Kristeva’s theory, this type of (admittedly dark) humor is an important way of resisting both conservative authoritarianism and Leftist “political correctness.” Continuing to prostitute herself even when she knows she has AIDS, La Madonna remains distant from any kind of morality; yet at the same time, her attempts to stay faithful to the “blond ambition” of her idol and role model show a certain adherence to an economic system imposed by the Right. La Madonna’s position is impossible to pin down, as is the way the chronicle treats her: it oscillates between admiration for her against-all-odds comedic pluck and perverse fascination with her grotesquely tragic end.
The *loca*’s mourning is so liminal, in fact, that it problematizes ideas about mourning itself: is the *loca* engaging in mourning or melancholia? A more thorough examination of theories of mourning and melancholia reveals that the *loca* is able to stand on the limit between them. In the case of Lemebel’s *Loco afán*, however, the mourning process is not something from which the *loca* necessarily wants to free herself, because it allows her to utilize her body as a way of resisting political ideologies and maintaining her position of productive abjection in order to ensure that her own story is told. Does the *loca*, then, tend more towards melancholia? Avelar’s analysis of mourning in post-dictatorship societies seems similar to that of Kristeva in that mourning can be a never-ending process, an abjection of sorts that seeks to perpetuate itself in order to keep memory alive. Avelar states that “what is most proper to mourning is to resist its own accomplishment, to oppose its own conclusion […]. The mourner is by definition engaged in a task that s/he does not want to conclude” (4-5). Melancholia, then—or at least an undefined area between melancholia and mourning—may be a much more useful state from which to resist attempts to corral subjectivity into categories. Considering that Freud himself discussed how productive melancholia could be for individual subjects, this is an ambiguity that is appropriate for the *loca* to inhabit:

…let us dwell for a moment on the view which the melancholic’s disorder affords of the constitution of the human ego. We see how in him one part of the ego sets itself over against the other, judges it critically, and, as it were, takes it as its object. Our suspicion [is] that the critical agency which is here split off from the ego might also show its independence in other circumstances (Freud 246).

Freud emphasizes the critical agency of the melancholic subject, an agency that the *loca* makes use of in her efforts to carry out what I call a “mourning of resistance.” Through queerness that comes through resistance to the strict binaries of gender difference as well as Right and Left, the *loca* is able to defy the categories of psychoanalysis, remaining on the borderline between
mourning and melancholia. This constant struggle for subjectivity, however, is in constant tension with solidarity with larger movements: the loca must walk a fine line, at times lending her voice to larger political groups in order to advance an agenda in which she believes, and other times standing apart from those groups in order to ensure her own freedom. The figure of the loca defies categories of gender, political ideology, genre and mourning itself; this constant insubordination is what allows the loca to stand apart and for her voice to be heard all the more clearly into the future. The “abject” gender position of the loca—whether to call this position one of “masculinity” is a question that I will leave open—is what allows her to maintain this balance, which distances her from any larger, Leftist agendas of “mourning” the past; it also brings her nearer to the imagination of a future in which individual subjectivities are firmly taken into account in tandem with larger political and economic stances.

Lorenza (or, Can Locas Be Canonical?)

There is one particular short chronicle in Loco afán, entitled “Lorenza (Las alas de la manca),” that has often gone unnoticed by critics. This chronicle, situated within a section of the book that tells the stories of queer male artists and writers in Chile, is clearly created with canon formation in mind, and tells the stories of the more marginal, queer subjectivities that made their voices heard during the dictatorship. Lemebel tells the story of a boy named Ernst Böttner who had an accident where he was electrocuted; his arms were amputated as a result. At the age of 14, in 1973, Ernst left Chile for Germany, where he became a painter and performance artist. She, because by this time Ernst was occasionally dressing as a female, studied art in Kassel, Germany, and at New York University. She spent time in the western United States as well, before returning to Germany in the late 1980s. She played the part of “Petra,” the mascot of the 1992
Special Olympics in Barcelona, Spain, and performed in several German cabarets in Munich. She died of AIDS in January of 1994.

Coincidentally, one section of Roberto Bolaño’s novel *Estrella distante*, published the same year as *Loco afán*, tells a similar story: some of the details are different—for example, Bolaño refers to her as “Lorenzo”—but there is no doubt that the two volumes are talking about the same person. In a way, *Estrella distante* has a similar mission to *Loco afán*: to create a canon of sorts to intervene in the cultural history of the postdictatorship, against a Left that both Lemebel and Bolaño considered to be insufficiently inclusive. *Estrella distante* poses an alternative, semi-apocryphal canon of Chilean poets and artists—also all men, curiously enough—who contributed to Chilean art from abroad and who have been supposedly “forgotten” and ignored by an “establishment” who remained in the country during the dictatorship. Lorenza is positioned by Bolaño as an artist forgotten because of her exile, and positioned by Lemebel as an artist forgotten because of her queerness.

Lorenza herself, however, is a figure of somewhat more considerable political ambiguity than Bolaño and Lemebel suggest: she never explicitly denounced the dictatorship, or positioned herself against homophobia in Chile. She also never made any sort of political statements about the charged topics of queerness and exile to which Lemebel and Bolaño attach her. How, then, did she come to be considered such an avatar of these “canons” of postdictatorship art and literature, particularly when nothing at all is known about her politics and she lived outside of Chile for so long? Aside from the ways she is presented in the two aforementioned volumes,

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50 Lemebel said, in correspondence with me, that his own chronicle of Lorenza first appeared in *Página abierta* magazine in 1991, so Bolaño could have read it; perhaps, Lemebel suggested, his own account was the primary one and Bolaño’s was only derivative. This is doubtful, however, because Bolaño’s admiration for Lemebel was such that he likely would have given credit where it was due, and also because Bolaño bases much of his account on coverage of Lorenza that appeared in the Spanish press in 1992, to which Lemebel would not have had access at the time.
relatively little is known about her, so a series of archival searches in Berlin, Barcelona, Santiago, San Francisco, and New York yielded further information. Born to German parents in Punta Arenas, Chile, in 1959, it turns out that Ernst was associated with this rhetoric of “exemplarity” and “modeling” from a very early age. In a 1973 article in the children’s magazine Mampato—which, interestingly, Isabel Allende edited at the time—Böttner, visiting Santiago on his way to Germany for rehabilitation, is presented as an inspirational “example” for children: “Su empeño, su voluntad, su optimismo, la valentía para afrontar las dificultades, su alegría, y su tenacidad lo hacen ser un muchacho ejemplar” (42). Even at this early age, Lorenza was positioned as an example of Christian resignation and perseverance. But the fact that she herself spoke publicly so little makes her into something of a mythical figure, a specter even, on the periphery of the cultural history of the (post)dictatorship. This ambiguity stands in sharp contrast to the fact that her story has been appropriated by several writers and artists who are interested in exhibiting her more centrally: as an “example” of perseverance in the seventies, and as a “model” of counterhegemonic versions of the dictatorship’s artistic canon in the nineties. Perhaps her very political opacity is what lent itself so well to these appropriations. Even though Lorenza spent very little time in Chile after 1973, I argue that her global mobility and visibility, as well as the way she has been politically fashioned by others, beg a rethinking of existing frameworks of criticism of Chile’s postdictatorship art and literature. In what follows, I will counterpose the way Lorenza’s story has been told by others to the way I have found that she has told her own story, in order to show that the queer futurity to which Muñoz points can be wrought via a mechanism of canon formation in which the loca de-centers previously accepted political and economic agendas aimed at coming to terms with the postdictatorship.
The rigid, closed political situation during the dictatorship proved irresistible to many critics and writers seeking to “counter” the regime; this occurred during the dictatorship itself, of course, but in its aftermath, many of them sought to construct canons of “dictatorship” writers and artists that contested economic and political precepts that—despite new, democratically elected leadership—seemed to persist into the nineties. Eugenia Brito’s volume *Campos minados: Literatura post-golpe en Chile* (1990) is one such text. Brito put together a critical volume in which she sought to show how the literature of the dictatorship offered resistance to the “unidad falsamente construida por el proceso dictatorial” (15), and yet her text explicitly excludes those writers and artists who spent the dictatorship outside of Chile, since “simplemente…ellos vivieron otro proceso” (Brito 14). Differences among those who stayed and those who left must be preserved, Brito insists, and yet the group of writers she herself offers is fairly uniform. Her reasoning is that to group together all the Chilean writers who produced literature during the dictatorship, whether from within Chile or from outside it, would be to replicate the rhetoric of the regime itself, which placed value on “un sujeto ‘chileno,’ monolítico, plano, sin estratificaciones sociales o psíquicas” (14) above all else. Brito’s “canon” includes writers such as Raúl Zurita, Diamela Eltit, Carmen Berenguer, and six others. Still, to her credit, she does leave the possibility open for future critics to create a broader, more inclusive theoretical framework (21). Sure enough, other conceptions of the cultural history and canon of dictatorship-era Chilean writers and artists came along in time. In fact, the postdictatorship, in general, was a time in which many sought to establish canons that could permanently consecrate their particular literary or artistic vision of history. Michael Lazzara (2002) offers a more nuanced such “canon”: a collection of interviews with eight different writers from the dictatorship period. He includes one who stayed in Chile because he was in favor of Pinochet; he
profiles some who wrote from exile; and he spends time on those who stayed in Chile but wrote in a state of what he calls insilio (“insile”),\(^{51}\) creating “literatura que se refiere a la contingencia del país, recurriendo con frecuencia a la metáfora y la alegoría como formas de esquivar la pluma roja de la censura o de aproximarse a una realidad nacional compleja y violenta” (Lazzara 2002: 12). The only writer profiled by both Lazzara and Brito is Eltit.

In fact, Eltit looms large in the story of Lorenza. As a major figure in the world of cultural ties within Chile during and after the dictatorship—she simply knows everyone, from Brito to Lazzara—she is something of an arbiter in terms of institutional cultural practices and networks in the country today. This is likely why Bolaño, who spent the dictatorship in exile, wrote so condescendingly of Eltit when he returned to Chile on a short trip in 1997, after more than twenty years living outside the country: it was a way of critiquing what he considered to be Chile’s somewhat endogamous cultural scene, as well as a strategic way to gain rapid notoriety in cultural circles there. Bolaño wrote a well-known chronicle of a dinner party he attended on that trip at the house of Eltit and her husband, Jorge Arrate, a former Allende collaborator who himself spent much of the dictatorship in exile and who was a government minister once democracy returned. In this chronicle, with the Césaire-esque title “Fragmentos de un regreso al país natal,” Bolaño contrasts the “timidez excesiva” (Bolaño 2004: 72) of Eltit, whom he condescendingly calls “la escritora más maldita de la literatura chilena actual” (Bolaño 2004: 75), with the work of Lemebel, whom he considered one of Chile’s most “brilliant” writers\(^{52}\) (Bolaño 2004: 76). Bolaño was critical of what he considered to be the self-righteously closed-minded mentality of artists like Eltit, who used the justification of having stayed in Chile and

\(^{51}\) See Fernando Alegría’s article “La novela chilena del exilio interior” in Verónica Cortínez’s edited volume Albricia (2000).

\(^{52}\) In fact, it was Bolaño who brought attention to Lemebel’s work upon his return to Spain, which led to Loco afán being published by Anagrama (Herralde 38).
resisting the dictatorship from within to impose their position of supposedly greater “commitment” to Chile over those who left, and then define the national canon accordingly. Both Eltit and Lemebel spent the dictatorship in Chile, resisting it through performance art, but for Bolaño, Eltit’s work was so opaque as to be practically unintelligible. Arrate, meanwhile, represents for Bolaño a somewhat antiquated Left that has imposed its hegemony in Chile following the return to democracy, and although he calls Arrate “brave” (2004: 75), Bolaño sees both him and Eltit as crowding out alternative voices such as his and Lemebel’s. Here, Bolaño describes how the Left saw Lemebel, who himself was certainly aware of how Chile’s hard Left saw him:

Lemebel es de los pocos que no buscan la respetabilidad (esa respetabilidad por la que los escritores chilenos pierden el culo) sino la libertad. Sus colegas, la horda de mediocres procedente de la derecha y de la izquierda, lo miran por encima del hombro y probran sonreír. […] Tengo la impresión de que Lemebel y Jorge Arrate no se entenderían (Bolaño 2004: 76-7).

For Bolaño, the Left’s dominant postdictatorship political and economic agenda was intertwined with the ways in which it sought to shape the postdictatorship literary and artistic canon; proof of that was Eltit and Arrate’s marriage itself. In his typically anti-establishment fashion, he sought

53 Citing Willy Thayer, Gareth Williams’ (2009) discussion of Estrella distante shows how the text is a critique of the entire Escena de avanzada, of which Eltit was, of course, a part: “In Thayer’s formulation, the Chilean neo-avant-garde of the 1980s is always already captured within the terrain of the national state of exception that was inaugurated in the flames that engulfed La Moneda on September 11, 1973” (134). The villain of Estrella distante, Carlos Wieder, does skywriting poetry in the same way Raúl Zurita did as part of the avanzada in the eighties and nineties, and Williams (by way of Thayer and Agamben) points out that these writings, created as they were within the context of a state of exception, comprise “command[s] without content” (136): robbed of intelligibility by “a principle of authority in which the only legitimate language was that of the barked commands of the state’s police and military elite. The military exception, rendered the norm during and after dictatorship, destroyed all modern forms of representation before the avanzada could do anything to counter it” (135). Williams concludes by citing Agamben: “‘What, after all, is a state of exception, if not a law that is in force but does not signify anything?’” (137). Bolaño’s critique of Zurita (the fact that Wieder’s alias in the novel is Ruiz-Tagle—Eduardo Frei’s second last name—is an implicit association of the avanzada with the Concertación (Williams 135), in line with Moulian’s reminder of the Concertación’s neoliberal (if not dictatorial) economic foundations in Estrella distante is analogous to his critique of Eltit in Entre paréntesis. For more information about Thayer’s work, see El fragmento repetido: Escritos en estado de excepción (2006).

54 By mentioning this polemic, I am in no way seeking to disparage the courageous work that both Arrate and Eltit (along with the rest of the avanzada) did to resist the dictatorship.
to counter this vision—a move with which he evidently felt that Lemebel would sympathize.

Lorenza was his gambit for doing this when writing *Estrella distante*.

Lemebel’s invocation of Lorenza as part of a “queer canon” in Chile was followed, in the meantime, by two anthologies of gay Chilean writing—both published the same year, 2001. One, by Sutherland, is an entire book, including excerpts from more than 25 writers, both men and women. The other, by Blanco, is a long journal article, and positions itself as more focused on “marginal” sexualities, in response to currents of study that have supposedly erased them:

Según nuestro parecer, en la última década, tanto en Chile como en otros centros de discusión, esa textualización [tematizada de prácticas homosexuales masculinas] ha desembocado en la instalación de una homonorma teórica—blanca y eurocentrista—que, paradójamente, ha contribuido a la invisibilización (homosombra) de los propios discursos subalternos y de otras maneras de vínculos culturales y contratos sociales, que incluyen subjetividades diversas (incluyendo, por ejemplo, a las minorías portadoras de VIH) (Blanco 2001: 111).

It is unclear whether Blanco would include Sutherland in this group of those contributing to privileging a “homonormative” view of homosexuality, but it is telling that Sutherland anthologizes Simonetti’s work (“Santa Lucía”) while Blanco does not (Blanco does not include Sutherland’s literary work in his anthology either, for that matter). Meanwhile, Blanco includes Gabriela Mistral and Eltit, while Sutherland does not.\(^{55}\) Both anthologies express a desire to intervene in “history” (Sutherland 2001: 10) or “historiography” (Blanco 2001: 112): either by opening up “new spaces and readings” of gay discourse (in the case of the former) or by rethinking categories of identity (in the case of the latter). In so doing, both Sutherland and Blanco evidently sought to counter larger discourses that they felt had glossed over their

\(^{55}\) Other than these divergences, the prose writers that Blanco includes—while smaller— all appear in Sutherland’s anthology: Donoso, Marta Brunet, Augusto D’Halmar, Lemebel, Mauricio Wacquez, and Alfredo Gómez Morel. Sutherland states that he wanted to include three poems by Mistral, but that the rights to reprint them in the anthology were not granted by what he calls “vigilantes” at the Gabriela Mistral Foundation, who reasoned that “dicho trabajo antológico puede contribuir a interpretaciones tendenciosas…contrarias a la siempre significativa y relevante obra de nuestra autora” (Sutherland 2001: 22). I do not know how Blanco received the rights to do it.
particular visions of Chilean queer history: in Sutherland’s case, this meant simply making homosexuality in Chilean literature more visible, while for Blanco, it meant a turn away from overarching (and possibly homonormative) discourses of “gay studies” (2001: 111) in favor of “minority” subjectivities. Although they both include work by Lemebel, neither dwells much on the visual arts (although Sutherland does reference Juan Dávila\textsuperscript{56}), and certainly neither one mentions Lorenza.

My interest piqued thusly, I decided to investigate Lorenza directly: was she, in Halberstam’s words (2011: 150), the “plucky queer” revolutionizing Chile’s repressive dictatorial apparatus from abroad through her radical corporeal performativity, and as such, worthy of a more prominent, “exemplary” place in the canon of postdictatorship art and literature? Or were her performances and art more difficult to instrumentalize for political means, and if so, how was this a cause for rethinking Chile’s archive of anti-dictatorship cultural history and canon formation? Little by little, I began to assemble an archive of Lorenza’s relatively short life, and I am still working on this; it is true, as Lemebel points out, that “de Chile le quedaba muy poco, solamente cierta sombra en la mirada” (1996: 151). I found a photo of her by the Dutch photographer Joel-Peter Witkin, entitled “Bacchus Amelus,” taken in New Mexico in 1986 (Figure 39). I received a clip from the movie “Wall of Ashes,” a six-DVD epic filmed in San Francisco in the late eighties by the director Frank Garvey, in which Lorenza tells her story, exhibits her paintings in a gallery, and offers a performance (Figures 40, 41, and 42). I obtained images of paintings Lorenza did as part of the Vereinigung der Mund- und Fussmalenden, or the German Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists (Figure 43). I also gained access, in

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{56} In 1994, Juan Dávila’s painting \textit{The Liberator Simón Bolívar}, which portrayed a mestizo Simón Bolívar in drag, caused controversy when it was exhibited in a Chilean Embassy in Europe, with the support of public funds. Masiello calls it a “suggestion to viewers that even marginal citizens have the right to interpret their national hero, thereby reversing the common symbolic legacies that have included considerations of gender” (54). Lemebel includes a short chronicle about the painting in \textit{Loco afán} (1996: 135-7).}
Germany, to the short film *Lorenza*, made by the director Michael Stahlberg in 1991 and shown on a number of film festival circuits at the time, including the International Short Film Festival in Oberhausen. Lastly, I found images of Lorenza playing the part of the mascot of the 1992 Barcelona Special Olympics, particularly one of her making a dramatic entrance into the stadium on the back of a motorcycle at the opening ceremony of the games in Montjuic (Figure 44).

*Figure 39.*

*Figure 40.*
Lorenza’s ingenuity and inventiveness are surely what sparked the imaginations of
Lemebel and Bolaño. Lemebel states: “Ciertamente, este artista se inscribe en una categoría
especial del arte gay, pero en Lorenza la homosexualidad es una reappropriación del cuerpo a
través de la falla. Como si la evidencia mutilada lo sublimara por ausencia de tacto” (1996: 153).
Bolaño’s wonder at Lorenza is somewhat more pedestrian: “cómo se limpiaba el culo después de
hacer caca, cómo pagaba en la tienda de fruta, cómo guardaba el dinero, cómo cocinaba. Cómo,
por dios, podía vivir sola” (1996: 83). Lorenza’s main medium of art, other than her painting, was the performance of everyday, routine tasks, such as dressing herself and making coffee. Her main art form was her life itself, as she states in Stahlberg’s film:

In some way I am an exhibitionist, and I like it. I benefit from it. But I was not always an exhibitionist. It came as a result of my handicap, because people stare at me whether I dress conservatively or very flamboyantly. But it is fun for me. I like to open people’s eyes and show them how stupid it is to hide behind a bourgeois façade (Stahlberg).

Still, are Bolaño and Lemebel accurate in appropriating Lorenza as a “model” of anti-dictatorial artistic resistance, and also as a model of resistance to existing dictatorship-era canons? Certainly, her body serves as an ingenious counterpoint to the rigid gender binaries of the time, as Guzmán articulates them, in the same way that Richard and Masiello have described the importance of gender-bending art in the dictatorship and post-dictatorship (albeit not in connection with Lorenza). Also, Lorenza is clearly conscious of her status as a model of gender non-conformity, as well as of the power of her performances, and her life itself (often the line between the two was very blurry), to resist people’s preconceptions of gender. And yet her “political stance” included no known mention of Chile—she talks about the importance of exposing facades of “bourgeois” respectability, but not in connection to any specific place other than where she is at the time, which is Germany.

Lorenza’s will to disrupt preconceptions is certainly the theme of her performance shown in Garvey’s film, in which she wears an outlandish dress, almost a wedding dress, and parades around an area of alfresco dining frequented by businesspeople in San Francisco, and clearly rattles some of them (Figure 45). This scene is interspersed with shots of her writing a biographical statement of sorts with her foot, and here she does reference where she was born: the only reference to Chile that I found Lorenza herself making (Figure 46). Although Lorenza presents herself, and has been presented by others, as a model and as an exemplar, it is not
immediately clear what of, other than of ingeniousness, and perhaps of the disruption of
predetermined notions about gender and “bourgeois” complacency in general. Placing her in
Chile’s canon, on the other hand, is a somewhat riskier bet.

Halberstam has quite a bit to say about challenging canons and cultural histories: she
insists over and over again on countering the “standardization and uniformity” of academic
discipline(s) (9) with “local, customary, and undisciplined forms of knowledge” (9) that
“emphasize mutuality, collectivity, plasticity, diversity, and adaptability” (10). This is why she
makes a case for “failure”: it can be a counterbalance to capitalistic success, which she equates
with “specific forms of reproductive maturity combined with wealth accumulation” (2). It would thus be easier to conclude that Lorenza “fails” to earn her place as a canonical member of the artistic resistance to the Pinochet dictatorship, which is not necessarily a bad thing: here I would quote Halberstam one more time on “failure,” which she calls a way to “resist mastery” (11) and remain free from the boundaries of canons in general, while also exposing the “punishing norms that discipline behavior and manage human development” (3). On the other hand, “freedom” from such institutionally bound canons can run the risk of replicating the neoliberal individualism that Jaime Guzmán, Augusto Pinochet, and Joaquín Lavín hold so dear in their writings. Lorenza’s sexuality is simply too complicated to politicize in convenient ways, which obfuscates Bolaño’s and Lemebel’s desires to intervene in Chile’s dictatorship canon and cultural history.

In the same way that Lemebel showed that the loca defies critical frameworks of politics and mourning, Lorenza demonstrates that the binary rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion as regard the dictatorship’s canons and cultural histories is often inadequate, as are Halberstam’s terms of success and failure. How, then, does Lorenza help with an understanding of Chile’s cultural history? Rather than as a model of “resistance” to the hegemonic gender constructions of Jaime Guzmán, or to the projects of those seeking to rethink artistic canons, Lorenza serves as a warning about the dangers of carelessly “rescuing” heroic queer subjects from the obscurity of history, which can result in silencing those subjects themselves, thus reproducing the dictatorship’s logic of censorship—the fact that Bolaño’s and Lemebel’s “alternative canons”

57 Speaking of neoliberalism and individualism, it should also be pointed out that the virtues ennobled by Halberstam in The Queer Art of Failure, such as “undoing, unbecoming, and violating” (4), “illegibility” (10), and “improbability” (21), all are luxuries that only she and select few others at the top of the pyramid of academia can afford. Most academics cannot get books published by Duke University Press in which they advocate for adding Finding Nemo and Dude, Where’s My Car? to the canon; dissertations discussing Chilean transgender performance artists are risky enough as it is.
exclude women is proof of how this can wind up being a silencing gesture. By “rescuing” Lorenza from obscurity, my aim is rather to bring up more questions about how we construct canons—queer, national, and otherwise—and what implications these canons have for futurity. Lorenza defies the gender binaries that Guzmán and Lavín espoused, the dichotomies of exile and “insile” that Brito discussed and Lazzara deconstructed, and the parameters of “gays” and “minorities” that Sutherland and Blanco established; but none of the aforementioned actors took her into account in their constructions of (post)dictatorship cultural history and thought at all. Lorenza’s was a labor in the darkness that fails in a different way, but she does not fail illegibly or self-effacingly: she still writes her name for all to see in Garvey’s film. Perhaps it is the very inscrutability of that gesture—a gesture metonymic for Lorenza’s inscrutable political beliefs as a whole—that allows for her to escape these appropriations of her body for anything other than utopian ends. Lorenza tells a story in which a loca is able to lead us forward into a future where individual subjectivities are valued as much as larger political and economic agendas, where the “success” of being included in a canon is interchangeable with the “failure” of being excluded from it, and where the past can be remembered in a way that takes into account the experiences of everyone who lived it.

**Conclusion: Past and Future, Sinking and Flying**

Being “memorable” is a prerequisite for being included in a canon, just as being “remembered” is the result of mourning; perhaps this “memorable” quality is as much a key to queer futurity as it has been to critical frameworks of mourning, as far as “postdictatorship” thought goes. Bolaño’s words about the contradictory essence of Chile itself are reflective of the nature of Lorenza’s legacy: “…en esto quizás resida el encanto del país, su fuerza: en la voluntad
de hundirse cuando puede volar y de volar cuando está irremisiblemente hundido. En el gusto por las paradojas de sangre” (Bolaño 2004: 73). This motif of sinking and flying is an optimal way of concluding. Indeed, one of the myths of Lorenza’s life inscribed by Bolaño is a supposed attempt to drown herself:

Pero es difícil ser artista en el Tercer Mundo si uno es pobre, no tiene brazos y encima es marica. […] Sus desilusiones (para no hablar de humillaciones, despacios, ninguneos) fueron terribles y un día… decidió suicidarse. Una tarde de verano particularmente triste, cuando el sol se ocultaba en el océano Pacífico, Lorenza saltó al mar desde una roca usada exclusivamente por suicidas (y que no falta en cada trozo de litoral chileno que se precie). Se hundió como una piedra […]. Con repentino valor decidió que no iba a morir. Dice que dijo ahora o nunca y volvió a la superficie. El ascenso le pareció interminable; mantenerse a flote, casi insoportable, pero lo consiguió. […] Matarse, dijo, en esta coyuntura sociopolítica, es absurdo y redundante. Mejor convertirse en poeta secreto (Bolaño 1996: 81-3).

If life was Lorenza’s main art form, nothing can be more life-affirming than this, a sinking that ends in a redemption of sorts. This probably did not happen—as we know, Lorenza left Chile just after the dictatorship started, and also, if she had jumped into the Pacific near Punta Arenas she would have frozen to death in a matter of seconds, even in the summer—and yet Stahlberg’s film of Lorenza’s life makes a similar reference to sinking and flying. At the end of his film, Lorenza jumps into water—a pool, in this case—and like Bolaño, Stahlberg re-signifies this breathtaking jump into a sensual, life-affirming gesture with which he concludes his film (Figures 47 and 48). In a discussion of Un espacio al olvido, a 1997 film by Marcelo Brodsky and Sabrina Farji, Masiello discusses the trope of water as a metaphor of both life and death. The film, which is about the life of a young man who was disappeared as part of the Argentine dictatorship, superimposes “turbulent ocean waters, presumably the tomb of the disappeared child” over “clips of super-8 film that show the boy, as a youngster, bathing at the sea”:

Saturating the viewers with reminders of redemption and death, the water commands dual orders of reflection: the super-8 film returns us to a nostalgia for childhood, the leisure-
time activities of seaside fun, while the larger frame focuses on the silent ocean and points to the final resting place for victims of the dirty war (Masiello 8).

The scene of the swimming pool at the end of Lorenza encapsulates the ability of the loca to evade, or transcend, historical and political visions of mourning (Avelar), memory, and forgetting, economic discourses of success and failure, and even conventional notions of life and death that dictate notions of “presentism” (Edelman) or “futurity” (Muñoz). This is a resistance to any “arrest of the sign,” as Lazzara puts it, as well as a resistance to any liberal discourses of “inclusion” or “equality” espoused by Simonetti. With a body in which art and life converge, Lorenza serves as a “model” of the contradictions inherent to the politicization of queer/loca sexuality that we see in the construction of the cultural history of Chile’s postdictatorship—contradictions that make it imperative to think beyond the lexicon of the “post” and look ahead to the future.

Figure 47.
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(“Bacchus Amelus” is Plate 59.)