THE POSTDICTATORIAL DOCUMENTARIES OF PATRICIO GUZMÁN: CHILE, OBSTINATE MEMORY; THE PINOCHET CASE AND ISLAND OF ROBINSON

CRUSOE

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Literature in the Graduate School of Duke University

2007
ABSTRACT

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Abstract

The aim of this investigation is to study the various cinematic and rhetorical strategies that Chilean filmmaker Patricio Guzmán uses to construct a complex image of the postdictatorial Chilean society. By analyzing three of his documentaries from the late 1990s and early 2000s (Chile, Obstinate Memory; The Pinochet Case and Island of Robinson Crusoe), I argue that Guzmán’s cinematic images expose the challenges of constructing a collective memory of the 1973 coup in Chile and its aftermath. In an attempt to interrogate the social, political and economic dynamics of the Chilean transition to democracy that began in the year 1990, Guzmán’s documentaries also explore the consequences of the Pinochet dictatorship (1973-1989) in the present. The historical conjuncture of postdictatorial Chile is connected to at least three geopolitical phenomenons: the Post-Cold War international arena formed after the dissolution of existent socialist regimes, the advent of neoliberalism as a transnational economic paradigm, and the struggle for global human rights. The documentaries of Patricio Guzmán are poetic responses to each of these geopolitical phenomenons that affect the constitution of the Chilean present.
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1. Introduction

The Battle of Chile, directed by Patricio Guzmán, is a masterpiece coming from the Latin American tradition of political documentaries. The first part of The Battle of Chile appeared in various prestigious international film festivals in 1975 (Cannes, Berlin, Volgograd, Pésaro, Moscow). It won various awards, including the Grand Prize at the 1975 Grenoble Festival in France, the Grand Prize at the 1976 Benalmádena Festival in Spain and was selected by Cuban Critics as one of the best ten films of 1975. In The Social Documentary in Latin America, Julianne Burton offers an accurate description of the film production process and highlights its political importance:

The Battle of Chile (1974-77-79) was shot by a group of six people over a ten-month period prior to and immediately after the violent overthrow of Chilean president Salvador Allende. After the coup, the footage and sound bands were promptly smuggled to safety in Europe. Five members of the Grupo Tercer Año, including its director, Patricio Guzmán, managed to leave the country in unobtrusive and carefully orchestrated fashion; the sixth, cameraman Jorge Muller, was abducted by the secret police in late 1974 and never heard from again—one of several militant Latin American filmmakers who paid for their political commitment with their lives. The editing of the three parts—The Insurrection of the Bourgeoisie, The Coup d'État, and Popular Power— took five years. The scope and density of this record of a tumultuous, unpredictable, and ultimately tragic political process is unprecedented. The Battle of Chile’s creative synthesis of documentary approaches, its collaborative mode of production, its methodology for breaking history-in-the-making into discrete components susceptible to cinematic recording make it a film of lasting importance. (Burton, 26-7)

Any study of Patricio Guzmán’s work should take into account the historical conditions in which each of his documentaries emerged. His documentaries emerged in the historical gap opened by the September 11, 1973 coup and Pinochet’s dictatorship, a gap marking the end and restoration of democracy in Chile. Guzmán's work is therefore an invitation to rethink Chilean democracy in the passage from Cold War to Post-Cold War politics.
The Battle of Chile responds to the frame of Latin American not-so-Cold War Politics of the 1970s. The Chilean democratic way to socialism made possible by Salvador Allende’s victory in the presidential elections of 1970 provided an alternative model to Marxist-Leninist guerrilla warfare, which served as a regional model for revolutionary politics after the consolidation of the Cuban revolution in the sixties. The most promising aspect of Allende’s political perspective consisted on trying to achieve a socialist society through a peaceful and legitimate democratic process based on popular power.

In 1970, Guzmán returned to Chile with the idea of making fiction films after spending various years studying cinema in Madrid. Once in Chile, Guzmán abandoned his original plan and began directing documentaries, first El Primer Año (1971) and then La respuesta de Octubre (1972), both about the politics of Allende’s Unidad Popular.¹ After witnessing the Chilean October crisis of 1972, Guzmán foresaw the collapse of Allende’s government and organized a film crew early in 1973 that began to document what appeared to be a pre-civil war conflict in Chile. Edited in Cuba between 1974 and 1978, Guzmán’s The Battle of Chile is a three-part film that shows the last days of

¹ Patricio Guzmán described the production process of these two films in an email he sent me on March 29, 2007. He explains: “La Respuesta de Octubre” no longer exists as an individual film because he decided to re-edit the original material and incorporate it in the last part of The Battle of Chile. That is why “La Respuesta de Octubre” no longer figures as an individual piece in any of Patricio Guzmán’s film lists. “La Respuesta de Octubre” fue producida por la casa de producción Chile-Films, en 1972 y su estreno se produjo en los circuitos móviles de esa institución en noviembre de 1972. Los circuitos móviles eran unidades de proyección montados en camiones que exhibían filmes en los barrios populares y fábricas de los alrededores de Santiago. El filme ganó precisamente el “Premio Circuitos Móviles 1972”. Este filme fue rodado originalmente en 16 Mm. Posteriormente yo utilicé los materiales de este filme para completar la tercera parte de “La Batalla de Chile”, de tal forma que la película original no existe y por eso no aparece en la página Web. Cuando Juliane Burton me hizo la entrevista yo estaba terminando la segunda parte de “La Batalla de Chile” y fue un año después cuando monté la tercera parte. “El Primer Año” fue producida por la Escuela de Artes de la Comunicación de la Universidad Católica de Chile (EAC). Su negativo original fue entregado a los militares que lo destruyeron. Pero en Francia Chris Marker conservó un negativo con la versión francesa. En el futuro volveré a poner en circulación este filme para lo cual debo hacer una nueva versión en español. Se filmó en 1971 se estrenó en mayo de 1972 en el marco de un festival de cine en Santiago. Luego fue distribuida en todo el país por la empresa del estado, Chile Films, en 35 MM.
president Allende’s government and the wide democratic movement known as Unidad Popular (Popular Unity). The Battle of Chile also presents an account of the conflicts provoked by the right wing opposition that prepared the way for the September 11, 1973 coup d’état that put an end to Allende’s democratic mandate. In his conversation with Julianne Burton included in Cinema and Social Change in Latin America, Guzmán explains that one of the contributions of The Battle of Chile is that the film encourages audiences to recognize fascist tendencies in society.

Through the lived experience of the film, we all came to understand what it means to live through a revolutionary process—what ideological struggle really means, what fascism looks and feels like, what it means for the enraged middle class to rise up against the workers, how invisible imperialism can be. (66)

In “The Battle of Chile: Documentary, Political Process, and Representation,” Ana M. López discusses The Battle of Chile’s critical reception and argues that there is a tendency “to privilege its status as a documentary record over its analytical work” (The Social Documentary in Latin America 276). Following López, I consider that it is crucial to discuss how The Battle of Chile organizes its vision of the Chilean political process in a structure that reveals the social tensions created by a democratic and socialist regime fighting against imperialism. The first two parts of The Battle of Chile constitute the epic tragedy of Allende’s socialist state. As the last scene of the second part shows, the conflict between Allende and the right wing opposition concludes violently with the bombing of La Moneda Presidential Palace. The first two parts of Guzmán’s film trilogy present the conflict between two notions of state bureaucracy: democracy vs. military rule. In contrast, the third part of The Battle of Chile approaches the limits of Allende’s state rationalism when the film constructs the epic around the efforts of proletarian and popular organizations whose alliance before the coup allowed for the creation of an autonomous collective power vis-à-vis the collapsing democratic state.
The structure of The Battle of Chile manifests the tensions that haunted Unidad Popular’s political imagination. While the first two films expose the need of overcoming the limits of the bourgeois democratic state through a process of popular mobilization, the last part of the film exposes the democratic potential of popular organizations acting independently from the state. In that sense, The Battle of Chile is a double critique of democratic state rationalism. While the first two parts critique Allende’s illusions of a pacifist class struggle that could be contained within the limits of the liberal state apparatus, the last part of Guzmán’s trilogy adds to that critique the manifestation of an alternative version of democratic exercise that exceeded the limits of Allende’s state rationalism. In that sense, the last part of The Battle of Chile could also be understood as a critique of Pinochet’s military rule in Chile, a dictatorship counting with the support of the right wing ruling class obsessed with the idea of regaining control of the state apparatus.

After the military coup on September 11, 1973, Chilean military forces captured Guzmán and took him to the National Stadium (the first concentration camp established in Chile after the coup) where he remained for two weeks. He eventually escaped the Pinochet dictatorship and spent the next 23 years in exile. For many Chileans, the coup meant exile. Cinema and music were two important cultural activities that allowed Chileans to regroup and organize solidarity networks in exile. The Battle of Chile along with other films like Claudio Sapiaín’s La canción no muere, Generales (Sweden 1975) were crucial in keeping alive the hopes of Chileans in exile. Zuzana Pick explains this process in “Chilean Documentary: Continuity and Disjunction:”

The Chilean “cinema of resistance” was born as films made by Chileans living outside their country were put to the service of a concerted campaign of public education and protest. The documentarists, most of whom had directed only one or two films before the coup d’état, became the intermediaries between Chile, its
exile community, and those groups involved in the international solidarity campaigns. (Burton ed., *The Social Documentary in Latin America*, 118)

For many Chileans living in Chile, the coup meant both fear and resistance. Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez constituted a radical resistance to Pinochet’s regime in Chile. In *A History of Chile, 1808-2002*, Collier and Sater report: “in September 1986” Pinochet “survived a serious attempt at assassination (mounted by the rodriguistas) in which five of his bodyguards died” (378). For Collier and Sater, however, the most effective resistance to Pinochet’s regime came from civil society. In a series of popular protests celebrated between 1983 and 1986, civil society condemned Pinochet’s abuse of power. This moment of mass mobilization coincided with a reorganization of political factions opposed to Pinochet in Chile. Collier and Sater notice that “the opposition (or most of it) slowly began to realize, with some reluctance, that its only practical tactic” to open the path for a transition to democracy “was to work within the framework of the detested 1980 Constitution” (378). To work within this framework meant that Chile’s political destiny could only be changed by subverting Pinochet’s own tool for extending his mandate: the coming plebiscite in 1988 that was announced in the 1980 Constitution. This democratic subversion of Pinochet’s mechanisms of power occurred on October 5, 1988, when La Concertación, a political alliance favoring the “no” option (“no” to Pinochet’s power), won the plebiscite. With the victory of La Concertación, the resistance to Pinochet’s mandate triumphed, but at the cost of having to negotiate the future of Chile at the expense of its socialist past. While democracy returned in the 1990s, neither Allende’s democratic ideals nor Guzmán’s *The Battle of Chile* could come back to Chile. The fear of damaging the fragile consensus between the former political order (Pinochet’s dictatorship) and the new democratic power forced Chileans to repress
their historical sufferings as well as the political ideals of Salvador Allende during the Unidad Popular period.

In 1996, Guzmán returned to Chile in order to screen his film trilogy The Battle of Chile. During this visit, Guzmán also had the opportunity to interview friends, survivors of the coup and some of the social actors that appeared in The Battle of Chile. Chile, Obstinate Memory captures the reactions of different audiences after watching Guzmán’s The Battle of Chile. Guzmán’s film trilogy came back to Chilean society and exposed itself as the return of the repressed: the memory of the years of Unidad Popular. With the return of The Battle of Chile and through Chile, Obstinate Memory, Guzmán was able to articulate a politics of memory in a country wounded by its past, a country that at times preferred to pass the pages of its socialist history and at times resisted the force of oblivion. Throughout the screening sessions of The Battle of Chile presented in Chile, Obstinate Memory, Guzmán also witnessed the transformation of Chilean society after the trauma of the coup.

If the last part of The Battle of Chile operates as a critique of state democracy (by showing the democratic potential of popular organizations emerging as an alternative to guerrilla warfare in the context of the Latin American not-so-Cold war politics), Chile, Obstinate Memory opens a new field of critique in the context of Post-Cold War politics: the deceptive politics of the Chilean transition to democracy that came after the Pinochet dictatorship (1973-1990). Pinochet’s arrest in London also encouraged Chileans in Chile and abroad to question the limits of the transition to democracy. Guzmán will radicalize his critique of the deceptive politics of the Chilean transition to democracy in The Pinochet Case, a documentary about Pinochet’s detention. Guzmán was able to open
this critical possibility because, after spending so many years in exile, he gained the necessary distance to look at the Chilean process with the force of the outside.

I study Patricio Guzmán's postdictatorial documentaries in order to understand the ideological tensions of the Chilean transition to democracy created by the struggle for global human rights and the globalization of justice. I also explore how Guzmán's politics of memory operate as a post-transitional opening of history. I divided my investigation of Guzmán's postdictatorial documentaries (Chile, Obstinate Memory; The Pinochet Case and Island of Robinson Crusoe) in three chapters. In the first chapter entitled "A Struggle to Remember: ‘Historical Materialism’ in Patricio Guzmán’s Chile, Obstinate Memory" I elaborate a detailed film analysis departing from Walter Benjamin’s conception of “historical materialism” as he develops it in his “Theses in the Philosophy of History.” In Chile, Obstinate Memory, Guzmán explores cinema as a social practice that combines multiple processes of recollection and transmission of historical data to unfold the dynamics of collective memory. I argue that Chile, Obstinate Memory is a very powerful film when it presents the lives of those who struggle to remember, not only as the visible evidence of the traumatic past, but as the poetic flight into the challenges and torments of memory itself.

In the second chapter entitled “‘A Secret Link of Affinity’: Testimony, Plural Rationalities and the New International in Patricio Guzmán’s The Pinochet Case,” I expand Benjamin’s view of historical materialism in order to approach the question of justice through Derrida’s notion of spectrality. I argue that the main protagonist of Guzmán’s The Pinochet Case is the “New International,” a sense of collectivity that, in Derrida’s words, “refers to a profound transformation, projected over a long term, of international law, of its concepts, and its field of intervention” (Specters of Marx, 84). I
analyze the various cinematic and narrative codes that Guzmán uses in *The Pinochet Case* to represent the challenges faced by the alliance of victims and professionals struggling for the achievement of justice beyond the boundaries of state rationalism. By juxtaposing different testimonies and opinions, the film exposes the crisis of the Chilean transition to democracy as well as the crisis of the discourse of national reconciliation based on Pinochet’s impunity.

In the first two chapters, I study the processes of Guzmán’s politics of memory in a theoretical framework that explores Benjamin’s historical materialism along with notions such as spectrality, testimonial address, documentary (Renov, Chanan, Nichols) and film theory (Chion) in order to propose a deconstruction of the ideology of the Chilean transition to democracy. In ““Mirar el mar y ser feliz:’ Towards the Interpretation of Happiness in Patricio Guzmán’s *Island of Robinson Crusoe*,” the third and last chapter, I add a new ingredient to my study: I expand the notion of historical materialism in order to see its modulations in the field of a fictional genealogy. I study the myth of Robinson Crusoe as Guzmán re-elaborates it in his visit to the Chilean Island named after Defoe’s classic novel. Guzmán’s *Island of Robinson Crusoe* could be understood as a Freudian regression towards the unreadable visual landscape that sustains the fantasy of Defoe’s readers. Following Deleuze’s notion of the “powers of the false” as it appears in his book *The Time-Image*, I argue, however, that it is correct but not enough to conceive Guzmán’s documentary as a Freudian regression. Rather, Guzmán’s regressive path towards the Island of Robinson Crusoe should be understood as one of the “powers of the false” unfolding the fictional genealogy of Defoe’s hero.

In *Island of Robinson Crusoe*, Guzmán tries to escape history by returning to the innocence of his childhood along with the specter of Robinson Crusoe, a hero who had
to explore by himself what it meant to live outside of history. As it happens to Crusoe, however, Guzmán discovers that he cannot escape history because history is always there and waiting for him. *Island of Robinson Crusoe* tell us that there is no way to come back to the innocence of the past, but instead of becoming a sign of historical defeat, the exploration of Crusoe’s island allows Guzmán to understand that the only path to happiness is the understanding of history as a dream from which one has to wake up.

In this chapter, I explore Robinson Crusoe’s genealogical constellation, which includes literary and philosophical re-elaborations of Defoe’s classic. Guzmán approaches the actions and speech of real characters as a means to evoke the roles given to Crusoe by writers such as Marx, Walcott, and Cortázar, whose re-elaborations of the myth form part of Crusoe’s genealogical constellation. I analyze the labor and speech of the real characters in Guzmán’s documentary as an allegory of the utopian association of free man that Marx links with the figure of Robinson Crusoe in the first chapter of Capital on commodity fetishism. However, Guzmán’s allegorical elaboration of Marx’s Robinsonian association of free men coincides with the fetishization of Crusoe in Chile in a way that resembles Walcott’s version of Crusoe as a commercial figure. Following Benjamin’s notion of allegory and phantasmagoria, I argue that Guzmán’s documentary is a critical reconstellation of Marx’s utopian community precisely at a stage in which Marx’s utopian impulse is at the point of collapsing with the euphoria of tourism. The contrast between the commodified versions of Robinson Crusoe and the social actors’s labor presented in the documentary serves to explore the contradictions of consumer culture in neoliberal Chile. I also explore Guzmán’s approach to the myth of Robinson Crusoe from a different angle: the question of justice and how Guzmán’s *Island of Robinson Crusoe* relates to Guzmán’s *The Pinochet Case*. I argue that *Island*
of Robinson Crusoe explores the question of justice by elaborating a poetic approach that projects the limit of experience described as “the loss of speech” by Chilean philosopher Patricio Marchant. I consider that Guzmán pays attention to the allegorical possibilities of Robinson Crusoe in Chile in order to provide a mediation between two narratives of the nation that are broken apart by the coup: Chile as a Marxist and as a neoliberal nation.

While it is necessary to study each film’s particular engagement in the history of not-so-Cold War and Post-Cold War politics in Latin America, Guzmán’s documentaries could be understood as a constellation of images that critically explores the limits of democratic state rationalism in the age of state-sponsored terror and human disappearance. Guzmán’s documentaries achieve an urgent critical relevance because they register the transformations of our sense of collective power in the transition from not-so-Cold War to Post Cold War politics in Latin America. It is true that the collective power of the Chilean workers appearing in The Battle of Chile disappears due to a combination of state-sponsored terrorism, economic re-structuring and a changing sensibility regarding modern ideals of progress and development. But rather than celebrating a way back to individualism, Guzmán’s documentaries explore the reconfiguration of non-governmental and post-industrial collective action under the new conditions of global politics and transnational capitalism in the Post-Cold War period. After questioning the ideology of revolutionary work ethic and abandoning Che Guevara’s doctrine of the moral incentives for the worker, Latin American intellectuals, Guzmán among them, propose a reconfiguration of the left around new issues of collectivization, which include the struggle for global human rights and global justice.
Guzmán’s postdictatorial documentaries register the historical changes that took place in Chile after the military coup (Pinochet dictatorship and the transition to democracy) without losing the critical edge that inspired *The Battle of Chile*: the critique of democracy from within democracy. In so doing, Guzmán also explore the possibility of transforming audiovisual media into a champion of a politics of memory that would abandon the transparent speeds of today’s cultural amnesia in favor of a better understanding of history. If *The Battle of Chile* explored the visible and invisible processes that lead a democratic power to its own dissolution, the postdictatorial films of Patricio Guzmán approaches the invisible remainder of the disappeared as a promise of justice that would inaugurate a democracy to come.²

² In one of the written reflections preceding the production of *The Battle of Chile*, the members of Equipo Tercer Año explain that: “El primer impulso es filmar “todo lo que ocurre” […]. No obstante, hemos descubierto que es completamente imposible filmar todo lo que pase … porque “todo lo que pasa” no es todo lo que pasa, en el sentido de que muchos acontecimientos son el resultante de un proceso, que culmina (cuando culmina) en un hecho visible, y que por lo tanto ese nivel de filmación resulta muy parcial” (*La Batalla de Chile: la lucha de un pueblo sin armas* 29-30). [The first impulse is to film “everything” […]. However, we have discovered that it is impossible to film all the things that happen … because “all of what happens” is not “all that happens” in the sense that many events are the result of a process, which ends (if it ever ends) in a visible fact, and for that reason that level of filming is very partial]. As I demonstrate in the concluding sections of chapters two and three of this investigation, Guzmán has never abandoned this vocation for the invisible, the importance of taking into consideration the force of the invisible as it affects the visible reality that is registered in the documentary mode.
2. “A Struggle to Remember”: “Historical Materialism” in Patricio Guzmán’s Chile: Obstinate Memory

After a series of protests in the 1980s against human rights violations in Chile and strong pressures coming from the international community (Roth-Arraiza 208-209), the Pinochet regime attempted to change its military look by assuming a more democratic appearance. The ruthless military look of the Pinochet of the 1970s gave way to a more human Pinochet dressing in suits as civilian politicians do.¹ This strategy (the dictator’s fashion change) failed and Pinochet was defeated in the plebiscite celebrated on October 5, 1988 (Collier and Sater 380). The plebiscite, instituted by the 1980 Constitution, offered voters two options: a “Yes” or “No” vote approving or rejecting the continuation of the Pinochet regime for 8 more years (380). Chilean society opened a road back to democracy with Pinochet’s defeat. However, the transition to democracy in Chile depended on Pinochet’s impunity.²

2.1 “El consenso es la etapa superior del olvido”: the Culture of Amnesia in the Chilean Transition to Democracy

Pinochet’s presence in the Chilean public sphere operated as a thread to the new democratic government.³ In the early 1990s, Chile’s political life was still haunted by

¹ Pinochet’s fashion change was parodied by the opposing political force “La Concertación” during its TV Campaign known as “Chile, la alegría ya viene.” I would like to thank Carmen Oquendo-Villar for bringing this to my attention as well as for providing me a video copy of the entire 1988 plebiscite TV campaign.
² According to Nelly Richard: “The consensual model of a ‘democracy of agreements’ formulated by the Chilean government of the Transition (1989) marked a passage from politics as antagonism (the dramatization of conflict governed by a mechanism of confrontation under dictatorship) to a politics of transaction (the formula of a pact and its technics of negotiation)” (Cultural Residues 15).
³ In Exorcising Terror: The Incredible Unending Trial of General Augusto Pinochet, Ariel Dorfman describes the exdictator’s presence in Chilean political life as a sort of haunting. In Dorfman’s chronicle, the voice of Pinochet begins to haunt the testimonial narrator even before the coup. Dorfman confesses that in one occasion, while he was working in La Moneda days before the tragic events of September 11, 1973, he answered the phone of the presidential palace and it was then when he heard the voice of General Pinochet for the first time. Dorfman generates his narratorial voice in counterpoint to Pinochet’s ghost, which Dorfman
the violent past of the dictatorship, a past that had to be exorcised from the public imagination in order to consolidate democracy. On their way to democracy, the transition governments of Aylwin and Frei had to accomplish precisely what the dictatorship left unfinished: the erasures of the crimes of the past. To the new democratic executive power of the Chilean transition the only way available for dealing with state violence was to displace it from its juridical conceptualization as a crime into the non-juridical theater of national tragedy. In other words, the erasure of the crimes of the past re-inscribed state violence, but not in the juridical realm of criminal acts, rather, in the domestic and nonjuridical process of national reconciliation. If we add the

transforms into a series of partial objects: first, the voice, then some newspapers clippings, some interviews, some memoirs containing fragmented episodes of the life of exdictator, and finally, the white glove that covered the hand of Pinochet. “Perhaps my fractured visions of him through these years—the disembodied voice; those faded newspaper clippings; the fragments of a life in hiding; the white, white glove—were, after all, prescient, intimations of a possible farewell. Was I finally going to get the chance, was my country about to be allowed, to wave good-bye to General Pinochet?” (Dorfman 26).

When I refer to the erasure of the crimes of the past, I do not mean the erasure of state violence. State violence itself was performed as an erasure of the evidence of the crimes committed by the Pinochet dictatorship in the name of the nation: this is perhaps the perverse logic that explains the practice of the disappearance of bodies. Since state violence itself was conceived as a form of erasure that belonged to the dictatorship, the ideologues of the transition to democracy, capitalizing on the work of human rights organizations such as the Vicaría de la Solidaridad (previously known as Comité Pro-Paz) articulated a discourse of national reconciliation that involved the reinscription of state violence. Although state violence was reinscribed in Chilean political imagination after the 1991 Rettig Report (Report of the Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation), state violence was never recognized as a criminal act. The Rettig Report was itself symptomatic of this dual process of reinscription and erasure as a crime. According to the Commission’s staff director José Zalaquett “[t]he Commission named the victims … but not the perpetrators” (qtd. in Kornbluh The Pinochet File, 471). This dual process of reinscription and erasure was due in part to the fact that President Aylwin, who was himself looking for ways to undo the 1978 self-amnesty imposed by the Pinochet regime, after seeing his hands tied by the terms of the transition, invited the Chilean Supreme Court to consider the investigation of state violence, however, not in order to prosecute the perpetrators of the criminal acts of the state, who were going to be protected by the amnesty anyway, but only as a therapeutic process for the families of the victims with the purpose of helping them in their mourning process. In her book The Pinochet Effect: Transnational Justice in the Age of Human Rights, Naomi Roht-Arriaza comments that: “The first chink in the wall of amnesty came when President Aylwin turned over a copy of the 1991 Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s report to the Supreme Court, with an exhortation to the courts to investigate the violations described in the report despite the court’s inability to bring suspects to trial. How could the courts know whether the amnesty applied, Aylwin and his legal advisors asked, if they didn’t know what had happened and when? The aim of the investigation became simply finding out the fate of the disappeared person, not putting anyone in jail. What a cruel irony for the families! So long as they were kept in dreadful uncertainty, the case could go forward, but as soon as they found proof of the death of a loved one, those responsible would go free. […] But a majority of the Supreme Court would have no part even of the Aylwin doctrine, arguing that amnesty meant that no crime ever existed, and so there was nothing to investigate” (Roht-Arriaza The Pinochet Effect, 72).
indifference with which the Chilean system of justice, still associated with the Pinochet regime, received the executive advice offered by President Aylwin favoring the investigation of state violence while not encouraging its prosecution, then it is clear that state violence as a crime was erased twice in Chile. It is true that, from a political point of view, the crimes of the past had to be excluded from the Chilean democratic imagination, as Tomás Moulian has argued in his book Chile Actual: Anatomía de un mito (1997). For Moulian, “El consenso es la etapa superior del olvido” [consensus is the superior stage of oblivion] (Chile Actual 37).

The transition’s discourse of national reconciliation had a strong impact: it conceived culture as a series of “techniques of forgetting” (Cultural Residues 25-26), which, paradoxically, orchestrated the circulation of memory as an empty signifier. The neutralization of memory in the transition to democracy not only benefited Pinochet’s impunity but it also became complicit with the dictatorship’s repression of the socialist past: the erasure of the legacy of the Popular Unity, a political coalition that supported

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5 However, it is not less true that, from the marketing perspective of Chilean neoliberalism, the reinscription of state violence (the memory of the brutality of the Pinochet dictatorship) is necessary in order to promote the advantages of the free market. In his essay “Posdictadura y poética: el futuro de Chile Actual,” Brett Levinson elaborates an excellent analysis of Moulian’s position (concerning the erasure of the crimes of the dictatorship) and argues that both memory and forgetting are crucial operations in the Chilean transition to democracy. Levinson analyzes a TV commercial in which the terror of censorship imposed by the Pinochet regime is evoked along with the slogan “Publicidad. El derecho de elegir” [Advertising. The right to choose] which celebrates the “democratic” potential of advertising (“Posttransición” 44). Levinson concludes that “if the dictatorship is a reign of terror, the postdictatorship re-stages that terror in order to sell” (45).

6 This is precisely the way in which we should read Richard’s reflections on the cooptation of the notion of memory for the official policy national consensus: “The word “memory,” like many that insipidly circulate, without weight or gravity, through the communicative channels of the mediating politics of television, has erased from its public voice the untreated, unsociable recollection of the nightmare that tortured and tormented its subjects in the past. Memory, dislodged even from the words that it name it, now suffers from an emptiness with a lack of affective context that daily cancels its horrible past, increasingly separating and distancing the historical memory from an emotional network that previously resounded collectively. It would seem that the word “memory,” thus recited by the mechanized discourse of the consensus, subjects the memory of the victims to a new offense: making memory insignificant by letting it be spoken in words weakened by official routines […]” (Cultural Residues 18). I associate Nelly Richard’s description of memory as a word “without weight or gravity” to the notion of empty signifier as developed by Laclau in “Why do empty signifiers matter to politics?” (Emancipations, 36-46). However, in contrast to Laclau’s characterization of empty signifiers as subversive political elements, I would like to emphasize the neutralizing effects of empty signifiers when they serve to consolidate a process of hegemonic closure as the one described by Richard in reference to the role of memory in the Chilean transition to democracy.
Salvador Allende’s project of achieving socialism through democracy. Along with the neutralization of memory, the transition to democracy also promoted a culture of amnesia that denied access to the country’s socialist past.

2.2 “As it flashes up at a moment of danger”: Cinema’s “weak Messianic power”

In an attempt to redeem the past from the transition’s exorcism of history and to restore the density of collective memory, Patricio Guzmán returned to Chile in 1996 (after 23 years in exile) with the purpose of screening his film trilogy The Battle of Chile for its original protagonists. Some of the viewers that participated in Guzmán’s film screenings were part of Salvador Allende’s Popular Unity government, and many of them were survivors of the dictatorship’s violence. Guzmán exhibited the film to young audiences as well, audiences that were only familiar with the cultural monuments of the present, those monuments that the new democratic government inherited from the Pinochet dictatorship. In his return to Chile, Guzmán also had the opportunity to interview friends, survivors of the coup and some of the social actors that appeared in The Battle of Chile. Chile, Obstinate Memory not only captures the interactive and reflexive encounters in which audiences respond to Guzmán’s The Battle of Chile, but it is also a film about Guzmán’s return to the original locations of the film trilogy. Guzmán returns to witness the transformation of Chilean society after the trauma of the coup. His trip to Chile is also a voyage to the past—the filmmaker not only travels from one geographical point (Paris) to another (Chile), he also becomes a time traveler. What he brings from the past is The Battle of Chile, a film that comes back to Chilean society in order to expose itself as the return of the repressed.
For Nelly Richard, Patricio Guzmán’s Chile, Obstinate Memory "shows the work of remembrance in a dialogic memory (made of communicative exchanges and transfers) that leads the characters to live the shock of remembering through memories filled with biographical details" (Cultural Residues 178, n. 8). In the next pages, I would like to propose an analysis of Chile, Obstinate Memory that could be conceived as a Benjaminian expansion of Nelly Richard’s comments on the film.

Chile, Obstinate Memory begins with a strong contrast established by the sound track that is key to understanding how this film operates along the lines of Benjamin’s historical materialism. The credits sequence at the beginning of Chile, Obstinate Memory shows its title, the name of the director, and a dedication note. Guzmán dedicates the film to his two daughters: Andrea and Camila. During this sequence, we hear the sounds of city traffic. A short silence that accompanies the dedication note follows the familiar sound of an automobile’s horn that beeps twice. After this brief silence, when sound is restored, we are no longer going to listen to the familiar sounds of harmless automobiles paralyzed in a traffic jam. Instead, we hear the sync sound of a combat airplane crossing the sky and cutting through the air. A loud sound erupts just a bit before the image of the combat airplane erupts on the screen. It is a deafening sound that not only disturbs the familiar ambiance given by the off-screen sound of the urban traffic jam that accompanies Guzmán’s dedication note, but also anticipates a thread, a thread that threatens all of the above mentioned in the opening credits sequence. It is the thread of having to return to an unredeemable past.

From the shot of the combat airplane, there is a cut to a take of a palace in flames. It is clear that the explosions that we hear in the sound track correspond to the palace that is being bombed by the combat airplane we just saw a few seconds before.
The visual track presents the attack in a sequence of three shots: from the palace in flames there is a cut back to the airplane, then a cut back to the palace, and then a cut back to a final shot in which we see the airplane moving almost out of the screen. The subtitles (11th September 1973 / SANTIAGO CHILE) on the cut back to the second shot of the airplane reveal to us the time and place of the attack. This regression to the images of the traumatic event of the September 11, 1973 coup sets the tone of the film in a Benjaminian key. It illustrates what Benjamin, in his “Theses on the philosophy of History,” calls historical materialism: “to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger” (“Theses” 255). When Guzmán interrupts the silence of the dedication note with the loud sounds and disturbing images of the bombing of La Moneda palace, he recognizes that “the danger affects both the content of the tradition and its receivers” (255). The return to a state of exception not only threatens to interrupt the progression of the film, but its danger almost touches the names those loved ones to whom Guzmán dedicates the work. However, no matter how dangerous having access to the violence of the past may result, Guzmán is also aware that by transmitting to his daughters that weak Messianic power, “a power to which the past has a claim” he is establishing a “secret agreement between past generations and the present one” that opens the realm of historical materialism (255).

2.3 “There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism”: La Moneda’s and the National Stadium’s Political Unconscious

The challenge of a historical materialist filmmaker is to show the danger that affects any “tradition and its receivers” without betraying the redemption of the past. In order to unmask the danger to which the tradition and its receivers are exposed, the
historical materialist filmmaker has to face the danger as it is: the attempt to erase the crimes of the past. That is why Guzmán, in Chile, Obstinate Memory, exhibits the double nature of cultural monuments as in an attempt to redeem the past. Each of the cultural monuments visited or reviewed by Guzmán and the other social actors in Chile, Obstinate Memory (La Moneda Palace, the National Stadium, some photographs of the coup) manifests the dialectic exposed by Benjamin in regards to historical documents: “there is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism” (Benjamin 256). The film is therefore an attempt to inscribe the memory of the past while becoming a meditation on the possibilities of revising the ambivalent condition of cultural monuments as historical documents.

The sequence showing the bombing of La Moneda palace that opens Chile, Obstinate Memory ends with a sound and visual dissolve to a shot showing the face of Juan, one of president Allende’s guards who was at the palace on the morning of the coup. Guzmán’s approach to the coup in Chile, Obstinate Memory is more personal and intimate than in The Battle of Chile. Guzmán combines the image of Juan’s vivid narration of the day of the coup with photographs of what Juan was suppose to be doing that day: getting married, an event that finally comes possible for Juan and his fiancée days after the coup. The barbaric episode of the coup haunts the personal memory evoked by the photographic document that shows Juan’s wedding ceremony. Because it evokes survival, the wedding photo also establishes an uncanny contrast with the rest of the photographic materials that Guzmán shows in this sequence: photos of the military forces that participated in the coup taken at La Moneda palace and photos of the scars left in the building after heavy gunfire. Apart from emphasizing Juan’s wish of getting married, Guzmán also includes the recurring sound of heavy gunfire, a sound effect that
for Bill Nichols “strengthens a ‘reality effect,’” (Nichols 41) in order to add a sense of
danger to the film sequence in which Juan reconstructs of the combat. The combination
of the wedding photo and the sound of gunfire create an “affective texture” in which the
act of remembrance responds to both pleasure and anxiety.

In this sequence, Juan and the filmmaker return together to La Moneda palace
after 23 years. During this visit, Guzmán’s strategy consists of creating a contrast
between the images of the palace in the past (the photographs that show the violence of
the coup and the footage of the bombing of La Moneda) and the image of the palace in
the present. A zoom out shot taken from a window reveals the renewed Moneda palace
free of all the scars left after the attack. Guzmán also expresses the same contrast later
in the film, in a visit to the National Stadium. The marks of the crimes of the past appear
to have been erased from both buildings when we observe them in the present. That
explains why Guzmán brings back photos and footage from the past: to desacralize the
role of these buildings as cultural monuments of the present.

One of the most dramatic photographic montages made by Guzmán, which he
creates to dismantle the fantasy of the civilized order expressed by cultural monuments,
juxtaposes an image of president Allende and his wife greeting the public from a balcony
of La Moneda palace with a later image showing the same balcony destroyed after the
bombing. The intensity of the visible evidence is enhanced when Guzmán shows the
same balcony twice and framed exactly in the same way in both photographs, as if to
expose the proof of what has been destroyed: not only the building, but the democratic
and public way of doing politics.

Although the marks of their violent past appear to have been erased from the
cultural monuments, neither in La Moneda palace nor in the National Stadium the
violence of the coup has been erased completely. The image that opens the film sequence of La Moneda shows a group of soldiers marching and entering into the palace. While the visual track refers to the presence of the military in today’s democratic government, guzmán’s voiceover refers to the past activities of the military against the democratically elected government of president salvador allende, leader of the popular unity movement.

In 1973, the country was in a state of shock. The army launched a coup d'état and allende died in the battle after the bombing. The world was moved. allende was the only marxist head of state elected democratically. he symbolized a new and different political way.

allende’s “new and different political way,” as evoked by guzmán, contrasts with the “same old” political way expressed by the presence of the military in the transition to democracy. a traveling shot from the battle of chile (included in chile, obstinate memory) makes evident the conflict between civilians and the military. it shows the figure of president allende in the background while his presidential vehicle crosses through a line of soldiers. in contrast to allende’s background figure, the blurry mass of soldiers with their backs turned to the camera appears in the front of the screen almost as if taking position to attack the president. while the traveling shot from the battle of chile exposes the thread of the military against allende’s democratic government, the opening shot of the film sequence of la moneda in chile, obstinate memory in which we see the soldiers marching denounces the continuity of the military involvement in the transition government. this piece of evidence presented by guzmán re-affirms one of

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7 in his analysis of kidlat tahmic’s perfumed nightmares, fredric jameson points to the “discreet allusions to state power, in the shape of police or army uniforms at the outskirts of the image” (the geopolitical aesthetic 191). in jameson’s analysis of perfumed nightmares, the military uniform is made equivalent with state power (and this is justified because jameson’s analysis of tahmic refers to Ferdinand marcos’ military repressive dictatorship). in contrast, i would like to conceive the role of the military uniform differently. in chile, obstinate memory, the military uniform is not only equivalent to state power but, more specifically, it serves as the emblem of the intrusion of the military in the “consertación” government that led the chilean transition to democracy.
Tomas Moulian’s arguments in Chile Actual: Anatomía de un mito referring to the periodization of Chilean history: that there is no dramatic rupture, but, rather, a sense of historical continuity between the dictatorship and the transition to democracy. The sense of continuity imposed by the dictatorship to the democratic government intensifies throughout the film sequence of La Moneda when Guzmán follows Juan as he observes the palace and soldiers appear on successive frames constantly surrounding him. The dramatic contrast between Juan, dressed as a civilian, and the soldiers, wearing uniforms, achieves a historical stance when one compares it with the photographs of the day of the coup. In these photographs, Allende’s loyals are dressed as civilians and the soldiers participating in the coup are wearing uniforms. The transition to democracy, as this sequence seems to suggest, would operate as a sort of déjà vu, guaranteeing a space for the afterlife of Pinochet’s military rule.

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8 In “Posdictadura y poética: el futuro de Chile Actual,” Levinson summarizes Moulian’s argument about the lack of ruptures in Chilean recent history (41-43). According to Levinson, Moulian conceives the “transition” as a “false transition” since the only event that has taken place in the past 160 years of Chilean history (1820-1997) is the bourgeois revolution (42). Moulian’s theory dismantles the official theory of Chilean history proposed by the transition government once it characterizes itself as an inaugural rupture that puts an end to Pinochet’s dictatorial regime. There is a second theory of Chilean history that shares with Moulian the conception of the actual “transition” as “false”, but it periodizes Chilean history differently. This alternative conception of history corresponds to Willy Thayer’s conception of the transition as a stasis. For Thayer, the actual “transition” is “false” because it refers “to a state of affairs that we know is not transitioning nor on the way to doing so; a state of affairs that we feel will not move in a positive direction, or that it already moved, and from there, its last transit, won’t move anymore, threatening us with a definite presence … The actual transition is not what goes (away), it is a conservative state that remains without anything happening to it” (qtd. by Richard in Cultural Residues 179, n.21). Thayer opposes the stasis of the actual “transition” with what seems to be, in his argument, the real transition that Chile experienced after 1973: the political and economic transformations that came along with Pinochet dictatorship (qtd. by Richard, “Introducción” 9). While in many accounts of Chilean history the Transition is treated as a personified abstraction, Ariel Dorfman has provided a poetic link that associates the actual transition to the dictatorship by elaborating an apostrophe with the ghost of Pinochet that confirms the continuism of the dictatorship as a form of stasis that affects the development of the new democracy: “And even when the people of Chile forced you to accept democracy and leave power, you were still able, with an uncanny instinct, to trap the whole country in a transition where you would never have to answer for even one of your deeds or words, a transition where you were the only one who was really free to say and do what you wanted to, while your fellow countrymen always had to be careful of their mouths, careful even of our thoughts. […] We couldn’t, given the terms of the transaction we agreed to under the specter of your guns, express our true emotions, fearful that if you didn’t like our latest move you would just up and kick the table on which the game was being played, shoot the player who had dared to trump your card. We got our democracy back, General, but you set the limits of how far and deep that democracy could go” (Exorcising Terror, 27-28).
The sensation of déjà vu is made evident in the National Stadium sequence once Guzmán compares the visual appearance of the soldiers in the present, paying services at a football match, with photographs of the soldiers in the past, those who were in charge of the National Stadium when it became a center for torture during the coup.

Guzmán not only provides photographic evidence of the brutality of the military forces during the coup, but it shows that the soldiers of today wear the same uniforms as the soldiers of the past. The uniforms and hats that the Chilean soldiers use today to control a mass of euphoric teenagers that go to the stadium to see the football match are the same uniforms and hats that the Chilean armed forces used during the coup. The insertion of photographic images of the coup in the montage of the National Stadium sequence confirms the semblance of the Chilean military forces from the past and the present, and, therefore, the afterlife of the dictatorship in the transition to democracy.

Guzmán’s act of memory contrasts with the euphoria of the teenagers, an emotional explosion that manifests the culture of amnesia of the Chilean society during the transition to democracy.  

For Nelly Richard, two emblematic gestures express the contradictions of the postdictatorship: muteness and overstimulation (Cultural Residues 22). The euphoria of the mass of teenagers corresponds to what Richard has referred to as “overstimulation.” According to Richard, “overstimulation” is characterized by a set of “compulsive gestures” coming from subjects that “artificially exaggerate the rhythm” and that

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9 It is interesting that when Guzmán links the National Stadium to the military repression that came after the 1973 coup, he overlooked the process of re-semanticization that transformed the National Stadium from an emblem of repression into an emblem of democracy during the 1990 inaugural address given by Patricio Aylwin, the first elected President of Chile after the transition. Ariel Dorfman affirms that more than the words of President Aylwin (the famous expression “nunca más”/“never again”), the exorcism of the demons of the past that haunted the National Stadium was achieved by the communal act of mourning that preceded the Presidential address: the collective performance of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony (Exorcising Terror 12-13). This symbolic transformation is not evident in Guzmán’s visit to the National Stadium.
“hysterically precipitate themselves into an ephemeral overabundance, celebrating this flightiness with the trivial wink of advertising novelty” (Cultural Residues 22). Richard’s notion of overstimulation as “advertising choreography” (22) should be understood as an attempt to transcode the Marxist notion of “false consciousness” into the Chilean critical debate. However, in order to grasp a more complex dimension of the National Stadium sequence in Guzmán film, I would like to consider Jameson’s objections to the notion of mass culture as manipulation and false consciousness (The Political Unconscious 287).

In the last pages of The Political Unconscious, Jameson proposes that in order to understand the dialectic of ideology and utopia as it channels collective desire, we have to question the conception of the manipulated viewer (286). Just a page before, Jameson has proposed to stage his discussion of collective desire “under a reversal of Walter Benjamin’s great dictum” (“there is no document of civilization which is not at one and the same time a document of barbarism”), the same dictum that gives coherence to my analysis of Guzmán’s film (286). What Jameson offers as “a reversal of Walter Benjamin’s great dictum” is this: “that the effectively ideological is also, at the same time, necessarily Utopian” (286).

If the function of the mass cultural text is meanwhile seen rather as the production of false consciousness and the symbolic reaffirmation of this or that legitimizing strategy, even this process cannot be grasped as one of sheer violence (the theory of hegemony is explicitly distinguished from control by brute force) nor as one inscribing the appropriate attitudes upon a blank slate, but must necessarily involve a complex strategy of rhetorical persuasion in which substantial incentives are offered for ideological adherence. We will say that such incentives, as well as the impulses to be managed by the mass cultural text, are necessarily Utopian in nature. (The Political Unconscious 287)

How can we conceive the relation between the euphoric mass of teenagers and the “carabineros” (the soldiers) in the National Stadium? In order to answer this, we will have to reverse Jameson’s reversal back to Benjamin’s dictum. If we take the football
match as a mass cultural text, or rather, as a mass cultural performance or event, then it is clear that the potential use of brute force becomes part of the ideological, in other words, the document of barbarism is such because it belongs to civilization. The euphoria of the teenagers is an utopian incentive that seems to correspond to the power of the popular masses, which vaguely evokes the massive force of Allende’s Popular Unity. When Guzmán juxtaposes the mass of teenagers with the mass of soldiers and connects the encounter with images of the coup, the film exposes the double edge of the fantasy that sustains not only the transition to democracy but also the Pinochet regime itself as a political ghost: the erasure of political antagonism and the consolidation of national consensus out of brute force. Brute force becomes both the ideological horizon and the utopian impulse that sustain the fantasy of Chilean society. In Chile, brute force is what mediates the dialectic of ideology and utopia. Therefore, utopia becomes the erasure of utopia (the utopian impulse of the coup involved the erasure of the socialist utopian impulse of Allende’s Popular Unity), while ideology becomes the erasure of ideology (the ideological horizon of the transition involved the erasure of any ideological claim –coming from the right or the left– in favor a de-ideologized economical realism). However, if this transcoding of Jameson’s reversal back to Benjamin’s great dictum is possible, it is perhaps because the National Stadium sequence plays its ideological function too well, when it insists that the mediation of the dialectic of ideology and utopia occurs at the level of “false consciousness” when in reality it occurs at the level of “the political unconscious”. Nonetheless, it would be misleading to conceive Guzmán’s film as a mass cultural text that only performs the ideological program of presenting the political unconscious of Chilean society as a form of false consciousness. The reflexive
force of Guzmán’s film comes precisely from its power to reveal what the document of civilization hides in its political unconscious.

La Moneda’s film sequence is interesting because it shows the image of a cultural monument from which the evidence of the barbarism (of which it became a document on the day of the coup) has been erased. What Guzmán achieves in his visit to La Moneda, assisted by some photographs (showing the scars of the building), the sounds of heavy gunfire and Juan’s testimony, is to break the silence of the walls and to supplement the mnemonic traces that have been erased by the renovation of the building. Juan’s testimony, as he walks inside the renewed palace, is of great importance since it provides a spatial reconstruction of the events of the coup. The perception of the space that Juan has not visited in many years seems to activate his memory and he begins to remember the details of the attack. Sometimes Juan verbalizes his memories and other times Guzmán pushes Juan’s memories to the limit. Carrying a tripod, Juan looks through one of the windows of La Moneda palace. There is a cut to a photograph of the soldiers ready to attack the palace during the coup and then a cut back to the window. Guzmán uses the photographic insert to create the illusion that Juan’s perception in the present is haunted by images of the traumatic past that the renewed palace itself represses.

2.4 “Contrary to an act”: Social Subjectivity as Substitution

In La Moneda’s film sequence, Guzmán combines Juan’s memories of the attack with his own memories. In addition to the attack it suffered the day of the coup, La Moneda palace was also the place for the inscription of another event with dramatic consequences in Guzmán’s life. While Juan continues to explore the interior of La
Moneda (the camera shows him walking and makes his visitors badge visible), Guzmán states:

At the time, I often came here and met Juan. He was one of the many anonymous persons I filmed to make ‘The Battle of Chile’ a feature documentary about Popular Union. [....] After the coup, the movie was shown in 37 countries and won many prizes.

La Moneda palace was one of the locations from which Guzmán filmed The Battle of Chile. Apart from the evident impulse of self-promotion that motivates Guzmán’s comments on the international success of The Battle of Chile, there is also a real preoccupation with the status of his film in Chile. Censored during the Pinochet dictatorship, The Battle of Chile has never been screened in the country after the transition to democracy. This explains Guzmán’s interest in sharing the film publicly, as an attempt to break the censorship imposed by the dictatorship and extended during the transition. While Juan contemplates the empty streets of Santiago from the same balcony of La Moneda from which Guzmán had the chance to shoot the mass movement of the Popular Unity, Guzmán goes to explain:

Here, in this same place an important mass movement had been developed. We filmed it for a year, often not knowing very well what we were doing. [....] However, until now, The Battle of Chile has never been shown in Chile. [....] It was banned under Pinochet dictatorship. Even today, distributors do not feel comfortable as to show it. For many people, the theme of memory is a closed theme.

The memory of this cinematic event, an event that, due to censorship, never existed in the Chilean collective memory, is evoked when, in what appears to be a point-of-view shot of Juan looking down the balcony to the empty streets of Santiago, there is a dissolve to a shot from The Battle of Chile taken from the same balcony and showing a mass of supporters of Popular Unity covering the streets of city. The shot from The Battle of Chile ends showing an ornament from the balcony and then there is a dissolve
that moves back again to Juan’s point of view shot, showing the same ornament in the present. In contrast to the streets full of people showed by the image of the past, the image of the present reveals an empty street. In a later shot, we can perceive a sense of loss expressed in Juan’s gaze, as if looking for something missing: probably, both the film, since he has never seen it, and the people that appeared in the film itself. In this sequence, Juan’s vision is made to coincide with a censored image: the image of the Popular Unity (both the film and the mass movement represented in it). While Juan’s access to the censored image of the Popular Unity is only suggested in Guzmán’s narration in Spanish, it is made evident by the English subtitles, when the phrase “Para muchos, el tema de la memoria es un tema cerrado” [For many people, the theme of memory is a closed theme] is translated into “For many, this memory has been suppressed.” What has been suppressed is not only “memory” as a “topic,” but the possibility of sharing the collective memory of the Popular Unity era. That explains why the dispersion of the collective utopian impulse of the Popular Unity mass mobilization gives way to the paralysis of the euphoric mass of teenagers in the National Stadium. On the one hand, one could suggest that the display of the mass mobilizations from The Battle of Chile in Chile, Obstinate Memory serves to expose the utopian impulses of different political collectivities before the coup. On the other hand, it is also possible argue that the portrait of the euphoric mass of teenagers in Chile, Obstinate Memory serves to reassert “the undiminished power of ideological distortion that persists even within the restored Utopian meaning of cultural artifacts” (The Political Unconscious 299).

Jameson uses the term “artifact” but I consider the term “performance” more appropriate to elaborate in my analysis since I am referring to the dynamics of collective
mobilization. It is important to consider that the shift from Juan’s gaze, from the “point of view” shot, to the image taken by the camera of Jorge Muller Silva, the director of photography of The Battle of Chile who disappeared in 1974, corresponds to what Bill Nichols has conceived as social subjectivity, a “subjectivity dissociated from any single individual character” (Nichols 179). In Chile, Obstinate Memory, Guzmán pushes cinema to the limits of objectivity when, from the same balcony, he exposes a cinematic hybrid gaze made with fragments of different temporalities in which the experience of collective union and individual dispersal is both perceived and remembered by a social subjectivity traveling in time. This cinematic hybrid gaze can help to rehabilitate a vision damaged by the effects of censorship. Juan’s complicity with the gaze of the filmmaker can be considered as a therapeutic process. It also expresses a hybrid mode of documentary filmmaking, what I would call interactive reflexivity\(^\text{10}\), since the film shows that it is Juan (and not a member of the film crew) who carries the tripod that is necessary to perform with precision the shot from the balcony, a shot which coincides exactly with the previous shot from the same location included in The Battle of Chile. It is evident that the tripod is used for this shot only, since the rest of La Moneda sequence in Chile, Obstinate Memory is shot in handheld camera style, including the shots that show Juan carrying the tripod. The tripod carried by Juan symbolizes the social subjectivity achieved by the cinematic gaze when memory becomes a collective task.

\(^{10}\text{By interactive reflexivity, I refer to the complicit role of social actors that are not members of the film crew in the film’s disclosure of its own process of production. It also refers to the role of audiences that appear in a film in order to participate in the questioning of another film’s rhetorical strategies. This new mode combines the typology used by Nichols to theorize two modes of documentary film (interactive and reflexive), and while it can be conceived as an elaboration of Nichols’ typology, it should be read as a further development that emphasizes on a problem not taken into consideration in Nichols’ model: the relation between the members of the film crew and the social actors that are not part of the film crew as it is staged in the film by the mutual use of cinematic tools. See Brian Nichols’ Representing Reality, in particular Chapter 2: “Documentary Modes of Representation” (32-75). Another great example of interactive reflexivity in documentary filmmaking may also be the sequence of the Sandinistas film screening included by Michael Chanan in New Cinema of Latin America: Part 1 (1983).}
The cinematic gaze turned into social subjectivity also serves to defy the power of the victors from which, as Benjamin puts it, not even the dead will be safe. In Chile, Obstinate Memory, Guzmán uses the camera as a restitutional device in order to capture a vision in the limits of life and death. Guzmán captures the vision of two dead social actors who participated in The Battle of Chile: cameraman Jorge Muller Silva (which we just analyzed in connection to Juan’s gaze and will analyze again later) and President Salvador Allende. There is a sequence in Chile, Obstinate Memory that shows Allende’s former guards escorting a red vehicle in the present. The red vehicle viewed in the present stands for the presidential vehicle used by Allende in the past. The performance of escorting the dead president in the present becomes an embodied act of memory. The former guards escort the empty car as they escorted it in the past when president Allende was alive. Photographs and archival footage represent the past from The Battle of Chile showing Allende in another vehicle as the same guards are escorting him. It is crucial to note that this sequence begins with a bird’s eye shot coming from inside the car. This bird’s eye shot simulates Allende’s point of view, as if the president were looking over his guards. This take, which simulates Allende’s vision, marks a visual and affective transition: it goes from a moment of loss, since the shot comes after a dissolve from a previous shot showing the files of the disappeared, to a moment of hope. This take makes possible the integration of the vision of one social actor who has been lost. Allende’s phantasmatic gaze from inside the car delivers a more an-archic gaze, the gaze of the Other that comes back through the camera as the camera becomes an ethical device that makes possible the realization of cinema as “modern antihumanism” in the Levinasian sense. According to Levinas, “modern antihumanism” “makes a place for subjectivity positing itself in abnegation, in sacrifice, and in substitution. Its great
intuition is to have abandoned the idea of the person as an end in itself. The Other is the end, and me, I am a hostage” (Levinas 94). By making possible the emergence of social subjectivity, the camera also accomplishes the task of substitution delivering the Other as an end. For Levinas: “Substitution is not an act but contrary to an act; it is passivity inconvertible into an act, on this side of the act-passivity alternative. It is the exceptional, which cannot serve as the grammatical category of Noun or Verb, the recurrence that can only be stated as an in itself, or as an inside-out of being, or as nonbeing” (Levinas 91). Guzmán and the guards are hostages to an act of memory that departs from a passivity irreducible to the act: Allende’s phantasmatic gaze emerges when Guzmán’s cinematic gaze itself exceeds the noun and the verb to become the concrete event of responsibility:\footnote{For Levinas, “Responsibility is not a return to self but an irremovable and implacable crispation, which the limits of identity cannot contain” (Levinas 89).}: “to substitute oneself for others” (Levinas 94).

2.5 “A phantomatic mode production”: Cinema as Work of Mourning

Guzmán’s achievements in The Battle of Chile could not have been possible without the vision of director of photography Jorge Muller Silva. In Chile, Obstinate Memory, Guzmán pays homage to Muller’s work when he insists on substituting his cameraman’s ghostly gaze. After some conversations with Muller’s friends, Guzmán visits Muller’s father, who is so affected by the visit that he remains speechless. Muller’s father overcomes his loss of speech in silence, when he shows the old film equipment used by his son for the shooting of The Battle of Chile as well as some photographs of the shooting process. It is from one of the photographs that Muller’s father puts over the table that Guzmán extracts an almost magical “weak Messianic power”. The photograph
shows Muller’s face while he was shooting with his camera. In a very delicate camera movement that seems to animate the content of the photograph, Guzmán brings back to life Muller’s work. Guzmán shakes the camera to produce the illusion that the cameraman trapped in the photo is finally able to move and to film once again what he shot in the past: a man running while pushing a wheelbarrow. This piece of footage comes from the first documentary film made by Guzmán in collaboration with Muller, The First Year (1971), which is a film about popular mobilization during Allende’s first year as Chilean president. Guzmán’s camera performs a work of mourning in which Muller’s phantasmatic labor finally frees from the fixity of the photograph. By getting free from the photograph’s fixity, Muller’s cinematic gaze also liberates itself from the rule of censorship of the Pinochet dictatorship, a freedom of censorship for which Muller had to pay with his own life. Guzmán’s homage to Muller’s work is a work of mourning in Derrida’s sense. For Derrida, “the work of mourning is not one kind of work among others. It is work itself, work in general, the trait by means of which one ought perhaps to reconsider the very concept of production—in what links it to trauma, to mourning, to the idealizing iterability of exappropriation, thus to the spectral spiritualization that is at work in any tekhne” (Derrida, Specters 97). The work of mourning is double: Guzmán liberates the work of a ghost through a work of mourning that shows that all work is a work of mourning. The resurrection of a work that can only come back from the past is the motive of both Guzmán’s animation of Muller’s photograph and Muller’s cinematic gaze, since what Muller films with the mechanical technology of cinema is the manual work performed by a man who is enslaved to an older technology: the wheelbarrow. The double spectral labor performed by Muller and the man pushing the wheelbarrow can be
associated with Derrida’s comments on the labor of the disappeared as the very mark of a phantomatic mode of production. According to Derrida,

"The one who has disappeared appears still to be there, and his apparition is not nothing. It does not do nothing. Assuming that the remains can be identified, we know better than ever today that the dead must be able to work. And cause to work, perhaps more than ever. There is also a mode of production of the phantom, itself a phantomatic mode of production. (Specters 97)

The re-appearance of Jorge Muller Silva (disappeared in 1974), as he documents the efforts of another man whose labor belongs to a previous mode of production which is about to disappear, becomes itself a work of mourning in a double sense: Guzmán mourns the disappearance of his comrade while he also mourns the disappearance of the mode of production seen through his comrade’s camerawork. The historical meaning of this spectral work which itself becomes a work of mourning may be associated with Benjamin, when he explains, against the grain of Social Democracy, that the working class’s “hatred and … spirit of sacrifice … are nourished by the image of enslaved ancestors rather than that of liberated grandchildren” (260). Rather than presupposing the role given by Social democracy to the working class as “redeemer of future generations”, Guzmán assumes the task of the historical materialist who is ready to redeem the past by showing how mourning works at the crossing of different modes of production. “Working at the crossing” is precisely what constitutes the historical and political force of the phantomatic mode of production exposed by Guzmán through the cinematic gaze of Jorge Muller Silva.

2.6 “Puede ser, pero tengo mis dudas”: Blurry and Flickering Memories

The double nature of historical documents, as they become the ambivalent mark of both civilization and barbarism, always affects the redemption of the past. . This is the
case of José Balmes’s painting process as it is represented in Chile, Obstinate Memory. The painting on which Balmes is working during the shooting is a revision of a photographic document taken on the same day of the coup. The original photograph shows a mass of human bodies thrown on one of the streets that surround La Moneda palace. This mass of human bodies corresponds to the bodies of those loyal guards of president Allende at the moment in which they were captured by the military forces. On the top of this mass of human bodies, there are two hands up in the air, as if claiming for pity. Balmes’s painting is a sort of colorful cropping of these two hands that come from a black and white photograph. While adding color to the scene, Balmes explores the blurry quality of the photographic image in which clothes and part of the body become indistinguishable. On the one hand, Balmes’s painting can be conceived as a revision of a traumatic past that runs the risk of contributing to the aesthetization of state violence. On the other hand, it is also true that Balmes’s project can be understood as the recognition of the irrefutable double nature of historical documents since they bear witness to both civilization and barbarism. Balmes’s painting not only refers to a violent past, but also to the difficulties of retaining a fixed image of it. It opens the possibility for revising the ambivalent condition of historical documents as they become part of an archive affected by its self-effacing capacity. The blurry quality of the photographic image, as Balmes’s brush interprets it, refers to the challenges of memory and to the vicissitudes of witnessing an event that has many angles and channels of transmission. A single archival image cannot contain them, because it is always in the plurality of the archive that the event appears and disappears.

12 For a philosophical account of the notion of the archive and its self-effacing capacity, please refer to Jacques Derrida’s discussion on Archive Fever (1998).
Guzmán suggests the plural character of the archival image when his camera examines the hands represented in the two documents (the photograph and the painting) along with the hands of the painter in action, as they explore the image in both documents. Guzmán juxtaposes the blurry image of the hands in the two documents with close ups of Balmes’s hands as they move freely in order to suggest the mutual dynamic movement of both the archival images and their interpretive re-elaboration.

The plurality of the event made possible by the multiple layers of memory becomes evident when Juan, the survivor of the attack to La Moneda who visits the palace along with Guzmán, recognizes himself to be the social actor whose hands up in the air appear in the photograph that Balmes uses as a source for his painting. In Chile, Obstinate Memory, the transmission of the same event, the arrest of Allende’s guards during the 1973 coup, is made possible by a combination of sources that include personal testimonies (those of Juan and the other guards), photographs, footage, Balmes’s painting and reactions of the witnesses to different visual materials. The revision of visual materials from the past portrayed in the film allows witnesses to get access to the traumatic event of the 1973 coup in order to recognize who they were while trying to understand their role in history. Access to the past through visual materials also facilitates the task of accounting for what has been lost, especially in those scenes of the film in which different survivors of the coup refer to the destiny of those citizens who never came back alive. The identification of missing citizens, those who disappeared after being captured by the military forces, not only results in showing the capacity of audiovisual media to preserve memory, but it also becomes an act of denunciation against the past crimes that present rulers attempt to erase or trivialize.
However, audiovisual media is not always enough to provoke mnemonic effects. Sometimes visual images cannot serve as evidence to sustain the presence of a subject whose past self-image may no longer be accessible to him or herself. This seems to be the meaning of the flickering image of Carmen Vivanco shown by Guzmán in Chile, Obstinate Memory. In a public screening of The Battle of Chile shown in Chile, Obstinate Memory, Guzmán asks the audience to identify any of the social actors that may have appeared in the film trilogy. Members of the audience respond in each case, distinguishing between those participants of The Battle of Chile who are still alive and those who have disappeared. Two women from the audience recognize the face of a woman who participates in one of the many rallies organized by Popular Unity that appear in The Battle of Chile. Guzmán freezes the image that reveals the face of this woman that according to the two witnesses corresponds to the face of Carmen Vivanco.

In the next scene, Guzmán confronts the real Carmen Vivanco, an old woman that appears in the left side of the frame, with the flickering image of the young woman that appears in a TV monitor on the right side of the frame and who is supposed to be Carmen Vivanco. Guzmán goes on to ask: “Es usted esa persona que esta ahí?” [Is it you?]. And Carmen responds: “Tengo mis dudas. Puede ser que cuando estaba más joven. Tengo entendido que esto tienen años.” [I have my doubts. Maybe … when I was younger. It is an old image]. To which Guzmán replies: “23 años.” [23 years]. And Carmen concludes: “Puede ser, pero tengo mis dudas.” [Maybe, but I have my doubts].

Whereas for Juan it is possible to identify himself with the fragmented body that appears in the photograph painted by Balmes, for Carmen Vivanco, it is impossible to determine if the face she sees in the screen is her face. Juan’s power to remember seems to have overcome the anxiety produced by a self-image that has been broken
into pieces. Even though there is no guarantee that those hands belong to Juan, he recognizes the blurry image used by Balmes for his painting as a self-image. For Juan, that photograph constitutes a self-image in spite of the fact that the evidence presented in the image corresponds to a confusing mass of human bodies. While Juan remembers the event from an image showing fragments of his body, the unity of the face that completes the specular image with which we humans identify ourselves is not enough for Vivanco to get access to her past self-image. Vivanco’s doubts may be the symptom of a resistance to remember, especially when the past is associated with traumatic events. This is precisely Vivanco’s case, since she later explains to Guzmán that five members of her family disappeared during the Pinochet regime. In order to suggest the possibility of confronting a subject with a repressed past, but without pushing Vivanco to identify herself with an image of the past that she cannot remember, Guzmán solves the sequence in a very poetic way. He superimposes the shot showing the face of the young woman from the past, supposed to be Carmen Vivanco, as well as many other faces of women participating in the same demonstration, on the face of the old Carmen Vivanco as she looks in the present. Guzmán’s solution evokes the function of superimpositions in silent cinema described by Michael Chion in his book The Voice in Cinema. Michael Chion argues that superimpositions were used in silent cinema “to show apparitions,

13 One could even suggest that the photographic document manipulated by Balmes captures in its optical unconscious the aggressive intention guiding the military forces during the assault to La Moneda palace. Therefore, Juan’s broken self-image belongs to the imagos of the fragmented body described by Lacan in his essay “Aggressivity in Psychoanalysis”: “Among these imagos are some that represent the elective vectors of aggressive intentions, which they provide with an efficacy that might be called magical. These are the images of castration, mutilation, dismemberment, dislocation, evisceration, devouring, bursting open of the body, in short, the imagos that I have grouped together under the apparently structural term of imagos of the fragmented body” (Lacan “Aggressivity in psychoanalysis,” Ecrits 11). Juan’s identification with his broken self-image at once expresses two paradoxical impulses: the instinct of self-preservation or “the narcissistic fear of damage to one’s own body” as Lacan puts it and the death instinct that constitutes man by dissolving him “at every moment he constitutes his world by his suicide” (Lacan “Aggressivity in psychoanalysis” 28). Survival is only experienced after this paradoxical impulses have been left unsolved in the subject’s imago.
doubles, or ghosts” and “to signify a character’s thought or subjective perceptions” (Chion 136). What Guzmán creates in a single frame is the possibility of conceiving the screen as an interface that shows the conflict between the ghosts of the past (the doubles that return to haunt the subject) and the subjective perception of a social actor in the present for whom it may no longer be possible either to receive or to exorcise her doubles from the past.

Another superimposition comes later in the film, when the names carved in the monument of the disappeared are superimposed over the face of Guzmán’s uncle, Don Ignacio. The superimposed images over the faces of Carmen Vivanco and Don Ignacio as well as the freeze frame of the woman in the past supposed to be Carmen Vivanco are both technical manipulations of the audiovisual document. The expressive and poetic force of these altered images comes from the links that they establish between the social actors’ more unconscious fantasies and the dynamics of the “optical unconscious” that Guzmán as a good Benjaminian and historical materialist filmmaker manages to reveal in Chile, Obstinate Memory. 14

2.7 “Esto debe ser como una autodefensa: que a veces yo quiero olvidar”: Memories, Traumas and Events “without witness”

Vivanco’s resistance to identifying herself with the image of the past relates to an extreme experience of trauma that is similar to the silence of Holocaust survivors. After trauma, “one could not bear witness to oneself” (Feldman and Laub 82). It is very

14 The notion of the “optical unconscious” comes from Benjamin’s “Little History of Photography” (1931). “For it is another nature which speaks to the camera rather than to the eye: “other” above all in the sense that a space informed by human consciousness gives way to a space informed by the unconscious. Photography, with its devices of slow motion and enlargement, reveals the secret. It is through photography that we first discover the existence of this optical unconscious, just as we discover the instinctual unconscious through psychoanalysis” (Selected Writings Vol 2. 510-12).
interesting that the only character in Chile, Obstinate Memory who is unable to speak, due to the pain caused by traumatic memories, is Don Rodolfo, Muller’s father, who arrived to Chile from Germany when he was 15 years old after escaping with his family from the Nazis. According to Dori Laub, the violence of the Holocaust was so extreme that it affected human capability to confront the traumatic past. For Laub, the Holocaust is an “event without witness”: “not only, in effect, did the Nazis,” as happened later in Chile, “try to exterminate the physical witnesses of their crimes; but the inherently incomprehensible and deceptive psychological structure of the event precluded its own witnessing” (Feldman and Laub 80). The incomprehensible disappearance of Jorge Muller Silva is so deceptive for Don Rodolfo that he, who was able to escape from the Holocaust, is unable to testify about the existence of state-sponsored violence in Chile.

When Guzmán approaches Hortensia Bussi, President Allende’s widow, the film presents the foreclosure of the witness in combination with a desire to forget. In a conversation with Guzmán, Bussi makes a “video confession”: “Esto debe ser como una autodefensa: que a veces yo quiero olvidar” [This may be a self-defense: that sometimes I want to forget]. One of Guzmán’s strategies is to overcome this foreclosure of the traumatic past, a past that Bussi would prefer to forget, by providing a cinematic witnessing of the years of Popular Unity. However, when this act of witnessing is made public, the trauma of missing the event may become evident. This is the case of a young student in one of the public screenings of The Battle of Chile that are shown in Chile. Obstinate Memory. The inconsolable student cries as he remembers that he was very happy the day of the coup because he was going to miss school. Contrary to what seems to happen to Vivanco, Don Rodolfo, or Hortensia Bussi, for whom access to the traumatic past is foreclosed due to their conditions as victims and survivors, the source
of trauma in the case of the student does not come after victimization, but after the 

witness has realized that he has missed the event and its real implications. In Chile, 

Obstinate Memory, Guzmán’s audiences bear “witness to the witness’s inability to 
witness” (Feldman and Laub 200).

Trauma affects Guzmán’s own witnessing of the event. He is one of the survivors 
of the National Stadium once the sport facility became a center for torture after the coup. 

In Chile, Obstinate Memory, Guzmán visits the sport facility along with his friend Alvaro, 
one of the doctors who helped the victims of the military forces while they were being 
tortured at the National Stadium in 1973. In a voiceover, Guzmán explains that he was 
captured and taken to the National Stadium, but he does not offer any details of his 
traumatic experience in the torture center. He does mention that it was at the National 
Stadium where he bumped into Alvaro, his old friend from school, and asked him to 
deliver the message of his arrest to the Guzmán family. “The task of testimony,” as 
Shoshana Feldman affirms, “is to impart that knowledge: a firsthand carnal knowledge of 
victimization … a firsthand knowledge of a historical passage through death …” (111). 

However, Guzmán’s passage through death in Chile, Obstinate Memory is not delivered 
through a first-person testimony of physical pain. It seems that in an “event without 
witness,” the very stance of the witness has to be restituted since one cannot bear 
witness to oneself. It is not Guzmán but Alvaro, the doctor, who reconstructs the precise 
details of their encounter in the National Stadium. As in Camus’s The Plague (which 
Feldman offers as an example to sustain her theory of witnessing), the stance of the 
witness is restituted in Chile, Obstinate Memory when the traumatic event, that 
“knowledge of victimization,” so painful for Guzmán to transmit, is narrated by Alvaro, the 
physician working in solidarity with the victims of the coup.
According to Feldman:

not only is the doctor’s stance designated naturally and symbolically for the most insightful body-witnessing of history; but, by virtue of his job—his professional struggle against death—the doctor’s testimonial stance is, of necessity, at once one of resistance (to the Plague) and one of preservation (of life, as well as of its memory): in much the same way the physician wishes to preserve life, the historian in Rieux wishes to preserve events. (112)

However, while the impulse to preserve life and history in Alvaro’s eye witnessing might come from his professional training in medicine, Alvaro’s testimony does not emphasize the corporeal but the psychological damage suffered by the victims of the coup. He is not so much a body-witness, as in the case of Dr. Rieux in Camus’s The Plague. Rather than getting from his encounter with Guzmán “a carnal knowledge of victimization,” Alvaro bears witness to psychological torture. Guzmán makes it explicit when he asks Alvaro if he looked scared when Alvaro met him at the National Stadium. Alvaro responds negatively, that Guzmán did not look scared, but he does remember that Guzmán mentioned that the military forced him to see some simulacrum of execution. The physician does not bear witness to physical pain, but instead, he bears witness to the psychic life of state terror.

2.8 “Fue más quirúrgico”: the Historicism of the Coup’s Apologist

In the Chile of the 1990s, an apologetic attitude towards the coup and the Pinochet dictatorship supplanted the fear provoked by state terror. This transformation in the attitudes towards the coup and the Pinochet regime during 1990s transition to democracy is manifested in Chile, Obstinate Memory when Guzmán is confronted with the opinions of various spectators from different universities that participate in the discussion sessions after the screening of The Battle of Chile. Those who defend the
coup in Chile, Obstinate Memory either avoid talking about the problems exposed in The Battle of Chile, as if the society represented in it never existed, or accuse the film of being a distortion of reality. It is interesting to consider that Ernesto, one of Guzmán’s friends from the period of Popular Unity, denounces the distortion of reality produced by media, but not in relation to The Battle of Chile, rather, in connection with the historical information provided by the local media to the new generations of Chileans. Ernesto is the one who encourages Guzmán to share The Battle of Chile with young audiences.

Y a mí lo que me espanta en este país, lo que me preocupa en este país, es que aquí se ha entregado una información distorsionada de la realidad. Hay un sector de la juventud que las opiniones que te da están basadas en una información manipulada.

What really scares me about this country, what worries me about this country, is that, here, distorted information about reality has been delivered. The opinions given by the young sector are based on manipulated information.

In contrast to Ernesto’s attack against the manipulation of information, Guzmán opens The Battle of Chile’s screening sequence in Chile, Obstinate Memory by exposing the manipulated character of the audiovisual information that the film trilogy contains. When Guzmán opens the screen and sets it up in front of the camera, it is evident that he wants to communicate that all information is exposed to some sort of manipulation. That all information is manipulated becomes evident when Guzmán’s ritual opening of the screen is followed by a shot showing images of The Battle of Chile reflected over the three light bulbs of the projector. Instead of deceiving the eye of the viewers, Guzmán shows that the black and white images of The Battle of Chile seem to emerge from each of the colors coming from the three different light bulbs. Guzmán’s problematization of the manipulated character of reality serves as a preface to the sequence in which he confronts the apologists of the coup.
The best example of the resistance to integrate The Battle of Chile in the discourse of the right wing comes from a man who, in an apologetic mode, explains that the United States’ Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had nothing to do with the coup.

La mejor prueba de que la CIA no estuvo participando en el Golpe de Estado en Chile es que, desde el punto de vista de las fuerzas armadas, el Golpe fue un éxito perfecto. En ese sentido, las fuerzas armadas chilenas fueron mucho más eficientes en la lucha contra el marxismo-leninismo que las propias fuerzas norteamericanas. Ahora, la propia izquierda ha reconocido que solo murieron 2,132 personas en 17 años, que es la cifra más baja en la lucha antisubversiva en toda Iberoamérica, incluyendo a Estados Unidos.

The best prove that the CIA did not participated in the coup in Chile is that, from the point of view of the armed forces, the coup was a perfect success. In this sense, the Chilean armed forces were more effective in the struggle against Marxist-Leninism than even the US forces. Now, even the Left has recognized that in 17 years there were only 2,132 deaths, which is the lowest number of deaths in the antisubversive struggle in Iberian-America, including the United States.

In a later shot, the same man adds:

Afortunadamente, en Chile no lograron dividir a las fuerzas armadas. Esto fue más eficiente, fue más quirúrgico. Efectivamente sufrió gente, pero mucho menos gente de lo que se ha dicho. Y el país, básicamente, se salvó de una guerra civil."

Fortunately, the armed forces in Chile could not be divided. (The coup) was more efficient, more surgical! It is true that people suffered, but they were less than what it has been said. The country was saved from a civil war.

As the opinions of this man reveal, The Battle of Chile, as well as the past it represents, the until now forbidden images of the years of Popular Unity, cannot be integrated in the discourse of the right wing apologues of the coup. In a previous sequence of Chile, Obstinate Memory, Guzmán’s inserts segments of The Battle of Chile evidencing the integration of the discourse of the right wing within the texture of the film trilogy. What this citation of The Battle of Chile in Chile, Obstinate Memory confirms is that the support given by the right wing to the coup remains the same and its historical explanation has not changed. The right wing apologist that today absolves the coup can
neither distance himself from the past mistakes of his own class nor can he assimilate the memories that come to the screen when Guzmán shares *The Battle of Chile* with members of the same ruling class represented in the film. Instead, the right wing apologist confronts those memories with a series of facts constructed by the fantasy of historicism, a fantasy that not only guarantees the empathy between past victors and present rulers, but also threatens to vanish the past from the present. In the right wing apologist’s lack of recognition for the past represented in Guzmán’s *The Battle of Chile*, we can read Benjamin’s warning to historical materialists, to those who have to dismantle, with the force of the present, historicism’s eternal image of the past as an eternal access to the truth of the past: “for every image of the past that is not recognized by the present as one of its own concerns threatens to disappear irretrievably.” (Benjamin, *Illuminations* 255)

The additive method of historicism as it “musters a mass of data to fill the homogenous, empty time” (Benjamin, *Illuminations* 262) —which corresponds to the mathematical discourse used by the right wing apologist to persuade Guzmán’s audiences of the economic and political effectivity of the coup— has to subtract from it any piece of the past that “would blast open the continuum of history” (262). Guzmán, as a historical materialist filmmaker, “cannot do without the notion of a present which is not a transition, but in which time stands still and has come to a stop” (262). However, in order for time to continue at the rhythm imposed by the transition to democracy in Chile, right wing spectators have to foreclose the possibility of adding interruption —Guzmán’s *The Battle of Chile*— to the system that creates the continuum of history in empty time.15

15 In *The Insubordination of Signs*, Nelly Richard approaches the cumulative and continuist tendencies of historicism in Chile from another angle, when she discusses the conception of history as a national defense
The reference to the surgical nature of the coup can be read as a medical metaphor that is symptomatic of the surgical role of historical explanation in historicism once it serves to erase *The Battle of Chile* as evidence of the danger of the power to disturb the eternal image of the past. Instead of restituting the place of a subject that can bear witness to “firsthand carnal knowledge of victimization,” the role of medicine in the apologist’s discourse is to become a metaphor of scientific truth. In his historical explanation, the apologist combines the metaphor of surgery with the precision of numbers in an attempt to convince the audience of Pinochet’s benevolent and accurate intervention in history. The coup becomes therefore “the rational choice” made by the bourgeois class in order to complete its revolution. In the discourse of the right wing apologists, historical explanation becomes a sort of “damage control” strategy sustained by the rhetoric of “total quality management”.

In *Chile, Obstinate Memory*, the system that supports historicism corresponds to the university, where many of the coup apologists perform their academic duties. In contrast to the right wing apologist’s foreclosure of history under the veil of statistics, Guzmán’s insistence on showing *The Battle of Chile* in different Chilean universities and on documenting this screening process performs a double restitution. It restitutes the possibility of putting into question the continuist vision of history reproduced by Chilean university discourse. However, by restituting this critical possibility, it also restitutes a Benjaminian spectral force in order to haunt Chilean academic life. This is a very important gesture if we take into account that for many years Benjamin’s legacy remained out of the range of the Chilean academic discourse (*Richard Insubordination* of cultural patrimony. Richard argues that this conception of history was characteristic of some of the movements of solidarity and militancy that were active in Chile and abroad against the dictatorship (11-12).
3). What Guzmán performs through his film screenings is therefore an intrusion of the academic space with the Benjaminian force of *The Battle of Chile*.

### 2.9 “Pegó un martillazo para derribar el Muro de Berlin”: *The Battle of Chile* ... “the tool of the ruling classes”?

In order to succeed as a historical materialist filmmaker, Guzmán has to prove his film trilogy against the risk already evoked by Benjamin in relation to the transmission of the past: that of serving as a “tool of the ruling classes” (*Illuminations* 255). When the right wing apologist excludes *The Battle of Chile* from his discourse, the film cannot become a tool for the ruling classes, but when the film is used as a tool for the justification of the coup, it does run the risk of becoming a tool of the ruling classes. *Chile, Obstinate Memory* confronts this risk when it shows that, among the apologists of the coup, there is one male university student who tries to use *The Battle of Chile* as evidence for the justification of the coup, and therefore, as evidence, produced by supporters of the Popular Unity, that could be turned against themselves. According to this student, in *The Battle of Chile*:

> Se ve muy claramente por qué era necesario un Golpe de Estado. Primero, el gobierno de Allende tenía muy poco control sobre sus partidarios. Segundo, el apoyo popular que trata de demostrar la película es totalmente falso.

It shown clearly why the coup was necessary. First, Allende’s Government had very little control of his supporters. Second, the popular support that the movie tries to show is false.

Behind the expository mode of speech used by the student to deliver his argument, which presents his points one by one, in a sort of numbered list, there lies a logical incoherence. On the one hand, the student argues that *The Battle of Chile* shows why the coup was necessary, so the film plays the role of real evidence when it comes to justify the coup. On the other hand, when the film serves otherwise, this is, to
demonstrate Allende’s popular support, the student argues that The Battle of Chile presents a false image of reality. That a movie can play two historical roles simultaneously should not surprise anyone, but that a film, taken in its epistemological status, is both real evidence of history and, at the same time, a distortion of the reality it represents, cannot be sustained logically. Therefore, the student’s incoherent argument is not only a symptom of the incoherent discourse of those who embark in the impossible task of justifying the coup, but it also expresses the difficulty of sustaining any claim of objectivity. Another student manifests the problem of objectivity when he questions The Battle of Chile’s lack of objectivity:

Yo entiendo un poco la falta de objetividad en la película, dado la propaganda mundial que se hizo, digamos, en contra del gobierno militar.

I understand a bit the lack of objectivity of the movie, due to the international propaganda made against the military government.

If the student understands the lack of objectivity in The Battle of Chile, due to the international propaganda against Pinochet, it is probably because the international dimension of his own propaganda in favor of Pinochet manifests itself the same lack of objectivity. The student declares:

Yo pienso que el gobierno militar encabezado por el general Augusto Pinochet fue el primero que derrotó el comunismo en el mundo, fue el primero que, diría, pegó un martillazo para derribar el Muro de Berlin.

Pinochet’s military government was the first to defeat communism, the first to hammer the Berlin Wall.

How can this student convince us to change our image of Pinochet if the declaration that he pronounces suffers from the same lack of objectivity that he observes in The Battle of Chile?\footnote{The student “original” and “objective” statement is only an echo of a statement offered by Pinochet to journalist Mónica González, a statement that Dorfman associates to Pinochet’s divine and messianic vision}
international propaganda that was made possible by the Cold War political game, is an epistemic problem that not only affects *The Battle of Chile* as a text, but also it affects its reception.17

of himself: “General Pinochet does not only believe in God. He also believes that God believes in him. Saving him over and over again for his divine and messianic mission. He told journalist Mónica González in September of 1995: ‘There was no dictatorship in Chile. We are an example for the whole world. The fall of the Berlin Wall was caused by Chile, we were the first to raise our flags against the Berlin Wall, we were the first to defeat Communism.’ And he added: ‘I wish to be remembered as the best president Chile ever had’” (Exorcising Terror, 84).

In *The Subject of Documentary*, Michael Renov refers to the crisis of objectivity in the domain of non-fiction films. For Renov, “the domain of non-fiction was typically fueled by a concern for objectivity, a belief that what was seen and heard must retain its integrity as a plausible slice of the social world. How else to persuade viewers to invest belief, to produce ‘visible evidence,’ and even to induce social action? Nowadays there are ample grounds for an active distrust of that hoped-for neutrality. The journalistic standards of objective reportage have been so eroded by the news gatherers and high-profile TV anchors, the emergence of the digital has so undercut our faith in the indexicality of signs, irony as master sensibility of our time has become so pervasive that objectivity has become an empty shell of a construct, kept alive by a vocal minority. Given the waning of objectivity as a compelling social narrative, there appear to be ample grounds for a more sustained examination of the diverse expressions of subjectivity produced in non-fiction texts” (xvii). My analysis of the expressions of subjectivity produced by the audiences represented in Guzmán’s *Chile, Obstinate Memory* departs from the same problematic that Renov’s describes: the waning of objectivity. However, it is interesting to notice that the subjective expressions produced by the audiences represented in *Chile, Obstinate Memory* take into account the crisis of objectivity as a point of departure. Therefore, the crisis of objectivity becomes precisely the self-reflexive matrix from which the subjects approached by Guzmán produce their own critical intervention as guardians of objectivity once they point to the lack of objectivity in *The Battle of Chile*. This self-reflexive allusion to the crisis of objectivity that ends up defending its value in negative terms (by evoking its absence as a cognitive deficiency of the film) is a form of false self-reflexivity. In contrast, Guzmán’s approach to documentary filmmaking is closer to the notion of conventional transgression that dismantles the fiction/documentary binarism that separates cinema into two modes of expression. In “The Documentary Chronotope,” Michael Chanan frames the transgression of conventional parameters of filmmaking precisely as a response to the crisis of objectivity: “It is more instructive to look at the problematic area where the two modes, fiction and documentary, which we normally easily tell apart, are brought into play against each other and produce delight—and problems—precisely by transcoding the conventions which normally define them. This trend, which has developed over the last decade or more, I take to be in large part a response to the crisis of objectivity, that is to say, to the accusation that documentary is not objective after all … filmmakers respond by in some way emphasizing their subjectivity—for example, through a self-reflexive form or by taking themselves and their quest as the very subject of their endeavor” (“Documentary Chronotope” 57). Although in *Chile, Obstinate Memory* Guzmán represents his own quest back to Chile as a sort of subjectivist fiction, he also approaches the problem of subjectivity in the social arena of film viewing. Chanan argues that even when a film combines different conventions from the modes of fiction and documentary filmmaking, it is still important to look at the ways in which a film constructs its screen space according to the conventional parameters of fiction and documentary. Even if it is true that Guzmán combines elements from both modes of cinematic representation (the subjective point of view from fiction and the dialogical relay of social subjectivity from documentary), as we have seen and will see again later, his approach to cinematic space correspond to montage, which for Chanan is the way in which documentary constructs its screening space (60-61). If I point out all this, it is in order to understand that the binarism of subjectivity / objectivity which itself indicates the distinction that exists between fiction and documentary filmmaking may not push our discussion too far. There are other ways to conceive of the differences and particularities of fiction and documentary filmmaking, like for example, Chanan’s re-elaboration of the whole problem of the modes of filmmaking in terms of screening space, to which I will refer in just a moment.
As Chile, Obstinate Memory makes evident, there are two ways in which the right wing audiences engage with The Battle of Chile: some spectators are reluctant to include the film trilogy as part of their historical framework and some question its lack of objectivity. However, the same problems posed by the objective representation of the Popular Unity years in The Battle of Chile operate as a sort of textual resistance against those who try to appropriate its filmic objectivity in order to use it as a mere tool for justifying the coup. Instead of turning the film against itself, those who pretend to use The Battle of Chile as a tool to legitimize its own ruling position as a class end up turning their expository tools against their own arguments.

2.10 “Echo de menos la presencia de una cla...”: “Epistephilia” and Ideology as Slip of Tongue

Whereas in the discourse of the coup’s apologists that we discussed above there are almost no references to the content of The Battle of Chile, the argument of some others members of the audiences represented in Chile, Obstinate Memory operate as a sort of evaluation of what The Battle of Chile failed to include in its content. When a student asks about the factory owner, about what happened to him, why he is not part of the reality that the film represents, this student is interested in the epistemological value of the film:

Falta la opinión del dueño de la fábrica. ¿Qué pasó con él? Se muestra a una masa de trabajadores que se apoderan de una fábrica que no les pertenece.

The opinion of the factory owner is missing. What happened with him? The film shows a mass of workers that occupy a factory that does not belong to them.

His desire as a spectator includes a demand for knowledge. This spectator suffers an “epistephilia” attack. At this moment, the student interprets The Battle of Chile from his impulse to know. According to Bill Nichols, “epistephilia” is a desire awakened in
the spectator by the traditional conception of documentary film as a tool for knowledge (Nichols 178-180). Before this student expresses his epistephilic impulses, Guzmán has already shown the reaction of another student who seems to undergo the same attack. Guzmán seems to be interested in showing the two students’ “epistephilia” attacks because both of them appear to have been provoked by the viewing of The Battle of Chile. However, if the reactions of these two students in Chile, Obstinate Memory become intriguing and hold any epistemological value for us, it is not exclusively because they allow us to confirm the “epistephilic” impulses of documentary film spectatorship. Additionally, what becomes intriguing and analytically valuable is precisely that which we cannot listen to in their statements, that forbidden knowledge lying behind their epistephilic impulse. Behind their desire to know lies ideology.

The Post-Cold War neoliberal ideology endorsed by the dictatorship and inherited by the transition to democracy seems to have effaced the Marxist category of “class” from Chilean academic discourse. The students’ desire to know is structured around this lack. In Chile, Obstinate Memory, a slip of tongue becomes the symptom expressing the effacement, a slip of tongue performed by the first student who manifests his epistephilic impulses:

Echo de menos la presencia de una cla … (estaba supuesto a decir “clase”) de un sector político mayoritario en ese momento. (parenthesis mine)

I miss the presence of a cla … (he was supposed to say “class”) of a mayoritarian political sector at that moment.

The student goes from not being able to say “class” towards filling the void left by the unspeakable word “class” with the expression “mayoritarian political sector.” The student substitutes the jargon of Marxism with the jargon of political polls. He takes the path of fantasy and “its impossible articulation between the void of the subject and the
object” (Dolar 92). The materiality of the slip of tongue left by the non-articulable category of “class” stands for the Real in Mladen Dolar’s notion of ideology:

> every ideology, in its reduced form, can be defined as an attempt to form the impossible junction of two minimal elements that by their very nature do not fit. The remainder, that bit of the Real that could not pass into the symbolic structure, plays an essential part in the matter … since it is only this part of the Real, this eluding little object, that provides jouissance (as opposed to pleasure). This little bit of surplus is finally the motor of any ideological edifice, its fuel, the award elusively offered to the subject for entering into the ideological turmoil. The structural problem of ideology is ultimately that this fuel cannot be integrated into the edifice, so it turns out to be at the same time its explosive force. (Dolar 92)

“Class” becomes an impossible tool for the ruling classes because it exposes the objective void that structures its subjective configuration. While it is the unavoidable category mobilized within the discourse of The Battle of Chile, “class” cannot be incorporated in the cognitive edifice of this student who is enrolled in one of the Chilean universities of the transition period. This is also a symptom of the resistance to assimilate the legacy of Marxism in Chile. The “jouissance” of the “class” struggle presented in The Battle of Chile disturbs the pleasure for knowledge and the epistephilic impulse of the student.

### 2.11 “Y, con el tiempo, obviamente, ha sido mucho más”:
**Cinematic Apparatus as a Psychoanalytic Stimulant**

As exposed in our previous discussion, The Battle of Chile can stimulate different reactions in Chilean audiences. Chile, Obstinate Memory presents itself as a chronicle that makes evident not only the ideological and psychic disturbances provoked by the “epistephilic” viewing of Guzmán’s film trilogy but also the potential of cinema for becoming a therapeutic tool. In contrast to the coup apologists and to the students who view the film as a deficient epistemic tool, there is a female teacher for whom the
Para mi fue muy fuerte y muy emocionante volver a … volver a esa etapa, volver a ese momento. En ese minuto, yo estaba en la universidad, participé también, no, digamos, hacia el lado más bien de derecha, digamos, yo no era de derecha propiamente tal, pero de alguna manera yo estaba de acuerdo en que algo tenía que pasar en Chile, que no podían seguir las cosas como estaban. Me equivocué, me equivocué. En este minuto pienso otra cosa. Reconocer que uno se ha equivocado en algo es duro, sobre todo con el costo que eso significó. Yo te puedo decir que en el momento mismo del golpe, en la mañana en que se desarrolló esto, yo estuve alegre, pero por que no tuve en ese momento la conciencia de lo que eso iba significar posteriormente. Dos días después, ya mi punto de vista era absolutamente distinto, y, con el tiempo, obviamente, ha sido mucho más.

For me, it was very strong and very exciting to come back … to come back to that stage, to come back to that moment. At that minute, I was in the university, I also participated, let’s not say that at the right, I was not from the right wing itself, but in a certain way I agreed that something had to happen in Chile, that things should not continue the way they were. I was wrong, I was wrong. In this minute, I think differently. To recognize that one has been wrong is very hard, especially once one understands the cost. I can tell you that at the time of the coup, in the morning in which it happened, I was happy, but because I did not have the consciousness at that moment of what it was going to mean later. Two days after the coup, my point of view was different, and when time passed, obviously, it became even more different.

The access to the past that is made possible by the screening of The Battle of Chile allowed the teacher to recognize her mistaken historical view when she saw in the coup a way out of the impasse that Chile was facing during the last days of Allende’s government. It also gave her the opportunity to account for a change in her position in relation to history as soon as she began to experience the damaging effects provoked by the coup. According to Jean Rouch, the camera has the potential to become a “psychoanalytical stimulant” (qtd. by Renov 178). However, Guzmán’s situation in Chile, Obstinate Memory is, to a certain degree, more complex than the one expressed by Rouch, since the cinematic apparatus that Guzmán constructs not only includes the camera, but also the screen. As the schoolteacher addresses the camera, she refers to
the emotional impact she experienced after seeing The Battle of Chile. She refers to the screening session of The Battle of Chile as a return to the past. The double role of the cinematic apparatus in the making of Chile, Obstinate Memory, both as a screening zone as well as a zone for new cinematic inscriptions, provokes in the school teacher a need to begin a process of sharing her impressions of the past. This scene operates as a confessional zone for a subject who can only recover from the trauma of the coup by engaging in a sort of cinematic therapy.

2.12 “El trabajador está cabreado de palabras:” Three Conflicts of the Professional Class

The evaluation of previous roles becomes one of the recurrent gestures of the social actors that participate in Chile, Obstinate Memory. The sequence at Ernesto’s house gives us the opportunity to find out more about the social outcome of one of the protagonists of the last part of The Battle of Chile. In his return to Chile, Guzmán films Ernesto while he performs various everyday tasks (washing dishes, turning on a lamp and practicing Tai Chi) and explains that, during the years of the Popular Unity coalition, Ernesto felt the need to abandon the university, where he was a professor, to join the socialist process in favor of transforming Chilean society. The purpose of emphasizing Ernesto’s more intimate and domestic side in Chile, Obstinate Memory is to present a contrast between the Ernesto of the present and the Ernesto of the past. The intimate Ernesto of the present appears in the visual track almost as an antithesis of the Ernesto of the past described by Guzmán in the voiceover narration. The role of the private individual in the present contrasts with the role of the public intellectual that Ernesto embodied in The Battle of Chile, where he played himself as the director of industrial relations in a copper mine in the northern part of the country. In Chile, Obstinate
Memory, Guzmán not only juxtaposes the Ernesto of the present with the Ernesto of the past as an audiovisual counterpoint, he also includes a very problematic segment taken from The Battle of Chile in which Ernesto appears to be explaining the differences between the abstract thought of academics and the concrete thought of the workers.

Los repuestos que faltan los inventan los compañeros aquí. Hacen las piezas que se necesitan. Bueno, el trabajador tiene un pensamiento concreto, no entiende de abstracciones universitarias. El trabajador está cabreado de palabras. The comrades invent the missing pieces. They make them. The worker thinks concretely. He does not understand academic abstractions. The worker is angry at and tired of words.

The hierarchical description offered by Ernesto concerning the differences between the worker and academics is symptomatic of at least three conflicting zones of the discourse of the professional middle class in Chile: its arrogance when facing the workers, the illusion of technological progress as political achievement, and, finally, its incapacity to understand the complexities of industrial production.

Ernesto’s statement reveals the arrogance of the Chilean professional class and how this arrogance helps form their ideas about the division of labor: at the same time that Ernesto underestimates the capacity of the worker to think abstractly, he, in a self-effacing manner, idealizes the worker’s capacity for reaching concrete solutions and joins them in their struggle. The idealization of the worker, however, made possible by stating the refusal of all academic discourse, a refusal that, paradoxically, cannot escape being inscribed in an academic frame (the distinction between the “abstract” and the “concrete” that articulates Ernesto’s explanatory power), fails as an interpellation to the worker. It fails because instead of making the workers comfortable with their idealization, it causes the workers to feel underestimated by the university professor who came from the classroom to become a copper mine manager. This is made evident in the same
shot taken from The Battle of Chile in which Ernesto establishes the distinction between workers/concrete and academics/abstract frames of mind. The camera moves around Ernesto and captures the moment in which a worker looks down as if feeling embarrassed after listening to the words of that university professor whose ideas he is not supposed to understand. The worker’s gesture of embarrassment indicates clearly that, indeed, he does understand very well what Ernesto is trying to express, even when the professor is unwilling to admit it in his professional discourse: contempt. If it is true that the worker is tired of words, as Ernesto himself indicates, it is possibly because Ernesto’s point is confirmed by the worker’s gesture of embarrassment itself, since it confirms as well that the worker is also tired of being alienated by a use of words that harms his self-esteem.  

If we consider Ernesto’s discourse from the view of Benjamin’s historical materialism we get a second conflict, the conflict of an intellectual who has been trapped by the same illusion that captured the German working class imagination: “the illusion that the factory work which was supposed to tend toward technological progress constituted a political achievement.” (258) Ernesto’s celebration of the workers capacity to produce spare parts shows the enthusiasm of a class that confuses technological progress with political achievements. What the Ernesto of the past was not aware of is

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18 The worker’s gesture of embarrassment in this sequence of The Battle of Chile is similar to the gesture of shame made by the Count Rene de Chambrun in Marcel Ophuls’s Le Chagrin et la Pitie: Chronique d’une vile francaise sous l’occupation (1971). Count de Chambrun is an International lawyer interviewed by Ophuls. He is also the son-in-law of Pierre Laval, who was the Prime Minister of France under the Vichy Government. Count de Chambrun’s role as Laval’s apologist in Ophuls Le Chagrin et la Pitie fails when he calls a worker to testify in favor of his father in law and the worker, by doing exactly what he was asked, proves to the contrary Count de Chambrun’s point about the absence of favoritism in Laval’s policy regarding war prisoners. This is the moment in which Count de Chambrun expresses his embarrassment. It seems to me that both gestures of embarrassment, the one in Guzmán’s film and the one in Ophuls’s film, although performed by subjects that come from different class origins, constitute a powerful piece of evidence that makes visible the deep tensions created by a class struggle that has been staged precisely at the moment in which it was supposed to be eliminated under the curtain of inter-class solidarity.
that this technocratic illusion was the one that had to be replaced, and not only the broken parts of the machine. If we follow Benjamin, the problem would not be looking for replacements to feed the machine, as Ernesto seems to emphasize, but replacing the class that stages its political dreams as if they were technological means leading to progress.

During Allende’s mandate, the copper mines became a dual place: a place of management and a place of production in which the political displaced the technological. The third conflict relates to the understanding of the industrial world as a political field and not as a specialized technical arena. According to Collier and Sater:

The government’s supporters claimed that the United States was sabotaging production by denying the nationalized mines access to American machinery and spare parts. It did become difficult for the mines to obtain spare parts, although it was often possible to purchase these through third parties. [...] Replacements for high-ranking technicians (including numerous Chileans) who left the mines after nationalization were more difficult to find than spare parts. [...] Whatever the reason, the departure of these skilled officials hamstrung production, particularly in technical areas such as refining. Political squabbles soon intruded into the mines after nationalization. Struggles between the PDC- and independent-controlled unions and Socialist and Communist mine officials led to wildcats strikes and a collapse of labor discipline. [...] An American observer noted that many of the new employees were ‘nontechnical’ personnel such as sociologists and psychologists and public relation men, who plunged into political work on behalf of the Unidad Popular or infantile rivalries among themselves. (Collier and Sater 335)

It is interesting that Ernesto, almost anticipating a sort of lack of control or lack of skill in the new scenario, diagnosed the workers’ lack of understanding of abstract ideas, as if attempting to absolve the lack of effectivity of the academic pedigree on the industrial stage. That is why his emphatic celebration of the worker’s capacity to create spare parts serves to cover up the failure of the academic class, a class incapable of becoming the effective technocracy that it needed to be for the realization of its political fantasy. From historical accounts, we know that, contrary to Ernesto’s view, it seems that
those who really did not understand what was happening were not the workers but the public intellectuals. The academics were those who really ended up not understanding the process where they were immersed, those like Ernesto, who jumped from the university to the industrial sector with no preparation whatsoever to confront the challenges of managing industrial relations and concrete production.

2.13 “No se pueden sacrificar los fines por los medios”: Confession and Self-Censorship

Guzmán’s presentation of Ernesto from The Battle of Chile in Chile, Obstinate Memory serves to contextualize the trajectory and new challenges of the version of Ernesto that we see in the present. It gives the spectator the opportunity to view the transformation of a social actor who, after serving in the industrial sector during Allende’s mandate, comes back to the university and continues to perform his social role as an educator. It also gives Ernesto the chance to meditate on his previous role after admitting the mistakes he committed in the past.

Ahora fuimos vencidos, estábamos equivocados, no se podían, no se pueden sacrificar los fines por los medios, viejo. Esa es la gran lección aquí.

Now, we were defeated, we were wrong, one could not, one cannot sacrifice the ends for the means, friend. This is the great lesson here.

Despite the ironical tone with which Ernesto delivers his declaration of defeat, the lesson he delivers should be taken seriously: “no se pueden sacrificar los fines por los medios” [one cannot sacrifice the ends for the means]. On the one hand, the way in which Ernesto states the lesson he learns seems to echo Benjamin’s lesson: one should not sacrifice political ends for the benefit of achieving control over technological means. On the other hand, the way in which Guzmán creates the montage sequence in which Ernesto admits that he was wrong seems to point to a sort of unjustifiable sacrifice that
connects what we see in the visual track with Ernesto’s statement. Ernesto’s confession begins with a take in which we see him as a confessional subject offering his account. Then, there is a cut to a long take from *The Battle of Chile* in which we see a mass of civilians running as if trying to escape from the gunfire of the military forces. Guzmán does not present the long take to its end; he interrupts it before its conclusion. To a viewer who is familiarized with the footage of *The Battle of Chile*, it is very easy to recognize that this long take is the one in which the Argentine cameraman shoots his own death. This long take appears twice in *The Battle of Chile*: it closes the first part and opens the second part of the film trilogy. When Guzmán decides to exclude from *Chile, Obstinate Memory* such an important portion of *The Battle of Chile*, we should ask: is this the way in which Guzmán illustrates Ernesto’s point, the fact that “one should not sacrifice the ends for the means”?

It seems that, in Guzmán’s imagination, Ernesto’s statement “to sacrifice the ends for the means” refers also to the ethical conflict created by the use of the media (“medios”) for the purpose of illustrating its own political transparency as an end in itself. By evoking this long take without presenting its final outcome (the camera falling after the Argentine cameraman has been killed by a bullet shot from a truck full of soldiers), Guzmán seems to illustrate Ernesto’s point: “one should not sacrifice the ends for the means”. Guzmán illustrates Ernesto’s point when he refuses to use the death of the Argentine cameraman as a means to present sacrifice as a political end. Through Ernesto’s words, Guzmán seems to re-evaluate the use he made of this long take in *The Battle of Chile*: the exploitative use of the death of another human being for the purpose of making a point about state terror. Rather than being a mere monologue, Ernesto’s self-critique in the soundtrack creates a dialogical exchange with Guzmán’s self-
censorship in the visual track. Guzmán’s self-censorship also affects our evaluation of the choice made by the Argentine cameraman, the choice of putting his life in danger just to continue shooting the scene in which he is ultimately shot to death. The end of life becomes the most powerful evidence against state violence. However, life ends when it becomes a means to sustain a single point: the political transparency of the media as a trustworthy representation of state terror. Nonetheless, the power of state terror is so violent that, paradoxically, the only way it can be inscribed in the media is by provoking a collapse of representation, which is precisely what happens in this scene.19

2.14 “La trampa, yo creo, está en que uno quiere poder quedar atrapado”: the Ritual Embodiment of Memory

In Chile, Obstinate Memory, Ernesto is the one who most emphatically verbalizes a critique of the media. Ernesto’s critique of the media consists not only in denouncing the media’s capacity to distort reality and to deliver manipulated information, as we discussed previously, but it also refers to the way in which media can be dangerous for memory.

Ahora, hay una trampa en este viaje ida y vuelta a la memoria, a mi juicio. Que, como la memoria almacena estos espejos que reflejan momentos significativos de nuestra vida, la trampa, yo creo, está en que uno quiere poder quedar atrapado, ¿no es cierto?, en la contemplación, ¿no?, de esas imágenes, ¿no?, y, entonces, empezar a sobar, digamos, esos, esas, esos espejitos, ese juego de espejos.

19 In “The Ethics of Intervention: Dennis O’Rourke’s The Good Woman of Bangkok,” Linda Williams refers to a taxonomy of documentary “gazes” that apparently has been elaborated by Nichols and Sobchack. The example that Williams offers for what she calls the “endangered gaze” happens to be the same segment of The Battle of Chile which I have just discussed. This is Williams’ description: “the endangered gaze: showing the cameraperson’s own personal risk, as in the famous moment in The Battle of Chile when a camera-man ‘shoots’ a gunman who literally shoots him back, the very jostling of the camera registering the bullet’s effect until the camera stop running and the camera goes black” (Gaines and Renov, Collecting Visible Evidence 177). For Williams’ this “famous moment” responds to the question of “showing the cameraperson’s own personal risk,” whereas for me this “famous moment” provokes a very different set of questions: how and why this “moment” became “famous” in the first place? What are the ethical issues that come with the popularity of this “famous moment” of documentary filmmaking when it is conceived as a single piece of visible evidence?
There is a trap in this round trip journey to memory: that memory stores all the important moments of our life in lots of mirrors. The trap is that one might want to stay trapped in the contemplation of those images to the point in which we start to touch these little mirrors, this game of mirrors.

Ernesto’s conception of memory as a game of mirrors stands as a metaphor of the viewer’s fascination with the illusion of reality created by cinema. Guzmán juxtaposes Ernesto’s words to a segment from The Battle of Chile that shows a group of filmmakers filming what one of the press conferences offered by Allende during his mandate. Through a dialogic exchange made possible by the combination of Ernesto’s words and Guzmán’s edited sequence, Chile, Obstinate Memory reaches a point of self-critique. The film serves to show that memory and cinema are both games of mirrors with the power to seduce viewers to the point of capturing them and condemning them to remain trapped in an unredeemable past. Later in the film, Ernesto suggests that, in order to overcome the danger of reducing remembrance to a specular image, memory has to become a living process, a sort of ritual.

The ritualized embodiment of memory is showcased in various sequences of Chile, Obstinate Memory: when Allende’s former guards escort the phantasmatic presidential vehicle, when Guzmán’s uncle struggles to remember Beethoven’s Sonata, and when the band of young students play “Venceremos,” the theme song of the Popular Unity. All of these moments originate from the same will, the “will to actualize memory against the forgetfulness of the present” affirmed by Nelly Richard in her book Cultural Residues (25). Of all these moments, there is a particular shot from the sequence with Allende’s former guards in which Guzmán seems to suggest both the overcoming of the game of mirrors through an embodiment of memory and the tendency of the subject to remain attached to the windows opened by memory. This shot, taken
from inside the car, shows the hand of one of Allende’s former guards as it touches and crosses the glass window of the phantasmatic presidential vehicle. While the framing of this single hand in a close up shot literally evokes the danger already denounced by Ernesto, the trap of contemplating the past to the point of touching its mirrors, the act itself of touching the window also refers to the overcoming of this danger by a performative embodiment of memory that crosses the glass window of remembrance. The act of touching performed by this single hand expresses the dangers of memory as well as the promise of leaving open the glass window of remembrance in the passage from the past to the present.

2.15 “Venceremos”: the Defeat of Chilean Socialism as a “Public Secret”

Through the cinematic window opened by Chile, Obstinate Memory, Guzmán shows a band of music students playing “Venceremos,” the theme song of the Popular Unity. In the film, this musical performance comes as a response to the performance of the military band in front of La Moneda palace. The contrast between the two bands’ musical performances serves almost as a metaphorical clash of forces in the terrain of embodied and aural memories. The sequence takes place in the streets of Santiago and it shows how the music ritual of the days of Popular Unity enters the public sphere in order to disrupt the present. The reactions of the multitude in the street provoked by the song are multiple: surprise, anguish, happiness, and indifference. Among the many facial reactions, the sequence includes two shots of Carlos Altamirano, former secretary-general of Allende’s Socialist Party, whose gaze addresses the camera directly as if greeting the audience outside the screen. Among the many effects generated by this act of memory, Guzmán seems to establish a contrast between the sound of “Venceremos”
and the mute image of Altamirano. This contrast could be understood along the lines of Michael Chion’s notion of the silent character that appears in his book *The Voice in Cinema*. According to Michael Chion, silent characters appear in cinema as guardians of a secret. Silent characters also appear to generate doubt about our knowledge.

The internal conflicts between Allende and Altamirano are well known and they had a negative effect and damaged the stability of the Popular Unity government (Simon and Collier 332, 348, 354, 356). There is no doubt that Altamirano knows more about the reasons for Allende’s defeat than we do. So, when Guzmán presents Altamirano’s muteness in this musical sequence that evokes the triumphant impulse of Popular Unity, it seems that the point is to show that the knowledge of the defeat of Chilean socialism is a private secret that can be exposed publicly but only by intensifying its own mystery. The sound of the “Venceremos” performed by musicians from the Chilean new generation is therefore haunted by the “public secret” of the defeat of Chilean socialism that Altamirano holds when he remains silent throughout this sequence.

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20 The silent character “is rarely the protagonist or the crux of the plot; most often he's a secondary character, marginal and tangential, but also somehow positioned intimately close to the heart of the mystery. Be he there to disturb, catalyze, or reveal, he is most often an instrument. […] The mute is considered the guardian of the secret, and we are accustomed to him serving in this way. So the presence of a mute character clues us in to the fact that there is a secret” (Chion, *The Voice in Cinema* 96).

21 Whenever he turns up, he generates doubt; we rarely know for sure whether he cannot speak or will not speak, and what’s more, we don't know how much or how little he knows. His presence also seems to cause any character he interacts with to question their own knowledge, for knowledge is always partial, and the mute might well be the one who knows ‘the rest.’ […] Since we cannot determine what he knows and does not know, the mute is often assumed to know all, or at least to be keeping to himself the knowledge which in combination with that of the character he is associated with, will resolve the whole intrigue. He is presumed to harbor the final word, the key to the quest, but which he cannot or wishes not to utter. We might think of him as the place where the story's crucial knowledge is lodged and which can never be wholly transmitted” (Chion, *The Voice in Cinema* 96-97).

22 In his book *Defacement: Public Secrecy and the Labor of the Negative*, Michael Taussig defines “public secret” as “that which is generally known, but cannot be spoken” (51).
2.16 The Social Character of Film Viewing

The end of the “Venceremos” sequence expresses the tensions created by Guzmán when he confronts the embodied acts of memory against the game of mirrors provoked by the screening of The Battle of Chile. There is a dissolve from a shot showing the disturbed faces of a street multitude to a shot of a film-screen as it projects The Battle of Chile to a shadowy audience. The visual dissolve is combined by a sound dissolve that moves from the “Venceremos” played in street to the “Venceremos” that the audience listens to in the screening room. The sound source changes: the recorded music, as it is played in the past and as it comes to us through the magic of the film projector, substitutes the live music of the real band playing in the present. While the soundtrack bridges the present and the past, the visual track reveals a bridge between the two notions of memory. On the one hand, the band’s performance that we see corresponds to an embodied act of memory. On the other hand, we see the cinematic experience as a mnemonic event that allows the audience in the screen, as well as we outside of it, to gain some sort of access to the past. Instead of favoring one over the other, Guzmán insists that the embodiment of memory as well as the cinematic preservation/representation of memory constitute valuable social experiences.

Guzmán’s organizes the cinematic experience of his audiences with a very complex repertoire of audio-visual strategies that reveal the social character of film viewing. At some moments, Guzmán establishes a magnitude and media contrast when he approaches the representation of the film within the film. To get a more intimate ambiance in those sequences in which he approaches old members of the Popular Unity, Guzmán usually screens The Battle of Chile in video monitors. The video monitor and the VCR technology also facilitate the manipulation of the image. Through its
manipulation, *The Battle of Chile* becomes a source of information, especially when it is necessary to identify social actors. The sense of collectivity in these sequences is not lost: the intimate ambiance helps to make the witnesses feel more comfortable when they share their connections to the past through the viewing of *The Battle of Chile*.

However, when Guzmán wants to create a less intimate and more public interaction, specially, in those sequences in which he confronts young audiences at the different universities and schools he visits, he prefers to use a film-projector, as if to transmit to the audience the sensation that they all share the same public sphere. Apart from creating a sense of collectivity, the public screening of *The Battle of Chile* in a film-projector offers young audiences the opportunity of experiencing the complexities of film reception. In contrast to the more dynamic approach that Guzmán uses when he shows *The Battle of Chile* through a video monitor, the approach he uses for young audiences presents a more fixed image, since the spectators do not have the rewind or freeze frame option. While older participants gain access to the past through a more flexible technology, access to the past for younger audiences is limited by a more rigid experience of reception. In any case, the encounter of an older audience and a newer technology as well as the encounter of a younger audience with an older technology allows Guzmán to expose his viewers to a more historical experience of film reception, one which is not limited by generational pre-determinations. Film reception in Chile, *Obstinate Memory* is a social act that expands the possibilities for the constitution of audiences, as they become time travelers crossing through various technological environments.
2.17 The Pro-filmic as a Vanishing Point

In the sequence that follows the version of “Venceremos” played by a band of young musicians in the streets of Santiago, Guzmán shows a young audience captivated by the images of The Battle of Chile. The montage of this sequence combines shots of the audience surrounding the film projector as well as shots of the screen in which The Battle of Chile is projected. This pro-filmic\textsuperscript{23} dimension of Chile, Obstinate Memory, showing the audience’s experience of the film reception, is abolished shortly when Guzmán includes a segment from The Battle of Chile, as if “the film within the film” would have invaded our screen. This moment of temporal discontinuity provoked by montage relates to Chanan’s description of documentary space in the essay “The Documentary Chronotope.” Chanan argues that “the representational space produced by documentary has different co-ordinates from those of fiction. […] Fictional screen space, as we know, is built on the grammar of continuity. It produces a series of unified spaces which are conventionally called scenes” (59). In contrast, the unifying and continuous prose created by fictional screen space, Chanan argues that documentary space is created by the rhetorical process of montage, which itself involves the poetic and discontinuous combination of heterogeneous regimes of images.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{23} In New Vocabularies in Film Semiotics: Structuralism, Post-Structuralism and Beyond, Stam, Burgoyne and Flitterman-Lewis summarize Tom Gunning’s notion of the pro-filmic as “the physical material of the film prior to the act of filming” (New Vocabularies 112). Gunning explains that “as narrative discourse the pro-filmic embodies a series of choices and reveals a narrative intention behind the choices” (qtd. in New Vocabularies 112). Following Gunning, Stam, Burgoyne and Flitterman-Lewis argue that: “[t]he pro-filmic concerns the elements placed in front of the camera to be filmed: actors, lighting, set design, etc. These elements, rather than being seen simply as raw material, can be understood as narrative discourse by the fact that they have been chosen and selected to communicate narrative meanings” (112).

\textsuperscript{24} In “The Documentary Chronotope,” Chanan affirms that: “The space of documentary is not created primarily by mise-en-scene, but by montage, the logic of difference in the succession of shots. A documentary shot is not so much a discrete strip of film or tape but the outcome of a process: the result of discovering, capturing, selecting and arranging appropriate elements to be found within actually existing social-historical space. In this process the documentarist discovers that representational space is highly malleable, for it includes people, places, events, the results of the provocations of the camera, and already
Once the images of *The Battle of Chile* invade the screen, interrupting the pro-filmic space of *Chile, Obstinate Memory* intermittently, it is clear that rather than constituting a closed scene, a unified space that transmits a sense of narrative continuity, the pro-filmic dimension of Guzmán’s film viewing becomes an open zone that can be transformed by montage. Also its internal discontinuities do not produce an alienating effect, rather, the pro-filmic space, at the very moment when it vanishes from the screen, creates a new sense of connectivity with the world, which is precisely a fundamental aspect of the space created by montage in documentary. According to Michael Chanan:

Where the space of the fictional narrative produces continuity, documentary space is composed of discontinuities, both spatial and temporal, produced by dialectical (and dialogical) associations across time and space. Neither of these modes of articulation are absolute or totalizing, but fictional screen space, ever since the ban was first raised against actors looking at the camera, has an ineluctable tendency towards closure and abstraction from lived experience. Whereas in the space of documentary the represented world is not separated from the viewer by reason of narrative principle. On the contrary, the social reality portrayed here is one in which a viewer could in principle find themselves present, putatively, or as a potential historical subject, and sometimes palpably. It is a world, in other words, which is continuous with the space in which the viewers live their own life, not separate from it. (62)

When Guzmán shows the social character of film viewing (by screening a film within the film as well as its reception) and then makes a direct address to the viewers of *Chile, Obstinate Memory* with the images of *The Battle of Chile* (that film within the film existing images of every sort. There is, of course, a mode of documentary that applies itself exclusively to the immediate profilmic space of the activity which it follows, such as the parafictional, direct observation of a director like Wiseman. [...] But if documentary frequently makes use of the techniques of spatial continuity, it can also dispense with them in favor of a quite different mode of exposition and articulation, closer to poetry than to the prose of fiction; such a style would rely on the dialectic between successive images. [...] In documentary, two different pieces of space may be joined in a continuous argument that links together quite disparate elements of the historical world in a kind of analogical affinity that generates signification. This, of course, is another way of describing what Eisenstein called intellectual montage. In the documentary mode, the visual and the geographical leap is bridged by a logic of implication where the organizing principle does not rely on plot and story but rhetoric, argument, poetry. This is a very important insight: narrative does not provide the only possible form of representational space on the screen” (60-61). 

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as it invades the whole screen) his purpose is to create this new sense of continuity. By interrupting the representation of film viewing and filling the screen with images of the film screened within the film, Guzmán creates a sense of shared experience between the audiences that are represented in Chile, Obstinate Memory and the audiences that this film itself addresses.

2.18 “Que regalaron su emoción a la cámara”: Trauma as a Transparent Gesture

The most intense moment in which Guzmán addresses the viewers of Chile, Obstinate Memory with images of The Battle of Chile corresponds to a montage sequence in which he combines footage from The Battle of Chile with takes that reveal the cathartic effects that this film provokes in the audience of young students that is represented in Chile, Obstinate Memory. Throughout this montage sequence, the screen serves as a source to unleash trauma. Both the viewers of Chile, Obstinate Memory and the viewers represented in its pro-filmic space are exposed to the traumatic events that are narrated in the last sequence of second part of The Battle of Chile: the moment in which a voiceover narrator explains the outcome of the coup while the visual track illustrates the violence of the military forces over civilian citizens.

Cientos de personas pierden la vida y los principales campos deportivos se convierten en campos de concentración. La democracia representativa más larga en la historia de América Latina ha dejado de existir. Sin embargo, la batalla de Chile no ha terminado.

Hundreds of people lose their lives and the principal sports fields become concentration camps. The longest representational democracy in Latin America has ceased to exist. However, the Battle of Chile has not ended.

In “The Silences of the Voice,” Pascal Bonitzer conceives of the voice-off of documentary films as a voice of knowledge: “the voice-off, that voice of knowledge per
excellence in all films, since it resounds from off-screen, in other words, from the field of the Other” (Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology 322). Although the function of the voiceover commentary in traditional documentary filmmaking consists in transmitting knowledge about the reality represented in the visual track, the effect of this disembodied voice over Guzmán’s audience is not the expansion of knowledge, but rather, it creates an emotional explosion. The words of the voiceover commentary transmit a sense of tragedy and responsibility towards which the audience reacts affectively. While in the visual track of Chile, Obstinate Memory, Guzmán juxtaposes the last segment of The Battle of Chile (part 2) with the shots that capture the reactions of the audience of young students (most of them crying). The voiceover narration from The Battle of Chile takes over the soundtrack of Chile, Obstinate memory. For Mary Ann Doane, “the voiceover commentary is necessarily presented as outside the space” (Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology 341). However, instead of being “presented as outside the space,” the voiceover commentary of The Battle of Chile, as it appears in this sequence, seems to invade the pro-filmic space in which the audience of Chile, Obstinate Memory is represented. The voiceover commentary not only fills the pro-filmic space but even the corporeality of the audiences represented in the film, whose reactions to the voiceover correspond to a series of mute gestures.25

25 It would be interesting to notice that this is one of the two sequences in which Guzmán represents a voice as an acousmachine: “a prerecorded voice coming from a mechanical device” (Chion 36) that appears in the diegetic space of the film. For Chion, “the acousmachine occupies no-place; it inhabits the all-around (what Didier Anzieu calls the ‘sonorous envelop’) that precedes the subject’s ability to distinguish discrete places” (44). The voiceover commentary from The Battle of Chile creates its no-place by inhabiting the all-around gesturality of the out-of-itself audience represented in Chile, Obstinate Memory. In contrast to this sonorous envelop that animates the gestures of audience, the other acousmachine that Guzmán presents in the film is not tied to the gestures of its receivers, but, rather, to the visibility of its source. This happens to be the sequence in which we see and listen President Allende as he gives a speech in the Chilean congress. Guzmán first includes the excerpt of Allende’s speech, which itself was part of the footage of The Battle of Chile, and then he cuts to a new shot in which he returns to the pro-filmic space of Chile, Obstinate Memory. From the direct citation of Allende’s speech, in which he appears as the source of the voice, Guzmán cuts to a scene in which the voice no longer originates from Allende’s mouth but comes from a TV speaker. At this
The audience also responds emotionally to the intertitles included at the end of The Battle of Chile.

[UNREADABLE WORD]
FUERZA
LA HISTORIA
ES NUESTRA
Y LA HACEN
LOS PUEBLOS

There is a cut to the face of a young male student and a young female student crying and then a cut back to the screen in which we read the following words.

PARA
CONSTRUIR
UNA SOCIEDAD
MEJOR
Salvador Allende
11-IX-73

Allende’s last message given on September 11, 1973, and delivered through these intertitles, can be taken as a tragic supplement added to the sense of historical responsibility transmitted by the voiceover commentary in the last segment The Battle of Chile (part 2). As it happens with the voiceover commentary, the intertitles provoke an unexpected effect in the audience. In “The Silences of the Voice”, Pascal Bonitzer argues that “In comparison to voice-off, intertitles involve a kind of effect of distanciation or —as Philippe Ivernel has proposed to translate the Brechtian Verfremdungseffekt—of ‘disalienation’” (331). If one compares the emotional reaction of the viewers with the very moment in which in which Allende’s voice has become an acousmachine, Guzmán reveals the context in which Allende’s voice is listened: a screening of The Battle of Chile to various survivors of the Popular Unity movement. From this shot in which we see the TV set in the foreground and the audience in the background, Guzmán cuts to a series of close ups of the audience as they listen to Allende’s speech. In this sequence, Allende’s voice suffers a series of transformations: first, it is linked to its anthropomorphic source (Allende’s mouth), then it becomes a acousmachine (the TV set), but then, it a last move, when Allende’s voice is listened by its supporters, the voice no longer behaves like an acousmachine but becomes “the voice of the dead”: “In cinema, the voice of the acousmêtre is frequently the voice of the dead. […] What could be more natural than a dead person continuing to speak as a bodiless voice, wandering about the surface of the screen?” (Chion 45). 

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function of intertitles in militant cinema as exposed by Bonitzer, then it is surprising that, rather than reaching a point of “disalienation” through the reading of the intertitles, the audience ends up identifying so strongly with Allende’s words in the intertitles to the point of externalizing their traumatic effect.

It is interesting that both the voiceover commentary and the intertitles end up serving new purposes when Guzmán combines their presentation with the representation of the reactions of the audience. They no longer serve as vehicles of knowledge and disalienation but rather as emotional provocations. The revision of traditional devices (the voiceover commentary, the intertitles) and their use for new purposes also express a transformation in Guzmán’s sensibility and documentary impulse. The most radical transformation expressed in Guzmán’s documentary cinema correspond to his documentary impulse: he is no longer in the business of transmitting historical knowledge, as was the case when he produced The Battle of Chile in the 1970s; rather, as Chile, Obstinate Memory demonstrates, in the 1990s Guzmán becomes interested in creating an emotional impact. This change may have something to do with a transformation of his own conception of politics: it seems that the “epistephilia” expressed by the Guzmán of The Battle of Chile came from a belief in rationalist debate; however, the Guzmán of the 1990s seems to be convinced that politics is after all an affective enterprise. When referring to Chile, Obstinate Memory, Guzmán comments:

Es una película subjetiva, muy personal, que utiliza a La Batalla de Chile como referencia para rebotar y extraer la emoción de los personajes. Su estructura es, al mismo tiempo, clara y compleja, porque la yuxtaposición de emociones se trabajó mucho […]. (“Patricio Guzmán, cineasta: ‘La memoria tiene que ser porfiada,’” n. pag.)

A very subjective and personal movie. It uses The Battle of Chile as a reference to create a rebound and extract the emotion of the characters. Its structure is, at
the same time, clear and complex, because it works a lot on juxtaposing emotions.

An aspect that makes Chile, Obstinate Memory a more personal film than The Battle of Chile is precisely the voiceover commentary. In The Battle of Chile, the voiceover commentary comes from a disembodied voice with an accent from Spain, an accent associated with authority in Latin America, an accent which adds a sense of legitimacy to the information delivered since the role of the voice-off in documentary film seems to be geopolitically regulated by an aural criteria of objectivity that corresponds to the colonial dynamics of domination and hegemony. It is a “voice-of-God” commentary that is typical of the expository mode of documentary filmmaking described by Nichols, a voice that transmits knowledge about the reality that the visual track illustrates (Nichols 34-35). Contrary to the traditional impersonal role of the voiceover as the voice of God in documentary, in Chile, Obstinate Memory the I-voice that we listen to is Guzmán’s voice. Although it is still an acousmatic being, a voice whose source is not shown on the screen, Guzmán’s voiceover in Chile, Obstinate Memory operates in a different register if we compare it to the impersonal voice that we listen to in The Battle of Chile. The I-voice in Chile, Obstinate Memory belongs to someone who speaks for himself about his memories from the past. Instead of the third person narration that dominates The Battle of Chile, in Chile, Obstinate Memory we listen to the first person narration

26 In The Voice in Cinema, Michael Chion describes the technical procedures for the recording of an I-voice and the imaginary connection it establishes with the spectator: “An I-voice is not simply an off-screen narrator’s voice. Sound film has codified the criteria of tone color, auditory space and timbre to which a voice must conform in order to function as an I-voice. […] The cinematic I-voice is not the voice that says I, as in a novel. To solicit the spectator’s identification, that is, for the spectator to appropriate it to any degree, it must be framed and recorded in a certain manner. Only then can it function as a pivot of identification, resonating in us as if it were our own voice, like a voice in the first person” (50-51). For Chion, “two technical criteria are essential for the I voice”: first, “close micking, as close as possible, creates a feeling of intimacy with the voice, such that we sense no distance between it and our ear” and second, “dryness’ or absence of reverb in the voice (for reverb situates the voice in a space). It’s as if, in order for the I-voice to resonate in us as our own, it can’t be inscribed in a concrete identifiable space, it must be its own space unto itself” (51).
coming from voice of the filmmaker. Guzmán’s voice becomes an intimate sound with which spectators may relate and may create a sort of complicity. Guzmán’s voice creates the illusion of almost speaking to our ears because is not recorded with reverb.

However, the last word in *Chile, Obstinate Memory* does not come from Guzmán’s voice. The last words we hear come from Ernesto’s voice, who directly addressing the camera, seems to break the traumatic spell affecting the students after the screening of *The Battle of Chile*.

Pero, lo que quiero decir es lo siguiente, que en esta hora difícil en que han caído los modelos, y las ideologías sirven de bien poquita cosa, debemos asumir la tarea de constituirnos en imágenes vivientes, para que los jóvenes, que miran para todos lados, buscando de donde agarrarse, sepan que este no es un naufragio, y es una tembladera de piso nada más.

What I would like to say is this, that in this hour in which models and ideologies no longer serve for much, we should embrace the task of becoming living images, so the younger generation, those who are looking to all sides trying to find a place from where they can hold themselves, would know that that this has not been a shipwreck, but only a floor trembling.

The restitution of meaning after Ernesto’s direct address to the camera reminds me of the students of Shoshana Feldman who suffered a nervous breakdown after watching a video-testimony of a holocaust survivor (Feldman and Laub 47-49). In “Education and Crisis, Or the Vicissitudes of Teaching,” Feldman narrates the episode of trauma as well as the way out of it that she discussed with her colleague, Dr. Dori Laub: “After we discussed the turn of the events, we concluded that what was called for was for me to reassume authority as the teacher of the class, and bring the students back to significance” (48). Ernesto’s message is one of hope directed towards the audience of *Chile, Obstinate Memory* as well as towards the audience represented within the film. The purpose of Ernesto’s direct address is to restore meaning after the images of *The Battle of Chile* have traumatized the students. Ernesto’s message seems to allow
meaning to be restored on-screen, in the heads of those students affected by trauma after watching The Battle of Chile, as it allows meaning to be restored off-screen, in the minds of the viewers affected by the footage of The Battle of Chile and its impact over the audience represented in Chile, Obstinate Memory. In other words, Ernesto seems to bring both audiences, the one onscreen and the one outside the screen, back to significance. However, we should ask the following question in regards to the audience represented in Chile, Obstinate Memory: has there been a loss of meaning among the students or have the students been dramatizing trauma for the camera?

In “Patricio Guzmán, cineasta: ‘La memoria tiene que ser porfiada,’” an article published by the Chilean newspaper El Mostrador on September 27, 2000 that offers details of the premiere of Guzmán’s Chile, Obstinate Memory in Chile, a journalist comments that Guzmán was very excited after he had the chance:

de conocer a un grupo de alumnos de la escuela del Gesto y de la Imagen de la compañía de teatro La Mancha que regalaron su emoción a la cámara después de asistir, por casi cinco conmovidas horas, a la proyección de La Batalla de Chile. (n. pag.)

to meet a group of students from the Gesture and Image School of La Mancha Theater Company that gave their emotion to the camera after attending, for almost five moving hours, to the screening of The Battle of Chile.

Then the journalist quotes Guzmán’s reaction after the encounter:

La reacción de ellos me emocionó. Recuerdo que el camarógrafo lloraba, tenía que secarse las lágrimas, temblaba tanto que tenía que sujetarlo. (n. pag.)

I was moved by their reaction. I remember that the cameraman was crying, he had to dry his tears, he was shaking so much that I had to hold him.

This seems to be one of the most delicate points of Chile, Obstinate Memory, the fact that the audience captured by trauma was composed of theater students from the School of Gesture and Image. The possibility that the students may have been performing for the camera is not only expressed by the journalist’s irony when she refers
to Guzmán’s encounter with them ("alumnos … que regalaron su emoción a la cámara" ["students … that gave their emotion to the camera]), but it is also expressed when we look at the sequence itself. Before Ernesto’s direct address to the camera, there is another shot in which a speechless student cries while looking at the camera. The same strategy used by Ernesto to restore meaning after trauma (direct address to the camera) is used by a theater student who may be enacting a nervous breakdown after the loss of meaning caused by trauma, but only as a transparent gesture. According to Richard, “direct language” is one of “the leading partners in this campaign of transparency (denotative realism, referential explicitness)” that dominates the state of affairs of the Chilean transition (Cultural Residues 5). The traumatic reaction performed by this student in front of the camera not only aspires to set itself as a transparent communicative transaction achieved by referential explicitness, it can also be conceived as the synthesis of the two gestures that Richard associates with the postdictatorship: muteness and overstimulation (Cultural Residues 22). One would therefore have to ask if the student’s expressions of grief may have been provoked by the same euphoria of consumption that affects the gestures of the young fans that we analyzed earlier when discussing the National Stadium sequence. The danger of juxtaposing so many emotions is that they may turn to reveal the spectacle of those who may not be able to escape the simulacrum of trauma once the euphoria of consumption invades all the gestures, and even mediates our relation to memory, specially after the production of memory itself becomes part of the cultural industry.

In Cultural Residues, Nelly Richard asks: “where to record the most frightening part of memory if there are hardly any sensitive surfaces of reinscription of memory left? Where can this recollection be moved to save it from the (c)rudeness, mean-
spiritedness, and indolence of ordinary communication?" (27). When memory prevails in the form of a standardized operation that does not consider the challenges and limits involved in any act of remembrance, it becomes problematic. The discourse of statistics can replace memory, as the historicist account of the coup apologist suggests. As German Bravo has expressed, the sociological discourse on human rights, to which the coup apologist refers during his intervention, was incapable of “sharing a common situation of ethical and intellectual torment with those who were ‘the object of investigation’” (qtd. in Cultural Residues 28). If the “techniques for collecting and organizing data” of the social sciences cannot account for the collapse of the subject tormented after facing violence, it would be ethically problematic to restore the “torment” of the subject as a mere visible evidence. Memory can also be captured by the simulative representations of media in order translate the “torment” of the subject into the codes of “advertising choreography” (Cultural Residues 22). This is why, when we face the question of memory in postdictatorial Chile, we have to ask, along with Nelly Richard, “what language can be counted on, what tongue can we trust?” (Cultural Residues 28).

Against the standardization of memory, which is made possible by the “techniques for collecting and organizing data” of the social sciences, and against the communicative transparency of trauma that media technologies try to simulate, Nelly Richard affirms the “performativity of memory” as a form of “critical imagination” (“Introducción” Pensar en/la Postdictadura 13). I would like to argue that Chile, Obstinate Memory is more powerful when it presents the lives of those who struggle to remember,
not as the visible evidence of the traumatic past, but as the poetic flight into the challenges and torments of memory itself.  

2.19 “Yo guardé los rollos de La Batalla de Chile en mi casa”: Domestic Ethnography and the Struggle to Remember

There is a scene in Chile, Obstinate Memory in which Guzmán superimposes the faces of the multitude in the Popular Unity rally over the face of the Carmen Vivanco as she appears in the present, and the music in the soundtrack corresponds to the first movement of Beethoven’s Moonlight Sonata. Throughout the film, the first movement of Beethoven’s Moonlight Sonata accompanies those sequences in which Guzmán seems to insist on the social actor’s struggle to remember. As Guzmán evokes Carmen Vivanco’s struggle to remember in the visual track, the interpretation of Beethoven Sonata also manifests the struggle to remember of another social actor that participates in the film. The broken melody of Beethoven’s Sonata reveals that Guzmán is not using a recording made by a professional pianist, rather, the interpretation of this musical score is in the hands of someone who plays it with difficulties, as if trying to remember. Almost at the end of the film, Guzmán finally reveals the source from which the sonata originates. Beethoven’s Sonata comes from Uncle Ignacio’s piano. The sequence opens with an establishing shot that shows Uncle Ignacio trying to play Beethoven’s Sonata on

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27 When Ariel Dorfman refers to the Wall of the Disappeared, a monument erected in Santiago in 1994 and containing the names of many victims of the Pinochet regime, he conceives it as a symbol of memory that is incapable of understanding its own mnemonic process: “Sí, en efecto, ese Muro no recuerda a los cientos de miles de chilenos que fueron torturados y sobrevivieron, ese Muro no comprende, no puede comprender su inagotable memoria” (Más allá del miedo, 4). “No, the wall does not include hundreds of thousands who were tortured and who survived, it does not include their memories” (Exorcising Terror, 10). Dorfman’s diagnosis of the tormented memory of the Wall in the Spanish version of his book on the Pinochet affair is a good example of what I consider to be one of the most common torments of memory: the impossibility of understanding itself as a process of reinscription and erasure.
a piano. In voiceover, Guzmán presents Uncle Ignacio as the only member of his family that is still alive.

Esta es la única persona de mi familia que hoy día sobrevive. Es mi tío Ignacio. Ha cumplido 80 años y creo que tiene buena memoria.

This is the only person from my family that survives today. This is my Uncle Ignacio, who has turned eighty years old and I think that he has a good memory.

Against the evidence presented in the soundtrack, which makes clear Uncle Ignacio’s difficulties to play Beethoven’s Sonata, Guzmán almost ironically still affirms his uncle’s capacity to remember. Guzmán presents Uncle Ignacio’s struggle to remember in an almost comical way. It is a struggle that, at times, is also expressed by Uncle Ignacio himself with a charge of good humor, for example, when he interrupts his musical performance and says, “bad,” followed by “this old man is accusing the piano.”

The accusation against the piano, whose name “August” appears in close ups twice during the sequence, may also add a charge of black humor since it is clear that the piano’s name is the same as the first name of the dictator (“Augusto”) whose regime of terror is denounced throughout the film. The sense of “courage, humor, cunning and fortitude” expressed in this scene in which Uncle Ignacio struggles to remember can be read along the lines of Benjamin’s notion of class struggle. According to Benjamin,

The class struggle, which is always present to a historian influenced by Marx, is a fight for the crude and material things without which no refined and spiritual things could exist. Nevertheless, it is not in the form of the spoils which fall to the victor that the latter make their presence felt in the class struggle. They manifest themselves in this struggle as courage, humor, cunning and fortitude. They have retroactive force and will constantly call in question every victory, past and present, of the rulers. (254-255)

When Uncle Ignacio has the courage to remember Beethoven’s Sonata as well as when he makes fun of his own attempts to struggle against the piano, against “August(o)”, his act embodies a retroactive force that calls into question Pinochet’s
victory. Participation in the class struggle does not result in the accumulation of spoils of war. Instead, the struggle for material things begins in the hands of Uncle Ignacio, whose musical virtuosity not only manifests the struggle to remember but also transforms memory into a class struggle in the Benjaminian sense, a struggle that involves both courage and humor.

Guzmán’s interest in exploring Uncle Ignacio’s struggle to remember can be understood as an exercise of domestic ethnography. According to Renov, “the Other” in domestic ethnography “is a family member who serves less as a source of disinterested scientific research than as a mirror or foil for the self” (216). For Renov, domestic ethnography expresses a “curious brand of epistephilia”, since “the desire for the other is, at every moment, embroiled with the question of self-knowledge” (218). If domestic ethnography begins with the question of the other but only in order to answer the question of the self, then we should ask: how does Uncle Ignacio’s struggle to remember express Guzmán’s struggle to remember? To answer this question, it is important to understand the other dimension of Uncle Ignacio’s struggle to remember: how he is complicit with Guzmán’s own battle for the preservation of memory. The most important confession made in Chile, Obstinate Memory comes from Uncle Ignacio, when he affirms that he was responsible for saving the film rolls of The Battle of Chile.

Uncle: Yo guardé todos los rollos de La Batalla de Chile en mi casa. [I stored all the rolls of The Battle of Chile in my house.]
Guzmán: ¿no te daba temor? [Weren’t you afraid?]
Uncle: Temor, bueno, y que ganaba, había que hacer algo, había que guardar las cosas. [Fear, well, and what would I win with it, someone had to do it, someone had to save things].

After telling the details of how the film rolls of The Battle of Chile were taken out of the country in a Swiss boat, his uncle adds: “sé que lo tenía que hacer, no solo por ti, sino por lo que significaba, para recuerdo después” [I know I had to do it, not only for
you, but for what it meant, for being able to remember afterwards]. In a sort of homage for having defeated fear, Guzmán inserts the credits of *The Battle of Chile* after Uncle Ignacio’s confession, as if suggesting that the conditions of possibility of his film trilogy were determined by his Uncle’s courageous political decision in favor of preserving memory. If not for the complicity and solidarity expressed by Uncle Ignacio towards Guzmán’s project, it would have been impossible for Guzmán to produce and share with us either *The Battle of Chile* or *Chile, Obstinate Memory*. Uncle Ignacio’s courageous political decision becomes the main condition of possibility for both films.

*Chile, Obstinate Memory* is therefore a film that presents a reflexive interaction with one of its conditions of possibility. The shared complicity and solidarity between Uncle Ignacio and Guzmán allows us to confirm one of the main characteristics of domestic ethnography: “In all instances of domestic ethnography, the familial other helps to flesh out the very contours of the enunciating self, offering itself as a precursor, alter ego, double, instigator, spiritual guide …” (Renov 228). Guzmán is in debt to Uncle Ignacio: he owes his uncle for the possibility of transforming his films into tools in the struggle to remember. In this quest for self-knowledge, Guzmán’s uncle becomes an example to follow, a “precursor,” a “spiritual guide,” for Guzmán’s own insistence in the preservation of memory.

The most powerful critical act that any cultural text can perform is to take into account its own conditions of possibility in order to problematize its relation with them. When we become aware that Uncle Ignacio’s courageous political decision to preserve memory (“to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger”) (Benjamin, *Illuminations* 255) is so fundamental for the existence of Guzmán’s cinema, it is also when we become aware that his presence in *Chile, Obstinate Memory* makes so much
sense that it creates an excess of meaning. Moreover, this excess of meaning affects the ideological closure of the film itself. It seems that Ernesto’s final speech, affirming the “task of constituting ourselves as living images” in the struggle to preserve memory, a speech which is delivered as if pretending to restore meaning after trauma, is not enough to restore the whole meaning of the film. Guzmán does not close Chile, Obstinate Memory with Ernesto’s final words, rather he ends the film with the image of Uncle Ignacio, an image that seems to achieve the task that Ernesto’s final speech evokes: the constitution of memory as living image.

Chile, Obstinate Memory ends with a shot of Uncle Ignacio walking slowly down the sidewalk of one of the streets of Santiago. This last shot achieves what Ernesto’s attempt to restore meaning promises but that the gestures of his traumatized students failed to achieve: the act of embodying memory in a life, in class struggle that is also a struggle to remember. However, Uncle Ignacio’s presence achieves more than becoming a living image of memory, it stands for the struggle to remember in which any existent living image of memory emerges as a site of its own finitude. In that sense, by exposing itself to the exhaustion of meaning, the corporeal presence of Uncle Ignacio exceeds signification and becomes a political aperture that defies the ideological closure of Chile, Obstinate Memory.

While Ernesto warns us against the dangers of conceiving memory as a game of mirrors, in his final direct address, he seems to fall prey of the cinematic apparatus. Although Ernesto breaks with its illusion when he performs for the camera, he cannot undo the fact that his decision to preserve memory is determined by the same cinematic apparatus which he criticizes. In contrast to Ernesto’s identification with the cinematic apparatus, Uncle Ignacio’s corporeal presence exposes itself to the dangers of the
games of mirrors without letting this game of mirrors interfere in his ritual embodiment of memory. One could argue that since cinema mediates our access as viewers to Uncle Ignacio ritual of embodied memory, it is then impossible to escape from the danger of the game of mirrors imposed by mediated memory. However, that a film can reach such a level of critical self-reflexivity, when it exposes the dangers of memory as well as the promise of overcoming them by abandoning ourselves at the very limits of memory, is very powerful. To preserve memory, one of the tasks of documentary film, comes accompanied with an impulse to analyze and problematize its own limits. Chile, Obstinate Memory is therefore an affirmation of the necessity to preserve memory as well as an analysis of the limits, challenges and torments of this task. This becomes evident at the beginning of the film, when Guzmán asks his witnesses about the meaning of memory. The responses are multiple. Of all of those responses, Uncle Ignacio’s slowly walk at the end of the film offers the most poetic meditation on what constitutes historical materialism when it becomes a struggle to remember that goes on by going forward.
3. “A Secret Link of Affinity”: Testimony, Plural Rationalities and the New International in Patricio Guzmán’s *The Pinochet Case*

After its world premiere at Cannes in May 2001, Patricio Guzmán’s *The Pinochet Case* won various international prizes, including the 2001 Fiction du Reel Grand Prize in Marseille, France, the Golden Gate Award for Best Documentary (Current Events) at the 2002 edition of the San Francisco International Film Festival, and the 2003 Award of Merit in Film from the Latin American Studies Association. It seems that Guzmán’s film received considerable international attention because it deals with one of the most important issues of our contemporary situation: the globalization of justice and human rights. In order to understand Guzmán’s contribution to the creation of alternative scenarios for global justice and human rights, I would like to begin by exploring the history of the struggle for global human rights. Before analyzing Guzmán’s film, I will offer an account of what I conceive to be the two solutions offered by world states to the question of human rights and global justice in the 1990s: humanitarian interventions and the creation of the International Criminal Court (ICC). After analyzing the limits of these two answers to the question of human rights and global justice, I will proceed to explore the ways in which Guzmán’s *The Pinochet Case* proposes an alternative view of these issues by taking into consideration non-governmental action: the multiple responses to the issue of human rights and the collective practices that constitute a sense of global justice as it moves beyond the limits of state power.
3.1 The Struggle for Global Human Rights

Two tendencies characterized the struggle for global human rights in the 1990s: humanitarian interventions conducted by military forces of dominant nation states, sometimes under the umbrella of UN peacekeeping missions, and the creation of legal concepts in the realm of international law that not only served to encode human rights violations but became crucial at the moment of prosecuting human rights offenders. Regardless of whether or not it may have proved effective in putting a stop to cycles of ethnic or religious violence, the first tendency, the defense of human rights through military interventions, turned out to be deceptive. In his book *The Pinochet Affair: State Terrorism and Global Justice*, Roger Burbach argues that “the intervention of dominant superpowers in Yugoslavia soon demonstrated that while the issue of human rights had become a major factor in international relations, ‘humanitarian interventions’ would be orchestrated primarily to advance the interests of the dominant nation-states” (154). Following Burbach, it is evident that the preservation of human rights through “humanitarian interventions” was not a satisfactory measure because it remained trapped within the political constrains imposed by dominant nation states, states seeking global control over the world economy. In the institutional frame of global superpowers, the defense of economic stability comes before the defense of human rights. If military superpowers acting out of humanitarian benevolence failed to provide a model for the globalization of human rights, then the second tendency, the creation of juridical concepts to prosecute human rights violators, perhaps provides a better model for the defense of human rights through the enforcement of international law. Although it may not be as fast and as effective as military interventions since it cannot prevent the spreading of violence but rather seems to come “too late for the traumatized victim” *(War*
The prosecution of human rights offenders is considered a crucial step towards the globalization of justice.

The creation of the International Criminal Court (ICC) is one of the most significant responses to the question of global human rights as conceived within the frame of international law. In his book *War Crimes and Realpolitik: International Justice from World War I to the 21st Century*, Jackson Nyamuya Maogoto considers the ICC “the last great international institution created during the twentieth century” (204). According to Maogoto, it has “the potential to reshape thinking about international law” (204). The ICC was instituted in La Hague in 2002 after many states ratified the Rome Statute written during the summer of 1998. The road to Rome began in 1947, when the UN General Assembly “directed the Committee on the Codification of International Law, the predecessor of the International Law Commission (ILC), to formulate a general codification of offenses against the peace and security of mankind” according to “the principles of international law recognized in the Nuremberg Charter and in the judgment of the tribunal” (Maogoto 204). Along with the codification of criminal offenses, the UN General Assembly also conceived the necessity of creating a special committee “for the purpose of drafting a convention for establishing an international criminal court” (205).

In spite of various attempts in the 1950s and 1970s, neither the adoption of the 1953 Draft Statute proposing the creation of an International Criminal Court nor the 1954 Draft Code of offenses were approved by the UN General Assembly during the Cold War (206). It was not the end of the Cold War, however, but an increase in drug trafficking that motivated a new interest in the question of the International Criminal Court within the UN General Assembly. Instead of limiting its scope to drug trafficking, however, the renewed interest in encoding organized crime in the realm of international law opened
the way to the codification and prosecution of human rights violations. Maogoto explains that the 1992 ILC’s preliminary report “transcended the drug trafficking question, which was the basis of its original mandate, by covering prosecution of other crimes under international law, including violations of international humanitarian law” (206). The UN General Assembly accepted the initiative “with no questions raised as to the expanded scope” (206).

The main transformation suffered by the ICC from its conception in the 1994 ILC Draft Statutes to its final form in the 1998 Rome Statute relates to the group of crimes within its jurisdiction. Originally, “the ICC would be able to hear cases involving transnational crimes” such as “piracy, kidnapping of diplomats, taking civilians hostages, and drug offenses”¹ (208). However, in its final version, the Rome Statute “extends subject matter jurisdiction to only four crimes: genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and aggression” (208). While it began as a way to secure the economic interests of dominant nation-states, the revival of a project such as the International Criminal Court had a symbolic impact on those struggling for the globalization of human rights. It transcended the superpower’s judicial agenda (global control over black markets) in favor of a more intensive defense of human rights by providing a judicial framework with the capacity to enforce international law. The Rome Statute also validated the claim of many activists who contributed to the development of the concept of human rights beyond the limits of state sovereignty: the need to recognize universal jurisdiction as a principle of international law when dealing with genocide and crimes against humanity.

¹ In the realm of international law, there exist a distinction between two types of crimes: international crimes or “crimes which constitute a direct threat to world peace and security” (Bhattacharya, qtd. by Maogoto 228) and transnational crimes consisting of “offensive conduct” that “affects the interest of more than one State, […] includes the citizens of more than one State, or involves means or methods which transcend national boundaries” (“Doctrinal Basis for the International Criminalization Process”, qtd. by Maogoto, 228).
As it is conceived in the 1998 Rome Statute, however, the function of the ICC is to serve “as a ‘complement’ to existing national courts and processes” (Maogoto 209). One of the various limitations that the ICC has to approach when enforcing international law in our globalized world is the principle of state sovereignty. Many opponents of the ICC have argued that international prosecution of former or active heads of state may interfere with diplomatic affairs and national sovereignty. In order to avoid such interference, the Rome Statute restricts universal jurisdiction by making it effective only in cases referred to the ICC by the UN Security Council. It concedes a “consent-based” jurisdiction if the ICC’s prosecutor or a state refers the case to the ICC. “Consent-based” jurisdiction means that universal jurisdiction depends on the particular criteria of the nation-state from which the accused is a citizen. This state “has the first right to institute proceedings” or can declare itself “unwilling or unable to genuinely carry out the investigation or prosecution.” In the later case, the process can be transferred to the ICC (Maogoto 209). More simply, the state from which the accused is a citizen has to agree in order for the ICC to hear cases of human rights violations. This “consent-based” jurisdiction is precisely one of the limits considered by Ariel Dorfman when discussing the possibilities of prosecuting ex-dictator Augusto Pinochet according to the ICC’s judicial paradigms:

on July 17, 1998, exactly three months before Scotland Yard came calling for Pinochet, one hundred and twenty nations (but not the United States) gathered in Rome to ratify the Statute of an International Criminal Court. The agreement established mechanisms for judging rulers who have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity—but it also included a proviso that in order to surrender the accused to the organs of world justice consent was first needed by the home state. Which meant that someone like, say, Pinochet, someone who, like most retired dictators, kept enormous enclaves of power in his own country, as well as friends and cronies in privileged positions, could never be submitted to the real jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. (Dorfman 110)
In this speculative remark, Dorfman identifies one of the most difficult problems that, according to Maogoto, has been left unsolved by the Rome Statute: “there is no guarantee that states would be willing to surrender their nationals to the processes of an international criminal justice system” (215). Apart from underlining the ICC’s lack of power to enforce universal jurisdiction since it operates through the principle of “consent-based” jurisdiction, Dorfman’s remark is itself a comment on another limitation that reduces the power of the ICC. This limitation is discussed by Clare Montgomery in her essay “Criminal Responsibility in the UK for International Crimes Beyond Pinochet”: “The ICC will not have jurisdiction over any offences that occurred before the court was established … even if the UK government had sought to transfer Senator Pinochet to the ICC (had it then been in existence), the ICC would have been bound to decline jurisdiction” (“Criminal Responsibility” 277). Let us read Dorfman’s speculation following Montgomery’s own speculative remark: if Dorfman is bound to speculate in relation to Pinochet’s destiny vis-à-vis the ICC, it is because it would be impossible for the ICC to proceed against the ex-dictator since his crimes were committed prior to the court’s establishment.

It is interesting to notice that Montgomery also uses a speculative mode when commenting on the ICC principle of complementarity in relation to the Pinochet affair: “Under the ICC regime, hypothetically Chile (a state which could have jurisdiction over the case) would have an opportunity to demonstrate that it was willing to conduct the prosecution (as has indeed now happened), thereby excluding the ICC’s jurisdiction”

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2 In this same passage, Maogoto adds that “the Rome Statute establishes an obligation on state parties that are also parties to the underlying treaty proscribing the crime to surrender the accused to ICC jurisdiction. Nonetheless, without an effective mechanism for requiring the compliance of states with the dictates of international law, such a regime continues to rest on voluntary compliance by the custodial state (War Crimes 215).
“Criminal Responsibility” 278). The speculative mode in Dorfman’s and Montgomery’s remarks serves as a rhetorical twist to explore the limits of the ICC’s guiding principle of complementarity in relation to the Pinochet affair. Both Dorfman and Montgomery’s speculations on the ICC can be read as ironic ways of exposing a very predictable fact: Chile’s resistance to giving up its jurisdiction in the Pinochet affair. This ironic use of speculation serves to expose a disparity between the realms of justice and politics: while the achievement of justice is left to speculations on whether or not universal jurisdiction can survive a process modeled on “consent-based” jurisdiction, the foundations of sovereignty are left intact by the ICC principle of complementarity.

Another problem remains once universal jurisdiction is made to operate within the constrains of consent-based jurisdiction: the achievement of global justice is subordinated to the ICC’s principle of complementarity, a principle which depends solely on the good faith of the state from which the accused is a citizen. It does not provide any measure to prevent fake investigations that would never lead to the prosecution of human rights offenders. Following Maogoto’s argument, this means that “a state may commence an investigation for the sole purpose of depriving the ICC of jurisdiction” (War Crimes 209). Whether the Chilean investigations against Pinochet were fake or not, this is a question that can only be answered by the Chilean system of justice.

For Maogoto, yet another problem arises when we try to conceive the globalization of justice through the ICC and the Rome Statute: “the statute does not expressly address universal jurisdiction, leaving such issues to the complimentary principle and state consent regime” (211). Maogoto argues that “the failure to express universal jurisdiction affirms the determination of states to retain certain prerogatives, even when international customary law recognizes universal jurisdiction, by blending
territorial and national jurisdiction, which is state-centered" (211). In addition to all the problems left unsolved by the state consent regime, it seems that the Rome Statute answers the question of universal jurisdiction by avoiding it while transferring it into a disparate realm made of two incompatible yet complicit levels. On the one hand, the Statute conceives of universal jurisdiction as a privilege of the UN Security Council (securing the interests of the powerful nation-states that are part of it) and, on the other hand, dissolves universal jurisdiction into a state consent regime in order not to harm any particular raison d’État or governmentality.

In his overall evaluation of the Rome Statute as it delimits the future of the ICC, Maogoto considers that:

The Rome Statute illustrates the tension between the requirements of international justice and the need of states to retain sovereign prerogatives. [...] Perhaps the dominant theme at Rome was the need to reconcile sovereignty with the desire for a functioning international institution. As a matter of law, institutional structure, and process, many prerogatives of sovereignty remain. The existing power structure premised on state sovereignty resisted giving up too many concessions to the ICC to facilitate its effectiveness. The final product is a fragile compromise that may or may not succeed. (223)

The defense of state sovereignty not only becomes the main obstacle for the achievement of global justice, but it adds a political pressure that seems to neutralize the entire field of international law. While the ICC may be considered a huge step in the long road to global justice, it still functions as a solution that responds to the institutional framework of state power. It may not serve to respond to the call for global justice coming from human rights organizations whose struggle transcends the constraints imposed by the complicit raisons d’État or govern/mentalities of world states. Although the ICC strengthened a new realm of action for human rights by emphasizing juridical over military interventions, its incapacity to break with the political pressures of state sovereignty may end up re-staging the deceptive scenario of humanitarian interventions.
Up to now, I have offered an account of the two tendencies that characterized the participation of world states in the struggle for global human rights. From this analysis one could conclude that in the 1990s there were two main responses to the question of global human rights that came from the frame of state power: a military response disguised as humanitarian intervention and a juridical response more concerned with political and diplomatic affairs than with properly judicial matters.\(^3\) In order to understand the struggle for global human rights in all its complexity, however, it would be necessary to expand our account into realm of non-governmental action. It is crucial to conceive of the struggle for global human rights as it operates within the frame of state jurisprudence but in order to transcend the limits imposed by the defense of state sovereignty.

In addition to humanitarian interventions and the creation of the ICC, the 1990s saw the expansion of non-governmental organizations that were active in promoting human rights on a global scale (Burbach 154). While it took state officials more than forty years to include human rights in the international agenda (and they had to wait for the end of the Cold War and the increase of drug trafficking in order to do so), for more than forty years non-governmental organizations articulated parallel efforts to promote human rights. These efforts included solidarity networks to support victims harmed by state-sponsored terrorism and advocacy networks favoring global justice. According to many observers, the most remarkable triumph of human rights advocates in the 1990s was the arrest of General Juan Augusto Pinochet Ugarte in London on October 16, 1998. For Burbach, “the arrest of Pinochet shifted the terms of the international debate over human rights and human rights interventions while representing the cause célèbre of a human rights

\(^3\) Maogoto argues that: “States are more inclined to make decisions based on political rather than judicial interest whenever the issue of international investigation and prosecution arises. States are keen on registering displeasure and condemnation through diplomatic channels and do not wish to offend the sensitivities of a state by triggering concrete international action” (War Crimes 222).
rights movement that acted independently of the state and the state's interests” (Burbach 155). Apart from its global impact, Pinochet’s detention also transformed Chilean’s views of politics and justice. For example, Nelly Richard contends that Pinochet’s arrest in London “disorganized” the Chilean “democracia de los acuerdos” (“democracy of agreements”; “Presentación” 9).

In my view, the Pinochet affair exposed three main challenges that non-governmental human rights organizations have to confront in their struggle for the achievement of global human rights through the globalization of justice. First, Pinochet’s detention in London exposed the need to postulate an unconditional defense of universal jurisdiction with the tools of state jurisprudence but from the standpoint of non-governmental human rights organizations. Second, the decision made by British Home Secretary Jack Straw on March 2, 2000 in favor of interrupting Pinochet’s extradition process from Britain to Spain (due to medical concerns first raised by the Chilean government) implies that diplomacy could be used as a legitimate mechanism to obstruct justice. These two aspects suggest that the struggle for global human rights has multiple dimensions. Since it exceeds juridical and legal concerns, and as it becomes affected by the intrigues of the state, the struggle for global human rights has to move in and out of the courts, expanding its range into the public sphere. The struggle for global human rights and for the globalization of justice would therefore involve the invention of heterological discourses that combine various processes of rationalization.4 Third, the continuation of the Pinochet affair in Chile, which reached its preliminary closure in 2002 (the same year in which the ICC began its operations in The Hague) and finally ended

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4 For a lucid meditation on the concept of heterology and its relation to discourse and the nonrepresentability of the Other as it is developed by Michel de Certeau, see “The Further Possibility of Knowledge,” which is Wlad Gozich’s foreword to de Certeau’s Heterologies: Discourse on the Other (vii-xxi).
with Pinochet's death (on December 10, 2006), made everyone aware that although “the primary value … of a transnational investigation” “lies in the ability … to prompt investigations and prosecutions at home” (Roht-Arraiza The Pinochet Effect 223), however, prosecution at home can become a compensatory theater. Instead of leading to the globalization of justice, such a theater rather reinforces state sovereignty and its false promises of justice. Against the false promises of justice coming from the yet vulnerable sovereignty of the Chilean transitional government (and in order to challenge its insufficiently democratic raison d'État or governmentality), it becomes crucial to conceive of alternative processes of juridical rationality, even if they involve pushing reason into the realm of poetic justice.  

3.2 “Porque sí, por solidaridad”: The New International as a Secret Link of Affinity

It is in the historical context of the struggle for global human rights and global justice that I will analyze Patricio Guzmán’s The Pinochet Case. Guzmán’s film offers a

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5 One example of poetic justice, as it affects juridical rationality in the criminal investigation against Pinochet corresponds to the definition of disappearance as a sort of perpetual kidnapping, “a crime that will not cease until the bodies of the missing are produced, dead or alive” (Dorfman 123). I agree with Dorfman when he describes this definition of the crime of disappearance as a form of poetic justice. According to Dorfman: “It is particularly marvelous, then, that it should be precisely those missing and supposedly dead bodies that have come back to haunt Pinochet, turning into instruments of what might well be his punishment and that of his accomplices. To get off scot-free, Pinochet will now have to prove that he killed those prisoners. He would have to disinter every last one of them from the depths of their anonymous graves, drag them out of the rivers and the seas where they were cast, piece together the splinters of bone scattered over hills and fields. Then and only then would the offense cease to be ongoing and perpetual. Then and only then could the amnesty that Pinochet granted himself could be applied, according to Judge Guzmán’s interpretation of the law: He would be freed because he had, admittedly, committed murder. Poetic Justice indeed: it is the particular excesses of the General's own brand of extreme cruelty that have ended up ensnaring him” (155-156). For Dorfman, this conception of disappearance (as "an ongoing violation of law, a crime which has not ended and for which Pinochet is therefore still, at this very moment, responsible") described by English Magistrate Bartle in his October 8, 1999 decision coincides with another legal doctrine first described by Chilean Judge Cerda in 1986 (Roth Arraiza 70) and later adopted by Judge Guzmán during his intervention in the Pinochet affair in Chile (Dorfman 122-123). Here, amnesty can only be conceded after a full investigation of the crime has determined the culpability of the perpetrators. Roht Arraiza discusses the importance of Judge Cerda’s reinterpretation of Pinochet’s 1978 Amnesty Law in her book The Pinochet Effect (70, 82).
detailed historical account of the various stages of the Pinochet affair and the new challenges the case exposes from the standpoint of non-governmental social actors. It presents a set of testimonies in which various witnesses explain the multiple juridical processes that allowed Spanish judge Baltasar Garzón to request Pinochet’s detention in London. Rather than sharing a mere account of actual events, most of the witnesses connect the experiences they had throughout the course of the Pinochet affair with crucial moments in the struggle for global human rights, such as in Carlos Castresana’s comments on solidarity. When Carlos Castresana (the Spanish lawyer responsible for discovering the legal loophole that would allow Spanish authorities to request Pinochet’s detention and extradition to the English authorities) explains his motives for taking action against the Chilean ex-dictator, he links his choice to a sense of solidarity that he seems to have secretly inherited from Chilean poet Pablo Neruda.

Here, I offer a transcript of Castresana’s narration of Neruda’s act of solidarity: ¿Por qué hicieron ustedes esto? Y yo decía por solidaridad. La solidaridad produce pequeños milagros que son conmovedores. Yo he conocido hace muy poco tiempo, no al principio del procedimiento, y no lo sabía antes, una anécdota que me parece que cierra muy bien el círculo de lo que yo explico, de porqué estas cosas se pueden hacer porque sí, por solidaridad, porque uno cree que las tiene que hacer, no porque espere obtener un resultado concreto. En el año 1939, medio millón de españoles salen refugiados en condiciones penosísimas al final de la guerra civil por la frontera francesa. Y el gobierno francés los interna en campos de concentración, medio millón de personas. Y, sin embargo, hay una acción de solidaridad absolutamente gratuita por parte de algunos gobiernos latinoamericanos. El cónsul de Chile en París fleta un barco, el Winnipeg, y dice – ¡todos los españoles que quepan se van a Chile donde los vamos a salvar! –. Son 2,500 españoles, el cónsul es un tal Pablo Neruda, Ricardo Neftalí Reyes, en aquel entonces un joven poeta, luego muy famoso, y finalmente, Premio Nobel. Pero más significativo todavía, ¿quién recibe a esos 2,500 refugiados españoles en el Puerto de Valparaiso? Les dan un lugar bajo el sol, les dan una nueva vida. Un joven, jovensísimo Ministro de Sanidad, Salvador Allende. ¿Por qué hizo eso Chile? No había ninguna razón, no tenían por que acogerlos … solo por solidaridad.

Why did you do this? And I said, for solidarity. Solidarity produces little miracles that are moving. Not too long ago, not at the beginning of the process, I have known, and I did not know this before, of an anecdote that I think closes the circle.
of what I want to explain, of why these things can be done like this, for solidarity, because one believes that one has to do them without expecting anything back. In 1939, at the end of the Civil War, half million of Spaniards in a very precarious situation cross the French border as refugees. Half million people! And the French government puts them in concentration camps. However, there is an act of solidarity absolutely disinterested made by some Latin American governments. The Chilean consul in Paris rents a ship, the Winnipeg, and says that all the Spaniards that could be accommodated in the ship will go to Chile were they are going to be saved. There are 2,500 Spaniards, the consul is a guy named Pablo Neruda, Ricardo Neftalí Reyes, at that time a young poet, very famous later and, finally, Nobel Prize (in Literature 1972). However, more interestingly yet, who is the one receiving the 2,500 Spanish refugees in the Port of Valparaiso? They give them a new place under the sun; they give them a new life. A young, very young Minister of Health, Salvador Allende. Why Chile did this? There is no reason. They were not obliged to receive them … only for solidarity.

In Confieso que he vivido, Neruda narrates an event that changed the lives of many refugees of the Spanish Civil War:

Ese gobierno del Frente Popular de Chile decidió enviarme a Francia, a cumplir la más noble misión que he ejercido en mi vida: la de sacar españoles de sus prisiones y enviarlos a mi patria” (174).

That Chilean Popular Front Government decided to send me to France to carry out the most noble mission that I have executed in my life: that of liberating Spaniards from their prisons and send them to my fatherland.

Neruda’s mission consisted of coordinating the delivery of many Spanish refugees to Chile and it confronted serious problems when President Aguirre Cerda sent a telegram canceling the task. After receiving the telegram and being very conscious of his role, Neruda comments:

¿Qué hacer? Aquel trabajo intenso y dramático, al borde mismo de la segunda guerra mundial, era para mí como la culminación de mi existencia. Mi mano tendida hacia los combatientes perseguidos significaba para ellos la salvación y les mostraba la esencia de mi patria acogedora y luchadora. Todos esos sueños se venían abajo con el telegrama del presidente. (181)

What could I do? That immense and dramatic work, on the verge of World War II, was for me the end of my existence. My hand extended towards the persecuted combatants meant salvation to them and showed them the essence of my welcoming and fighter nation. All those dreams went down with the president’s telegram.
Neruda’s sense of solidarity, expressed with the metonymy “mi mano tendida hacia los combatientes” [my hand extended towards the combatants], led him to make a series of diplomatic maneuvers in order to overcome the bureaucratic obstacles imposed by President Aguirre Cerda. He finally achieved the task of embarking the Spanish refugees in the Winnipeg, a boat provided by the Spanish government in exile, which would deliver them to Chile. Moreover, it is fascinating that Neruda’s act of solidarity in favor of Spanish refugees achieves its status as an act of poetic justice when Castresana refers to it in The Pinochet Case.

When Castresana explains the rationale of Neruda’s act of solidarity and links it to his act against Pinochet, he affirms that there is no reason other than solidarity. If there is a lesson to be learned from Castresana’s account of Neruda’s act of solidarity with Spanish refugees, an act that challenges the commands of Neruda’s own government, it is this: solidarity is a reasonable action taken beyond the frame of any state rationalism. While Neruda’s act of solidarity is a reasonable act that goes beyond state rationalism, Castresana’s account of it is an act of poetic justice that crosses the realm of international law in order to affirm a universal call for justice.

According to Castresana, his actions against Pinochet were taken in solidarity. As Castresana explains, his sense of solidarity may have been haunted by an event from the past, an event that he was not aware of at the beginning of the Pinochet affair: Neruda’s act of solidarity, an act of solidarity with Spanish refugees. Neruda’s act of solidarity is complemented by another gesture of solidarity: the official emissary who receives the Spanish refugees in Valparaiso, Chile is Salvador Allende (Minister of Health at the time of the Spanish Civil War and who later became the first Chilean socialist president). Castresana’s gesture of solidarity with the victims of Pinochet’s
regime is an act of poetic justice that operates secretly by restoring the force of international solidarity, a force coming from two of the protagonists who participated in the definition of the utopian horizon that Pinochet destroyed in Chile after the coup of 1973. Castresana’s act of solidarity becomes poetic justice once it conceives of itself as reciprocating the act of solidarity of two spectral figures: Neruda and Allende. Between Castresana’s gesture and the gestures of Neruda and Allende, a new dimension is opened where the arrival of the other becomes possible as a form of hospitality in a time that is out of joint. Guzmán enhances the sense of poetic justice achieved by this spectral alliance when he includes images of Picasso’s Guernika as a way to illustrate the moment in which Castresana denounces France’s mistreatment of Spanish refugees. With the inclusion of Picasso's Guernika, Guzmán visually affirms Castresana’s contention that international solidarity is both a redemptive action as well as an opportunity for denouncing injustice.

I would like to argue that the main protagonist of Patricio Guzmán’s *The Pinochet Case* is the New International, which is not a new political subject but instead a sense of collectivity that, in Derrida’s words, “refers to a profound transformation, projected over a long term, of international law, of its concepts, and its field of intervention” (*Specters of Marx* 84). Guzmán’s *The Pinochet Case* is a film that can be conceived as one of the many tools articulated by the New International to transform international law through a critical movement that would exceed the frame of state sovereignty. Derrida argues that “international law should extend and diversify its field to include … the worldwide economic and social field, beyond the sovereignty of States …” (84). For Derrida, the New International is:

a link of affinity, suffering, and hope, a still discreet, almost secret link, as it was around 1848, but more and more visible, we have more than one sign of it. It is
an untimely link, without status, without title, and without name, barely public
even if it is not clandestine, without contract, ‘out of joint,’ without coordination,
without party, without country, without national community (International before,
across, and beyond any national determination), without co-citizenship, without
common belonging to a class. The name of New International is given here to
what calls to the friendship of an alliance without institution among those who,
even if they no longer believe or never believed in the socialist-Marxist
International, in the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the messiano-eschatological
role of the universal union of the proletarians of all lands, continue to be inspired
by at least one of the spirits of Marx or of Marxism (they now know that there is
more than one) and in order to ally themselves, in a new, concrete, and real way,
even if this alliance no longer takes the form of a party or of a worker’s
international, but rather of a kind of counterconjuration, in the (theoretical and
practical) critique of the state of international law, the concepts of State and
nation, and so forth: in order to renew this critique, and especially to radicalize it.
(85-86)

The scene in which Castresana shares with Guzmán his sense of solidarity and
links it to Neruda’s act of solidarity becomes an emblem of the secret connection that
holds together the notion of the New International. Castresana’s call for justice, a call for
justice with no pretensions of attributing itself the representation of a concrete group,
class, nation or party, resembles Derrida’s notion of the New International as an alliance
that operates beyond the traditional paradigms of political representation.

Lo que hicimos efectivamente: poner una denuncia en nombre de la humanidad,
o en nombre de la sociedad, o en nombre de la consciencia jurídico-
democrática, sin atribuirnos la representación concreta de nadie.

What we effectively did: to put a denunciation in the name of humanity, or in the
name of society, or in the name of a juridico-democratic conscience, without
assuming the concrete representation of anyone.

A symbolic interaction occurs between Castresana’s words and the images
selected by Guzmán in which various acts of solidarity are juxtaposed as if establishing
a secret link of affinity. The living speech of the Spanish attorney acting as storyteller
(Castresana), the images composed by the Chilean filmmaker (Guzmán), and the
spectral alliance of the Spanish painter (Picasso), the Chilean poet (Neruda) and the
dethroned president (Allende) become a new constellation made out of multiple
processes of rationality. This bio-spectral alliance challenges the boundaries of time and space in its quest for justice. This scene, which comes almost at the beginning of the film, sets its tone and provides the frame for our interpretation. The main protagonist of Guzmán’s *The Pinochet Case* is precisely the spectral collective force of the New International, a sense of solidarity performed at the limits of life and death and whose most poetic expression is the constitution of a secret link of affinity. In *The Pinochet Case*, the struggle for the achievement of justice is both “untimely,” “out of joint” and made possible by a common story of suffering and hope.6

6 In *Exorcising Terror: The Incredible Unending Trial of General Augusto Pinochet*, Ariel Dorfman describes two forms of collectivity that seem to share the sense of justice that is characteristic of the New International as they both challenge the spatio-temporal boundaries imposed by nation-state-centered geopolitics as well as the limits of life and death: the Lincoln Brigade and the collective memory of the disappeared. This is Dorfman’s elaboration on the Lincoln Brigade, an American brigade that fought in the Spanish Civil War of 1936-1939: “They see Pinochet’s arrest as continuing the same tradition and concept of humanity that they held high when, more than sixty years ago, they volunteered to travel to Spain, defying their own government, and died for a cause in a land where they had not being born, to die next to Germans and French and Russians and Yugoslavs and Latin Americans, defending the right of good men to intervene in the fight against injustice whenever it may exist, defining themselves as human beings first and as members of a nationality second. Anticipating this moment in history when humanity would agree with them that to trample one man’s freedom is to trample the freedom of all men” (89-91). It is interesting to notice the importance of the Spanish Civil War in the works of Dorfman and Guzmán, two Chilean artists whose creative works have been shaped by the experience of exile. Both Dorfman and Guzmán share what we could call a “new internationalist” perspective in regards to the Pinochet affair. While Dorfman alludes to international solidarity by evoking the role of the Lincoln Brigade in the Spanish Civil War, Guzmán conceives solidarity as a spectral alliance of various international intellectuals whose creative works were affected by the Spanish Civil War. It seems that Dorfman also shares with Guzmán the idea of conceiving the New International as a sort of spectral alliance when he refers to the collective memory of the disappeared: “Whatever happens to the General’s transitory body, there can be no doubt that the Chilean Supreme Court’s recent decision has implications for the rest of the planet, a lesson to be learned. The strategy of disappearing prisoners, that extreme form of violence that has sullied so many regimes of every ideology all over the world, has proven to be a boomerang that ends up damaging those who use it. The desaparecidos, it turns out, those men and women arrested one night and then never heard of again, have refused to accept the destiny of oblivion and terror that a dictator dreamt of them, are somehow still alive, beyond death, still accusing the man who thought he could extinguish them forever by hastening and the denying their deaths. Perhaps the past, after all, is not as easy to murder as some in power would like to proclaim. The hidden light of the men and women who gave their lives for what they believed in cannot be totally snuffed out, not while there is one person somewhere in this world, who is willing to remember and resurrect them” (159).
3.3 The Structure of the Documentary

Apart from appearing as a spectral alliance, the New International in Guzmán’s The Pinochet Case appears also as an ensemble of heterologic discourses: the testimonies of the victims, the legal explanations and juridical arguments made by lawyers, the chronicle of Pinochet arrest in London made by a Spanish journalist, and forensic information provided by physicians. The film is divided into six segments that articulate Guzmán’s arguments about the multiple discourses of the New International and its opponents. The film begins with a short prelude in which Guzmán travels to the Northern part of Chile. In this sequence, Guzmán accompanies some family members of the disappeared citizens as they try to find the remains of their loved ones in the mass graves that Chilean authorities discovered in the desert. Then, in the first segment of the film, Guzmán presents the legal arguments made by the various attorneys who contributed to the preparation of the case against Pinochet in the Spanish court system. The second segment of the film consists of four testimonies, three of them given by family members of missing citizens who disappeared while they were under police or military custody, and one testimony given by a torture survivor. The third segment is a chronicle of Pinochet’s trip to London in where he is arrested for crimes against humanity. This segment ends when the English court decides that Pinochet can only be extradited for crimes of torture committed after 1988 when, according to the voiceover narrator, “the torture convention became binding on Spain, the United Kingdom and Chile.” The fourth segment is a sequel to the second and third segments. Here, Guzmán presents a new series of four testimonies, but this time torture survivors deliver all the testimonies. After presenting the testimonies of the four torture survivors, Guzmán returns to the juridical scene in which the Pinochet affair takes place. The fifth segment begins with
Pinochet’s defeat at the extradition court and then presents an account of the way in which the Chilean government negotiated with the English state to put an end to Pinochet’s extradition process. The sixth segment of the film presents Pinochet’s return to Chile along with testimonies about the impact of his arrest in Chilean society. The last segment of *The Pinochet Case* portrays the new legal battle that the ex-dictator will now face in his country. Along with the various reactions provoked by the possibility of prosecuting Pinochet in Chile, Guzmán ends the film showing the process of constructing and erecting a statue of Salvador Allende in front of the Chilean Ministry of Justice. In order to understand the complex texture of Guzmán’s film, I will offer a detailed analysis of the various testimonial practices elaborated by the plural rationalities that share the sense of collectivity exposed in the promise of the New International.

**3.4 “Entre todos estos remedios se me pierde”: Attachments and Closures**

*The Pinochet Case* presents the challenging processes in which the alliance of victims and professionals (struggling for the achievement of global justice beyond the boundaries of the nation state) participate. One of the constitutive processes of the New International involves the possibility of sharing the stories of victimization and suffering. Guzmán presents the testimonies of eight victims of the Pinochet regime. Victoria, a woman who lost one of her sons after the police burned her house, delivers the first testimony. The story of Victoria’s missing son is the story of her search for a missing loved one whose photograph has traveled around the world. According to Victoria, even though the photograph of her son has acquired public and international presence, she has not encountered her son nor has she found justice for him. While Victoria emphasizes on the public and international character of her search (for her lost son and
Victoria tells Guzmán that she is having problems finding the photograph of her son in a bag that appears to be her purse, but that she prefers to call her “trunk,” a metaphor condensing her trips in search for her son with the traveling photographic document containing the image of her son as it has circulated globally. Finally, she finds the photograph of her son and places it over her chest. When Victoria is able to find the photograph of her son in her “trunk” and show it to Guzmán, she denounces the lack of justice for her son by affirming that both her son in the photograph and justice continue to be lost. She seems to compensate for the lack of justice haunting the memory of her son by transforming his photograph into a religious symbol.

Victoria’s search for her son’s photograph corresponds to Laub’s notion of testimony as a process of facing loss.\(^7\) Victoria’s search for her son’s photograph is a

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\(^7\) According to Laub: “[t]he testimony is inherently a process of facing loss—of going through the pain of the act of witnessing, and of the ending of the act of witnessing—which entails yet another repetition of the experience of separation and loss. It reenacts the passage through difference in such a way, however, that it allows perhaps a certain repossession of it” (91).
hide and seek game in which the lost object not only represents but also becomes the missing loved one. In Victoria’s speech, there is no difference between her son and her son’s photograph. In other words, she identifies her lost son with the object that represents him. This becomes evident when Victoria observes that as soon as she starts looking for her “son” (her son’s photograph) in her “trunk” (her purse), he (the photograph) gets lost as if hiding himself. Victoria’s prosopopeic address to her son’s photograph expresses the attachment experienced by family members to the objects that represent their missing loved ones, especially when these loved ones have been irretrievably lost. Through Victoria’s testimony, Guzmán explores the stage in which victims facing loss confront us with the aura of those who remain lost, of those whose presence can only be spectrally repossessed if the facial indexicality achieved by the photographic image is personified, gaining a sacred character.

Victoria’s prosopopeic attachment to the photograph of her lost son may be symptomatic of an incomplete process of mourning. Nelly’s story, the second testimony presented by Guzmán in *The Pinochet Case*, moves on to the next stage in which the process of mourning seems to reach a closure. Nelly tells Guzmán that when her husband was taken prisoner by the Pinochet secret service, she prepared a suitcase of her husband’s favorite things: clothes, magazines, chocolates, and almonds. Nelly confesses that for a while she lived with the hope of delivering all these things to her husband. She thought that she was going to be able to find her husband in one of Pinochet’s detention centers. As time passed and the case’s contents started to age, she replaced them many times in order to keep her son’s hope that one day he would finally meet his father alive. When she finally received the first news that her husband was probably dead, she had to confront her four-year-old son and explain to him that his
father was not going to return. Nelly and her son’s process of facing loss is poetically expressed in the film when we see Nelly’s hand closing her husband’s suitcase in the last shot of the sequence in which she appears. The sense of closure Nelly reaches when she closes her husband’s suitcase expresses the completion of a process of mourning that can only be witnessed through a montage of visual and aural images.

3.5 “Yo creo que eso es lo que más te duele”: the Torturing Question of Democracy

Victoria’s and Nelly’s stories open the first testimonial series in The Pinochet Case and present two different ways of facing loss. On the one hand, Victoria expresses her feelings for her lost son by creating an attachment with the object that represents her son’s absent presence: the photograph. On the other hand, Nelly faces the loss of her husband by closing the suitcase, or in other words, by detaching herself from the very baggage of things belonging to her husband (or things he may have wished to have). Victoria’s and Nelly’s testimonies are followed by two testimonies in which Guzmán explores another element of the constitutive processes of the New International: the critique of the nation-state.

Both Gabriela, who delivers the third testimony, and Luisa, whose story closes the first testimonial sequence of The Pinochet Case, express their frustration with the current state of affairs in Chile. In the narrative structure of this film, a loss of faith in state institutions follows the loss of the loved ones. When Guzmán asks Luisa whether she believes in local justice or not, she responds in the negative. Although she does not believe in local justice, Luisa tells Guzmán that she does believe in the power of the young people of her community, those who follow the example of her two sons (who were killed during 1985’s popular protests against the Pinochet regime) and fight for the
establishment of a new society. While Luisa’s expresses a lack of faith in the Chilean juridical system, Gabriela expresses a complete frustration with the reconciliatory discourse imposed by the political negotiations of the Chilean transition to democracy. Gabriela declares her frustration with the limits of the transition to democracy in Chile because the only possibility of negotiating political transformation after Pinochet’s rule seems to be at the expense of the possibility of justice. Gabriela’s frustration with the transition to democracy is so painful that she breaks into tears when she remembers its advent, a historical transformation that, according to her, was marked by the total indifference of the new Chilean authorities to the sufferings of the victims of the Pinochet regime.

Yo, volvió la democracia en este país, o el inicio de la democracia en este país, y yo empecé a no poder dormir, lloraba todo el tiempo. Y, yo, afortunadamente en mi trabajo había, tenía un colega que había trabajado apoyando, que trabajaba como médico apoyando gente que había sido afectada por la represión. Y el me dijo, o sea, yo te puedo decir que incluso hoy, hoy, uno no habla mucho de haber estado preso, salvo con las que estuvieron presas. Porque este país todavía es un país que niega su historia, que niega, te niega el derecho a la dignidad. Porque ese … perdona, yo no quería llorar en esta … Yo creo que eso es lo que más te duele. No te duele lo que paso en este país. El hecho de que haya tanta gente que acepte y le parezca bien que haya habido torturados, que haya habido desaparecidos, que haya habido muertos, gente que te diga en tu cara—¡El único problema de Pinochet es que no mató a todos los comunistas o a todos los que pensaban diferente!—. Yo creo que eso es mucho más duro, eso es más duro porque es la continuación de la dictadura en personas que no son militares. ¿No?

I, democracy came back to this country, or the beginning of democracy in this country, and I started to lose my sleep, I was crying all the time. And I, fortunately in my work there was, I had a colleague who had worked in support, who worked as a physician supporting people affected by repression. And he told me, in other words, I can tell you that indeed today, today, one does not talk too much about being in prison, except than with people who were also in prison. Because this country is still a country that denies its history, that denies, that denies you the right to dignity. Because this … I am sorry, I did not want to cry in this … I believe that that is what is more painful. What happened in this country is not what hurts you. The fact that there are a lot of people who accept and even think that it is ok that there had been tortured people, that there had been disappeared, that there had been killed people, people telling in your face —The
problem with Pinochet is that he did not killed all the communists or all the people that think differently!–. I think that this is the hardest thing; it is the hardest because it means the continuation of the dictatorship in people that are not part of the military.

A retelling of an episode of sexual violence that Gabriela is able to share with Guzmán without losing control or bursting into tears precedes this moment, which becomes one of the most dramatic points of the film. As Gabriela’s testimony suggests, psychological pressures can have more painful effects and be more difficult to narrate than sexual or physical torture. The recurrent use of the personal pronoun “yo” (“I”) in Gabriela’s speech, a pronoun which is usually omitted in Spanish, could be conceived as a linguistic scar left by the violent effects of public indifference as it wounded Gabriela’s ego during the transition to democracy. In that sense, Gabriela’s resort to the “I” when she confesses her solitude during the transition to democracy could itself be conceived of as symptomatic of “an agony that does not encounter parallel in the social,” which is precisely the way Brett Levinson conceives of the pain of torture survivors once they return to society but without finding cultural elements to which identify themselves (“Pos-transición” 51). Gabriela’s recurrence to the “I,” however, could be conceived of differently if we explore Levinson’s view in contrast to Nelly Richard’s comments on the function of the “I” in the speech of torture victims, especially when both Levinson and Richard analyze the confession of a torture victim who collaborated with the dictatorship.

Both Levinson and Richard refer to the case of Marcia Alejandra Merino who published Mi Verdad in 1993, a testimonial account in which she narrates her life as a prisoner and collaborator with the Pinochet dictatorship as well as her conversion to Christianity. According to Richard, the “effect of reintegrative identity avails itself of the circularity of a story that narratively goes around the "I" in order to fill the potholes of inconsistency with a line of continuity, as if the surviving word that narrates torture required that kind of
editorial closure to suture the wounds of memory and meaning” (Cultural Residues 37). While Richard manifests her doubts about the function of the “I” in the speech of torture survivors, Levinson affirms the function of the “I” in torture survivors as an attempt at “going forward” by “going towards the Other” (53). Probably, following Levinson, and against Richard’s view, Gabriela’s circular attachment to the personal pronoun “I” could be read as a linguistic mark of self-affirmation that helps to preserve the ego and its tendency to go forward and towards the Other, precisely, in spite of a process that threatens to vanish the history of suffering and pain that constitutes the subjective frame of the survivor.

In the case of Gabriela, it seems that more painful than sexual or physical torture is the nightmare of having to face a transition to democracy without the possibility of justice. Gabriela’s comments on democracy could be understood along the lines of a question that tortured Derrida in the last decade of his life: “can one and/or must one speak democratically about democracy?” (Rogues 71). For Gabriela, the most painful situation produced by the torturing question of democracy comes when the public endorsement of Pinochet’s crimes made by his supporters has to be tolerated as part of the contemporary political debates shaping Chilean society. She seems to conceive of Chile’s tolerance to “pinchetismo” as the continuation of Pinochet’s military dictatorship in civil society.

In his book Rogues: Two Essays on Reason, Derrida declares what is at stake when he asks the torturing question of democracy: “to speak democratically about democracy, to speak on the subject of democracy in an intelligible, univocal, and sensible fashion would mean making oneself understood by anyone who can hear this word or the sentences formed with this word …” (Rogues 71). After declaring what he
means by speaking “democratically about democracy,” Derrida quickly recognizes that he is “multiplying the protocols and conditions” of the semantic range of the word “democracy” in order to discover the contradictory circularity of its meaning:

What meaning can be given to this right to discuss freely the meaning of a word, and to do so in the name of a name that is at the very least supposed to entail the right of anyone to determine and continuously discuss the meaning of the word in question? Especially when the right thus implied entails the right to self-critique – another form of autoimmunity – as an essential, original, constitutive, and specific possibility of the democratic …? (Rogues 72)

Let us analyze Gabriela’s critique of the transition to democracy from the perspective proposed by Derrida in Rogues. Although the democratic ideal of the transition itself seems to guarantee Gabriela’s critique of the transition to democracy in Chile, it is interesting that her critique expresses a paradoxical approach to the contradictory circularity of democracy exposed by Derrida. While it becomes a symptom of the contradictory circularity of democracy itself, Gabriela’s frustration with the transition to democracy in Chile, as I will soon discuss, denounces the central point that makes possible the constant rotation of this contradictory circularity: democratic consensus. Gabriela’s target coincides with Derrida’s critical target, for whom the semantic range of the word “democracy” and its contradictory circularity involves the imposition of a form of “semantic” consensus whose meaning itself depends on “political violence” and “some force of law” (Rogues 73). The consensus imposed by the transition to democracy in Chile involves “the political violence of some enforcing rhetoric” (Rogues 73) that silences the sufferings of the victims of the Pinochet regime. As we will soon see, Gabriela breaks the consensual cycle of postdictatorial Chilean

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8 Derrida argues that “to speak democratically of democracy, it would be necessary, through some circular performativity and through the political violence some enforcing rhetoric, some force of law, to impose a meaning on the word democratic and thus to produce a consensus that one pretends by fiction” (Rogues 73).
democracy when she dismantles the illusion of consensus in favor of an unconditional affirmation of her singular right to forgive.

Gabriela’s testimony serves to prepare the way for the most insistent critique made by the attorneys commenting in *The Pinochet Case*: the critique of the limits imposed by the fragile sovereignty of the nation-state once it obstructs the achievement of justice. In Guzmán’s *The Pinochet Case*, victims and attorneys denounce the role of the Chilean government in sabotaging and blocking the extradition process against Pinochet requested by Spain. The testimonies of victims and lawyers point to the failure of local justice, so the most important target of the New International in Guzmán’s film becomes the transition to democracy in Chile. What the film exposes is the crisis of the transition to democracy in Chile as well as the crisis of its reconciliatory discourse based on amnesty to the criminals.

3.6 “Chess is a semiology”: Plural Rationalities and the Critique of State Rationalism

*The Pinochet Case* not only exposes the crisis of Chilean democracy, but it also exposes the multiple rationalities of those who struggle for an unconditional democratization beyond the sovereign reason of the state. Guzmán’s portrait of these multiple rationalities as they challenge the rationality of the state should be associated with Derrida’s defense of plural rationalities. Derrida advances a series of postulations

9 According to Derrida: “If this architectonic vocation of reason is indeed systemic and unifying, what risk threatening it today are not only the figures of the antithesis of the antinomies of the transcendental dialectic. It is also the just as rational necessity, rational, that is, from the point of view of a history and of a development of sciences, to take into account plural rationalities. […] These plural rationalities thus resist, in the name of their very rationality, any architectonic organization. […] Is it not then in the name of these heterogeneous rationalities, in the name of their specificity and future, their history, and their “enlightenment,” that we must call into question the masterly and mastering authority of architectonics and thus of a certain “world,” that is, the unity of the regulative idea of the world that authorizes that world in advance” (*Rogues*, 120).
that allow us to conceive of reason beyond its conception as architectonic in Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason (Rogues 120). Although Derrida questions the sovereign unity of reason in regards to the conceptualization of globalization as a teleological process, he will later associate the architectonic impulse of reason with the idea of the good and will characterize all the great rationalisms coming from this association (between reason and the good) as rationalisms of the state, or state rationalisms (139). Against state rationalisms, Derrida conceives that “an extension of the democratic beyond nation-state sovereignty” is crucial in order to create “an international juridico-political space that, without doing away with every reference to sovereignty, never stops innovating and inventing new distributions and forms of sharing, new divisions of sovereignty” (87).

While invention is key for the constitution of the New International (“invention not of the event but through the event”) (87), Derrida explains that deconstruction:

would remain above all […] an unconditional rationalism that never renounces – and precisely in the name of the Enlightenment to come, in the space to be opened up of a democracy to come— the possibility of suspending in an argued, deliberated, rational fashion, all conditions, hypotheses, conventions, and presuppositions, and of criticizing unconditionally all conditionalities […]. It would be a question not only of separating this kind of sovereignty drive from the exigency for unconditionality as two symmetrically associated terms, but of questioning, critiquing, deconstructing, if you will, one in the name of the other, sovereignty in the name of unconditionality. (142-143)

I would like to argue that the unconditional deconstruction of sovereignty and the critique of state rationalism are the two guiding threads of the New International’s plural rationalities as they are perceived in Guzmán’s The Pinochet Case. Guzmán’s critique of state rationalism in The Pinochet Case operates at two levels: the international and the national. Guzmán’s main agenda at the international level is to denounce the obstruction of justice performed by the Chilean and the British states in order to liberate Pinochet. Guzmán’s main target at the local level is the Chilean transition to democracy itself. In
order to denounce the obstruction of justice performed by the diplomatic and executive powers of the Chilean and the British states, Guzmán invents a poetic approach to real actions. Guzmán twice evokes the rituals of the House of Lords’s maid as she cleans up the courtroom. The first House of Lords’s clean up session presented in the film comes after the Law Lords decided (“for the first time in a 150 years” as the voice-over narrator says) to revise their decision about revoking Pinochet’s immunity because the ex-dictator’s attorneys discovered that one of the Lords was affiliated with Amnesty International. The second House of Lords’s clean up session comes after Minister Jack Straw decides to liberate Pinochet due to medical concerns first expressed by the government of Chile. The symbolic ritual of cleaning the House of Lords appears in the film at two different moments in which external forces obstruct Pinochet’s encounter with justice. When Guzmán presents the maid cleaning up the House of Lords, he evokes the dirt of politics as it effects judicial power. He shows how the system of justice cleans itself from all the dirt produced once it cannot guarantee the achievement of justice due to the external pressures of the diplomatic and the executive rationality of the state.

In order to pursue the critique of state rationalism, Guzmán also uses a very interesting narrative device to present the international forces in conflict as they operate from within the rational diagrams of state power: chess. He uses chess to frame the narration of the juridical steps taken by Garzón and Pinochet’s attorneys in the juridical process against the ex-dictator. Chess serves also to deliver the chronicle of the obstruction of justice provoked by the British state in complicity with the Chilean government. It is Ekaiser, a journalist from the Spanish newspaper El País, who serves as the narrator and only player of the chess match. The chess match, a recurrent motif throughout The Pinochet Case, appears every time Ekaiser narrates the judicial and
diplomatic intrigue provoked by the ex-dictator’s arrest in London. The chess match begins with a close up to the chessboard and then a tilt up that shows Ekaiser seated, like any chess player, behind the chessboard. He is on the side that corresponds to the black pieces and there is no other player across from him. As he explains Garzón’s efforts to proceed against Pinochet, Ekaiser takes out the black bishop piece from the chessboard and puts it into his side, as if Garzón, represented by this black bishop, would join Ekaiser in his role as game’s mastermind. Then, Ekaiser explains that Garzón had news about Pinochet’s visit to England. In order to represent Pinochet’s visit to England, Ekaiser places the beige king alone at the other extreme of the chessboard. The beige king, representing Pinochet, stands alone and in opposition to the black pieces. The lonely king at the other side of the board symbolizes Pinochet and expresses the vulnerable and isolated position of the ex-dictator in 1998, when he traveled to England.

At this stage of the chess match, the black pieces, in confrontation with the beige king, symbolize both collective mourning as well as the multiple forces opposed to Pinochet and clamoring for justice. When Garzón, represented by the black bishop outside the chessboard, expresses his interest in interrogating Pinochet in London to the British government, Ekaiser moves a black pawn to the front in order to illustrate Garzón’s first move. As is made evident by the position of the black pieces, the claim for justice is expressed both inside the chessboard, as the internal movement of the pawn representing Garzón’s interrogation request suggests, as well as outside the chessboard, an excess indicated by the piece of the black bishop representing Garzón which was taken out from the chessboard earlier by Ekaiser. Since it is outside of the chessboard, the black bishop, representing Garzón, has not entered the game as
another piece but it serves to indicate Garzón’s role as chess player, a role that is expressed inside the chessboard by the movement of the black pawn performed by Ekaiser. When Ekaiser explains that Garzón receives a favorable reaction from the British government that motivates him to request Pinochet’s detention, however, Ekaiser illustrates this unimaginable action by sliding the black bishop inside the chessboard in a diagonal offensive movement of five squares to the right. In this new position, the black bishop, both Garzón’s double inside the chessboard as well the expression of Garzón’s juridical action, becomes a threat to Pinochet, the beige king. Checkmate? Almost, but not yet. Whereas in the shot taken from the top of the chessboard Ekaiser illustrates the black bishop offensive as one that threatens the isolated figure of the beige king, in the following close up shot, which shows the conclusion of this movement from the point of view of the beige king, there is a line of beige pawns that seems to protect the beige king from the black bishop. In the next chess match sequence, a line of five beige pawns represents Pinochet’s legal team. While it could be considered as a mistake in terms of film continuity, the presence of the beige pawns on the chessboard on the previous sequence (at the end of the offensive movement made by Ekaiser to illustrate Garzón’s request to arrest Pinochet in London) may anticipate the role of servitude of the legal team hired by Pinochet.

The second chess match sequence begins with a close up of the black bishop that serves as both a double for Garzón as well as an expression of Garzón’s actions inside the chessboard. It comes after a sequence in which both Ekaiser and Jeremy Corbyn, a left-wing (anti-Blairite) Labour MP for a London constituency, offer a detailed account of Pinochet’s detention in London. Guzmán illustrates their account with archival footage of the ex-dictator’s arrest (including images of British police officers placed in
The second chess match is presented in a more fragmented way when compared to the first chess match sequence. Ekaiser begins the narration by establishing the new scenario in which the case takes place. He comments that, on the one hand, “the British extradition law,” and, on the other hand, “all the possibilities a wealthy person has to defend himself against the action of justice” constitutes this new scenario. Rather than a space, the new scenario of the Pinochet affair in Ekaiser’s account is constituted by the written and unwritten rules of the game played by the system of justice and the power of money. Pinochet’s monetary power assumes a spectral character in the chessboard when Ekaiser places a set of five beige pawns in front of the beige king in order to symbolize the legal team hired by the ex-dictator to protect himself. Ekaiser never completely fills the empty squares on the side of the chessboard that are supposed to be occupied by the full set of pieces corresponding to the beige king’s army. After Pinochet’s legal team fails to persuade Home Secretary Jack Straw to void the detainment order, they present recourse in the British High Court and in twenty-four hours Pinochet’s immunity as a head of state is reinvested. The victory of Pinochet’s legal team is represented on the chessboard, but not by a movement involving the beige pawns. Rather, the vertical movement of a beige castle against the black bishop represents Pinochet’s legal victory. The sequence ends when the black bishop representing Garzón inside the chessboard loses its position against this beige castle coming from outside the chessboard.

The archival footage Guzmán includes in this sequence suggests that the beige castle symbolizes the British High Court, a British juridical institution that is itself housed in a sort of white castle. In The Pinochet Case, we only see the façade of the building housing the British High Court. As Michael Chanan pointed out to me in an email: “the
UK does not allow film cameras into either the magistrate's court or the high court, but there are images of the Law Lords because this takes place on the floor of the House of Lords and is therefore televised.” The use of the beige castle to represent the British High Court not only establishes a visual analogy (doesn’t this evoke the architectonics of state rationalism?), but it also corresponds to a coherent movement determined by the very logic of chess: the beige castle is the only piece whose virtual position and potential vertical movement allow for an offensive movement against the black bishop. However, it is interesting to notice that where all the black pieces, except the bishop representing Garzón, occupy their structural positions on their side of the chessboard since the beginning of match (in coordination with the game’s logic), the pieces on the beige side appear on the chessboard contingently and in order to perform tactical defensive movements to protect the beige king’s isolated position. The lonely and isolated king is protected by a set of beige pieces that come from nowhere and only appear on the chessboard arbitrarily when Ekaiser, who seems to play the role of the chess match mastermind on the side of the black army, calls them. As he plays against the invisible power of the beige army, Ekaiser also exposes the plays of the invisible enemy he invents with each move.

The chess match continues in The Pinochet Case when Ekaiser illustrates the House of Lords’s revocation of the ex-dictator’s immunity made on November 25, 1998: he moves a black castle from one corner to the other in the chessboard. Again, it seems that the beige king that represents Pinochet is being pushed to the point of checkmate. This shot, taken from the top of the chessboard, shows that some of the black pieces are missing. The film leaves it unclear why these black pieces are missing. Neither a shot nor a montage sequence illustrates their withdrawal. Their absence may be explained if
we consider that perhaps Ekaiser made some other movements illustrating the development of the Pinochet affair that were later excluded from the final editing of the film. However, the absence of the black pieces at this stage of the game may also express a change in the representational function of chess in Guzmán’s film. Up to this point, Ekaiser had maintained the structural coherence determining the movement of each of the pieces in the chessboard. Although the game did not start with all of the pieces on the chessboard, Ekaiser reconstructed the main elements of the game by placing the pieces in their correct location on the chessboard and by moving them according to the logic of the game. In the last sequence, however, when Ekaiser uses the chess match to symbolize the obstruction of justice orchestrated by Chilean and British states, we do not see the black castle on the corner of the chessboard threatening the beige king. This development would be the logical result of the narration of the case with full respect of film continuity as it represents the game’s trajectory. Instead of maintaining the coherence between film continuity and the logical development of the chess match, however, in the last sequence we no longer see the black castle threatening Pinochet. Ekaiser abandons the match and only evokes the role of servitude played by the Chilean government by taking a beige pawn in his hand and showing it to the camera without ever placing it on the chessboard.

Apart from the violation of film continuity expressed by the absence of the black castle, what is most interesting is the fact that the game is left unsolved. Ekaiser no longer uses the chess match to illustrate the diplomatic action that serves to obstruct the achievement of justice in the criminal process against Pinochet. Rather, Ekaiser evokes the chess match motif in order to denounce the role of servitude of the Chilean state in favor of Pinochet, the beige king. Chile’s subordinate role in defending the ex-dictator is
represented by Ekaiser when he takes one of the beige pawns in his hands and, without finishing the game, narrates the final outcome of Pinochet’s arrest in London. The end of the game does not result from a logical movement justified by the structure of the chess match. Rather, Ekaiser pushes the game into a point of interruption in order to associate the Chilean state with the less important piece that exists in the hierarchical structure of chess: the pawn. Chess, after having a performative function and serving as a narrative frame for the case, ends up having a symbolic function: it provides the symbol for the servile interruption of an unsolved intrigue.

The use of chess in *The Pinochet Case* to narrate the rational processes of the justice system and to symbolize the dishonest interruption of court proceedings made for diplomatic reasons could be associated with Gilles Deleuze-Guattari’s conception of chess as a game of the state.¹⁰ For Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, “chess is a semiology” (*A Thousand Plateaus* 353). The semiological function of chess in Guzmán’s *The Pinochet Case* is very complex. Although chess is a game designed to display the conflict between two states, it is important to notice that in the chess match proposed by Ekaiser neither of the two sets of pieces represent a state apparatus. Rather, the two sets of pieces lend their statist disguise to a complex play of forces that move both inside and outside the state. Therefore, chess organizes the narration of *The Pinochet Case* in a frame that expresses the limits of state rationalism as well as the insufficiency of its intrinsic codes. In the context of Guzmán’s film, the bipolar structure of chess is an emblematic image of the obstacles and limits posed by state rationalism to the

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¹⁰ Deleuze and Guattari point out that: “Chess is a game of state, or of the court: the emperor of China played it. Chess pieces are coded; they have an internal nature and intrinsic properties from which their movements, situations and confrontations derive. They have qualities; a knight remains a knight, pawn a pawn, a bishop a bishop. Each is like a subject of the statement endowed with a relative power, and these relative powers combine in a subject of enunciation, that is, the chess player or the game’s form of interiority” (*A Thousand Plateaus* 352-353).
transformation of international law and the globalization of justice. Perhaps the fact that
the black pieces representing the legal actions taken against Pinochet were on the
chessboard since the beginning of the game is a preliminary signal of the self-defeating
closest character of these legal actions, as they remained trapped in the coded logic of the state
apparatus. In contrast, the excess produced by the absence of one of the black bishops,
the one representing Garzón, not only exposes the resistance to fall into the trap of the
state, but also indicates the necessity of overflowing the frame of state rationalism in
order to pursue the transformation of international justice. The promise of global justice
therefore involves the promise of the New International as it deconstructs sovereignty
along with the limits of state rationalism. The black pieces that are missing from the
chessboard at a certain stage of the chess match perform an act of disappearance that
can be linked to the promise of the New International: the expression of an anonymous
call for justice in a clandestine configuration of power.

If it is possible to associate the clandestine configuration of the black pieces that
disappear from the chessboard in Guzmán’s *The Pinochet Case* with Derrida’s notion of
the New International, then it is also possible to analyze the spectral configuration of the
beige pieces (organized around the isolated figure of the beige king representing
Pinochet) along the lines of what Derrida has defined as the phantom state. In *Specters
of Marx*, Derrida associates the phantom states with the mafia and the drug cartels.¹¹ In

¹¹ This is Derrida’s elaboration on the phantom states: “How can one ignore the growing and undelimitable,
that is, worldwide power of those super-efficient and properly capitalist phantom-States that are the mafia
and the drug cartels on every continent, including in the former so-called socialist States of Eastern Europe?
These phantom-States have infiltrated and banalized themselves everywhere, to the point that they can no
longer be strictly identified. Nor even sometimes clearly dissociated from the processes of democratization
(think—for example of the schema, telegraphically simplified here, that would associate them with a history-
democratic-camp-on-both-sides-of-the-Atlantic-as-well-as-in-the-reconstruction-of-the-Italian-Christian-
democratic-State-which-has-entered-today-into-a-new-configuration-of-capital, about which the least one
can say is that we understand nothing of what is happening there if we do not take into account its
his genealogy, Derrida conceives of mafia in opposition to the fascist state. If we analyze Ekaiser’s chess match along the lines of Derrida’s notion of the phantom state, it is clear that even though the Pinochet regime, represented by the beige king, is closer to fascism than to mafia, it becomes the spectral image of the phantom state, a power superior to the power of the Chilean postdictatorial democratic state. Pinochet’s terror is therefore a hybrid haunting. Not only does it belong to the fascist configuration that performs an authoritarian exercise of power over civil society, but also becomes part of the mafia-genealogy that operates by intimidating the public with the sole purpose of expanding capitalism in a democratic simulacrum. As we saw in the previous chapter, the power to intimidate held by Pinochet as a former head of state has invaded the state rationalism that emerged in Chile after the transition to democracy. This explains why Pinochet is the king of the game and not the Chilean state, whose role is represented by a beige pawn ready to be at the service of the king. Chess, in its symbolic function, serves to expose the distortion of state rationalism as it has been invaded by the spectral force of the phantom state, a spectral configuration of power that no longer opposes mafia to fascism but rather includes among its tools both state terror as well as democratic simulacrum.

When chess serves as a narrative device in Guzmán’s film (operating according to the semiological rules described by Deleuze and Guattari), any single piece included by Ekaiser in his retelling of the Pinochet affair represents a subject of the statement. Ekaiser uses a black bishop when Garzón becomes the subject of the statement, a beige king to represent Pinochet, a set of five beige pawns for Pinochet’s legal team, a genealogy). All these infiltrations are going through a “critical” phase, as one says, which is no doubt what allows us to talk about them or to begin their analysis. These phantom-States invade not only the socio-economic fabric, the general circulation of capital, but also statist or inter-statist institutions” (Specters of Marx 83).
beige castle for the British High Court, and a black castle for representing the House of Lords’s revocation of Pinochet’s immunity. If the chess pieces operate as the subjects of each statement, it is because the structure of the game itself is the subject of enunciation. In other words, when Ekaiser evokes the subjects of the statement and he makes them operate according to the bipolar logic of the state apparatus, the subject of enunciation is the state. In Guzmán’s characterization, however, it is Ekaiser, the media reporter, the one responsible for narrating the intrigue of global forces in a conflict, who becomes the subject of enunciation. Ekaiser’s task in the context of *The Pinochet Case* would therefore consist in narrating the possibility of transforming the frame of international law with a game that manifest all the limits of the state. Once Ekaiser discovers that this is an impossible task, he abandons his dual role as narrator and chess player in order to perform his real role, the role of the journalist, the symbolic mastermind who manipulates the pieces as they can still mean something outside the chessboard. Ekaiser becomes a subject of enunciation separated from the structural effects of the game only after he discovers that he can manipulate the pieces as he wishes. When Ekaiser becomes the subject of enunciation, he uses the media’s power of symbolic manipulation to parody the failure of state rationalism.

The role of the media reporter in Guzmán’s film as the subject of enunciation is to unravel the simulacrum that reduces a complex play of forces into a conflict between two state apparatuses. However, as we have seen, the conflict created by the Pinochet affair involves at least three state rationalisms (Chile, Spain, Britain) as well as the plural rationalities of international human rights advocates. Therefore, this conflict between two heterogeneous rational configurations (state rationalisms and the plural rationalities of the New International) cannot be reduced to a clash of two state rationalisms as the
structure of chess suggests. If we study the two functions of chess in Guzmán’s *The Pinochet Case*, it is clear that these two functions (performative and symbolic) express at least two different conflicts between the three states involved in the case: a juridical conflict between Spanish and British authorities on the possibility of extraditing Pinochet, and a diplomatic conflict between British and Chilean authorities on the possibility of liberating Pinochet. Whereas the function of chess in Ekaiser’s narration of the conflict is performative (let’s recall that Ekaiser represents as plays on the chessboard each of the juridical decisions affecting Pinochet), when Ekaiser refers to the solution of the diplomatic conflict between Britain and Chile the game is interrupted. At this stage, chess no longer possesses a performative function but it rather becomes a way of symbolizing the role of servitude played by the Chilean government in the Pinochet affair. It is also at this stage that the subject of enunciation changes scenarios: Guzmán presents Ekaiser in his role as a journalist working for a newspaper and producing written statements on his computer, no longer on the chessboard. Why does the subject of enunciation change scenarios? It seems that after using chess to expose the simulacrum of state rationalism (the play of signifiers that serves to cover up the play of forces that enter into conflict during the Pinochet affair), chess itself becomes insufficient as a semiological machine since it reaches its logical and performative limits.

The exhaustion of chess as a semiological machine is evident when the game shifts from a performative to a symbolic function. At this point, chess reaches a point of semiologic consummation that leads to narrative paralysis. It is at this point that the simulacrum of state rationalism gives way to the simulacrum of media, and Ekaiser, the new subject of enunciation, no longer expresses his statements according to the logical and structural limits of chess. Instead, Ekaiser would break the spell of state rationalism
in order to liberate his statements into a public sphere which itself represents a more intensifies stage of simulacrum: the computer screen. Once chess (the archaic machine that sustains the simulacrum of state rationalism) becomes insufficient, a digital machine unmasking the simulacrum of the state with the help of the most advanced form of simulacrum replaces it. However, the words generated by the computer and projected onto the screen are later printed on the newspaper. By evoking the virtuality of the computer along with the materiality of printed newspapers, Guzmán presents a complex articulation of media in which the circulation of information passes through a technologically hybrid public sphere. It is precisely this hybrid of media environment announced at the beginning of the chess match sequence when Guzmán identified Ekaiser as a media reporter. He is a more flexible figure than any state official. His potential capacity to narrate the event, first limited by the archaic form of chess (as it represents the struggle for globalization of justice from the standpoint of state rationalism), finally unleashes the hauntology of the public sphere from the hauntology of the state.

3.7 “¿No sería mejor que uno olvidase?”: the Discourse of Torture Survivors

While at the international level Guzmán’s main target is the obstruction of justice performed by the Chilean and the British states in order to liberate Pinochet, his main target at the national level is the Chilean transition to democracy and the discourse of social reconciliation that shapes the postdictatorial rationalism of the state. Gabriela criticizes the official discourse of social reconciliation when she explains to Guzmán her reasons for contending that only the victim, and not the state, is capable of forgiving the perpetrator.
Yo me siento capaz de vivir con el pasado—¿no?—capaz de vivir con el pasado. Sin embargo, se me viene a la mente esta pregunta que siempre la gente te hace: ¿no sería mejor que uno olvidase? Hay que perdonar, yo lo he escuchado tantas veces. Hay que olvidar. Yo creo que los únicos que pueden perdonar son los que han sufrido. Nadie más puede perdonar por ellos. Y yo creo que uno puede perdonar cuando alguien le pide perdón.

I feel capable of living with the past, capable of living with the past. However, a question that everybody asks me comes to my mind: is not better to forget? One has to forgive! I have heard that so many times. One has to forget! I believe that the only ones capable of forgiving are the ones who have suffered. Nobody else could forgive in place of them. And, I believe that one can forgive only if someone asks for it.

Gabriela believes that the possibility of forgiveness, which is the only right of the victim, involves two individuals: the one who has been offended and the one who asks for forgiveness. For Gabriela, there can be no forgiveness if someone does not requests it first and forgiveness cannot be transferred to a third party. Although Gabriela’s conception of forgiveness depends on someone else’s recognition of his or her fault (a structural demand that corresponds to Derrida’s notion of the conditional form of forgiveness), the self-affirmation of the victim’s right to forgive is itself unconditional and coincides with Derrida’s theorization of the structure of forgiveness: “forgiveness must engage two singularities: the guilty … and the victim. As soon as a third party intervenes, one can again speak of amnesty, reconciliation, reparation, etc., but certainly not of pure forgiveness in the strict sense” (“On Forgiveness” 42). Gabriela’s testimony puts in question the tendency of fragile democratic states to reconstitute national unity through an official rhetoric of reconciliation and amnesty. This rhetoric of reconciliation, as I will discuss at the end of this chapter, conceals political calculation behind a smokescreen of generosity. In Guzmán’s The Pinochet Case, the unconditional deconstruction of sovereignty is evoked by Gabriela’s unconditional power to forgive, a power coming from her own singularity as a torture survivor.
In the first testimonial sequence of *The Pinochet Case*, the stories of Victoria, Nelly and Luisa express the process of facing loss that affects the family members of those missing citizens who disappeared after Pinochet’s secret service captured them. In contrast, Gabriela’s story refers to the experience of physical and psychological suffering that has affected the life of a torture survivor. Gabriela’s testimony, located in the first testimonial sequence of Guzmán’s film, serves as a prelude to the second testimonial sequence in which four witnesses share with Guzmán their experiences of suffering in Pinochet’s torture camps. Guzmán’s emphasis on torture survivors in the second testimonial sequence of *The Pinochet Case* is structurally justified and creates a coherent sequel to the first part chronicling Pinochet’s arrest in London. It comes right after the film presents the Law Lords’ court decision to revoke Pinochet’s immunity since the ex-dictator, according to the torture convention, can be prosecuted for torture crimes committed after 1988. Guzmán’s strategy is to structure the second testimonial sequence of *The Pinochet Case* by focusing on torture, thus providing evidence that would correspond to the crimes for which Pinochet can become prosecuted at that stage of the process. Guzmán shifts his focus from family members of the disappeared to torture survivors in order to mark the shift in the juridical process against Pinochet. The new series of testimonies of victims of torture, while operating as a narrative shift which expresses the new juridical rationality that sustains the case against Pinochet, also expresses common elements with the previous testimonial sequence: the process of facing loss provoked by the death of others and the frustration with the transition to democracy. Guzmán’s purpose is to create a bridge to cross the abyss of two juridical rationalities, an abyss created by the impossibility of judging Pinochet for genocide and the chance of prosecuting him for torture. In order to keep track of the transformations in
juridical rationality as they affect the progress of the criminal investigation against
Pinochet (but without excluding those shared links of suffering that the system of law
cannot address) Guzmán’s film shows that loss and frustration touches all the witnesses.
Regardless of whether or not the criminal acts denounced by witnesses in The Pinochet
Case can be condemned by courts, the act of testifying achieves its value as a rational
act parallel to court proceedings. In other words, testimony comes to be a reasonable
act in spite of the transformations affecting juridical rationality.

In the coming pages, I will focus on the discourse of torture survivors as it comes
to be part of the testimonial practices portrayed by Guzmán in The Pinochet Case. The
experience of facing loss provoked by the death of others not only affects family
members of missing citizens but it also affects torture survivors. In other words, as
different perspectives on the same problem are juxtaposed, The Pinochet Case allows
us to see the common ground of the witnesses’s shared suffering and the ways in which
each of them confronts the challenges of recovery after trauma. Gabriela and Gladys
express the pain suffered by torture survivors after witnessing the death of others in the
first testimonial sequence and the second testimonial sequence. Both women share with
Guzmán a common pain that they felt after surviving torture: the pain caused by seeing
somebody else dying and not being able to do anything about it. According to Gabriela,
the death of other human beings is a mark that never leaves the survivor. Later, Gladys
refers to the persistence of this mark when she tells Guzmán of an event that has
returned to her many times in the form of a nightmare. She is the only living witn
ess of the death of a young Yugoslavian man killed in one of Pinochet’s torture camps. She
seems a bit embarrassed when she confesses to Guzmán that, at a certain point in the
torture process, she wished the Yugoslavian man would die quickly so he would no
longer suffer. Gladys’s confession coincides with Giorgio Agamben’s description of extermination camp survivors as subjects haunted by shame. Following various testimonial accounts made by Holocaust survivors (Primo Levi’s reflections among others), Agamben has observed that a feeling of shame constitutes the subjectivity of the survivor (Remnants of Auschwitz 88). For Agamben, the survivor bears witness to a death which is not his or her own, and therefore when he or she confronts death, this experience at the limits of the self cannot but provoke a sense of subjective dissolution. For Gladys and for many survivors of extreme violence like her, the most difficult pain to heal is the pain suffered by others.

3.8 “Hablábamos fuerte–¡Estoy marcando un número! –Y dábamos un número–¡y estoy llamando a Miriam Ortega!”: a Secret of Survival

The frustration with the Chilean transition to democracy, expressed by Gabriela in the first testimonial sequence of The Pinochet Case, becomes the first aspect emphasized by Cecilia, the first witness of the second testimonial sequence focusing on torture survivors. Cecilia’s frustration with the transition to democracy stems from the fact that she was not liberated from one of Pinochet’s prisons immediately after the end of the dictatorship. After being taken prisoner in 1981, Cecilia remained in prison until 1992. She was finally liberated two years after the arrival of democracy in Chile. For Cecilia, the transition to democracy owes her these two extra years she spent in prison since supposedly all the prisoners of the Pinochet torture camps were to be set free at the end of the dictatorship. Cecilia’s critique of the transition to democracy occurs in between the two sequences in which Guzmán offers a chronicle of Pinochet’s arrest in London. Her disenchantment with the Chilean transition to democracy is key to
understanding the intrigue that the film unravels at the end of the second sequence in which Guzmán presents the outcome of the Pinochet affair in London: the official collaboration of the Chilean state in Pinochet’s liberation from the British extradition court. Cecilia’s disenchantment serves in a way to anticipate the frustrating option taken by the postdictatorial state of Chile to support the ex-dictator’s liberation. What frustrates Cecilia is that while proving incapable of doing justice to Pinochet’s prisoners at the right time, the Chilean transitional government activated all the resources available to liberate Pinochet.

Although Cecilia’s testimony provides a key to understanding the deceptive politics of the transition to democracy in Chile, her testimony is also full of hope. This is part of the dialogue between Cecilia and Guzmán.

Cecilia: Adentro, en la cárcel, nosotros no estábamos cruzados de brazos y esperando los días que pasaran. Hacíamos muchas actividades físicas dentro de la carcel. Conversábamos mucho. Yo creo que una de las cosas que nos ayudó mucho, por lo menos a las mujeres, es que fuimos capaces de poder entre nosotras conversar lo que nos había pasado, que nos habían hecho, el apoyarnos y ser capaces de hacernos cariño, de querernos. Yo creo que son todos esos elementos los que nos han ayudado y que hoy día estemos bien. Suponte tú, nosotros jugábamos a llamarnos por teléfono y, de una celda a otra celda, nos llamábamos por teléfono. Y nos imaginábamos que habían pasado muchos años y nos empezábamos a preguntar—¡Bueno! ¿Y qué? ¡Ya han pasado tantos años que no nos hemos visto! ¿Qué estás haciendo tú? ¿Te casaste? ¿Cuántos hijos tienes?—.

Guzmán: ¿Y cómo hablaban por teléfono?
Cecilia: ¿Cómo hablábamos por teléfono? Hablábamos fuerte—¡Estoy marcando un número!—y dábanos un número—¡y estoy llamando a Miriam Ortega!—que era una de las compañeras. Y nos poníamos la mano acá y la compañera que estaba en la otra celda así que levantaba y empezábamos a conversar de una celda a otra.

Guzmán: ¿Y hacían que inventaban la conversación?
Cecilia: E inventábamos la conversación porque nos situábamos que estábamos fuera, que habían pasado muchos años, y que había triunfado la revolución, que habían algunas personas que estaban en puestos importantes, y que estábamos construyendo una sociedad diferente, nosotros ya éramos abuelas.

Cecilia: In prison, we were neither lazy nor waiting for days to pass one after the other. We were doing many physical activities while we were in prison. We talked
a lot. I think that one thing that really helped, at least women, is that we were capable of talking to each other about what had happened to us, what they had done to us, the experience of supporting each other, getting closer to each other with love, loving each other. I think that all these elements have helped us and, probably, that is why we are fine today. Imagine, we played a game in which we called each other, from cell to cell, by phone. And we imagined that many years had passed and we asked each other—Well! So many years have passed since last time we saw each other! So, tell me, what are you doing? Did you get married? How many children do you have?—

Guzmán: And how did you speak by phone?
Cecilia: How did we speak by phone? We spoke loudly—I am calling a number!—and we said a number, and—I am calling Miriam Ortega!—who was one of the prisoners. And we placed our hands here and the prisoner from the next cell picked up the phone and we started talking from one cell of the prison to the next.

Guzmán: And, were you making up the conversation?
Cecilia: Yes, we invented the conversation because we placed each other outside prison, we imagined that many years have passed and that the revolution was triumphant, that many people were occupying important positions, and that we were building a different society, and that we were already grandmothers.

When she refers to her time in prison, she emphasizes the importance of physical activity and the benefits of conversation, of keeping the channels of communication with other female prisoners open. One of the ways in which conversation becomes possible inside the prison is through a game which Cecilia calls “the telephone.” The game of “the telephone” allows female prisoners to stay in touch with each other even when they are separated (each of them in their own cell). It helps to transform the disenchanting reality of alienation caused by imprisonment because “the telephone” game not only promotes communication but it also becomes an imaginary time-machine allowing prisoners to envision a future outside prison. In her interview with Guzmán, Cecilia illustrates the situation of the game by calling one of her companions: Miriam Ortega. She explains that female prisoners would invent a conversation in which both interlocutors would locate themselves in the future, as grandmothers participating in the construction of a new society after the triumph of the revolution. Since Cecilia’s explanation of the game is performed in a present in which she is already outside of
prison, her revelation participates in the utopian futurality proposed by the game itself. Through montage, Guzmán juxtaposes the futurality proposed by the game of “the telephone,” as it invades the present in which Cecilia testifies, with images of the cells in which this game was played for the first time, creating a spatiotemporal constellation made out of the tension existent between fragments of the past, the present, and the future as they circulate in the visual and verbal registers of Cecilia’s testimonial sequence. Despite the fact that the future revolution is a counter-factual fantasy that does not exist as empirical reality and remains beyond the reach of the survivor in the present, it achieves a historical stance since it constitutes: “the very secret of survival and of resistance to extermination” (Feldman and Laub 62). The game of the “telephone” cannot be reduced to an imaginary compensation performed by those who suffer from confinement. Its real effect is to break the frame of death by allowing the prisoner to survive. Cecilia bears witness to the revolutionary act of surviving, and to the survival of the secret that made possible this revolutionary surviving.

The power of the game of “the telephone” described by Cecilia contrasts with the destructive capacity of a torture process that Santiago, the third witness of the second testimonial sequence of Guzmán’s *The Pinochet Case*, also calls “the telephone,” a torture which consists of being hit on the ears with two hands as if these hands were clapping. Santiago’s description of “the telephone” relates to a violent process that takes place in the scenario of torture: the transformation of familiar objects belonging to our civilization into weapons of human destruction (Scarry 41). It is very interesting that Elaine Scarry uses “the telephone” precisely to illustrate what she conceives of as a circle of negation created by the designation of torture according to the names of domestic objects, a linguistic practice that not only dissolves human pain into words but
also obscures the torturer’s responsibility in the infliction of pain.\textsuperscript{12} Scarry conceives of the process of torture and the infliction of pain as an undoing of civilization, as if presupposing that a form of civilization exists before violence. I disagree with this idea of an innocent stage of civilization because it seems to me that, against the grain of her own argument, Scarry’s account of torture advances the Benjaminian idea that “there is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism” (Benjamin 256). Idelver Avelar makes the same objection to Scarry’s argument in his essay “La práctica de la tortura y la historia de la verdad.” Against Avelar’s reduction of Scarry’s complex and rich argument, however, I would like to affirm that her account of torture can still be useful for us here in spite of the fact that I tend to disagree when she comes to conceive torture as an undoing of civilization.

The best proof against the thesis that torture corresponds to the undoing of civilization comes from the double role of “the telephone” in the discourse of the survivors of torture approached by Guzmán. While Santiago associates “the telephone” with pain and barbarity, Cecilia associates “the telephone” with the possibility of having access to a new voice, a voice coming from the future, which also implies a renewed access to the futurality of a coming community by technological means belonging to our present civilization. Scarry’s perspective on torture is important because it allows us to understand the dynamics of the voice and the body in the torture scenario. Scarry

\textsuperscript{12} According to Scarry, “the designation of an intensely painful form of bodily contortion with a word usually reserved for an instance of civilization produces a circle of negation: there is no human being in excruciating pain; that’s only a telephone; there is no telephone; that is only a merely a means of destroying a human being who is not a human being, who is only a telephone, who is not a telephone but merely a means of destroying a telephone. The double negation of a human being and a symptom of civilization combine to bring about a third area of negation the negation of the torturer’s recognition of what is happening, a negation that will in turn allow the first two to continue. The torturer’s idiom not only indicates but helps bring about the process of perception in which all human reality is made, no matter how screamingly present, invisible, inaudible” (Scarry 44). In the next chapter, I will refer again to this passage in order to discuss the role of the public telephone in Guzmán’s \textit{Island of Robinson Crusoe} and how it can be associated to a form of poetic reversal of the roles of the torturer and the tortured prisoner.
explains the colossal discrepancy that exists between the body of the prisoner and the voice of the torturer: “for the prisoner, the body and its pain are overwhelmingly present and voice, world, and self are absent; for the torturer, voice, world and self are overwhelmingly present and the body and pain are absent” (Scarry 46). Let me refer here to Scarry’s definition of torture:

Torture ... consists of a primary physical act, the infliction of pain, and a primary verbal act, the interrogation. The verbal act, in turn consists in two parts, “the question” and “the answer,” each with conventional connotations that wholly falsify it. “The question” is mistakenly understood to be “the motive”; “the answer” is mistakenly understood to be “the betrayal.” The first mistake credits the torturer, providing him with a justification, his cruelty with an explanation. The second discredits the prisoner, making him rather than the torturer, his voice rather than his pain, the cause of his loss of self and world. (35)

When Cecilia is able to call her friend Miriam Ortega, also in prison, she creates a new voice that exceeds the voice she lost in the torture scenario. Instead of associating the name of the comrade with an act of betrayal and self-betrayal, Cecilia’s phone call breaks the cycle of torture and creates a new zone of ethical engagement that overcomes pain by transforming the wounded body into a voice, a voice of hope and solidarity reproduced with the aid of an imaginary prosthetic device: the telephone. Only in retrospect, once Santiago explains that the telephone is a method of torture in the sequence following Cecilia’s confession, it is possible for the audience of The Pinochet Case to understand how Cecilia’s confession becomes a secret of survival. When Cecilia transforms the violence of the telephone into a tool for calling the name of her comrade, she inverts the fixed roles of the body and the voice as they are performed in the torture scenario. Rather than constituting itself as useful information and therefore as a form of betrayal, the verbal confession of the name of the other becomes an act of defiance against the conventional roles played by the torturer and the prisoner. This act questions the colossal discrepancy that exists between the body/pain of the prisoner and
voice/power of the torturer. Moreover, if we look at Cecilia’s act from another angle, from the technological perspective suggested by “the telephone,” the imaginary prosthetic device that she uses when calling her friend, it is interesting to note that her voice does not become “property of the regime” via tape-recording (Scarry 49). Rather, her voice challenges the technological conventions of torture as it favors an interactive technology (allowing for mutual human engagement) over an audio-reproduction technology that captures the voice in the emptiness of its repetitive sonority.

3.9 “Así que te vamos a venir a buscar en un rato más”: Terror as Political Fraud

Apart from exposing the play of signifiers that still occurs in the violent scenario of torture as it disseminates the meaning of “the telephone,” Santiago’s testimony also serves as an oral catalogue of the torture methods used by the agents of the Pinochet’s secret service. His testimony includes a detailed description of each of the physical and psychological abuses to which he was subjected while he was imprisoned in the Villa Grilmaudi torture center. The application of electricity to his fingers and penis as well and “karate lessons” which consisted of being hit in the spinal cord by two agents playing the roles of karate master/student are among the methods of physical torture Santiago describes. His description of each of the forms of torture becomes a crucial piece of evidence of the abuses suffered by the prisoners of Pinochet’s torture camps, especially when he gives an account of the pain caused by methods of torture such as the “dry submarine,” which consists of asphyxiating the victim by putting his head in a plastic bag. The importance of offering an account of this type of torture comes from the

13 For a description of torture methods used in Chile and other countries, please see Scarry’s The Body in Pain (26-59).
fact that methods like the “dry submarine” do not leave corporeal marks that would serve as evidence of the violence of the Pinochet regime, a regime which is known for trying at any cost to erase the evidence of its crimes against humanity.

Aside from bearing witness to the physical brutality of the Pinochet regime, Santiago also bears witness to the psychological abuses and forms of terror practiced by Pinochet’s secret service agents in order to intimidate the prisoners. When Santiago paraphrases the words of his torturers (“ya te venimos a buscar, hemos sabido algo de ti, así que te vamos a venir a buscar en un rato más” [we will come back for you, we know something about you, so we will come back for you soon]) and links it with time as it drags (“y eso hace que los minutos y los segundos se vuelvan horas y siglos, porque estás siempre esperando que nuevamente te van a llevar a la parrilla o a golpear” [and that transforms minutes and seconds into hours and centuries because you are always waiting for them to come back again to take you to the bed or to hit you]), the temporal distortion caused by terror reveals that the speech of the perpetrator has been interiorized by Santiago and perpetuates itself in the form of a future thread. Santiago and Gabriela, who also recalls the words of the torturer in her testimony, are still haunted by the speech of the torturers. Both witnesses may recall the words of their victimizers as a way to denounce and perhaps exorcise the psychological damage caused by interiorizing terror in a temporal duration that still affects them when they try to take it into account. This sort of verbal déjà vu, however, suffered by the torture survivors sharing their testimonies in The Pinochet Case expands Scarry’s distribution of the body and the voice way beyond the torture scenario: the loss of the voice experienced by the prisoner could become the persistence of the voice of the torturer in the words uttered by the torture survivor.
When Santiago shares his testimony in *The Pinochet Case*, Guzmán juxtaposes images of the interior ruins of Villa Grimaldi with images of Santiago in his apartment (as he reads and looks outside from his balcony) and with images of some of Santiago’s belongings (his slippers, his books, photographs of him with his daughter, his poster of Salvador Allende in the wall that is behind his bed, etcetera). The horror and brutality of what is narrated, somehow visible through the scars of the ruins of Villa Grimaldi, contrasts with the familiar ambiance of Santiago’s apartment. When Guzmán contrast the horror of torture narrated by Santiago with his domestic environment, the scene provokes an emotional tension created by three incompatible elements. First, terror becomes more terrible and difficult to exorcise since it seems to have penetrated the familiar ambiance of Santiago’s apartment. Second, the brutality of torture cannot be justified vis-à-vis the victim’s humanity as an agent of culture. Although the domestic setting of this sequence exposes the thread of torture that comes with the conversion of everyday objects into weapons (“the appropriation of the world into the torturer’s arsenal,” as Scarry suggests), the sequence itself does not conclude with the perversion of “the prisoner’s pain” “into the fraudulent assertion of power” (Scarry 49). As Scarry warns us, “the translation of all the objectified elements of pain into the insignia of power, the conversion of the enlarged map of human suffering into an emblem of the regime’s strength” (56) is always a fraud. So here comes the third element: even though terror seems to have invaded Santiago’s everyday life, Guzmán’s emphasis on Santiago’s cultural icons (evoking the times of Popular Unity) and intimate belongings in the visual track also express a sort of relief since these objects can be conceived of as emblems of recovery and survival. If Santiago’s belongings express the double status of cultural objects as they become documents of civilization and barbarism, they do so precisely by
also becoming documents that reveal the overcoming of barbarism. This doubling occurs in spite of the terror that still haunts material culture in postdictatorial Chile as a sort of political fraud.

3.10 “Una de las sensaciones que causa mayor desazón”: Witnessing as an (In)human Excess

Gladys’s testimony, the last of the second testimonial sequence of The Pinochet Case, resembles Santiago’s when her account also becomes a sort of catalogue of the methods of torture practiced by Pinochet’s officials.

In my case, I was a political leader and I was a woman. I think that these are two elements provoked their anger, so I had a very bad time. What they did to me, well, the bed, the hangings, immersions in dirty water, a karate fan broke my body, I still have a broken eardrum, I still feel pain in my ribs when it is too cold. Many drugs, they put me many drugs, because they thought that if I did not speak during torture, I would speak while being sedated, a lot of psychological torture, a lot. Now that I am making a sort of account of all the things I lived by, I feel that the effects of psychological torture remain for longer time. I was placed in a very narrow space. I was not able of stretching myself. I had to be with my knees stuck to my body. They never let me take a bath nor clean myself. They
did not let me … so many elemental things like seeing how I was going to solve menstruation. Therefore, I was a person subjected to torture for three months, night and day. I remember that I had an odor that I had to get accustomed to but the other prisoners said that I smelled like a kid (like a small goat) with all that blood glued to my body. In short, they push you into subhuman conditions. But I think that the uncertainty of what you are living, the objectification to which you are subjected, in which you become a package in their hands, I think that that is one of the most depressing sensations.

Apart from describing the physical and the psychological torture methods to which she was exposed, Gladys also refers to the use of drugs in Pinochet’s torture centers as a part of the interrogation method. Gladys also describes a series of physical privations that she suffered during the three months she was held in Villa Grimaldi. Among these privations, Gladys recalls that she was not allowed to take a bath or clean herself, so her odor during her menstrual period was so strong that even her comrades in prison rejected her. They somehow became complicit with the torturer’s idiom when they start calling her “chivo,” (kid, young goat). The animalization of the torture victim made by other prisoners added another element to the process of dehumanization suffered by Gladys while she was in the hands of the torturers. For Gladys, the sense of inhumanity leaves the most intense psychological wounds because the victim is reduced to a repulsive object in the hands of the perpetrators. When Gladys bears witness to this sense of inhumanity that affects the victim’s of sense of being human, her testimony coincides with the paradox of humanity as it is formulated by Agamben in his book Remnants of Auschwitz: “the one whose humanity is completely destroyed is the one who is truly human” (133). For Agamben, the witness is a remainder at the limits of the human.  

Even when Gladys has been reduced to a (sub)human condition, the fact that

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14 Agamben considers that “[t]he paradox here is that if the only one bearing witness to the human is the one whose humanity has been wholly destroyed, this means that the identity between human and inhuman is never perfect, that it is not truly possible to destroy the human, that something always remains. The witness is this remnant (Agamben 133-134).
she can bear witness to the destruction of her humanity, which she confesses in order to
denounce it, exposes the excess of the witness as she becomes a remnant in the very
limits of the human and the inhuman.

3.11 “Pero irte así al detalle, el como te metían la desto”: the Afterlifes of Torture in Language

If sharing their sufferings with Guzmán becomes possible for Gladys and
Santiago, it is because their witnessing emerges as an (in)human excess in spite of the
destruction of humanity to which both of them bear witness. When both witnesses offer
verbal testimonies cataloguing the methods of torture used during the Pinochet
dictatorship, language becomes the vehicle that serves to expose the witness as a
remainder that defies the inhumanity of the criminals. As has been observed by Feldman
and Laub in Testimony, however, “[w]hat the testimony does not offer is […] a completed
statement, a totalizable account of those events” (5). Instead, Feldman and Laub affirm
that “In the testimony, language is in process and in trial, it does not possess itself as a
conclusion, as the constatation of a verdict or the self-transparency of knowledge” (5). It
is precisely this impossibility of speaking about torture in a set of completed and detailed
statements accounting for the totality of the experience that becomes emphasized by
Cecilia, the second victim of torture who shares her story with Guzmán in the second
testimonial sequence of The Pinochet Case.

Cecilia begins by declaring that it is very difficult to speak about the methods of
tortures to which she was exposed.

Ahora, yo creo que es redíficil hablar de lo que a uno le han hecho. A pesar de
que ha pasado harto tiempo, cuesta. Uno habla de las generalidades—¡Me
tiraron! ¡Me acostaron en una cama de metal! ¡Me agarraron! ¡Me pusieron
electricidad!—pero irte así al detalle, el como te metían la desto en la vagina,
entre medio de los dedos, cuando tú pedías agua que no te daban, cuando, no
sé, querías ir a hacer tus necesidades y no te lo permitían, entonces, uno se va a la generalidad. Es difícil, muy difícil. No sé si eso significa que uno no tiene asumido totalmente lo que ha sido la tortura o porque no es … no sé.

Now, I think that it is very difficult to talk about what they have done to you. In spite of the fact that time has passed, it is difficult. One speaks about the generalities—They throw me! They put me in a metal bed! They took me and put me electricity!—but to go in detail, to explain how they put something ["la desto," literally, “the of this"] on your vagina, or in between your fingers, when you asked for water and they did not give it you a sip, when, I don’t know, you wanted to do your necessities and they did not let you do them, then, one goes into the generalities. It is difficult, very difficult. I do not know if that means that one has not yet assumed totally what torture has been or because it is not … I do not know.

This difficulty is expressed in her speech when she seems to substitute a noun designating a torture weapon with the word “desto,” a colloquial expression in Spanish that designates something for which we have not yet encountered a precise expression. “Desto” constitutes a mutation of the Spanish demonstrative pronoun “esto” (which in English correspond to the adjective pronoun “this”) when a speaker adds the Spanish preposition “de” (which in English corresponds to the preposition “of”). While “esto” designates something present or close by, “de” indicates a relation of correspondence between two nouns, be it one of possession, place, cause/effect, and part/whole. But “de” also connects a noun to its material content or to the energy it transmits. In Cecilia’s testimony, “desto” suggests the existence of “something” made of or transmitting “something.” In other words, both a noun and its content may have remained unexpressed in Cecilia’s testimony, which is therefore exposed to an imprecise meaning. “Desto” corresponds to the condensation of two nouns provoked by syntactic mutilation of the two. Cecilia seems to have substituted the two nouns with the preposition (“de”), which was supposed to connect both of them, as she has added it to an exemplary empty signifier (“esto”), a demonstrative pronoun that indicates the vanishing of the signified(s) omitted. If we follow Cecilia’s testimony, it could be possible to connect
“desto” to the Spanish expression “cable de electricidad” or “alambre de electricidad” (an expression made of two nouns connected by a preposition that can be translated into English as “electric wire”). It is possible to decipher the type of torture weapon that Cecilia designates as “la desto” because the context to which she refers when she alludes to “la desto” corresponds to the body parts in which electric wires were applied during torture sessions: sexual organs and fingers.

Another key serves to reconstruct the link that exists between “the electric wire” and “la desto,” but again language suffers another transformation. The feminine article “la” when she refers to “la desto” (“the ‘of this’”) may be referring to “la electricidad” (“the electricity”), instead of to “el cable” (the cable) or “el alambre” (the wire) “de electricidad” (of electricity). However, in Cecilia’s speech “desto” is a masculine noun, which would correspond to a masculine article and not a feminine one. This gender disagreement suggests that if language in testimony is in process and on trial, it is also exposed to trial and failure. Cecilia not only fails to express a precise nominal phrase to designate the weapon introduced into her vagina and between her fingers, she also fails to maintain the gender coordination in the syntax of the phrase indicating the existence of the weapon. In other words, the language of the witness, as Cecilia’s testimony reveals, is a process of trial and failure that operates by approaching its own limits.

Cecilia’s failure to designate the weapon may be a sign of the witness’s impulse to evade further danger. When Cecilia says “la desto” (“the of this”) instead of “el cable de electricidad” (electric wire) or whatever weapon to which she may have been referring, the failure of language, the imprecise meaning of the syntactic mutilation dramatized by gender disagreement may serve to exorcise the pain caused by torture. “La desto” mentioned by Cecilia manifests the paradoxes of memory in the Chilean
transition to democracy: while it attempts to cover up violence by transforming torture into the “respectful and almost painless” citation of traumatic memories (Richard, Cultural Residues 18), it ends up exposing what it tries to hide, the painful effects of torture as they persist in language. If “the symptom,” as defined by Lacan, is “the signifier of a signified repressed from the consciousness of the subject” (Ecrits 69), then what is most painful about the persistence of torture in language is that it produces a signifier way beyond the repression of the signified. Rather than designating a signified buried by the symbolic order, this signifier points to the Lacanian Real, or the extreme experience provoked by the collapse of signification. The fact that torture survivors fail to designate the weapon used against them manifests that torture has been so traumatic that it has challenged the human capacity to represent it in language. “La desto” in Cecilia’s testimony is therefore an ambivalent sign: as it expresses the evasion of pain it can also be conceived as an extreme symptom (perhaps beyond all semantic symptomatology), an agrammatical scar that reveals the afterlifes of torture in language. 15

15 It is interesting to note that Cecilia’s speech capacities differ dramatically at two points: as a prisoner she is able to perform a verbal “act of human contact” that restores the human voice and affirms the powers of prosthetic self-extension (this happens when she reveals the game of “the telephone” as a method of survival), but as a witness of torture, she is unable to verbalize the weapon that causes pain. Cecilia’s testimony shows that access to language “restores to each person tortured his or her voice,” but not when pain is objectified and diminished as Scarry would suggest, rather, when the source of pain is missing, which is precisely what makes language painful in the first place. Perhaps, it is by resisting the pain of missing the source of pain in language, that torture survivors can transform the torturer’s weapons of destruction (for example “the telephone”) into a channel for the transmission of a new voice. In that sense, it is possible to contend that instead of returning to an original voice (as Scarry’s argument perhaps suggests), torture survivors are only able to speak through a new voice once access to language is again possible.
3.12 “No sé si eso significa que uno no tiene asumido totalmente lo que ha sido la tortura o porque no es … no sé”:
Testimony as a Reasonable Act Expanding the Witnessing in the Very Limits of Reason and Knowledge

For Cecilia, it is easier to speak about the generalities than the details of being tortured. She establishes a distinction between the generalities and the details of this extreme experience, but the distinction she establishes is difficult to sustain. When we look at her fragmentary statements, both what she defines as “generalities” as well as what she identifies as “details” are part of a non-totalizable experience that escapes the speaking subject. In Cecilia’s testimony, the dissolution of the event into the generality of its occurrence does not reach an intelligible conclusion, it does not allow the constatation of a verdict nor does it achieve the self-transparency of knowledge. Rather, the impossibility of approaching torture in order to make it intelligible reaches its most intense expression when Cecilia, after confessing that probably her emphasis on the generalities of torture may mean that she has not yet assumed her sufferings totally, concludes her account by declaring: “I don’t know.” For Feldman and Laub, “the speaking subject” who bears witness to extreme violence “constantly bears witness to a truth that nonetheless continues to escape him” (15). Testimony should therefore be understood “not as a mode of statement of, but rather as a mode of access to, that truth” (16). “I don’t know,” a statement repeated four times in Cecilia’s testimony, is the mark that indicates the witness’s access to the truth of not knowing, to the lack of frames of reference that would make the experience of torture reducible to a form of knowledge. “I don’t know” may also refer to the survivor’s resistance to becoming an object of knowledge. To reduce the witness to an object of knowledge would itself constitute an act of epistemic violence that, by trying to reverse its effects, would reproduce the
violence that has removed the possibilities of knowing the traumatic event in the first place. The testimonial experience produces a truth, but not the truth that can be objectified and made to fit into a form of knowledge. Rather, testimony announces the advent of a truth that comes from not knowing, from never knowing exactly how to survive the witnessing of an event without witness. Testimony is therefore a reasonable act because it transforms the subject’s recognition of the limits of reason into a way of going beyond cognition and objective knowledge.

Instead of constituting a form of cognition, Feldman and Laub contend that testimony is a form of action that involves a process of change. Following this view, I would like to argue that historical change in Guzmán’s The Pinochet Case is achieved by a form of action that involves the verbal and visual deconstruction of traumatic events. Conceived as historical change, testimony in The Pinochet Case also involves the verbal and visual deconstruction of torture sites such as Villa Grimaldi. For Ofelia, the second witness in the second testimonial sequence of The Pinochet Case, “[…] la vida en la Villa Grimaldi era de por sí ya una tortura. Estábamos todo el día vendados” [Life in Villa Grimaldi was by itself a torture. We were blindfolded all day]. In this sequence, Guzmán presents Ofelia’s efforts to reconstitute a visual perspective of Villa Grimaldi with fragments of memories that have to overcome blindness in order to make visible what remained invisible to Chilean society and can only be guessed by the prisoners: the spatial configuration of Pinochet’s terror. By combining the visual information coming from a drawing made by Ofelia and comparing it with the visual information of a small maquette of Villa Grimaldi, Guzmán is able to deconstruct the

16 “The testimony is itself a form of action, a mode not merely of accounting for, but of going through, a change: as opposed to a confession, the meaning of the testimony is not completely known, even by its author, before and after its production, outside the very process of its articulation […]. Historical change cannot fully come into cognition but testifies to its own process of occurring” (163).
spatial configuration of the torture camp. The scene shows the potential of audiovisual media to expand “the capacity for witnessing” (Feldman and Laub 206). But the expanded witnessing of the space of Villa Grimaldi achieved by the filmmaker and the witness through the use of audiovisual media does not come into cognition as an object of knowledge, it is rather the performance of a historical change that makes possible the “retroactive return of witnessing to the witnessless historical primal scene” (Feldman and Laub 258). Although Ofelia does not return to the ruins of Villa Grimaldi, her collaboration with Guzmán’s cinematic deconstruction of the torture camp becomes a process of recovery. The spatial deconstruction of the torture camp allows the survivor to create the conditions for the development of a visual perspective that has been annihilated in the primal scene of torture.

Throughout the second testimonial sequence, Guzmán combines exterior and interior images of Villa Grimaldi and other prison facilities with images of the four torture survivors as they share their testimonies. Guzmán evokes the image of the cells in the visual track in order to enhance the play of temporalities unfolded by the speech of the witnesses. This play of temporalities is exposed in the game of “the telephone” described by Cecilia and in the interview with Santiago, where the images of Villa Grimaldi create a contrast with the domestic environment of the witness’s apartment. In the case of Gladys, the images of Villa Grimaldi express the silence that the witness has to break in order to testify about the horrors of torture. Finally, in the sequence in which Ofelia offers a verbal and visual account of the torture camp, Guzmán juxtaposes Ofelia’s drawings with images of Villa Grimaldi in order to deconstruct the spatial configuration of Pinochet’s terror. The fragmented visions of the torture camp that appear throughout the second testimonial sequence illustrate the ruins of terror in the
imagination of each of the witnesses. In other words, Guzmán’s use of the images of Villa Grimaldi in the second testimonial sequence not only creates a feeling of terror but also serves to expose the ruins of Pinochet’s crimes.

Later in the film, Guzmán exposes the gaze of one of the social actors who has gained access to Villa Grimaldi. In The Pinochet Case, Guzmán’s camera meets the gaze of Judge Guzmán, the judge who investigates the crimes of Pinochet in Chile. The judge is the one who visits the ruins of Villa Grimaldi in Guzmán’s film. Therefore, the imaginary and fragmented visions of the terror of Villa Grimaldi that Guzmán documents with his camera when he interviews each of the torture survivors are part of the juridical gaze of judge Guzmán, who tries to collect visible evidence in order to account for the terror of the Pinochet regime. The play of signifiers that regulates Guzmán’s connection to judge Guzmán, since both the filmmaker and the judge share the same last name, expresses the dual role of the gaze that gets public access to the ruins of Villa Grimaldi: it is both the gaze of the judge as he participates in the cinematic representation of the visible evidence collected and the gaze of the filmmaker as he participates in the achievement of justice. While the images of Villa Grimaldi in the second testimonial sequence illustrate the terror haunting torture survivors, the gaze that gains access to the torture camp creates a more unified vision of the ruins of terror that allow spectators to give a new value to the visual information of Villa Grimaldi: behind the images of terror, there lies hope for the arrival of justice.

The juxtaposition of audiovisual images from different sources is an effective cinematic tool for approaching the complexity of testimony as an expansion of witnessing. But the most important achievement of Guzmán’s film seems to be the creation of a public forum that receives the stories of the victims and provides them with
the possibility of finding an address. The two testimonial sequences of *The Pinochet Case* function to present the poles of pain and relief that constitutes the experience of testimony. By including the testimonies of the victims of the Pinochet regime, Guzmán’s film reproduces the sense of hospitality expressed by the Spanish court system when it began to receive the victims’s declarations during the preparatory stage of the case against Pinochet. Both Carlos Castresana and Joan Garcés, two of the Spanish attorneys involved in the Pinochet affair, insist on the importance of the Spanish court’s receptive welcoming for the victim’s process of recovery. According to Castresana, the Spanish juridical procedure against Pinochet offered victims the opportunity to break the culture of silence imposed by the Chilean juridical system that refused to pay attention to their claims. Guzmán provokes a similar effect when his film provides a space to break the silence of a local system of injustice that operates by silencing the victims of state violence. Castresana argues that the Spanish juridical system provided an open tribunal with the capacity to listen and to protect the victims. In light of Castresana’s account, Guzmán’s film can also be conceived as an open tribunal that invites victims to share their stories of survival. For Joan Garcés, the receptivity of the Spanish tribunal to the testimonies of the victims of the Pinochet regime constitutes a form of moral compensation. Conceived along the lines of Garcés’s characterization of the Spanish tribunal, Guzmán’s film seems to function as an analogous forum that expresses the moral compensation received by the victims once they have been able to share their stories in a public forum.
3.13 Solidarity as Professional Knowledge and Ideological Commitment

Sharing stories of victimization and suffering is one of the integral aspects of the New International. After analyzing the structure of testimonial address in *The Pinochet Case*, I would like to discuss the representation of other members of the New International: the professionals who have been responsible for listening to and codifying the testimonies of the victims in order to transform their suffering into evidence leading to the prosecution of state sponsored criminals. *The Pinochet Case* presents a coherent view of the technical support offered by professionals in at least two areas: law and forensic medicine. These professionals establish a network of solidarity with the victims. Their role in *The Pinochet Case* is very complex because their professional duty and responsibility is inseparable from the political and moral vindications that the New International pursues in the name of justice. Guzmán’s representation of the legal community constituted around the Pinochet affair coincides with Roht-Arraiza’s characterization of lawyers as transnational actors (*The Pinochet Effect* 213). In relation to the legal community constituted around the Pinochet affair, Roht-Arraiza argues that it is precisely the tension created by their dual role as advocates and experts that “made the lawyers such a potent force” (214).¹⁷ In various interviews with Spanish, English and Chilean attorneys who intervened in the preparation of the legal case against Pinochet,

¹⁷ Roht Arraiza suggests that: “Public interest lawyers, especially, share both an ideological commitment and a set of professional knowledge and norms. The former made the lawyers an integral part of the transnational advocacy groups. The latter, however, made them operate more like an epistemic community, whose power derives from specialized knowledge common to the community’s members. […] Moreover, the two roles—advocate and expert—were often in tension, as lawyers struggled with how closely to identify with their clients and how far to push the envelope of existing law. It was the combination of the attributes of a network participant, with its focus on information provision and mobilization of pressure, and of an epistemic community member, with its claim to specialized, dispassionate knowledge (of international law, in this case) that made the lawyers such a potent force” (213-214).
Guzmán reconstructs the history of all the professional efforts made to prosecute the ex-dictator.

The cinematic construction of legal discourse in *The Pinochet Case* involves the explanation of juridical figures in a narrative frame that exposes the historical context in which both the crimes against humanity and the claims for justice provoked by these crimes emerged. For example, Chilean attorney Roberto Garretón explains how the Pinochet regime produced the phenomenon of forced disappearance. After a victim was captured by agents with false identifications and was forced to disappear, lawyers presented a *habeas corpus* that would be rejected by Pinochet’s Ministry of Interior with the argument that the detention of the missing citizen never took place. When lawyers asked about the possibility of finding the victim convicted in Villa Grimaldi, the dictatorship’s officials would deny the existence of the torture camp. When lawyers submitted to the consideration of the government the name of a witness who would confirm the existence of the disappeared, the existence of the witness was denied or the witness was executed. Finally, when the evidence was irrefutable, Pinochet’s officials would deny the existence of the disappeared citizen. According to Garretón, the phenomenon of forced disappearance persisted in keeping an official lie that obstructed justice. Later in the film, in his interview with Guzmán, Spanish attorney Castresana argues that the first to put in practice forced disappeared was the Nazi regime. Castresana supplements the map of local abuses in Chile by pointing to Nazi Germany, the international regime of terror from which the figure of the disappeared was later adopted by Pinochet.

The organization of an archive is fundamental to the projections of justice of those who are part of the New International. As Guzmán’s film confirms, the network of
solidarity in favor of the victims of the Pinochet regime began with the efforts of the
Vicaría de la Solidaridad, a Catholic human rights organization that assumed the
responsibility of creating an archive which collected all the information necessary to
account for the disappearance of Chileans during the dictatorship. In an interview with
Guzmán, the official in charge of the archive explains the contents of the file created
each time a disappearance was reported. This file included the following documents: a
photograph of the victim, his or her birth certificate, official declarations of witnesses
(constantly made by other prisoners who can confirm that they saw the missing person
alive), and an appeal submitted by family members which would end in a lawsuit that
would never be processed in the dictatorship’s system of justice. Throughout this
sequence, the camera illustrates the documents contained in the file described by the
person in charge of the archive of the disappeared. In a series of close ups to the file
cabinets, the camera also emphasizes the massive amount of files collected by the
Vicaría de la Solidaridad as if trying to illustrate the magnitude of state terror. By making
visible the magnitude of the evidence collected against state criminals, Guzmán
emphasizes on the efforts of those who had to confront the official system of erasure
that affected the victims and their possibility of achieving future justice.

3.14 “Cada cuerpo que se encuentre implica una cercanía hacia la paz social”: Reconciliation as Objectivist Naiveté

While Guzmán represents legal discourse by making visible the documents
collected for many years in the Vicaría archive (which consists mostly of legal
documents and some photographs), he also includes in The Pinochet Case another set
of documents, whose power to represent state violence does no longer depend on the
letter: bones and corpses. Let us analyze the role of forensic discourse in The Pinochet
Case. According to Judge Guzmán, “Cada cuerpo que se encuentre implica una cercanía hacia la paz social” [Each body that we find means that we are getting closer to social peace]. Judge Guzmán’s statement expresses the tendency to link dead bodies with political transformation as Katherine Verdery describes it in her book *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies*. Verdery, who discusses the politics of dead bodies in the context of postsocialist Europe, claims that:

[Dead bodies] help us to see political transformation as something more than a technical process—of introducing democratic procedures and methods of electroneering, of forming political parties and nongovernmental organizations, and so on. The “something more” includes meanings, feelings, the sacred, ideas of morality, the nonrational—all ingredients of “legitimacy” or “regime consolidation” (that dry phase), yet far broader than what analyses employing those terms usually provide. (Verdery 25)

For Verdery, the manipulation of dead bodies involves a resacralization of politics that exceeds technical procedures. In Guzmán’s *The Pinochet Case*, however, it is precisely the technical manipulation of the dead bodies what allows them to become not only useful sources of evidence against but also tools for the achievement of social peace. The discourse of forensic pathology provides the concrete evidence of the crimes described by the legal discourse. The visual display of the methods of forensic pathology in *The Pinochet Case* is divided into two spaces: mass grave sites (where corpses are discovered) and the laboratory (where bones are processed).

Guzmán directly represents mass graves in the first sequence of the film when he visits a site in Northern Chile along with Judge Guzmán, a group of forensic pathologists and family members of the disappeared. During this sequence, Guzmán shows how living bodies serve to determine the position of dead bodies in the mass grave. He juxtaposes Dr. Patricia Hernández’s explanation of the discovery of two corpses with an image of two living bodies representing them. The frontiers of life and
death become tenuous when two living bodies represent dead corpses. Instead of performing a solemn ritual, these two living bodies erase the frontiers of life and death only for technically describing the location of the corpses at the moment of their discovery. While mass graves sites provide an exterior scenario for the representation of death, the laboratory serves as an interior scenario displaying the technical procedure of forensic pathology. By selecting and classifying bones, forensic pathologist Patricia Hernandez reconstructs the corpse of a young male victim who disappeared during Pinochet’s dictatorship.

When Guzmán represents the methods of forensic pathology, his film runs the risk of becoming a mere piece of legal evidence and an objective scientific inscription, which is precisely the way Brian Winston conceives of documentary film: a discourse constituted by the combination of legal and scientific methods. The epistemic pedigree of documentary film seems to provoke a power-knowledge domino effect: “the innocent arrogance of the objective fact” (Winston 259). Is Guzmán backing up his argument in favor of plural rationalities with “the innocent arrogance of the objective fact”? “The innocent arrogance of the objective fact,” an expression used by Winston at the end of his book Claiming the Real, resembles Husserl’s characterization of the crisis of reason provoked by objectivist naiveté. For Husserl, it is necessary to “unmask the naiveté of that rationalism which is taken for philosophical rationality as such” (qtd. in Rogues 127). He explains that “In this naiveté, then, unavoidable as a beginning stage, are caught all

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18 Winston argues that: “the legal tradition casts the documentarian as witness to the original scene (and, even more overtly, the interviewee as witness to data unfilmed and unfilmable). […] But science casts the documentary film audience as jurors of film as evidence. Documentary mimesis is grounded in assumptions about the nature of evidence that come from using the camera as a scientific instrument. The law thus interposes itself to offer a cultural context in which this audience as jury can operate; but the camera’s scientific status is the bedrock upon which documentary’s truth claim must rest or collapse” (Claiming the Real 142).
the sciences” and concludes that “the most general title for this naiveté is objectivism, taking the form of the various types of naturalism” (qtd. in Rogues 127). I would like to argue that, in The Pinochet Case, Guzmán pushes reason to its limits in order to dismantle the objectivist naiveté of both forensic pathology and documentary film itself.

Before discussing how Guzmán’s The Pinochet Case is a documentary film that dismantles the very objectivist naiveté it exposes, it is important to look at the way in which the objectivist naiveté of forensic pathology has affected the achievement of justice in Chile. In order to consider this point, I would like to refer briefly to Husserl. In the 1930s, Husserl declared that the failure of rational culture was part of an ongoing crisis affecting reason: “[t]he reason for the failure … of a rational culture … lies not in the essence of rationalism itself but solely in its being rendered superficial … in its entanglement in … ‘naturalism’ and ‘objectivism’” (qtd. in Rogues 130). Although Husserl is referring to the Crisis of European Enlightenment in the 1930s, the reason he offers to explain the failure of rational culture in Europe may allow us to understand how the naturalization of forensic objectivity may itself explain the failure of the political rationality that characterizes the Chilean transition to democracy. Husserl’s diagnosis of the crisis of rational culture could be helpful for us if we transpose it into the terms Brett Levinson uses to conceive of the separation of truth and justice in the Chilean transition to democracy.

According to Brett Levinson, the discovery of human skulls in Lonquén, Chile in 1978 marks the point at which the state-sponsored terror of Latin American dictatorships is finally exposed to the public (“Pos-transición” 49). Levinson suggests that the public exposure of state terror generated a set of political practices against the dictatorship. Those denouncing state terror “viewed” the truth of the information provided “as a
narrative that would appear in a certain type of judicial process” leading to “the prosecution and incarceration of military criminals” (49). In Levinson’s account, however, the post-1989 impunity imposed upon the negotiated transition to democracy suspended the possibility of linking truth to legal justice in Chile. More information about Pinochet’s violent regime circulated, but the impunity “eliminated any possible connection between truth and legal justice” (50). If we follow Levinson, we could argue that the forensic information produced by the 1991 “Truth and Reconciliation Commission,” and the “Rettig Report” may have contributed to the presentation of truth as a natural and objective fact compensating for the lack of juridical prosecutions against state sponsored criminals. For Levinson, the fact that truth had no legal value “may be the reason” that explains why military regimes of the Southern Cone allow “this truth … to appear” (50). In the Latin American transitions to democracy, “the innocence arrogance of the objective fact” becomes a simulation of justice that ends up feeding the not-so-innocent impunity of arrogant state-sponsored criminals. The reason for the failure of the political rationality that characterizes the Chilean transition to democracy lies in the fact that it first naturalizes terror by confusing its truth with the objectivist naiveté of forensic pathology and then it passes for justice the truth that naturally and objectively, in other words, naively, exposes terror to the public eye.

3.15 “No he visto nada”: Dismantling the Objectivist Naiveté of Forensic Pathology and Documentary Film

It is true that the opening sequence of The Pinochet Case presents a forensic investigation whose truth seems to be part of a legal process. Although Guzmán documents the transformation of forensic knowledge into legal evidence, the impact of the scene lies elsewhere, not in the renewed link of truth and justice, but in the way in
which family members deal with the perpetual disappearance of their loved ones. In this first sequence, Guzmán represents the frustration of a mother looking for the last signs of her disappeared son. She comes back from the mass grave site with empty hands without having seen anything. After showing a photograph of her son, the mother declares her frustration because she will not be able to see him again.

Bueno, a lo mejor me va a quedar la duda, porque no lo he visto, pero también siento su presencia. Y la verdad siento mucha rabia, mucha pena, porque este era mi hijo cuando lo vi yo por última vez. Y ya, ahora, he visto, no he visto nada. Yo creo que ni siquiera voy a ver nada. Solamente va a quedar el recuerdo que vine, y que a lo mejor aquí quedo mi hijo.

Well, perhaps I will always have doubts because I have not seen him, but I also feel his presence. And truly, I am angry, I am very sad, because this was my son the last time I saw him. And I have seen, I have come to see nothing, I think that probably I will see less than nothing. Only the memory of my son as I had it when I came will remain and perhaps the chance that my son rests here.

Rather than completing the process of mourning in an act of closure that would allow this mother to achieve some sort of reconciliation with the memory of her missing son, the trip to Northern Chile opens a wound in the mother’s remembrance of her son. She feels sorry because her own memories of her son will always be haunted by the uncertainty of her son’s destiny, a destiny marked by his invisibility.

When the mother demands that her son be visible to forensic pathology, it is clear that only the naive objectivism of science can satisfy her demand. However, since forensic pathology cannot satisfy her demand for a naive and objective proof of her son’s final destiny, she feels frustrated. If we compare this mother’s sense of frustration with judge Guzmán’s perspective (for whom Chileans get closer to social peace each time a body is found by forensic pathologists), then, it is clear that there will remain gaps in the process of social reconciliation proposed by the transition to democracy, gaps generated by “the invisible visibility of the visible, the condition of visibility that is itself invisible and
unconditional” (Rogues 137). Since the condition of visibility claimed by the mother cannot be satisfied by forensic pathology, her son comes to be part of the unconditional invisibility that conditions what is made visible during this sequence: the limits of social peace. It seems that the conditions of visibility in the Chilean transition to democracy cannot satisfy the unconditional demand of the disappeared.

This means that, from the very beginning of the The Pinochet Case, the invisibility of the disappeared haunts the objective discourse exposed in the film. It is not by means of projecting the “totality of truths” in a teleological horizon, as Husserl’s account may suggest, that Guzmán dismantles the objectivist naiveté of forensic pathology and documentary film. Rather, it is by being attentive to the conditions of visibility as they become affected by an invisible unconditionality, that Guzmán dismantles not only the objective naiveté of forensic pathology and documentary film, but also the calculated conditions of forgiveness imposed by the political rationality of the Chilean transition to democracy. For Derrida, “Only the dead man could legitimately consider forgiveness” (On Forgiveness” 44). Guzmán’s attention to the invisibility of the disappeared at the beginning of the film may provide the key to read his film along the lines of what Derrida has conceived of as the unconditional secret of forgiveness.

3.16 “Forgiveness is thus mad”: the Multitude and the Sound of the Big Ben

In his essay “On Forgiveness,” Derrida argues that “forgiveness is often confounded, sometimes in a calculated fashion, with related themes: excuse, regret, regret, regret.”

Derrida adds that: “[t]he survivor is not ready to substitute herself, abusively, for the dead. The immense and painful experience of the survivor: who would have the right to forgive in the name of the disappeared victims? They are always absent, in a certain way. The disappeared, in essence, are themselves never absolutely present, at the moment when forgiveness is asked for, the same as they were at the moment of the crime, and they are sometimes absent in body, often dead” (“On Forgiveness” 44).
amnesty, prescription, etc.; so many significations of which certain come under law, a penal law from which forgiveness must in principle remain heterogeneous" ("On Forgiveness" 27). For Derrida, “there is always a strategical or political calculation in the generous gesture of one who offers reconciliation or amnesty, and it is necessary always to integrate this calculation in our analysis” (40). If we want to understand how political calculation works in the Chilean transition to democracy we have to integrate the naive objectivism of forensic pathology into our own analysis of the reconciliation process. If we want to understand how this process of reconciliation fails as a political calculation in the Chilean transition to democracy, however, we have take into account forensic pathology’s failure to naively objectify the return of the disappeared. When the disappeared desist from coming back as an objective fact in Guzmán’s The Pinochet Case, it is clear that reconciliation, as exposed by Judge Guzmán (for whom the truth of the corpse, while it is now connected to justice, still appears in the service of the transitional politics of reconciliation) is impossible. It is precisely by dismantling the official fantasy of reconciliation that Guzmán opens his film to the secret question of forgiveness.

Following Derrida, I would like to argue that if Guzmán’s The Pinochet Case exposes us to the question of forgiveness, such a question can only be posed once reconciliation has failed as a rational calculation of the state. Or, to quote Derrida’s words again: “Must we not accept that, in heart and in reason, above all when it is a question of ‘forgiveness,’ something arrives which exceeds all institution, all power, all juridico-political authority?” (40). Even if we accept that “Only the dead man could legitimately consider forgiveness,” in Guzmán’s The Pinochet Case the question of forgiveness is not posed by the dead man. It is rather posed by the silent multitude that
appears at various moments in the film and that I think is the very embodiment of The New International.

While reconciliation constitutes the hegemonic horizon that sustains the raison d’État of the Chilean transition to democracy and is state rationality that wants to pass itself as general intellect, in Guzmán’s representation of the New International the notion of general intellect is dismantled in the name of a dual politics of solidarity and forgiveness. The New International’s sense of solidarity is made out of plural rationalities tied by the unconditional critique of sovereignty: deconstruction, perhaps. The collective embodiment of the New International’s sense of solidarity appears at various moments in the film, when Guzmán presents a silent multitude looking at the camera in a single shot. In an interview with Patricia Aufderheide, Guzmán explains:

I wanted the film to have a quiet, clear, calm tone. For this reason, I also employed the use of silence. I wanted the spectator to listen to silence. The camera searches, at the beginning and the end of the film, the faces of the those who testified in absolute silence. It is an informationally rich moment; when people don't talk, that's when the most is said. I also chose an editing style that is very unobtrusive, never flashy, never showing off. (Aufderheide, ”The importance of historical memory” 24)

Sometimes, this multitude fills the space of a hall, an interior space that seems to receive each of its members. At other moments, Guzmán films the multitude in an exterior space. Guzmán does not establish any other link among the members of the collective apart from that fact that each of them contributes with their presence to the constitution of the multitude. When Guzmán explores with his camera some of the faces in the multitude, however, we the film-viewers, can recognize that some of those faces belong to the witnesses who have shared with Guzmán their stories of suffering and hope. It is through identifying, face after face, a common story of suffering, survival and
hope in justice, that Guzmán reveals the link of affinity that exists as a public secret among these plural rationalities.

However, the secret link of affinity made public by these plural rationalities also corresponds to the madness of forgiveness. In order to be unconditional, forgiveness must remain a secret. The secrecy that constitutes the image of the multitude in *The Pinochet Case* is achieved through silence. The most eloquent silence of the multitude comes after the scene presenting Minister Jack Straw’s decision to send Pinochet back to Chile without trial. The multitude is placed in front of the Big Ben, the famous clock in the building of the British Parliament that became a symbol of liberty during World War II. Guzmán mixes the silence of the multitude with the sound of Big Ben in the background. Rather than corresponding to “a scene of confession in progress” ("On Forgiveness" 31), the sound of Big Ben represents the time of the silent multitude, which itself is heterogeneous to the “Abrahamic” “globalization of forgiveness” of self-repentent nation states. *It is time* … to question the obstruction of justice orchestrated by Chilean and British diplomacy. *It is time* … to question the hypocrisy of states in regards to international law, human rights and crimes against humanity. *It is time* … to forgive the unforgivable. *It is time* … for “democracy to come.”

We can imagine, and accept, that someone would never forgive, even after a process of acquittal or amnesty. The secret of this experience remains. It must remain intact, inaccessible to law, to politics, even to morals: absolute. But I

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20 “For, if a pure forgiveness cannot, if it must not present itself as such, and thus exhibit itself in consciousness without at the same time denying itself, betraying or reaffirming a sovereignty, then how to know what is an act of forgiveness, it it never takes place, and who forgives whom, or what from whom? For, on the other hand, if it is necessary, as we just said, that the two sides must agree on the nature of the fault, must know consciously who is guilty of which evil toward whom, etc., and if the thing remains very improbable, the contrary is also true. At the same time, it is necessary in effect that alterity, non-identification, even incomprehension, remain irreducible. Forgiveness is thus mad. It must plunge, but lucidly, into the night of the unintelligible. Call this the unconscious or the non-conscious if you want. As soon as the victim 'understands' the criminal, as soon as she exchanges, speaks, agrees with him, the scene of reconciliation has commenced, and with it this ordinary forgiveness which is anything but forgiveness” (Derrida "On Forgiveness" 49).
would make this trans-political principle a political principle, a political rule or position taking: it is necessary also in politics to respect the secret, that which exceeds the political or that which is no longer in the juridical domain. This is what I would call the “democracy to come.” (Derrida, “On Forgiveness” 54-55)

In order to conclude, I would like to argue that, after Pinochet’s liberation from British custody, the silent multitude in Guzmán’s The Pinochet Case is waiting for “democracy to come.” Following Derrida, I think that in Guzmán’s film “time is out of joint.” Time sounds like a monumental parliamentary clock (Big Ben) but it exposes the silent multitude to an incalculable and unforeseeable event: the arrival of that unconditional madness of forgiveness as it secretly crosses the public and unconditional plurality of reason.
4. “Mirar el mar y ser feliz”: Toward an Interpretation of Happiness in Patricio Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe

“Una victoria para la humanidad” (“A victory for humanity”) (Exorcising Terror 104) is how Ariel Dorfman described the decision taken by the Lords on March 24, 1999 which affirmed that “Pinochet could be extradited–but only for human rights crimes committed after Britain signed the U.N. Convention against Torture in September 1988” (Kornbluh 469). On March 25, 1999, Página 12, an Argentinean newspaper, published an interview with Patricio Guzmán in which he offered his impressions on this new episode of the Pinochet affair. For Guzmán, the Lords decision constituted the most desirable scenario because, even if it was an ambiguous decision, it would allow Chileans to discuss the case against Pinochet while the exdictator remained in London.

In the interview for Página 12, Guzmán declares:

Me gusta la idea de estar lejos del centro de los acontecimientos … Me parece que este escenario es el mejor de los que se podían desear … Porque, mientras sirva para mantener preso a Pinochet en Londres, tal vez la ambigüedad del fallo permita discutir mejor el tema en Chile. (n. pag.)

I like the idea of being far-off the events … I think this is the best scenario … because, while it serves to keep Pinochet arrested in London, perhaps the ambiguity of the decision would allow us to discuss the topic in Chile.

1 In “Criminal Responsibility in the UK for International Crimes Beyond Pinochet,” Clare Montgomery discusses the consequences of Pinochet No 3, the decision taken by the Appellate Committee of the UK House of Lords on 24 March, 1999, in connection with the development of international law in the British system of justice (Montgomery 271-282).
4.1 “Hacerlos convivir en un mismo espacio con la cámara”: The Challenges of Reconciliation

In this interview, Guzmán shared his creative vision about the two documentaries he was working on: The Pinochet Case and Island of Robinson Crusoe. In the same interview, Guzmán shares his visions about his documentary Island of Robinson Crusoe:

Tengo dos películas en marcha. Una es la del caso Pinochet. Pero la que debo terminar ahora no es política: se llama La isla de Robinson Crusoe, y es una filmación con una cámara digital que voy a realizar completamente solo, en una isla ubicada a unos 600 kilómetros de Valparaíso. Es una especie de diario de viaje, que va a formar parte de una colección llamada Voyages, por encargo del canal Arte. Voy a estar dos semanas en esta isla, que se transformó en un excéntrico lugar de vacaciones. Y ya me contaron que la habitan acérrimos pinochetistas, con lo que incluso en mi papel de Robinson Crusoe cinematográfico no me voy a poder aislár del tema. (n. pag.)

I am working on two films now. One is that of the Pinochet Case. But the one I have to finish now is not political: it is entitled Island of Robinson Crusoe, and it is a shooting with digital camera that I will do entirely on my own, in an island located 600 miles from Valparaiso. It is a sort of travelogue that will be part of a collection called Voyages, commissioned by the Art channel. I am going to spend two weeks in this island that became an eccentric vacation place. And I was already told that it is populated by hard-core Pinochetistas so I will not get to far from the topic [of the Pinochet Case] in my role as cinematographic Robinson Crusoe.

While Guzmán described Island of Robinson Crusoe as a “non-political” “travelogue,” he considered The Pinochet Case as a political documentary “about the new dimension of justice” and “the eventual creation of an international court.” Guzmán explains that The Pinochet Case:

Va a ser un documental sobre la nueva dimensión que la Justicia podría llegar a tener luego de esto. Y sobre la eventual creación de un tribunal internacional. Por eso decidimos separarnos desde un primer momento del aspecto periodístico. Es decir: a mí no me importa no estar en Londres hoy. Eso ya lo filmarán diez amigos, o cien agencias. Lo que nosotros vamos a tratar de hacer es una película que muestre cómo trabajó Garzón, el camino que recorrió hasta encontrar un dispositivo jurídico que le permitió paralizar a los lores. Un mecanismo tan perfecto que hubiera logrado el mismo objetivo tanto con el gobierno francés como con el suizo. (n. pag.)
It is going to be a documentary about the new dimension that justice could reach after all this. And about the future creation of an International Court. That is why we decided to separate ourselves from the journalist’s perspective since the beginning. In other words, I do not care if I am not in London today. Ten friends or hundreds of agencies will film the events. What we will try to do is a movie that will show how Garzón worked, the path he took until he found a juridical loophole to paralyze the Lords, a mechanism so perfect that it would achieved the same objective with the French or Swiss governments.

When Pérez asked Guzmán about the place of “Chilean reality” in The Pinochet Case, Guzmán commented that he was interested in rehearsing “a way of looking for reconciliation in Chile.” In the interview for Página 12, Guzmán explains:

Mi idea es ensayar una forma de buscar la reconciliación en Chile. Buscar, por ejemplo, conformar una especie de tribunal popular, que permita poner en un mismo estrado a un pinochetista y un allendista, por llamarlos de una manera. Hacerlos convivir en un mismo espacio con la cámara, a ver qué pasa. Porque me parece que en este asunto nos estamos quedando pegados a nuestras respectivas tragedias. A ver si me explico: yo no creo que los militares pidan perdón jamás, no está en su naturaleza. Eso quiere decir que todavía estamos a merced de ellos, incluso para no reconciliarnos jamás. (n. pag.)

My idea is to rehearse a form of looking for reconciliation in Chile. For example, I would try to create a sort of popular court that would allow us to put a Pinochetista and an Allendista in the same room, letting them live together in the same space with the camera. Because I think that on these matters we are getting stucked to our different tragedies. I do not believe that the military will ever ask for forgiveness, that is not in their nature. That means that we are still at their mercy, even to never achieve reconciliation.

He explained that he wanted to create a sort of popular court in which Allendistas and Pinochetistas would inhabit the same juridical and audiovisual space. Guzmán’s idea of reconciliation does not imply the neutralization of justice but rather its intensification. For him, audiovisual media could make possible the articulation of a popular court as a space that would make visible the challenges of reconciliation. For Guzmán, reconciliation in a popular court consists of “letting them (Pinochetistas and Allendistas) live together in the same space with the camera.” As the Pinochet affair is precisely the example of ethical act that Zizek offers—an intervention that opens new
social possibilities by reconfiguring “the reality principle” within a given society (Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism? 167)—Guzmán’s conception of an audiovisual reconciliation is a formal and aesthetic solution emerging in the documentary mode (a cinematic mode concerned with the articulation of reality) that already manifests the effects of the ethical act in the realm of audiovisual production. In other words, since the ethical act transforms the conditions of audiovisual production, the documentary mode has to transform its approach to that social reality which has reconfigured its very principles of production (“the reality principle”). How does the documentary mode approach the Real once the reality principle that constrains the experience of the Real is transformed?

Living together with the enemy (the coexistence of victims and torturers in the same space) is a historical challenge that Ariel Dorfman explores in Death and the Maiden. As a sort of self-critique that serves to historicize the conditions of possibility of his own work, Dorfman considers that the dramatic solution he offered to the conflict of the victim and the torturer in Death and the Maiden symptomatizes “the tragedy of my country and of so many precarious democracies worldwide … that we could not put the murderers and violators on trial … that our ambiguous freedom depended on coexisting with the dictator’s shadow … with his threats, with his oblivion of our memories” (Exorcising Terror 48). Even if the aesthetic solution rehearsed in Death and the Maiden becomes a symptom of the deceptive politics of the transition to democracy in Chile, Dorfman recognizes that the problem of reconciliation remains unsolved once the Pinochet affair creates a crisis of democratic consensus. For Dorfman, under the new circumstances marked by Pinochet’s arrest in London, the lack of reconciliation reproduces a contract of mutual fear between those who support Pinochet and those
who want to see him in jail. In *Exorcising Terror*, Dorfman faces the crisis of democratic consensus created by the Pinochet affair when he approaches the question about how to reach Pinochet’s supporters.

How to reach her, that woman who had celebrated each one of our sufferings during those seventeen years? That woman who had opened a bottle of champagne upon hearing of Allende’s death? […] How to enter into a dialogue with her and with that gigantic third of the Chilean population who, like her, conjured us up as the enemy that would, given the chance, once again steal her property, enslave and kill her, rape her daughters? How to overcome the blind hatred of that woman, her inability to feel the afflictions of others as if they were her own? How to make her listen to us now that her hero was jailed and she felt that her world and certainties were crumbling, if she is firmly convinced that only a return of authoritarianism and military rule will make us understand that they won this war and we lost? […] Though I have never even met that woman, she is afraid of me and I am terrified of her. (78)

While Dorfman fears the return of authoritarianism and military rule, Guzmán is more concerned about the possibility of leaving reconciliation in the hands of the military.

In the same interview published by *Página 12* the day after the House of Lords decision of March 24, 1999, Guzmán declares:

> yo no creo que los militares pidan perdón jamás, no está en su naturaleza. Eso quiere decir que todavía estamos a merced de ellos, incluso para no reconciliarnos jamás. (n. pag.)

I don’t believe that the military will ever ask for forgiveness, that is not in their nature. That means that we are still at their mercy, even to never achieve reconciliation.

Once the Pinochet affair opens a post-transitional path in Chile on the verge of the 21st Century, the historical problem of artists like Dorfman and Guzmán becomes this: how to approach the challenges of reconciliation without abandoning the struggle for justice?

The challenges of reconciliation involve the overcoming of fear and the restoration of social dialogue. However, the horizon of global justice opened by the Pinochet affair, a horizon imposed over Chile by the international community, dismantles
the Chilean parameters of reconciliation as a form of democratic consensus, based on
the objectified collection of truth at the expense of justice. Therefore, we have to ask:
under what conditions is it possible to overcome fear and restore a social dialogue once
justice becomes the non-negotiable horizon? Is it possible to live together with the
enemy and to share with him or her the judgment of history? Is it possible “to unblock the
remembrance of the past that pain and guilt encrypted in a sealed temporality” (Cultural
Residues 24)? In order to inaugurate a post-transitional period, it is important to
transform the politics of memory and move beyond the cycle of pain and guilt. As Nelly
Richard has observed in Cultural Residues,

> diverse interpretations of memory and history must be freed up and made
capable of assuming conflicting narratives; and starting from the multiple and
disconnected fractions of a contradictory temporality, new versions and rewritings
of what has happened that translate the event to unexplored networks of
historical intelligibility must be attempted. It’s not a matter, then, of turning one’s
gaze to the dictatorial past to engrave the contemplative image of what has been
suffered and resisted onto the present, in which that image becomes mythically
encrusted as memory, but instead a matter of opening up fissures in the blocks
of signification that history closes off as being past and finished, in order to break
up its unilateral truths using the folds and creases of critical questioning. (24)

Describing his plans for the making of Island of Robinson Crusoe in the same
interview for Página 12 after the Lords’s decision, Patricio Guzmán declared: “Voy a
estar dos semanas en esta isla, que se transformó en un excéntrico lugar de
vacaciones. Y ya me contaron que la habitan acérrimos pinochetistas, con lo que
incluso en mi papel de Robinson Crusoe cinematográfico no me voy a poder aislar del
tema.” [I will stay two weeks in this island, which was transformed into an eccentric place
for vacations. And I was told that the island is populated by hardcore Pinochetistas, so I
won’t be far-off from the topic (the Pinochet Case) in my role as a cinematographic
Robinson Crusoe]. Isn’t Patricio Guzmán moving beyond the cycle of pain and guilt
when he is about to re-elaborate the myth of Robinson Crusoe with the collaboration of a group of Pinochetistas?

I would like to argue that if The Pinochet Case explores the limits of social reconciliation as they have been articulated by the ideology of the Chilean democratic consensus, Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe offers an alternative vision of the process of reconciliation in which the traumatic past is approached “to read what was never written” in the enemy’s territory (Benjamin, “On the Mimetic Faculty” Reflections 336). Guzmán’s exploration of the Island of Robinson Crusoe reconstructs a sense of the past that overcomes trauma when it reveals “the still clandestine threads of many other artistic and cultural memories” (Richard, The Insubordination of Signs 2). As it approaches the challenges of reconciliation without dismissing the question of justice, Guzmán reconfigures his own politics of memory. In Chile, Obstinate Memory and The Pinochet Case, Guzmán uses the documentary mode to approach the events that shaped the history of his country (the 1973 military coup, Pinochet’s dictatorship, the transition to democracy in the 1990s and the Pinochet affair). In Island of Robinson Crusoe, he uses a non-fictional approach to investigate the allegorical restaging of Chilean history through his encounter with a fictional character.

Three questions will guide my analysis of Patricio Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe. First, how does this documentary becomes an allegorical projection of Chilean history? Second, how does the documentary manipulate the signs made available by the myth of Robinson Crusoe and its re-elaborations in order to pursue its allegorical operation, at times reproducing and at times subverting Crusoe’s fictional and critical genealogy? Finally, how does this film relate to the period of its own production (the
emergence of a post-transitional period in Chile made possible after Pinochet’s arrest in London)?

Island of Robinson Crusoe constitutes a spatio-temporal staging of reconciliation but not by representing the proceedings of a popular court, an aspect tenuously explored by Guzmán in The Pinochet Case. Rather, the documentary approaches the challenges of reconciliation by exploring the ideological paradigms of the Chilean present through the allegorical configuration of Robinson Crusoe and its fictive and critical reconstellations. Instead of reproducing the cycle of pain and guilt by confronting victims and perpetrators in a single camera shot, Guzmán projects the myth of Robinson Crusoe as an allegorical configuration that exposes Chilean society to the challenges of reconciling itself with its own past, even if that past has yet to be explored in the present for the first time. In that sense, although justice is not represented explicitly in the form of a popular court, Island of Robinson Crusoe constitutes itself as a process of reconciliation that approaches the challenges of justice by displaying this very process in a series of allegorical images.

4.2 “Without Pronouncing the Verdict”: Imperfect Cinema, Allegorical Dispersion, Powers of the False, and Regression

Since the historical problem that Guzmán faces consists of approaching the challenges of reconciliation while struggling for justice, his task involves showing the process of this problem. This task is precisely that of imperfect cinema, which, for García Espinosa, relates to the faculty of judgment: “to show the process of a problem … is to submit it to judgment without pronouncing the verdict” (García Espinoza 81). The capacity of imperfect cinema “to show the process of a problem” and “submit it to judgment without pronouncing the verdict,” is closer to allegorical dispersion than to
symbolic unity. That is why Guzmán’s *Island of Robinson Crusoe* could be studied as a model of imperfect cinema in the age of video documentaries, following Walter Benjamin’s “field of allegorical intuition” in which “the image is a fragment, a rune” (*The Origin of German Tragic Drama* 176) and “must constantly unfold in new and surprising ways” (183).

If imperfect cinema tends to allegorical dispersion (holding the verdict while showing “the process of a problem” submitted to judgment), then what imperfect cinema submits to judgment is the crisis of judgment that allegorical dispersion creates when it transforms its fragments “in new and surprising ways” over the course of “the process of a problem” shown on the screen. Therefore, the way in which imperfect cinema shows “the process of a problem” in all its allegorical complexity and the way in which it responds to the question of judgment by exploring the crises of judgment provoked by its own allegorical impulse relates to “the powers of the false.” These powers are one of the aspects of modern cinema explored by Deleuze through his concept of the “time-image.” As such, when Guzmán explores Robinson Crusoe as an allegory of Chilean society, the filmmaker, his allegorical model and the real characters participating in the documentary belong to a chain of forgers. From this perspective, the role of imperfect cinema becomes the unfolding of a genealogy that subverts the idea of pure origins. In *Island of Robinson Crusoe* the chain of forgers and the allegorical images unfold in a regressive path. The documentary is a non-linear regression projecting multiple points in the past that return to the Chilean present in the promising and deceptive appearance of phantasmagoria.

*Island of Robinson Crusoe*, a documentary modeled on the powers of the false and the allegorical dispersion that are characteristic of imperfect cinema, projects the
process of reconciliation as an open problem. Instead of achieving a point of ideological cohesion, *Island of Robinson Crusoe* unfolds the dissemination of social meaning created by the unsolved contradictions of Chilean history. By activating the powers of the false and displaying a series of allegorical images in a non-linear regressive path, Guzmán plays with the meaning of Robinson Crusoe in order to challenge the official projection of Chilean history that tends to apologize for Pinochet's dictatorship by celebrating free-market economy. It is precisely by exploring the political and the economic metamorphoses of Robinson Crusoe that Guzmán exposes the historical transformation that took place in Chile after the coup: the collapse of socialism and the triumph of neoliberalism. The conception of economic development as historical progress in Chile could relate to Benjamin's concept of progress as catastrophe: “the concept of progress must be grounded in the idea of catastrophe. That things are ‘status quo’ is the catastrophe” (*The Arcades Project* 473). When Guzmán explores the “status quo” of Chilean society through the myth of Robinson Crusoe, he is pointing to Chile as a site of historical catastrophe.

**4.3 The Structure of Guzmán’s *Island of Robinson Crusoe***

Guzmán's *Island of Robinson Crusoe* is a travelogue documentary divided in two parts: the first sequence shows Guzmán's wanderings in continental Chile (Santiago and Valparaiso) and the second sequence shows Guzmán's adventures on the Island of Robinson Crusoe. A brief interlude divides these two parts: the trip to the Island of Robinson Crusoe. In the first part of the documentary, Guzmán arrives in Chile from Europe with the purpose of finding a way to travel to the Island of Robinson Crusoe, an island in the Archipelago of Juan Fernández six hundred miles west from the coast.
Chile. Once Guzmán arrives in the city of Santiago, he visits the National Library of Chile and explores the Island of Robinson Crusoe through a series of maps. Due to bad weather conditions, the first flight to the island of Robinson Crusoe that Guzmán attempts to take is cancelled. Guzmán decides to take advantage of this first delay and goes from the airport back to the center of Santiago in order to look for traces of Robinson Crusoe in Chile. He visits Robinson Crusoe’s Street, a street leading to the market, a market not so far from Pablo Neruda’s house in Santiago. After visiting Neruda’s house and looking at the poet’s collected items, the film jumps to the next day when Guzmán is back in airport and the flight is once again cancelled. Looking for a ship to take him to the island, Guzmán drives to Valparaiso. Since he cannot find a ship available to travel from Valparaiso to the Archipelago of Juan Fernández, he takes advantage of this second delay and pays a visit to Valparaiso’s aquarium. From Guzmán’s voiceover narration we find out that this aquarium exhibits all the variety of living creatures that surround the waters of the Island of Robinson Crusoe. He spends the night in Valparaiso, where he goes to a bar and studies the crowd with his camera. Driving back to the city of Santiago the next day, Guzmán suffers a third delay provoked by a traffic jam. Again he takes his camera and studies the crowd like a cinematic flâneur. Back at the airport, Guzmán introduces us to those who will be traveling to the Island of Robinson Crusoe on the same plane. The first part of the documentary concludes when the airplane is finally able to depart.

A brief interlude, in which we see the filmmaker and his other companions traveling, first on an airplane and then on a ship, precedes Guzmán’s adventures on the Island of Robinson Crusoe. In the airplane, Guzmán explains the lives and wishes of his six travel companions while they are all asleep: Abigail, Juan Carlos, Doña Juana,
Francisco, Rodrigo and Alvaro. Abigail, a six-year-old girl, is coming back from Santiago with her father Juan Carlos after receiving medical attention. Guzmán explains that Juan Carlos is the only native on the plane and that he works at the Island’s electric plant. Doña Juana travels to visit her daughter Juanita and her grandchild Vicky. Guzmán explains that Juanita and Vicky recently moved to the island and Doña Juana’s reason for traveling to the island is that she wants to understand her daughter’s decision. Along with Doña Juana comes Francisco, Juanita’s boyfriend. Guzmán also introduces Rodrigo who is the public relations agent of the Island of Robinson Crusoe and who will be in charge of Guzmán’s schedule. Alvaro, introduced at the end of the sequence, is Guzmán’s assistant “who has received instructions not to fall asleep” just in case his help is needed by the filmmaker during the flight. After the airplane lands in Juan Fernandez, all the members of the cast embark on a ship. Here, Guzmán interviews a volcanologist who explains the geological origins of the Island of Robinson Crusoe. This brief interlude concludes when Guzmán and his travel companions arrive on the island. While his travel companions stay in the only town on the Island, San Juan Bautista, Guzmán spends the first night in El Pangal, a small hotel across from the town.

The second part of the documentary begins the next day, when Guzmán starts to explore the Island of Robinson Crusoe. Before leaving El Pangal, the filmmaker explores the landscape of that side of the island and imitates the footprint that Crusoe discovered in the sand. Then, Guzmán crosses the bay and once he arrives to San Juan Bautista, he visits Rodrigo’s office and Juanita’s house. After visiting the island’s only store with Juanita’s family and spending some time at the town’s school with Abigail and Vicky, Guzmán goes to the electric plant where Juan works and later at night he attends Rodrigo’s balónmano match. That night, Guzmán has dinner with Rodrigo and his
girlfriend, who talks about the living conditions on the island. The next day Guzmán visits Daniel Defoe’s library and meets Don Gregorio who is the town’s librarian. That same day Guzmán visits the cave of Robinson Crusoe, which he describes as the central scenario of his film. Back in San Juan Bautista, Guzmán interviews Juanita, who confesses that she has not yet read Defoe’s novel. The most surprising moment comes next when Guzmán discovers that his visit coincides with the entrance of the Chilean naval forces to the Island of Robinson Crusoe. Guzmán explores with his camera some of the gestures of the members of the Chilean naval forces as they use the only public telephone available on the island. Fernando Kerner, a resident of the island of Robinson Crusoe who is of German descent, arrives with the Chilean naval forces. Kerner shares with Guzmán the story behind his father’s arrival in Chile: the British attack against the Dresden, a German cruiser sunk under Chilean waters since the First World War. Kerner’s father was one of the German survivors of the Dresden who decided to stay in Chile. After interviewing Kerner, Guzmán explores the lives of two members of the Dresden: Wilhelm Canaris, who was the chief of Hitler’s secret service and who died in a concentration camp after conspiring against the Nazi regime, and Hugo Weber, who spend 13 years on the Island of Robinson Crusoe—most of the time completely alone—before being kicked out by other islanders under suspicion of being a Nazi spy. In the course of this exploration, Guzmán meets Reynold Green, a Scottish friend of Hugo Weber who is still alive and lives on the island. “Moved by curiosity”—as Guzmán explains—he decides to visit the ruins of Hugo Weber’s house where a pile of stones stand as the only remnants of the “German Crusoe.” Next, Guzmán meets Daniel, the “Indiana Jones” of the island, a tourist guide who takes Guzmán and the other real characters that appear in the documentary into a tour to Alexander Selkirk’s panoramic
viewpoint. The documentary ends when Daniel reveals the “historical” origin of Defoe’s story: the adventures of Alexander Selkirk, the Scottish mariner who was rescued by Captain Woodes Rogers from the Isla Más a Tierra in the Archipelago of Juan Fernández in 1711. According to the tradition, Selkirk’s story perhaps inspired Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe. After hearing Selkirk’s story, Guzmán concludes the documentary declaring:

Aquí termina mi viaje y mi lectura. Pensándolo bien, ahora comprendo un poco mejor al viejo Robinson y le doy la razón a este Robinson adulto que sabe mirar el mar y ser feliz.

My trip and my reading ends here. Thinking again, now I understand a little bit more the old Robinson and I agree with this adult Robinson who knows to look at the sea and be happy.

4.4 “Tal como lo hemos soñado antes de conocerlo”: Regression

Conceived in its regressive movement, Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe expands the transition from Defoe’s book to Crusoe’s island that Luis Buñuel accomplishes with a dissolve in the opening sequence of his film version of Robinson Crusoe (1952). The structure of both movies coincides with Freud’s idea of regression as “the transformation of thoughts into visual images” (Freud 463). In both movies, the image of the book represents “the structure of dream-thoughts,” while the image of the island represents the “the raw materials” of the dream (Freud 461). While Buñuel’s regressive movement to the island is closer to hallucination, Guzmán’s exploration of the island is closer to dreaming because it responds to the wish to sleep. When Guzmán travels from the continent to the island along with all the real characters that appear in the documentary, all the members of the cast are sleeping. The sequence which shows the transition from the continent to the island, from the first to the second part of
Guzmán’s travelogue, could be conceived of as an interlude which reveals the dream-like character of Guzmán’s wish-image: the Island of Robinson Crusoe becomes the stage of the dream. The island comes into full view as a dream-stage unfolding in Guzmán’s exploration of Robinson Crusoe (Guzmán’s wish-image) only as a result of the wish to sleep manifested by the members of the cast during the trip.

The regressive movement of Guzmán’s *Island of Robinson Crusoe* manifests the temporal and formal dimensions already considered by Freud in his definition of regression in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. ³ When Guzmán refers to the first time he read Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, he declares that he was 13 years old and completely unaware of the existence of the Island of Robinson Crusoe in Chile. Later in the documentary, once he enters into contact with the beautiful landscape of the island, Guzmán comments:

> Vuelvo a tener 13 años y siento la nostalgia del mundo tal como lo hemos soñado antes de conocerlo. Un mundo de pureza, quizás, como el grado cero de la civilización.

Again, I am 13 years old and I feel the nostalgia of the world like when we have dreamt it before coming to know it. A world of purity, perhaps, as the degree zero of civilization.

This episode could be understood as a condensed return to the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. First, Guzmán’s age coincides with the age of Emile when Rousseau encouraged his imaginary pupil to read his first book: *Robinson Crusoe*. ⁴ And

³ For Freud, there are three interrelated dimensions in the phenomenon of regression, such as there is “a threefold species of regression: (a) a topical one, in the sense of the scheme of the systems here expounded; (b) a temporal one, in so far as it is regression to older psychic formations; and (c) a formal one, when the primitive modes of expression and representation take place of the customary modes. These three forms of regression are, however, basically one, and in the majority of cases they coincide, for that which is older in point of time is at the same time formally primitive and, in the psychic topography, nearer to the perception end.” (Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* 464-465)

⁴ This is the passage in which Rousseau encourages the reading of Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*: “Since we must have books, there is one which, in my opinion, affords a complete treatise on natural education. This book shall be the first Emilius shall read: In this, indeed, will, for a long time, consist his whole library, and it
the image that Guzmán uses to evoke his return to the “degree zero of civilization” (a natural well) recalls Rousseau’s speculations in his “Essay on the Origin of Language,” when he imagines that southern languages emerged when humans experienced their first romantic encounters while collecting spring water. In that sense, Guzmán’s re-staging of Defoe’s classic is also a re-staging of a ghostly scene of reading: the filmmaker evokes the specter of Rousseau in order to become a new Emile returning to the natural well that marks the origin of southern languages.

By returning to Rousseau, Guzmán not only goes back in time but he also experiences the reality of the island with the tools of an “older psychic formation” (Freud 465): the nostalgia of an unknown world only available in dreams corresponds to Freud’s definition of temporal regression. Guzmán’s magic revival of his childhood (which is also a magic revival of Emile’s childhood and of Rousseau’s primal scene of language) points precisely to “a degree zero of civilization,” because for Freud this “childhood of the individual” always points to “the oldest and darkest phases of the beginnings of mankind” (Freud 465). For Freud, regression can give us “an insight … into the evolution of the human race” (465). In Guzmán’s documentary, this insight comes into view when it will always hold a distinguished place among others. It will afford us the text, to which all our conversations on the objects of natural science, will serve as a comment. [...] You ask impatiently, what is the title of this wonderful book? Is it Aristotle, Pliny, or Buffon? No. It is Robinson Crusoe” (Rousseau “A Treatise on Natural Education” 262).

5 In “Chapter 9: The Formation of the Southern Languages,” included in the “Essay on the Origin of Language: In Which Melody and Music Imitation are Treated,” Rousseau declares: “But in arid places, where water can be had only through wells, people simply had to unite to sink them, or at least to agree about their use. Such must have been the origin of societies and of languages in warm countries. [...] Imperceptibly water became more necessary, the livestock were thirsty more often; they arrived in haste and parted reluctantly. In this happy age when nothing marked the hours, nothing obliged them to be counted; time did not have any measure other than amusement and boredom. Beneath aged oaks, conquerors of years, an ardent youth gradually forgot its ferocity, gradually they tamed one another; through endeavoring to make themselves understood, they learned to explain themselves. There the first festivals took place, feet leaped with joy, eager gesture no longer sufficed, the voice accompanied it with passionate accents; mingled together, pleasure and desire made themselves felt at the same time. There, finally, was the true cradle of peoples, and from the pure crystal of the fountains came the first fires of love (Rousseau, “Essay on the Origin of Language” 314).
presents transitions from more advanced to less advanced means of transportation (airplane, ship, walking, horses) and from modern to archaic modes of construction and dwelling (from steel hangars to caves).

The regressive path of Island of Robinson Crusoe gives us access to archaic forms of expression that correspond to Freud’s definition of formal regression. Guzmán’s documentary opens with Defoe’s novel but only in order to go back into an archaic form of narration: storytelling. Guzmán’s voice-over narration in Island of Robinson Crusoe fits more into the model of storytelling than into the more complex narrative structure of the novel, even if the filmmaker jumps constantly from his oral fictionality to the fiction of literature in order to explore different fragments of Defoe’s novel. This quest towards storytelling could also be conceived of as a regression to an archaic mode of communication. It is important to remember that Guzmán’s interaction with the airport crew at the beginning of the documentary could be characterized as one of information exchange. In “The Storyteller,” Benjamin argues that the delivery of information has substituted storytelling as a means of human communication, which “brings about a crisis in the novel” (Illuminations 88). In that sense, it is possible to suggest that Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe moves backwards from the modern informational value of communication into storytelling, the pre-modern mode of communication performed by the tourist guide at the end of the documentary in order to put Defoe’s novel in crisis. In other words, what provokes the crisis of Defoe’s novel in Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe is not information, but rather storytelling. If Guzmán represents the crisis of the novel through storytelling, however, it is in order to reveal the crisis of storytelling itself: its reification in the form of a touristic adventure.
4.5 “None of my business”: Allegory

In contrast to Buñuel’s instant and linear regression from Defoe’s book to the Island of Robinson Crusoe, Guzmán’s regressive path to the island and to the fictive life of Robinson Crusoe is constantly deferred by other images that expose Defoe’s fiction in Chile as they appear in two new environments: the collection and the city. As a “cinematographic Robinson Crusoe” visiting the island of his precursor, Guzmán plays the different roles performed by the mythic hero in the island: the traveler, the explorer, the dreamer. Guzmán also performs the enemy’s ritual when he plays the role of the savage leaving a footprint on the sand. But as a “postmodern Crusoe” looking for the traces of Robinson Crusoe in the two Chilean cities of Santiago and Valparaiso, Guzmán suffers a surprising metamorphoses that links his adventure to the roles of two agents of modern life: he becomes the “flâneur” exploring “the transfiguration of things” in the phantasmagoric field of the “collector.”

Before reaching the primal landscape that inspired Defoe’s novel, Guzmán explores other images of Robinson Crusoe. The metamorphoses of Robinson Crusoe’s image (the island, the character and the book) appear in the first sequence of Guzmán’s documentary as it is displayed in various collections: a map, a street sign, a postcard, an aquarium, a series of drawings and the book form itself with its multiple translations of the classic. These dispersed fragments of reality that respond to the name of Robinson reveal the allegorical character of Crusoe’s image in Chile: an image that unfolds “in new and surprising ways” (Benjamin, The Origin of German Tragic Drama 183). Let me refer to Benjamin’s notion of allegory in order to approach the question about the relation between Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe and Pinochet’s arrest in London. According to Benjamin, “allegories become dated, because it is part of their nature to
Isn’t it shocking that Guzmán, who was working on a documentary about the globalization of justice (The Pinochet Case), would pick as his theme for another film a literary character whose juridical rationality is similar to Pinochet’s juridical rationality? And isn’t it shocking that Crusoe’s juridical rationality is similar to the juridical rationality of those politicians in the Chilean and British governments who tried to save the ex-dictator from extradition?

Roht-Arriaza comments that:

When he heard of the arrest, then President Frei was at a meeting of Ibero-American presidents in Portugal. His immediate reaction was to ask why, if the Spanish were so quick to judge others for genocide, they had never judged anyone in relation to the crimes committed during the Spanish Civil War? Other Chilean politicians were also quick to invoke sovereignty and the need for a domestic solution. (The Pinochet Effect 37)

Frei’s juridical rationality is similar Crusoe’s because, as we will see, Crusoe’s juridical rationality is defined by the nation. In that sense, Crusoe could be conceived of as an allegory of the juridical rationality of the Chilean state during the Pinochet affair. Moreover, Frei’s recrimination against Spain for being unable to deal with the crimes of the Civil War in a juridical frame resembles Crusoe’s recrimination against Spain: “the Conduct of the Spaniards in all their Barbarities practis’d in America, where they destroy’d Millions of these People, who however they were Idolaters and Barbarians, and had several bloody and barbarous Rites in their Customs, such as sacrificing human Bodies to their Idols, were yet, as to the Spaniards, very innocent People” (Defoe 124). While Crusoe’s recrimination underscores the crimes committed by Spain (during the conquest of the “New World”) in order to justify a politics of non-intervention that would absolve him from judging the crimes of the savages, Frei’s recrimination underscores the crimes committed during the Spanish Civil War in order to claim that Pinochet and his men “were yet, as to the Spaniards, very innocent People.” In so doing, Frei’s position
manifests the juridical aporia of the transitions to democracy: crimes against humanity should be prosecuted domestically, but as the history of the Spanish Civil War (and its post-Franco transitional aftermath) teaches us, this domestic solution is impossible since it puts the fragile sovereignty of the postdictatorial state at risk.

Crusoe’s politics of non-intervention could also be read as a projection which reveals Jack Straw’s political unconscious.

As to the Crimes they were guilty of towards one another, I had nothing to do with them; they were National, and I ought to leave them to the Justice of God, who is the Governor of Nations and knows how by National Punishments to make a just retribution for National Offences; and to bring publick Judgements upon those who offend in a publick Manner, by such Ways as best pleases him. (Defoe, Robinson Crusoe 125)

After refusing to judge the savages once he became the only witness of their crimes, Crusoe transfers universal jurisdiction in God’s hands. The first impulse is to read this episode of Defoe’s novel in connection to the decision taken by British Minister of the Interior Jack Straw on March 2, 2000, when he decided not to proceed with the ex-dictator’s extradition because “the trial of an accused in the condition diagnosed in Senator Pinochet, on the charges which have been made against him in this case, could not be fair in any country” (qtd. in Roht-Arraiza 63) Only by transferring universal jurisdiction into God’s hands after diagnosing the incurable pathology of the accused, was Straw able to save the ex-dictator from being prosecuted for his savage crimes.

Straw’s humanitarian gesture favoring divine justice is certainly an act of Christian piety that contrasts with Hulme’s description of Crusoe’s “wildly” alternation “between the two extreme points on the scale of international relations: he dreams of various elaborate contrivances for killing as many of the cannibals as possible, and then decides it would be both morally right and more prudent to leave them entirely alone unless they attacked him first” (Hulme Colonial Encounters 199). The juridical rationality behind both Crusoe’s
and Straw’s gesture is the same, however, which is not shocking: it is politically correct for the Western man to leave the savages alone until Judgment Day.

What Necessity I was in to go and dip my Hands in Blood, to attack people, who had neither done, or intended me any Wrong? Who as to me were innocent, and whose barbarous Customs were their own Disaster, being in them a Token indeed of God’s having left them, with the other Nations of that Part of the World, to such Stupidity, and to such inhumane Courses; but did not call me to take upon me to be a Judge of their Actions, much less an Executioner of his Justice; that whenever he thought fit, he would take the Cause into his own Hands, and by national Vengeance punish them as a People, for National Crimes; but that in the mean time, it was none of my Business … (Defoe, Robinson Crusoe 168)

For Straw as well as for Crusoe, the crimes of the savages (Pinochet among them) enter into the category of those issue that are “none of my business.” One could argue that the line of continuity between Crusoe’s and Straw’s narrative solution to the crimes of the savages could be conceived of as the manifestation of the political unconscious of Western dominant nations when facing the violence of South American dictatorial regimes: the crimes of the savages are none of our business, even if these crimes come to be an integral part of our business operations abroad since they facilitate the opening of free markets for our products. This confluence between Crusoe and Straw is not shocking. Rather, their shared position manifests a very predictable ethnocentric delirium and an imperialist indifference to crimes against humanity committed by nations of savages, those who, according to Peter Hulme, “are not members of the family.”

Since this confluence is not shocking, it is therefore not

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6 This imperial indifference to crimes against humanity can be understood in relation to Crusoe’s contractual model of sovereignty as discussed by Peter Hulme in Colonial Encounters: Europe and the native Caribbean, 1492-1797: “Crusoe constructs himself as a sovereign, monarch, and patriarch. His relationships with his subjects are properly contractual, entered into on their part through an appropriately Hobbesian fear, but guaranteed in the absence of ‘the sword’ by their gratitude for such almost magical deliverance from danger. By exchanging their natural rights for a guaranteed security they make themselves, in the traditional analogy, children to Crusoe’s father, a relationship articulated most clearly with respect to Friday: the Europeans, it might be said, remain ‘brothers’ when faced with cannibals, who are not members of the family” (Hulme 217).
allegorical. As Benjamin suggests, if allegories provoke a shock it is because they “become dated,” and, perhaps, it is more productive to pay attention to the date of Guzmán’s interview for Página 12 (March 25, 1999), the same interview in which he refers to his Island of Robinson Crusoe.

Guzmán’s interview in Página 12 was published almost a year before Straw’s decision. This interview appeared in a different context and Guzmán was reacting to a previous stage in the Pinochet affair: the Lords’s decision against Pinochet that favored universal jurisdiction over crimes against humanity. When Página 12’s journalist Martín Pérez compared the effects of Guzmán’s Chile, Obstinate Memory with the consequences of the Pinochet affair in London, he emphasized that this historical event confirmed the force of the politics of memory defended by Guzmán in his 1997 documentary. For Pérez, Pinochet’s arrest in London as well as Guzmán’s Chile, Obstinate Memory, appeared to confront the public with a reality that had been forgotten. Answering the journalist, Guzmán affirmed that the Pinochet affair has been experienced in Chile as “un elemento que creó catarsis” [an element that created catharsis]. In the interview, Guzmán explains that what is shocking about such a “catharsis” is that:

Dejó ver un nacionalismo absurdo que hace que mucha gente diga que hay que juzgar a Pinochet en Chile, algo que no tiene sentido. Todo el mundo sabe que no se puede hacer, ya que la Corte Suprema no cambió desde el golpe. (n. pag.) It shows an absurd nationalism that makes people say that it is possible to judge Pinochet in Chile, something that does not make sense. Everybody knows that this is impossible because the Supreme Court has not changed since the coup.

Although Guzmán was partially wrong because the Supreme Court did experiment with some changes after 1998 (Roht-Arraiza The Pinochet Effect 72-73), his March 25, 1999 diagnosis of the Pinochet affair was correct after all and his view will be confirmed along the way of the case proceedings in Chile. As history confirms today, it
was impossible to judge Pinochet in Chile. Guzmán was not only referring to the conditions of possibility of judging Pinochet in Chile, however, he was also denouncing the nationalist attitudes that this very possibility provoked. As Roht-Arraiza reports in The Pinochet Effect, Pinochet himself during his arrest in London adopted this nationalist attitude toward justice.

On December 11, [1998] Pinochet appeared for the first time in public, in the local Belmarsh court. He used a wheelchair and spoke only briefly. Pulling himself up to as close to military bearing as he could muster, he announced, in Spanish, that he did not recognize the jurisdiction of any courts but the Chilean to try him for anything. (52)

Pinochet’s nationalist juridical rationality confirms Crusoe’s formula: “National Punishments to make a just retribution for National Offences.” For Pinochet as well as for Crusoe, the only structure that can guarantee an adequate equivalence between crimes and punishments is the nation. It is pertinent first to contextualize Crusoe’s formula and then discover, through the play of its signifiers, the frame of juridical rationality that the Crusoe formula explicitly evokes: the nation. The original intention of Crusoe’s formula is to evoke the system of divine punishment as he imagines it functioning in the Old Testament: after judging the crimes of Sodom, Gomorrah, and Egypt, God punishes the people of this places for their crimes. But if we play with the signifiers that Crusoe uses to formulate what he considers to be divine punishment (National Punishment, National Offenses, but also, National Crimes), it is impossible to miss the fact that these signifiers also express the frame from which the equivalence of crimes and punishment should be established: the nation. Crusoe’s formula explicitly evokes the Post-Westphalian scenario described by Maogoto in War Crimes and Realpolitik:

\[ \text{Realpolitik:} \]

\[ \text{On December 10, 2006, Pinochet died at the age of 91 in Chile and he never faced trial for the crimes of which he was accused, neither for human rights violations nor fraud.} \]
the affirmation of national states in modern societies generated a monopoly of domestic criminal justice systems keen to assert absolute sovereignty to ward off interference by the papacy. [....] The Peace of Westphalia attempted to codify an international system based on the coexistence of a plurality of states exercising unimpeded territory within their territories, thereby making untrammeled state sovereignty and freedom from outside interference the foundation of international law. In the absence of any higher authority deriving from the community of states, restraints in the international arena were mostly self-imposed, voluntary observed, and enforced principally by the thread of retaliation. In the absence of an international mechanism for enforcing international law, war was a means of self-help for giving effect to claims based on international law. (17)

While the intention of Crusoe’s formula is to evoke divine punishment, its structure is a projection of the limited frame from which international law articulates its historical emergence: national sovereignty. The fact that modern nation states assumed the monopoly of domestic criminal justice explains why Crusoe feels unqualified to judge the crimes of the savages. For Crusoe, the crimes of the savages are not “crimes against humanity” as we could understand state sponsored killings today, but domestic crimes of a nation that deserves to be punished by God. Consistent with the Post-Westphalian scenario described by Maogoto, Crusoe cannot judge the savages because they cannot be transformed into juridical subjects. In Crusoe’s frame of mind, the savages can only occupy the place of the enemy against whom Crusoe can organize war. That is why Crusoe does not intervene with the savages and only decides to attack them once they become a threat to his personal security. After being a subject ruled by a policy of non-intervention, Crusoe becomes a warrior against the savages. This transformation can be read as a rite of passage that concludes when Crusoe, after becoming the sovereign of the island, transforms himself into a judge.

Crusoe and Pinochet agree when they consider that access to juridical subjectivity coincides with access to national identity. In Defoe’s novel, Crusoe becomes a judge only after he assists the captain of the English ship to recuperate control over his
mutinied crew. Once Crusoe defeats the mutineers through a series of tactics that belong to the exercise of psychological war, he is ready to claim the right of imparting justice within the constraints of the nation. After listening to the English Captain (“the captain said he knew they were such rogues, that there was no obliging them; and if he did carry them away, it must be in irons, as malefactors, to be delivered over to justice at the first English colony”) (Defoe 198), Crusoe discards the captain’s plan since the presence of the prisoners in the ship will pose a problem of security. Crusoe then decides to concede an amnesty to the prisoners but only if they remain on the island. If the mutineers remain on the island, Crusoe would not put his deliverance into civilization at risk. When conceived as a risk reduction policy, the amnesty Crusoe gives the prisoners corresponds to an act of national reconciliation that comes out of political calculation. In that sense, Crusoe’s juridical rationality serves as a model of Pinochet’s juridical rationality not only because both agree in conceiving of the nation as a frame of justice but also because both end up exercising justice as a selfish act of political calculation that operates by introducing amnesty as a domestic solution for national crimes. The amnesty Crusoe gives the mutineers is not so distinct from the 1978 amnesty Pinochet gave to those in the military forces who participated in the coup and its repressive aftermath. The only difference is that Pinochet gave amnesty to his forces in order to avoid being prosecuted for the crimes he commanded, while Crusoe gave amnesty to the mutineers as a means of securing his way back to civilization.

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8 Derrida establishes that when amnesty is given out of an calculative imperative, as is expressed by Crusoe’s, “the right of grace could not be exercised without injustice. In fact, one knows that it is always exercised in a conditional manner, in the function of an interpretation or a calculation on the part of the sovereign regarding what joins a particular interest (his own, those of his family, or those of a fraction of society) and the interest of the State” (Derrida, “On Forgiveness” 47).
When read against the context of the Pinochet affair, Crusoe’s juridical rationality could be understood as an allegory of two deceptive aspects of transitional politics: the illusion of considering the nation as a frame for justice (an illusion that Guzmán condemns in his interview for Página 12) and the illusion of domestic amnesty as a way to solve national crimes. Moreover, instead of constituting an example to follow, Crusoe’s nationalist and selfish juridical rationality could be characterized as an obstacle for the globalization of justice that Guzmán tries to articulate in The Pinochet Case. Then, why does Guzmán evoke a literary figure whose conception of justice not only opposes the principles of the “New International,” but also serves as an allegorical affirmation of the nation as a frame for the realization of justice, one of the main obstacles that the “New International” has to overcome? Guzmán neither refers explicitly to the Pinochet affair nor offers any opinion about Crusoe’s juridical rationality in Island of Robinson Crusoe. There is a moment in Island of Robinson Crusoe, however, in which Guzmán refers to Crusoe’s encounter with the English Captain who was betrayed by his crew. In his visit to Neruda’s house, Guzmán explores the question of justice posed in Defoe’s novel and he links it to Chilean history.

4.6 Crusoe and Neruda: Allegory as a Missed Encounter

After exploring some collected items in Neruda’s House, Guzmán goes on to revise Neruda’s editions of Robinson Crusoe. The shot simulates the gaze of a reader skipping through the pages of a book. Then, the hands of this reader seem to stop at a page in which there is an illustration of a ship and various men on the coast. It is here that Guzmán reveals himself as a reader, when he comments:

‘Pienso que Robinson y Neruda se encontraron muchas veces en la imaginación.”
I think that Robinson and Neruda many times imagined to have bumped into each other.

The cinematic reading of Robinson Crusoe that Guzmán proposes coincides with Benjamin’s description of the dynamics of perception created by drawings in children books. Rather than leaping out of the book, Benjamin observes that “the objects” in children’s book illustrations “do not come to meet the picturing child from the pages of the book; instead, the gazing child enters into those pages, becoming suffused, like a cloud, with the riotous colors of the world of pictures” (“A Glimpse into the World of Children’s Books,” Selected Writings 435).

The regressive movement to the Island of Robinson Crusoe and Guzmán’s insistence on exploring the colorful images of Defoe’s hero in various close-up shots of the various versions of Robinson Crusoe corresponds to Benjamin’s observation on the fantastic character of color. For Benjamin, “pure color is the medium of fantasy” (442). In that sense, Guzmán’s documentary activates the dynamic of formal regression defined by Freud when it explores Crusoe’s myth backwards, in the passage from letters to images. In the framing that resembles the children’s gaze as described by Benjamin that we see at the end of Neruda’s sequence, however, the camera that simulates Guzmán’s gaze enters the world of pictures but this world is not colorful. Benjamin argues that “unlike the colored pictures, the surface of the black-and-white illustration seems to be incomplete and hence in need of additions. So children imaginatively complete the illustrations. At the same time as they learn language from them, they learn writing: hieroglyphics” (436).

The black and white drawing that Guzmán observes comes from an 1835 edition of Robinson Crusoe and it was made by W. M. Robertson. The drawing refers to the scene in which Crusoe and the captain retake the English ship from the mutineers. While
the arrangement of the figures in the drawing shown in Guzmán’s documentary suggests this possibility, nothing other than the drawing confirms that the image represents this particular episode. I confirmed that this book drawing illustrates the episode of the mutiny when I visited an electronic exhibition of Crusoe’s book illustrations posted on the website of Rutgers University at Camden, New Jersey.\footnote{Visit \textless http://www.camden.rutgers.edu/Camden/Crusoe/Images/Robertson4.jpg\textgreater .} The caption of the drawing posted in the electronic collection reads: “the ship retaken from the Mutineers.—p. 151.” The illustration in the book shown by Guzmán does not include this caption, so it seems that the caption included in the image that I saw on the Rutgers’s website is not part of the book itself but was added to the drawing later in order to exhibit the image outside of the book’s pages. Nevertheless, the image that Guzmán shows in order to illustrate the imaginary encounter between Neruda and Crusoe corresponds to Robertson’s 1835 illustration of the mutiny in the Defoe’s novel. And it is precisely this missing caption that Guzmán is learning to write and read when he shows us the hieroglyph of Crusoe’s encounter with the English captain in the screen: “the ship retaken from the Mutineers.”

As if following the children’s tendency described by Benjamin (“black and white illustration seem to be incomplete and hence in need of additions”), Guzmán presents an image of Crusoe’s encounter with the English captain that illustrates what his voiceover narration completes: Neruda’s encounter with Crusoe. The English captain serves as a vanishing mediator of the imaginary encounter that occurs between Crusoe and Neruda. As the combination of voiceover and image suggests, Neruda seems to play the role of the English Captain in his encounter with Robinson Crusoe: Neruda is the one who, betrayed by his crew, receives Crusoe’s help in order to defeat the mutineers; but he is also the one who, after defeating the mutineers, delivers Crusoe out of the island.
Guzmán’s projection of Neruda as playing the role of the English Captain is consistent with Neruda’s own vision of his life: “perhaps, I did not live in my own self; perhaps, I lived the life of others” (Confieso que he vivido 21).

In Guzmán’s cinematic re-elaboration of Defoe’s classic, he proposes an imaginary encounter between Neruda and Crusoe through the vanishing mediation of the English Captain in order to transfigure Crusoe’s nationalist and selfish conception of justice into an international enterprise overcoming the limits of time and space. In this part of the sequence, Guzmán’s transfiguration of Crusoe’s juridical rationality subverts the categories of the “status quo” in order to question the realization of history as catastrophe. Apart from standing as an allegory of two juridical illusions of Chilean transitional politics (the nation as a frame for justice and domestic amnesty as a solution for national crimes), Guzmán seems to suggest that Crusoe is an allegorical image in metamorphoses which could still be considered as an open promise of redemption for those like Neruda who were defeated by Pinochet’s coup of 1973. Moreover, when Guzmán associates Crusoe with Neruda through the vanishing mediation of the English Captain, he is also projecting the salvational power of the English captain over Neruda. In that sense, Guzmán’s transfigures Neruda into an open promise of salvation, which not only is consistent with Neruda’s imaginary rescuing of Crusoe in Confieso que he vivido (88), but also with Neruda’s act of solidarity in favor of the Spanish refugees during the Spanish Civil War, a historic and literary episode that I discussed in Chapter Two. However, all this happens in a flash. The promise of the book drawing illustrating the end of the mutiny and representing Crusoe’s encounter with Neruda vanishes.

As if jumping out of the illustration that made the imaginary encounter possible, the individual images of Neruda and Crusoe appear on the screen in a crosscutting
montage sequence that comes after we see the drawing illustrating the defeat of the mutineers. We discover that the imaginary encounter between Crusoe and Neruda through the vanishing mediation of the English Captain is itself a dream image from which Guzmán has to wake up. What remains once the montage sequence jumps from Benjamin’s formula (the gazing child entering the book) to Andersen’s formula (the one criticized by Benjamin where images jump out of the book and enter the real world) are two images: a black and white illustration of Crusoe wearing his goatskin and a black and white cardboard cut out drawing of Neruda standing in the middle of the room as a ruin. Once the promising encounter is vanished, Guzmán’s montage sequence suggests that the two figures in the drawings look at each other. This returned gaze between the two drawings corresponds to the Benjaminian concept of aura: “To perceive the aura of an object we look at means to invest it with the ability to look at us in return. This experience corresponds to the data of memoire involontaire […]. The essentially distant is the inapproachable: inapproachability is in fact a primary quality of the ceremonial image” (“On Some Motifs in Baudelaire,” *Illuminations* 188). When the drawings of Neruda and Crusoe look at each other in Guzmán’s montage sequence, their gazes, crossing each other, are crossed by “the data of memoire involontaire.” What that mutual experience of memoire involontaire suggests is that the distance between the two gazes is inapproachable, and, therefore, both figures are condemned to miss the encounter. Once the illustrated figures of Crusoe and Neruda are shown outside of the book and as if looking to each other “under the gaze of melancholy,” both figures come to simultaneously play the role of the allegorist and the role of the object of allegory.\(^\text{10}\) By

\(^{10}\) This is Benjamin’s idea of allegory in relation to the gaze of melancholy: “If the object becomes allegorical under the gaze of melancholy, if melancholy causes life to flow of it and it remains behind dead, but eternally secure, then it is exposed to the allegorist, it is unconditionally in his power. That is to say it is now quite
pushing the distance between the allegorist and the object of allegory into a total collapse, the figures of Crusoe and Neruda become the allegorical image of the inapproachable distance from each other as both become the broken mirror reflecting the gaze of melancholy.

While the image of Crusoe as he is dressed in goatskin refers to “man’s subjection to nature” and to “the enigmatic question” “of the biographical historicity of the individual as such” (Benjamin, The Origin of German Tragic Drama 166), Neruda’s drawing corresponds to another aspect of allegory described by Benjamin: “everything about history that, from the very beginning, had been untimely, sorrowful, unsuccessful, is expressed in a face” (166). The mutual promise of redemption is broken twice in Guzmán’s montage sequence once the allegorical operation makes us question the reality of Crusoe’s “biographical historicity” while leaving no chance of evading Neruda’s face as it comes to stand for historical catastrophe since it projects “the deadness of its concrete tangibility” (226). Guzmán intensifies this sense of historical catastrophe when he transfigures Neruda, the paradigmatic figure of the collector in Chilean culture, into a collectible item facing another item collected as it becomes inapproachable: Robinson Crusoe.

Even if pointing to a promise, the condition of these two figures as collectible items is deceptive and provokes a similar frustration to that suffered by Neruda when he

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incapable of emanating any meaning or significance of its own; such significance as it has, it acquires from the allegorist. He places it within it, and stands behind it; not in a psychological but in an ontological way” (The Origin of German Tragic Drama 183-184).

11 This is Benjamin’s idea of allegory in relation to the faciality of history: “In allegory the observer is confronted with the facies hippocratica of history as a petrified, primordial landscape. Everything about history that, from the very beginning, had been untimely, sorrowful, unsuccessful, is expressed in a face … […] And although such a thing lacks all ‘symbolic’ freedom of expression, all classical proportion, all humanity—nevertheless, this is the form in which man’s subjection to nature is most obvious and it significantly gives rise to not only the enigmatic question of the nature of human existence as such, but also of the biographical historicity of the individual. This is the heart of the allegorical way of seeing […]. (166)
recalls his amateurish relation to the sea in connection to his passion for collecting things:

Yo soy un amateur del mar. Desde hace años colecciono conocimientos que no me sirven de mucho porque navego sobre la tierra. (Confieso que he vivido 263)

I am an amateur of the sea. For many years I have collected knowledges that do not serve me for much because I navigate over land.

Once their own frustrated attempts to master the sea end up in an amateurish private collection, neither Neruda nor Crusoe could be useful to each other. For Benjamin, the value of collecting comes from an act that frees things from their use-value in order to invest them with “connoisseur value” (“Exposé of 1939,” The Arcades Project 19). Neruda’s versions of Crusoe and Neruda’s cardboard cut out drawing, considered both as collectible items that are not even able to transmit the knowledge of the sea, can only transmit the knowledge of their distance from each other. While “the collector delights in a world that is not just distant and long gone but also better—a world in which, to be sure, human beings are no better provided with what they need than in everyday world, but in which things are freed from the drudgery of being useful” (19), the only knowledge that these figures can transmit is their distance from each other, which is also their distance from that better world dreamed by the Benjaminian collector. All these two figures signify is the inapproachable distance from the historical redemption that their imaginary encounter once promised.

4.7 “Powers of the False” in Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe

Standing as a ruin that points to historical catastrophe but also appearing as a dream image from which Guzmán has to wake up in order to find happiness, the allegorical dispersion of Robinson Crusoe in Chile points to an opening of history that
could be associated with Gilles Deleuze’s regime of the time-image. In Reading the Figural, or Philosophy after the New Media, Rodowick offers the most accurate synthesis of Deleuze’s conception of the time-image:

The movement-image is characterized by a Hegelian logic, that is, a dialectical organization of images and signs in an organic representation marked qualitatively by a will to truth. Alternatively, the time-image presumes a Nietzschean aesthetic whose images and signs are organized by ‘fabulation,’ a falsifying narration defined not by representation but by simulacra whose qualities are ‘powers of the false’: the indiscernibility of the real and the imaginary in the image; a temporal (dis)ordering of narration presenting differences in the present as inexplicable, and alternative versions of the past whose truth or falseness are undecidable; and, as a result, a transformation in the problem of judgment, of deciding the necessity or contingency of possible or probable interpretations where incompossible worlds proliferate as incongruous presents and not necessarily true pasts. (172)

Deleuze associates dreams with the organic narration of the movement-image and not with the time-image. The organic narration of the movement-image would correspond to a chronological unfolding of time. If we follow the discourse of the subject in Island of Robinson Crusoe, the form in which Guzmán organizes his travel according to a chronological timeline that operates as a regressive path, then, the travelogue structure of his documentary would manifest the sensory-motor schemata that Deleuze associates with the movement-image. Up to a point, it is true that Guzmán’s trajectory from the continent to the island, organized as a day by day account of events, may be understood as a movement that crosses the hodological space proper

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12 Here is Deleuze’s explanation of organic narration: “Organic narration consists of the development of sensory-motor schemata as a result of which the characters react to situations or act in such a way as to disclose the situation. This is a truthful narration in the sense that it claims to be true, even in fiction. Such a regime is complex because it can produce interventions from breaks (ellipses), insertions of recollections and dreams, and above all because it implies a certain usage of speech as a development factor. […] Recollection- or dream-images are on the way to actualization in sensory-motor schemata, and presuppose their broadening or weakening, but not their breaking in favor of something else. If time appears directly, it is in de-actualized peaks of present; it is in virtual sheets of past” (Deleuze, Time-Image 127, 130).

13 According to Rodowick, in the movement image “the protagonists’ actions drive a chronological narrative marked by the dialectical unfolding of effects from causes, reactions from actions, according to a logic of ‘rational intervals’—the beginning of an image or sequence unfolds in continuity from the ones that precedes it” (Reading the Figural 174).
to the regime of the movement-image, “a field of forces, oppositions and tensions between these forces, resolution of these tensions according to the distribution of goals, obstacles, means, detours” (Deleuze, The Time-Image 127-128). Guzmán’s trip to the island confronts various obstacles: the weather conditions that make the trip impossible as well as the limited capacity or lack of proper means of transportation. These obstacles also provoke some of Guzmán’s detours: for example, after trying unsuccessfully to take a plane to the island, Guzmán visits the city of Santiago. Later, once he confirms that it is impossible to take a ship from Valparaiso to the island, Guzmán spends the rest of the day in the city and makes a brief report of his experience there. Finally, once Guzmán overcomes all the obstacles, he reaches his goal of arriving on the island. All these obstacles and detours can be understood as a sort of sensory-motor deferral that Guzmán has to face in order move across the regressive path towards the wished-for destiny. In its regressive movement, however, Island of Robinson Crusoe provokes an explosion of the multiple temporalities that are constitutive of the tradition of Robinson Crusoe. Guzmán’s regressive path towards the Island of Robinson Crusoe is therefore part of a falsifying narration made in a documentary that approaches the complex temporalities crossing the re-elaborations of a literary hero. Guzmán liberates the dream motif from the sensory-motor schemata of the movement image in order to expose it as a false narration that unfolds the multiple wishes that the dream image of Robinson Crusoe has created in his readers. What Guzmán allows us to see is how the regressive path is constantly interrupted by another space, the space of an event and the force of time as it transforms Robinson Crusoe into a genealogical constellation.
Since its inscription in the Western imagination, the figure of Robinson Crusoe has provoked numerous re-elaborations around the world that have transformed him into a myth with transnational dimensions. The French re-elaborations of Crusoe made by Rousseau, Verne and Tournier tend to emphasize the struggle of the modern human for harmonizing incompatible tendencies: a return to nature with the scientific tools of a civilization that has conceived its quest towards nature as a conquest. Postcolonial Noble laureates Derek Walcott and J.M. Coetzee have proposed a series of allegories that question the way in which Defoe constructed Crusoe’s relation to his companion Friday as one of domination and inequality. The importance of Defoe’s book for postcolonial writers comes from the fact that Robinson Crusoe can be read as a figure projecting the fantasy of mastery that is constitutive of the practices of domination imposed by British colonial rulers. The South American Robinsonades of Sarmiento, Cortázar, and Neruda (and here I will have to postpone my discussion of Arturo Uslar Pietri’s La isla de Robinson) tend to emphasize the dissolution of reality and fiction when they displace Crusoe’s story from the fictional location in the Caribbean to the historical location from which Alexander Selkirk was rescued in 1711. The Robinsonades of the Southern Cone present Crusoe’s displacement from the space of the novel to the landscape of the historical subject who supposedly is the real source of Crusoe’s story. Apart from the literary re-elaborations of Robinson Crusoe, I have already referred to Buñuel’s film on Defoe’s classic, which counts as a cinematic re-elaboration of the myth. Finally, the philosophical re-elaborations of Crusoe include passages from Marx’s Capital and Grundrisse. It could be argued that the genealogical constellation of Robinson Crusoe as a transnational phenomenon that exposes the crossing of various historical contexts, literary genres and philosophical meditations operates as a chain of
forgers invested by the powers of the false: the power to transform the proliferation of origins into a spatial event with the force of time.\textsuperscript{14} The forger is the central figure in Deleuze’s conception of the powers of the false: “By raising the false to power, life freed itself of appearances as well as truth: neither true nor false, an undecidable alternative, but power of the false, decisive will. […] In short, the forger cannot be reduced to a simple copier, not to a liar, because what is false is not simply a copy, but already the model” (\textit{The Time-Image} 145). In my view, Guzmán’s \textit{Island of Robinson Crusoe} becomes part of this genealogical constellation made of Crusoe’s forgers.

Guzmán is the first forger in the documentary who unfolds the powers of the false belonging to Crusoe’s genealogical constellation. Some of Guzmán’s actions and anxieties reproduce Crusoe’s actions and anxieties in Defoe’s novel. In the airport sequence, Guzmán measures his weight on a scale. Guzmán is worried about his weight because, as is explained by an airport official, a small airplane that does not admit an excessive load makes the flight to the island. Guzmán asks the airport official if an overloaded airplane runs the risk of falling and the official responds that an overload may cause a failure of the airplane’s engine system, which would result in a crash. This is the dialogue between Guzmán and the airport official. Here Guzmán expresses an anxiety about his weight and the possibility of traveling in an overloaded airplane:

\begin{quote}
Guzmán (voiceover): También estoy preocupado por mi peso. Creo que he subido 3 kilos y no sé si me puedan llevar. [I am also worried about my weight. It seems that I have gain 3 kilograms and I do not know if they will be able to take me].
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{14} Rodowick argues that “in their new Nietzschean elaboration, space and time are refigured: space becomes an Event defined by the force of time as becoming and virtuality. Space no longer occupies a single time but is instead crossed by multiple lines of descent (so many alternative paths and deviations in the line of time either barred, forgotten, or barely dreamed) and launches into the future as an undetermined set of possibilities” (\textit{Reading the Figural} 171).
Guzmán (off-screen intradiegetic voice): Podemos llevar 10 sin sobrepeso, ¿cuánto más tu admites de sobra? [We can bring 10 without being overloaded, how much extra weight do you admit?]
Airport official: En este vuelo, es que depende. Lo que pasa es que van seis personas. Entonces, yo trataría de nada, porque no puede superar los quinientos kilos. [On this flight, it depends. What happens is that there are 6 passengers already. So I would try not to put extra weight on this flight, because it should not exceed the 500 kilograms].
Guzmán: Se cae. [It will fall].
Airport official: O sea, no. El problema es que, cuando despega un avión, hay un límite máximo de peso de despegue. Si llega a fallar el motor acá, y están con sobrecarga, el avión se va a pique. [Well, no. The problem is that when an airplane departs there is a maximum limit (of weight) for the take-off. If the engine fails, the overloaded airplane will crash].

Guzmán’s concern about his weight and the anxiety provoked by an overloaded airplane evoke the difficulties that Crusoe had to overcome in order to transport some objects he rescued from the shipwreck. Crusoe actually lost a cargo of iron due to an overloaded raft.\(^\text{15}\) Guzmán’s anxiety about weight is an allegorical restaging of Crusoe’s anxieties when he traveled back to the island with an overloaded raft. The materiality of Guzmán’s body in the visual track is made evident, not only by the fragmented image of his body, but also by the scale itself which shows Guzmán’s weight in kilograms. The substantial presence of the filmmaker produces a reality effect which is similar to the one produced by Defoe’s emphasis on Crusoe’s concerns about the weight of the loaded raft. However, Defoe’s emphasis on Crusoe’s anxiety about weight is a reality effect that guarantees the verisimilitude of fiction, while Guzmán’s emphasis on his own weight is a hyperreal effect that exposes the powers of the false invading the reality represented in the documentary: the genealogical constellation of Robinson Crusoe as a fiction loaded with the weight of simulacra. Guzmán’s anxiety about weight also evokes the anxious

\(^{15}\) This is the passage in which Crusoe refers to the loss cargo: “for this Raft was so unwieldy, and so overladen, that after I was entered the little Cove, where I had landed the rest of my Goods, not being able to guide it so handily as I did the other, it overset, and threw me and all my Cargoe into the Water; as for myself, it was no great Harm, for I was near the Shore; but as to my Cargoe, it was a great Part of it lost, especially the Iron […]” (Defoe, Robinson Crusoe 42).
reaction of the five men in the opening episode of Verne’s *The Mysterious Island* (one of the most remarkable re-elaborations of the myth of Robinson Crusoe). Those five men traveling in a balloon decided to get rid of their belongings in order to keep the aircraft up in the air (Verne 6-8). Guzmán and the five protagonists of Verne’s *The Mysterious Island* share the same concerns: the passenger’s weight and the possibility of traveling in an overloaded aircraft.

The shot that shows the scale in *Island of Robinson Crusoe* becomes a piece of visible evidence affirming the real and substantial presence of the filmmaker on the screen and this could also be connected to self-affirmations of substantial presence made by Susan, the female narrator in Coetzee’s *Foe*. Coetzee’s novel fictionalizes the revolt of a supposedly real witness of the story against the narrative virtuosity of the author. Susan claims to be the only witness of Cruso’s story. Contrary to Foe’s judgment that she is only a character in a story, Susan affirms: “We are all alive, we are all substantial, we are all in the same world” (Coetzee, *Foe* 152). When she confronts Foe, the institution of the author, she refuses to be confused with a ghost and affirms the substantial reality of her own body, which she also identifies with the substantial reality of her story. According to Susan “if I were a mere receptacle ready to accommodate whatever story is stuffed in me, surely you would dismiss me, surely you would say to yourself, ‘This is no woman but a house of words, hollow, without substance’?” (Coetzee 130-131). Coetzee exposes the irony of a literary character claiming to be substantial and real. However, Guzmán’s irony operates as an inversion of Susan’s equation. He embraces what Susan refuses, the fact that his body may only be a “mere receptacle ready to accommodate whatever story is stuffed” into it. By showing the substantiality of his corporeal presence in the context of an exploration of Crusoe’s genealogical
constellation, Guzmán represents his own body as a “house of words”: a hyperreal fiction weighed on the scale of the tradition, but also a simulacra that seems to carry all the load of an anxiety that shapes the whole tradition. Crusoe’s anxiety about his lost cargo in Defoe’s novel, the anxiety suffered by the five protagonists in Verne’s The Mysterious Island, Susan’s anxiety for her supposed lack of substantiality in Coetzee’s Foe and Guzmán’s anxiety about weight in Island of Robinson Crusoe all manifest the anxiety of influence that haunts tradition as its load proliferates in simulacra.

If Guzmán’s role as a “cinematographic Robinson Crusoe” operates as a false narrative loaded by the simulacra of Crusoe’s genealogical configuration, then, he as well as the real characters in his documentary are forgers of Crusoe and Crusoe’s re-elaborations. Moreover, the film could be conceived of as an allegorical reconstellation of Crusoe’s genealogy when it proceeds to reconfigure the roles played by Crusoe in the creative imagination of his readers. Most of the time the allegorical operation of the documentary consists of unfolding the latent references to Crusoe’s genealogical constellation. Although Guzmán never establishes an explicit association between the actions of his real characters and the actions of the characters belonging to the genealogical constellation of Robinson Crusoe, the actual embodiment of these roles in the actions of the islanders represented in the documentary manifests the latent references to the various re-elaborations of Crusoe. Through the actions and speech of these real characters, Guzmán’s documentary unfolds the genealogical constellation of Robinson Crusoe in a fiction in which “incompossible worlds proliferate as incongruous

\[16\] Deleuze argues that: “The forger will thus be inseparable from a chain of forgers into whom he metamorphoses. There is no unique forger, and, if the forger reveals something, it is the existence behind him of another forger … The truthful man will be part of the chain, at one end like the artist, at the other end, the nth power of the false. And the only content of narration will be the presentation of these forgers, their sliding from one to the other, their metamorphoses into each other” (The Time-Image 133).
presents and not necessarily true pasts." Moreover, the film subverts the idea of pure origins when it presents Robinson Crusoe as simulacra.

Guzmán’s documentary unfolds the genealogical constellation of Robinson Crusoe through the actions and speech of real characters, but not only for the sake of unveiling the model and its re-elaborations as simulacra. If Guzmán explores his model as simulacra it is in order to expose the clandestine threads which exist between the re-elaborations of Defoe’s classic and the events that have shaped Chilean history after the coup: the collapse of socialism and the triumph of neoliberalism. The actions and speech of real characters in Island of Robinson Crusoe could be conceived of as an allegoric ritual that manifests the confrontation of two spectral aspects of Robinson Crusoe: Marx’s Crusoe in the first volume of Capital (1867) and Walcott’s commercial Crusoe in Pantomime (1980) and “The Figure of Crusoe” (1965).

4.8 “Acá es como un lujo y es increíble”: Marx’s Crusoe

In Capital, Marx uses Crusoe as an example of a man who reaches a full understanding of production by the calculation of labor-time.\(^\text{17}\) Crusoe is able to organize time according to the labor he needs to perform in order to survive the tough environment of the island. Marx uses Crusoe as a model for the intelligibility of production when production is understood as the effective time-organization of abstract human labor.\(^\text{18}\) Marx’s reading of Crusoe is key to understand Guzmán’s Island of

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\(^\text{17}\) This is Marx’s description of Crusoe in Capital: “Despite the diversity of his productive functions, he knows that they are only different forms of activity of one and the same Robinson, and, hence only different modes of human labor. Necessity itself compels him to divide his time with precision between his different functions” (169).

\(^\text{18}\) In Capital, Marx makes a crucial distinction between two forms of labor: concrete labor and abstract human labor. This is the passage from Capital in which Marx confronts the question of concrete human labor vis-à-vis abstract human labor: “By equating, for example, the coat as a thing of value to the linen, we equate the labor embedded in the coat with the labor embedded in the linen. Now it is true that the tailoring
Robinson Crusoe. It provides the conceptual spectrum (abstract human labor, commodity fetishism, the intelligibility of production, political alliance) that Guzmán will put to test in order to offer a critical reconstellation of Chilean history.

According to Spivak, Marx’s Crusoe provides “a form of appearance of man in nature, able to calculate abstract average labor because the labor is all his own” (Spivak, A Critique of Postcolonial Reason 178). In Island of Robinson Crusoe, abstract human labor takes a new appearance when Guzmán substitutes Marx’s Crusoe, “a form of appearance of man in nature,” for the labor-time of a real character whose work becomes determined by machines. Guzmán is about to complete his trip by sea to the only town on the Island of Robinson Crusoe. Once on the ship, Guzmán refers to the duration of the trip:

Tenemos que dar casi toda la vuelta a la isla para llegar al pueblo. En total, el viaje ya dura 4 horas y seguimos al mando del mismo piloto, por aire y por mar.

We have to round the island almost completely in order to reach the town. In total, the trip has lasted about 4 hours and we are still under the command of the same pilot, by air and by sea.

Guzmán’s summary of the trip evokes Crusoe’s concern for the calculation of time. But when Guzmán links the time of the trip to the labor-time of the pilot, he evokes which makes the coat is concrete labor of a different sort from the weaving which makes the linen. But the act of equating tailoring with weaving reduces the former in fact to what is really equal in the two kinds of labor, to the characteristic they have in common of being human labor. This is a roundabout way of saying that weaving too, insofar as it weaves value, has nothing to distinguish it from tailoring, and, consequently, is abstract human labor. It is only the expression of equivalence between different sorts of commodities which brings to view the specific character of value creating labor, by actually reducing the different kinds of labor embedded in the different kinds of commodity to their common quality of being human labor in general (142). It should be noticed that when Crusoe confesses he is a bad carpenter, he does it in the same context in which he discusses his poor skills as a tailor: “I have mentioned, that I saved the skins of all the creatures that I killed, I mean four-footed ones; and I had hung them up, stretched out with sticks, in the sun, by which means some of them were so dry and hard that they were fit for little, but others I found very useful. The first thing I made of these was a great cap for my head, with the hair on the outside, to shoot off the rain; and this I performed so well, that after this I made me a suit of clothes wholly of the skins, that is to say, a waistcoat, and breeches open at the knees, and both loose; for they were rather wanting to keep me cool than warm. I must not omit to acknowledge that they were wretchedly made; for if I was a bad carpenter, I was a worse tailor” (Defoe, Robinson Crusoe 98).
Marx’s Crusoe as an example of abstract human labor through his portrait of the real character who makes possible the realization of the trip by air and by sea: the airplane pilot who is also the ship’s captain.

Guzmán’s documentary reveals a fascinating link between the different labors of the same Crusoe and the different labors of the same pilot. But in linking the pilot’s multiple actions to the appearance of abstract human labor that Marx discusses when he evokes Crusoe, the film also illustrates a new appearance of abstract human labor. The pilot becomes the manifestation of abstract human labor in our mechanized world: the rhythm of machines determines his labor-time. In other words, neither his labor nor his labor-time belongs to him. Therefore, under the new conditions of appearance explored by Guzmán in Island of Robinson Crusoe, the appearance of the machine determining the labor-time of the airplane pilot turned into captain of the ship haunts Marx’s Crusoe as a form of appearance of abstract human labor. When the pilot commands two different means of transportation, he can only present an indirect image of his labor-time, an image determined by the movement of the vehicles he commands. In that sense, the pilot sequence expresses the mechanical dynamic of Deleuze’s regime of the movement-image. The appearance of the pilot’s labor-time reconfigures the labor-time of Marx’s Crusoe in order to explore the new conditions of appearance of abstract labor as Marx has already theorized them in Capital and Grundrisse (the confrontation of man and the machine). As such, Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe is closer to Deleuze’s regime of the time-image because it breaks the rhythm of the machine in order to expose the movement of thought that the genealogical constellation of Robinson Crusoe unfolds through its spectral reworkings.
In *Capital*, Crusoe operates as an exemplary figure whose actions and understanding of production create the figural conditions of possibility for the emergence of Marx’s “imagined” “association of free men.” Marx’s utopian view of the island of Robinson Crusoe corresponds to a virtual association of those who have reached the highest level of intelligibility in relation to the social production they perform collectively.

Let us finally imagine, for a change, an association of free men, working with the means of production held in common, and expending their many different forms of labor-power in full self-awareness as one single social labor force. All the characteristics of Robinson’s labor are repeated here, but with the difference that they are social instead of individual. All Robinson’s products were the result of his own personal labor and they were therefore directly objects of utility for him personally. The total product of our imagined association is a social product. (Marx, *Capital* 171-172)

When Marx discusses the fetishism of commodities in *Capital*, Robinson Crusoe appears to be the figure for which the possibility of interrupting the fetishism of the commodities can come to life. Robinson is a singular model for the achievement of an intelligible relation among labor, value and products. In *Capital*, Crusoe marks the shift from individual consciousness of labor-time/value to the collective socialization of production in an intelligible sense. When Guzmán visits the Island of Robinson Crusoe, he is confronting Marx’s theoretical fiction with the actions and speech of real characters who seem to be haunted by it. Real characters in Guzmán’s documentary seem to operate allegorically as a collective re-embodiment of Marx’s virtual community of free individuals. *Island of Robinson Crusoe* is therefore an exploration of the virtuality in which Marx’s fiction unfolds: Robinson Crusoe is a social product and a vanishing mediation that haunts the intelligibility of production achieved by Marx’s imagined association of free men.

Guzmán presents two real female characters whose stories seem to operate as allegorical re-tellings of the visions guiding Marx’s association of free men, a virtual
community whose intelligibility of production seems to come from the lessons exposed by Robinson Crusoe as a social product, theoretical fiction and vanishing mediation. In Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, the hero discloses all the works necessary for completing the task of bread making.\(^{19}\) Crusoe’s description of the process of bread making could be conceived of as an allegorical inversion of Marx’s notion of commodity fetishism, where the labor-time and the labor force of the worker is expropriated and concealed in the objective form of the commodity.\(^{20}\) Guzmán evokes Crusoe’s remarks on bread making when he shows a woman making bread in *Island of Robinson Crusoe*. As if supplementing Crusoe’s narrative with an image, Guzmán’s documentary discloses the labor process through the visual track. The disclosure of the island’s bread maker’s labor could be conceived of almost as a restoration of Marx’s light (“the physical relation between physical things”) into the optic nerves of the spectator. Later, the island’s bread maker comments:

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\(^{19}\) Here Crusoe explains the process of bread making: “It might be truly said, that now I work’d for my Bread; tis a little wonderful, and what I believe few People have thought much upon, (viz.) the strange multitude of little Things necessary in the Providing, Producing, Curing, Dressing, Making and Finishing this one article of bread. […] I that was reduced to a meer State of Nature, found this to my daily Discouragement, and was made more and more sensible of it every Hour, even after I had got the first Handful of Seed-Corn, which, as I have said, came up unexpectedly, and indeed to a surprise” (Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* 86).

\(^{20}\) In the first chapter of *Capital* in which Marx refers to Crusoe, he also explains the mysterious character of commodities: “The mysterious character of the commodity-form consists therefore simply in the fact that the commodity reflects the social characteristics of men’s labor as objective characteristics of the products of labor themselves, as the socio-natural characteristics of these things. Hence it also reflects the social relation of the objects, a relation which exist apart from and outside the producers. Through this substitution, the producers of labor become commodities, sensuous things which are at the same time suprasensible or social. In the same way, the impression made by a thing on the optic nerve is perceived not as a subjective excitation of that nerve but as the objective form of a thing outside the eye. In the act of seeing, of course, light is really transmitted from one thing, the external object, to another thing, the eye. It is a physical relation between physical things. As against this, the commodity-form, and the value-relation of the products of labor within which it appears, have absolutely no connection with the physical nature of the commodity and the material [dinglich] relations arising out of this. It is nothing but the definite social relation between men themselves which assumes here, for them, the fantastic form of a relation between things. In order, therefore, to find an analogy we must take flight into the misty realm of religion. There the products of the human brain appear as autonomous figures endowed with a life of their own, which enter into relations both with each other and with the human race. So it is in the world of commodities with the products of men’s hands. I call this the fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labor as soon as they are produced as commodities, and is therefore inseparable from the production of commodities” (164-165).
Todos los días haciendo el pan para la gente, para el turista. La gente ya como que se acostumbró con el pan acá en la isla. Entonces … Y le gusta el pan porque no es igual que el pan del continente, no tiene tanta malicia como le ponen allá. Aquí siempre queda como medio natural.

Everyday I make bread for the people, for the tourists. The people seem to get used to the bread I make here on the island. They like the bread because it is not the same bread of the continent. It [the bread she makes] does not have the bad things [malice] they put in the bread there [on the continent]. Here, the bread always comes out almost like natural.

For the island’s bread maker, it is clear that the bread of the island is superior to the bread of the continent. She explains that the bread of the island is “almost like natural” in contrast to the bread of the continent that seems to be corrupted because, according to her, they add a lot of “malice” to the bread there. If we read the island’s bread maker’s statement in connection to Marx’s description of commodity fetishism, it is possible to conceive of the malice of the bread of the continent as an allegory for the political corruption that has transformed Chile into a neoliberal consumer culture. Both the Pinochet dictatorship and the transition to democracy are moments of the same process of political corruption whose effects become visible through mysterious character of commodities. Guzmán shows us the labor that lies behind the bread of the island in order to break the magic spell of commodities. He does this by evoking the authority of Defoe’s Crusoe in an spectral encounter with Marx’s association of free men. The bread of the island serves to unveil the labor of the island’s bread maker and operates as a mirror image from which she as a worker can put to test the corruption of the bread on the continent as a means of subsistence. What lies behind the corrupted bread of the continent is a pact that ties Chilean society to the mysterious character of commodities: the malice (malicia) operating as a means of subsistence for those who defend the free market ideology of the dictatorship and the transition to democracy.

When Guzmán presents the actions of the island’s bread maker and discloses the labor
behind the island’s bread to break the magic spell of commodities, he is reconfiguring
the ideological constellation of the islanders (an ideological constellation that Guzmán
himself associates with Pinochetism and tourism) with the spectral power of Marx’s
Crusoe. When *Island of Robinson Crusoe* exposes the islanders’s labor force as an
allegorical re-working of Marx’s Crusoe, the film affirms the possibility of reconciliation
with the present that turns to the past as a virtual promise. This promise opens the
possibility of living together with the enemy, but only in order to show how the spectral
friendship of socialism haunts the enemy’s imagination.

Although consumer culture seems to be stronger in continental Chile than on the
Island of Robinson Crusoe, the impact of market economy is stronger on the island than
on the continent. In the sequence in which Guzmán dines at Rodrigo’s house, Rodrigo's
female partner describes the “malice” of market economy.

Todo lo que es como cotidiano en el continente, acá es como un lujo y es
icreíble. Yo aprendí a valorar cosas, no sé … Como les decía hoy día el pan
batido es un lujo, una lechuga. Ahora tengo un jardín grande y ya tengo las
semillas listas para sembrar más racimos de lechuga. Imagínate, comer verdura
green fresca acá es fantástico.

All things that are everyday items in the continent, here become luxurious and
this is incredible. I learned to value things, I do not know […]. Like when I said
today that the bread is a luxury, a lettuce. Now I have a large garden and I have
lettuce seeds ready to sow. Imagine, to eat fresh greens here is fantastic.

In comparison to Crusoe’s lesson on value (a lesson which consisted of affirming
the power of use-value as a form of knowledge21), Rodrigo’s female partner could only
deduce the value of things on the Island of Robinson Crusoe from the logic of prices that
corresponds to a market economy. Common goods are so expensive that they have

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21 This is the passage in which Crusoe affirms the power of use-value as a form of knowledge: “But all I
could make use of was, All that was valuable… In a Word, The Nature and Experience of Things dictated to
me upon just Reflection, That all the good Things of this World, are no farther good to us, than they are for
our Use and that whatever we may heap up indeed to give others, we enjoy just as much as we can use,
and no more” (Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* 94).
become a luxury on the Island of Robinson Crusoe. The woman explains that the only alternative to high prices is to produce goods in a private garden. Her private garden evokes Crusoe’s return to agriculture. Her enthusiasm for a return to production and her refusal to participate in an unjust system of consumption controlled by market fluctuations evokes the utopian visions of Marx’s association of free men. Indeed, Rodrigo’s partner evokes the utopian dissolution of exchange when she refers to the beautiful landscape of the island as something that is priceless. The conception of a priceless landscape in the imagination of Rodrigo’s partner is key to understanding that the island explored by Guzmán operates as the site of Marx’s utopia. This realization could lead us to consider that the shift from Crusoe to the association of free men in Marx’s Capital is a metamorphosis, a phantasmatic substitution, or an exchange that operates in Marx’s own conception of utopia as a post-exchange society.

Rodrigo’s partner’s thoughts on value (her deduction of use value from exchange value/market forces/high prices, her affirmation of her own labor as use value in order to avoid high prices and her conception of the island’s landscape as priceless), all of which could be condensed in the conception of the island as a utopian private garden “à la Robinson Crusoe,” could be linked to Derrida’s conception of value as a dynamic process which is conditioned by iterability, a sort of repetition projected “in all directions”. Derrida explains that:

metamorphosis is possible in all directions between the use-value, the commodity, and money … Since any use-value is marked by this possibility of being used by the other or being used another time, this alterity or iterability projects it a priori onto the market of equivalences (which are always equivalences between non-equivalents, of course, and which suppose the double socius we were talking about above). In its originary iterability, a use-value is in advance promised, promised to exchange and beyond exchange. It is in advance thrown onto the market of equivalences. This is not simply a bad thing, even if the use-value is always at risk of losing its soul in the commodity. (Derrida, Specters of Marx, 162)
Rodrigo’s partner’s visions on value in Guzmán’s *Island of Robinson Crusoe* appear to iterate the complex play of mirrors that exist between Robinson Crusoe and Marx’s association of free men. While serving as a critique of the market fluctuations that affect the island, the visions on value of Rodrigo’s partner expose the market of equivalences that regulates Marx’s textual exchanges in *Capital* (the association of free men as an iteration of Robinson Crusoe). It comes to expose the fact that Marx’s utopia operates as a market of equivalence that regulates the allegorical metamorphoses of the real characters in Guzmán’s *Island of Robinson Crusoe*. At times, the real inhabitants iterate Crusoe’s labor (the pilot, the bread maker) in order to reconfigure it. At other moments, the real inhabitants reconfigure Crusoe’s intelligibility of production (the island bread maker, Rodrigo’s partner) in order to reiterate it. In that sense, *Island of Robinson Crusoe* achieves the invention of a people when it presents the becoming-other of its real characters.  

Moreover, the fact that the chain of forgers who participate as real characters in Guzmán’s documentary is established as a market of equivalences may also imply that the “specter of the commodity is at work in use-value” (*Specters of Marx* 151). This leads us to think that the island’s labor force “is always at risk of losing its soul in the commodity” (162). That is why apart from exposing the market of equivalences that operates in Marx’s conception of utopia, the allegorical exchanges traversing

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22 Deleuze explains that: “What cinema must grasp is not the identity of a character, whether real or fictional, through his objective or subjective aspects. It is the becoming of the real character when he himself starts to ‘make fiction’, when he enters into ‘the flagrant offence of making up legends’ and so contributes to the invention of his people. The character is inseparable from a before and after, but he reunites these in the passage from one state to the other. He himself becomes another, when he begins to tell stories without ever being fictional. And the filmmaker for his part becomes another when there are ‘interposed,’ in this way, real characters, who wholly replace his own fictions by their own storytelling. Both communicate in the invention of a people. […] Thus cinema can call itself cinéma-vérité, all the more because it will have destroyed every model of the true so as to become creator and producer of truth: this will not be a cinema of truth but the truth of cinema” (Deleuze, *The Time-Image* 150).
Crusoe and the islanders in Guzmán’s documentary may relate to the way in which the realm of tourism digests Defoe’s novel.

4.9 “And you want to tell me it ain’t shit?”: Walcott’s Commercial Crusoe

The commodification of Robinson Crusoe in the realm of tourism is a process of role-playing that animates Harry Trewe’s entrepreneurial fantasy in Walcott’s Pantomime. Trewe, the owner of a small vacation house in Tobago, tries to convince Jackson, his handyman, to perform a new version of Defoe’s classic by reversing the roles Crusoe and Friday, so the boss would be Friday and Crusoe would become the servant. I am referring to this dialogue between Harry Trewe and Jackson in Walcott’s Pantomime:

HARRY
We could turn this little place right here into a little cabaret, with some very witty acts. Build up the right audience. Get an edge on the others. So, I thought, Suppose I get this material down to two people. Me and… well, me and somebody else. Robinson Crusoe and Man Friday. We could work up a good satire, you know, on the master-slave — no offense — relationship. Labor-management, white-black and so on … Making some trenchant points about topical things, you know. Add that show to the special dinner for the price of one ticket … […]

JACKSON
You want my honest, professional opinion?

HARRY
Fire away.

JACKSON
I think is shit. […]

HARRY
You could say things in fun about this place, about the whole Caribbean, that would hurt while people laughed. You get half the gate.

JACKSON
Half?

HARRY
What do you want?

JACKSON
I want you to come to your senses, let me fix the sun deck and get down to the beach for the sea bath. So, I put on this hat, I pick up the parasol, and I walk like a mama-poule up and down this stage and you have a black man playing Robinson Crusoe and then a half-naked, white fish-belly man playing Friday, and you want to tell me it ain’t shit? (Pantomime 109-111)

In a previous essay entitled “The figure of Crusoe,” Walcott describes the commercialization of Crusoe in the Caribbean: “The commercial Crusoe gives his name to our brochures and hotels. He has become the property of the Trinidad and the Tobago board, and although it is the same symbol that I use, you must allow me to make him various, contradictory and as changeable as the Old Man Of the Sea” (35). Walcott’s commercial Crusoe could be associated with the touristic development of the Chilean Island of Robinson Crusoe. A group of residents dressed like Robinson Crusoe, “with umbrellas and a parrot on their shoulders,” received various groups of tourists visiting Isla-Más-a-Tierra after the island was renamed Robinson Crusoe by the government of Chile in 1966.

En 1966, como parte de una estrategia de promoción turística, el gobierno de Chile cambió oficialmente los nombres de Más a Tierra, que no era la isla de Crusoe, y Más Afuera, donde Alexander Selkirk nunca estuvo, a Isla de Robinson Crusoe e Isla Alexander Selkirk respectivamente. Un grupo de visitantes fueron recibidos por pescadores locales vestidos como Robinson Crusoe, con paraguas y un loro sobre el hombro. (Werner, “Tras los pasos del verdadero Robinson Crusoe” 29)

In 1966, as part of a strategy to promote tourism, the government of Chile officially changed the names of Más a Tierra, which was not Crusoe’s island, to Island of Robinson Crusoe and Más Afuera, where Selkirk never went, to Island Alexander Selkirk. A group of visitors was received by local fishermen dressing like Robinson Crusoe, with umbrellas and parrots in their shoulders. This report on the commercial exploitation of Robinson Crusoe in Chile anticipates the realization of Trewe’s fantasy in Walcott’s Pantomime: tourism as role-play. Guzmán presents this commercial projection of the story of Robinson Crusoe at the end of the documentary, when he refers to the tourist guide who organizes a visit to the
viewpoint of Alexander Selkirk as the Indiana Jones of the island. The tourist guide’s real name is Daniel, like Daniel Defoe, the author of Robinson Crusoe. Indiana, the tourist guide whose real name is Daniel, and who Guzmán calls an “adult Robinson,” is the character who carries the multiple names of the market of equivalence in which the genealogical constellation of Robinson Crusoe operates. In the last sequence of Island of Robinson Crusoe, Daniel/Indiana (tourist guide, Defoe’s double, archeologist and treasure hunter), becomes the storyteller who puts the truth of the novel in crisis by revealing its secret history. He is the one who explains to Guzmán that Crusoe’s shipwreck is a fiction, that it never happened, that the Island of Robinson Crusoe is not the Island of Robinson Crusoe since Defoe’s hero does not exist, that it is rather the island where Alexander Selkirk decided to remain in 1704. The punch line of the tourist guide, and, therefore, the trick of the tourist trap, consists of unveiling the enigma of the place (that Selkirk was rich until he exchanged the island for a new destination) while still enjoying the dividends of the confusion (that Selkirk ended up being exchanged for Robinson Crusoe). The delivery of Selkirk’s name becomes the final form of the commodity and storytelling, in its reified form, approaches its crisis once it is transformed

23 In an on-and-off-screen narration, Daniel tells Guzmán that: “Una noche llega el Duque y la Duquesa, dos barcos al mando de Woods Rogers. Al llegar a la orilla, dicen: “nos encontramos con un salvaje, vestido con piel de cabra, zapatos de piel de cabra, pero lo más extraordinario de todo es que hablaba inglés. Este señor lo habrían reconocido como el contramaestre del Cinque Ports que Stradlin en el año 1704 había dejado abandonado en esta isla. Y posteriormente este Selkirk se hizo a la mar a bordo del Duque. Pero, según cuenta la historia, murió añorando su amada tierra. Dice que nunca había sido más feliz y más rico que cuando vivió en la hoy día isla de Robinson Crusoe. Todo ese cuento dió origen la novela de Daniel Defoe. Hizo una mezcolansa, cierto, entre un indio caribeño que también quedó abandonado en 1661 en esta isla, a Selkirk le pone Robinson Crusoe, a Will le pone Viernes y ahí genera esta fábula que creo que todo niño y todo amante a la lectura ha tenido la posibilid [The Duke and the Duchess, two ships commanded by Woods Rogers, arrived one night. When they arrived, they said: ‘we found a savage wearing a goatskin dress and goatskin shoes, but the most extraordinary thing is that he spoke English.’ This man was recognized as the Master of the Cinque-Ports who Stradlin abandoned in this island in the year 1704. And afterwards, Selkirk was back in the sea as he got on board the Duke. But as the story goes, he died dreaming of his lovely island. He says that he never felt as happy and rich as when he was living here, in today’s Island of Robinson Crusoe. All this story was at the origin of Daniel Defoe’s novel. Defoe made a mixing, right, between a Caribbean native who was also abandoned in the island in 1661, he changes Selkirk’s name to Robinson Crusoe, he changes Will’s name to Friday and there he generates this fable that I think all children and literature lovers have had the possibility to read].
into a touristic adventure. However, Island of Robinson Crusoe ends when Guzmán liberates Crusoe from the magic spell of commodities by recognizing that Daniel’s delivery of Selkirk’s story is also dream image.

4.10 “Este secreto de los nombres es mágico, como usted sabe, en política sobre todo ...”: The Market of Equivalences

In this market of equivalences established between real characters and the members of the genealogical constellation of Robinson Crusoe, Guzmán explores the experience of reading through a female character. This exploration of reading manifests Guzmán’s interest in the revision of gender roles. The Juanita of Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe is the feminine of Juan, a name which gains a political meaning in Adiós, Robinson, a radio play written by Cortázar in the 1970’s for a French radio station. Cortázar’s radio play expresses the tensions between Friday and Crusoe: the dynamics of domination and inequality that inform the master-slave dialectic. In connection to its postcolonial sensibility, Cortázar’s Adiós, Robinson operates as a ritual quest for a new name. The name of Juan Fernández in Cortázar’s Adiós, Robinson becomes a metaphor for a collective force, a collective force that evokes Marx’s association of free men.24 If we link Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe to Cortázar’s

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24 When Cortázar’s Friday arrives at Juan Fernández, he suffers a transformation and a laugh escapes from his mouth every time he refers to Robinson as master. Once Robinson notices Friday’s compulsive laugh, he asks his servant for an explanation. Friday responds that he has consulted various psychiatrists and now he waits for the diagnosis. Meanwhile, as if trying to calm his master, Friday tells Robinson that: “según me informó Jacques Lacan el otro día, se puede sospechar desde ya que se trata de un tic nervioso.” [As Jacques Lacan told me the other day, one can suspect from now that it is a nervous tic] (Adiós, Robinson 150). Perhaps, Lacan’s name indicates that Cortázar’s characters are playing their roles in a symbolic stage dominated by the discourse of the master. It is evident, however, that the nervous tic is a symptom of Friday’s anxiety, which is caused by his condition of subjugation vis-à-vis his master. Friday’s nervous tic is also a transference of the slave’s rebellious impulse, since the laugh anticipates the transgression which will occur at the end of the radio-play: Friday will call Robinson by his first name, refusing to call him master. When Friday refuses to call Robinson “master,” Robinson questions the authority of Friday’s speech: “¿Quién te autorizó para que me llames por mi nombre de pila? ¿Y qué es eso del cambio?” [“Who authorized you to call me by my first name? And what are you talking about when you refer to a change?”]
radio play, it is possible to suggest that the collective force that Cortázar’s Friday assigns to the name of Juan Fernández has been transferred to the Juanas (mother and daughter) of Guzmán’s film. One could argue that Island of Robinson Crusoe offers a feminine version of Cortázar’s collective force and a political revision of Cortázar’s very well known machismo, a machismo which is expressed in his novel Rayuela when he characterizes passive readers as “lector-hembra” or “female reader” (614). Guzmán’s portrait of Juanita as the Chilean reader of Defoe's classic could be conceived of as a critical revision of Cortázar’s masculinist notion of the reader and of his vision of Juan Fernández as a masculinist collective utopia.

Cortázar’s Juan and Guzmán’s Juana are haunted by the conception of the name given by Sarmiento in a chronicle of his visit to “Más-A-Fuera”, today Island of Alexander Selkirk. Sarmiento’s “Más-A-Fuera,” included in Viajes por Europa, África i

(168). Friday responds with another question: “¿Por qué crees Robinson que esta isla se llama Juan Fernández?” [“Robinson, why do you think that this island is called after Juan Fernández?”] (168). Then, Friday explains: “Juan Fernández es el nombre más común, más vulgar que podrías encontrar en lengua castellana. […] Y por eso no suena como un nombre de individuo sino de multitud, un nombre de pueblo, el nombre del hombre cualunque, del jederman” (168). [Juan Fernández is the more common and vulgar name that one can find in the Spanish language. That is why it does not sound like a name of an individual but the name of a multitude, the name of a people, the name of the uomo qualunque, of the jederman] Later, when Robinson expresses his desire to stay in the archipelago of Juan Fernández, Friday replies: “Demasiado tarde para ti y tus tuyos, pobre Robinson Crusoe, pobre Alejandro Selkirk, pobre Daniel Defoe, no hay sitio para los naufragos de la historia, para los amos del polvo y el humo, para los herederos de la nada” (170). [Too late for you and your men, poor Robinson Crusoe, poor Alexander Selkirk, poor Daniel Defoe, there is no place for the shipwrecked of history, for the masters of dust and smoke, for the inheritors of nothingness][And then Friday adds: “Mi verdadero nombre no es Viernes, aunque nunca te preocupaste por saberlo. Prefiero llamarme yo también Juan Fernández, junto con millones y millones de Juan Fernández que se reconocen como nos reconocimos Plátano y yo, y que empiezan a marchar juntos por la vida” (170). [My real name is not Friday, but you never worried about knowing it. I prefer to call myself after Juan Fernández, as well as millions and millions of Juan Fernández who can recognize themselves like Plátano and I recognized ourselves, and begin to march together through life].

25 Oliveira, one of the characters that appear in Cortázar’s Rayuela, refers to the idea of “lector-hembra” in relation to the destruction of literature: “¿Para qué sirve un escritor si no para destruir la literatura? Y nosotros, que no queremos ser lectores-hembra, ¿para qué servimos si no para ayudar en lo posible a esa destrucción?” (614) [“What is the use of a writer if it is not for the destruction of literature? And us, who don’t want to be female-readers, what are we useful for if it is not to help in that destruction?"]. In Guzmán’s film, neither the writer nor the reader, as Oliveira suggests, are responsible for the destruction of literature. It is rather Daniel, the tourist guide turned storyteller, the one who conducts the movement towards the destruction of literature, but in doing so, it adds a poetic twist to the film that is similar to the one that Oliveira adds into Cortázar’s novel.
América (1849), is a letter sent to Demetrio Peña in Montevideo and dated December 14, 1845. In this letter, Sarmiento offers an autobiographical chronicle that is similar to Guzmán’s film: both Sarmiento and Guzmán narrate the events that they experience on the island with the help of the powers of the false. They constantly affirm the reality of the figure of Robinson Crusoe by deemphasizing on the figure of Alexander Selkirk in their texts. But this lack of attention is only a trick to intensify the surprise of the revelation. As we have previously discussed, Guzmán’s film ends with the revelation of the name of Alexander Selkirk as the historical character who supposedly inspired Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe. In the case of Sarmiento, the ghost of Alexander Selkirk also reappears at the end. Sarmiento closes his letter referring to the inscription of his proper name on a tree, a sort of signature that, although Sarmiento does not explain its origin, was performed by Alexander Selkirk (according to Woodes Rogers’s historical account). This secret reference to the practice of name inscription originated by Selkirk perhaps has something to do with what Sarmiento proposes at the beginning of his chronicle when he considers the political secret of names as magic.

Para emprender la proyectada partida de caza, debíamos dejar nuestro calzado i reemplazarlo por uno de cuero de cabra ceñido al pie, con el ausilio de una gareta artisticamente preparada; calzado a la Robinson Crusoe, según nos complacíamos todos en llamarlo, a fin de cohonestar con una palabra noble, la innoble y bastarda forma que daba a nuestros pies. Este secreto de los nombres es mágico, como usted sabe, en política sobre todo [...]. (21)

26 This is the passage in which Sarmiento evokes the spectral signature of Alexander Selkirk: “Por él supimos demasiado tarde que en un árbol estaban inscritos más de veinte nombres de viajeros. Acaso hubiéramos tenido el placer al verlos, de quitamos religiosamente nuestros gorros de mar en presencia del de Cook i de los de sus compañeros. Pero ya que esto no nos fuese dado, encargámose gravase al pie de una roca, ad perpetuam rei memoriam, los de HUELIN. SOLARES. SARMIENTO. 1845” (Sarmiento, “Más-A-Fuera” 28). [By him we knew too late that there were more than twenty names of voyagers inscribed on a tree. Perhaps we would have the pleasure of seeing them, of take off our sea hats religiously in the presence of Cook’s and his companion’s names. But because this opportunity was not given to us, we ask him to carve at the foot of a rock, ad perpetuam rei memoriam, the names of HUELIN. SOLARES. SARMIENTO. 1845]. Sarmiento’s episode evokes the signature of Alexander Selkirk inscribed in the trees that Woodes Rogers recalls in his historical account: “And he had conquer’d his Melancholy. he diverted himself sometimes by cutting his Name on the Trees and the Time of his being left and Continuance there” (Rogers “Account of Alexander Selkirk,” Robinson Crusoe 233).
In order to proceed with the hunting, we had to leave our shoes and replace them with goatskin shoes very tight to our feet, with the aid of an artistically prepared tie; shoes à la Robinson Crusoe, as we delighted in calling them in order to cover up, with a noble word, the not-so-noble and bastard form that these shoes gave to our feet. This secret of the names is magical, as you may know, in politics above all [...].

For Sarmiento, the secret of the names is magical, especially in politics, because it gives a noble appearance to something that in reality is not noble at all. However, as is made evident in Sarmiento’s narrative, access to the secret of the names is achieved through a sort of magic, the magic of being in someone else’s shoes. That is why at the end of his chronicle, Sarmiento’s signature unfolds the secret power of Selkirk’s name in order to break the magic spell of Robinson Crusoe. In many ways, Guzmán’s documentary evokes Sarmiento’s notion of the political secret of names as a form of magic that depend on putting the narrator as well as other characters in someone else’s shoes.

Guzmán’s Juanas refer to the collective force explored by Marx and Cortázar in their re-elaborations of Robinson Crusoe. In Marx, the collective is a force of production. In Cortázar, the collective is a force of liberation. In Guzmán, the collective force of Juana/Juanita could be linked to what Spivak has referred to as affectively necessary labor in her essay “Scattered Speculations on the Question of Value” (162-63). Guzmán evokes affective labor-time when he explains that Juanita has moved from Santiago to the Island of Robinson Crusoe in order to spend more time with her daughter Vicky. In comparison with Marx’s and Cortázar’s collective force (a utopian impulse that liberates from oppression and exploitation), however, the impulse of Juanita in Guzmán’s film is more ambiguous because it also operates as an entrepreneurial force. Guzmán evokes the time for doing business when he explains that Juanita’s new project is to develop a
touristic enterprise on the Island of Robinson Crusoe. Juanita is therefore a mother, but also a female subject ready to do business with the fiction of Robinson Crusoe.

Guzmán’s Juanita appears to be reconfiguring the role of Susan in Coetzee’s *Foe*. Both Susan and Juanita are mothers, but Juanita, in contrast to Susan, no longer claims to be the witness and co-author of the story. Rather, Juanita is the reader who tries to take commercial advantage of Defoe’s classic. One would therefore have to ask if reading becomes liberation or self-exploitation in the case of Juanita. Is Juanita’s reading of *Robinson Crusoe* a form of pleasure or a way of doing business? Perhaps, the political secret of Juanita is that it takes its name from Marx’s and Cortázar’s noble cause in order to cover up something that is not noble at all: the commercialization of Robinson Crusoe that Susan tries to capitalize upon in Coetzee’s *Foe*.27

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27 In 2002, Américas, a journal published by the American Organization of States, reported that the myth of Robinson Crusoe was about to change in Chile: “Pero se halla en proceso de surgir una nueva y diferente mitología en las islas. Durante los últimos cinco años, el industrial estadounidense Bernard Keiser ha estado tratando de encontrar un tesoro enterrado en la isla de Robinson Crusoe en un lugar llamado la cueva de Robinson Crusoe. Supuestamente posee documentos que prueban que un cargamento de oro azteca llevado desde México en 1714 por el capitán español Juan Esteban Ubilla y Echevarría, que se dice que contenía 846 barriles de lingotes de oro y otros objetos con un valor de 10,000 millones de dólares, pasó a manos de piratas ingleses que enterraron el tesoro en la isla. Con la autorización oficial del Consejo de Monumentos Chilenos, Keiser ha estado excavando y gastando su propio dinero en el proyecto. Los isleños se muestran escépticos, y no todos ellos prefieren recurrir al pico y la pala en vez de vestirse con pieles de cabra y pasearse con un loro sobre el hombro. (Werner, “Tras los pasos del verdadero Robinson Crusoe” 29) [A new and different mythology is in the process of emerging in the islands. For the last five years, American business man Bernard Keiser has been trying to find a buried treasure on the island of Robinson Crusoe, at a site known as the cave of Robinson Crusoe. Apparently, Keiser possesses some documents proving that a cargo of Aztec gold taken from Mexico in 1714 by Spanish Captain Juan Esteban Ubilla y Echevarría, containing 846 barrels of gold and other objects with an estimated value of $10,000 millions, passed to the hands of English pirates who buried the treasure on the island. With the authorization of the Chilean Monument’s Council, Keiser have been digging and spending his money in this project. The islanders are exceptic, and not all of them prefer to take a shovel instead of getting dressed in goatskin and walk around with a parrot in their shoulders]. This passage confirms that another not so noble cause could be condensed under the name of Indiana Jones, the name that Guzmán gives to Daniel, the tourist guide: Bernard Keiser’s adventures in treasure hunting at a site known as the cave of Robinson Crusoe. Although Guzmán visits a site known as the cave of Robinson Crusoe, he does not explore it in connection to Keiser’s archeological and financial adventure. Guzmán’s figuration of the cave as a modern apartment may indicate a sort of unconscious reference to speculation. In the cave sequence, speculation is represented through an illustration of Crusoe’s dream of the savages, an oniric speculation that appears in Defoe’s novel in order to reconcile with the arrival of Friday. As I will argue later, the inclusion of Crusoe’s dream of the savages in the cave sequence serves as an allegory of military terror, a dream-like image guarding the sleep of Chilean neoliberal society. Perhaps when Guzmán presents Crusoe’s dream of the savages he may be evoking speculation as a dream-image that not only refers to the ties between military terror and Chilean
4.11 “Is not big deal”: The Specter of Robinson Crusoe Haunting Chile

After analyzing the market of equivalences that articulates Guzmán’s powers of the false in Island of Robinson Crusoe, it is important to consider that, for Guzmán, it is not enough to show that the “specter of the commodity is at work in use-value” (Derrida, Specters of Marx 151). This is precisely the same critique that Spivak makes in her essay “Ghostwriting” against Derrida’s notion of value in Specters of Marx.

It is no great discovery to say that the ‘specter of the commodity is at work in use-value’ [SM 151]. In fact, nowhere is this more evident than in labor in its form of appearance as labor-power. If anything is ‘proper to man,’ it is the potential for this peculiar commodification: to create exchange-value in use. […] [V]alue is a form of appearance that makes a thing susceptible to abstraction. I am not suggesting this is a more ‘deconstructive’ way of thinking. It is just that Derrida seems to be beating the wrong Marx and reinventing the wheel when he points out that exchange (and therefore the ghost) is implicit in use. If that ‘imminence’ were not ‘proper to man,’ there would be no socialism. Marx wants us to use the ghostliness in man for socialism. The ghost is the rational. (“Ghostwriting” 75)

On the one hand, what Guzmán’s documentary shows through the actions and statements of real characters is that the ghostliness that man extracts from rational figures as Marx’s Crusoe could open the promise of socialism. Robinson Crusoe could open the promise of socialism in Chile even for those collective forces trapped in the realm of tourism, even for those islanders who, according to Guzmán, appear to gain their collective identity from their links to Pinochetism. In that sense, Island of Robinson Crusoe is a documentary about reconciliation because it projects the promise of neoliberalism, but also to Keiser’s neocolonial adventure, that of the archeologist looking for a treasure that would guarantee his financial success. Keiser as a speculator and treasure hunter could be conceived of in connection to Derrida’s comments on “Commerce and theater of gravediggers” that appears in Specters of Marx: “In Marx’s funerary rhetoric, ‘useless metal’ of the treasure once buried becomes like the burnt out ashes … of circulation, like its caput mortuum, its chemical residue. In his wild imaginings, in his nocturnal delirium … the miser, the hoarder, the speculator becomes a martyr to exchange value. He now refrains from exchange because he dreams of a pure exchange. (46). Later Derrida adds that “[s]peculation is always fascinated, bewitched by the specter” (46). Since Keiser’s dream is a speculative development of the English pirate’s speculative fantasy, Keiser, following the pirate’s destiny, “becomes a martyr to exchange value” “because he dreams of a pure exchange.”
socialism through the spectral labor of its enemies. On the other hand, what Guzmán's film shows is that “simply to see the relations of production clearly,” as Crusoe and some of the real characters of the film do, “is not big deal.” It is not enough to follow Crusoe as a role model or to achieve his understanding of production. In addition to seeing the relations of production clearly, it is necessary to create a political alliance with the specter of Robinson Crusoe in order to socialize his spectral powers. In that sense, *Island of Robinson Crusoe* reveals Marx’s point according to Spivak:

Marx’s point is that simply to see the relations of production clearly is not big deal; if you look at earlier modes, in fact, like the feudal **corvée**, or the patriarchal family, you see the relationship clearly as well. The first example is Robinson Crusoe, to demonstrate that the relations of production can be known even in a situation of ‘pure’ use-value: Man in Nature [discussed at greater length in Native Informant]. In the socialist mode of production, on the other hand, it is not just that the relations of production become clear, but that private labor, socialized and therefore spectralized … by capitalism, has associated … so that the specter of the social can work at socialism […]. (“Ghostwriting” 76)

As is shown in *Island of Robinson Crusoe*, the promise of socialism in Chile is not foreclosed because the social has been spectralized, but because the collective forces have not being able to create a political alliance with their social spectrality in order to wake up from the phantasmagoria of capital. Guzmán exposes the process of commodification that affects the image of Robinson Crusoe in Chile in order to explore the failure of Chilean society to create a political alliance with the spectral promise of Marx’s Crusoe. The touristic impulse of the real characters that appear in *Island of Robinson Crusoe* traverse the collective force of Marx’s association of free men. In the end Guzmán presents the total impotence of the islander’s collective labor force when he transforms them into tourists consuming of their own landscape as phantasmagoria. The transformation of the islanders’s collective labor force into a deceptive image of Marx’s utopian collectivization (the association of free men) could be considered as a
chance for Guzmán to wake up from a social phantasmagoria of Chile, a country that has transferred its spectrality to capital. The specter of Robinson Crusoe that haunts the actions and statements of the real characters in Guzmán’s film serves as an allegory of the defeated specter of the social that “can work at socialism,” but instead prefers to sell its spectral and social force in a free market economy.

4.12 “Un cristal irremediablemente herido”: Landscape and Phantasmagoria

The spectral appearance of Robinson Crusoe haunts Guzmán’s subjective space and the filmmaker himself confesses this in the island episode: “la imagen de Robinson Crusoe me persigue” [“the image of Robinson Crusoe persecutes me”]. The spectral metamorphoses of Robinson Crusoe also saturate the social space in unexpected ways, but this very social space has already become a phantasmagoric image. The culture of the image that saturates Chile becomes an allegory of social totality. After arriving in the city of Santiago and before starting his quest for the traces of Robinson Crusoe in Chile, Guzmán shows us a vision of the urban landscape of Santiago. This vision of the city ends up being an image coming from a postcard. Once Guzmán removes the postcard with his fingers, the next image that comes to the screen reveals the new landscape of Santiago. In the first image of the city of Santiago that Guzmán presents, the one coming from the postcard, the sky is crystal clear and the brilliant colors of the urban landscape create a beautiful contrast with the dark blue tone of the Andes that appears in the background. In contrast to the crystal clear sky in the first image, the sky in the second image is full of smog and the urban landscape projects a grey and foggy look that completely erases the view of the Andes. While the transparency of the sky of Santiago in the postcard could be taken as the promise of transparency made by the
image, this very transparency is deceptive once it comes to represent social totality: it erases the grey zones of that reality which it is called to represent.

By exposing the image of the city as both promising and deceptive, Guzmán seems to be doing two things: he is making us aware of the utopian impact of the image in society and he is warning us about the fraudulent status of the image in a social totality saturated by it. It is crucial to read the allegorical dispersal of Robinson Crusoe in Chile against the poles of promise and deception.²⁸ In that sense, the metamorphoses of Robinson Crusoe in Chile become allegorical because his fragmented image stands as the ruin of the many wish-images of a collective dream: it points to the hope of socialism (and its collapse) as well as to the triumph of the culture of transparency imposed by neoliberalism in Chile. Guzmán explores the allegorical dispersal of Robinson Crusoe in a regressive path that leads to the phantasmagoria of the image from which Chilean society has to wake up. Guzmán represents this phantasmagoria, in all its transparency and in all its foggy ambiguity, at the end of his visits to Neruda’s house, when he ends the episode with a close-up shot that shows the shadowy reflection of the city of Santiago as it becomes visible from one of the windows of the poet’s mansion. Guzmán’s exploration of the shadowy phantasmagoria of the city as it becomes an image reflected in Neruda’s glass window constitutes an emblematic gesture that reveals one of Island of Robinson Crusoe’s models of memory: Neruda’s own conception of memory in Confieso que he vivido.

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²⁸ Rolf Tiedemann’s discussion of Benjamin’s “phantasmagoria” and “dialectical image” in his essay “Dialectics at a Standstill” (The Arcades Project 929-945) is very useful. Tiedemann offers a definition of phantasmagoria which is pertinent here: “Phantasmagoria: a Blendwerk, a deceptive image designed to dazzle, is already the commodity itself, in which the exchange value and value-form hides the use value. Phantasmagoria is the whole capitalist production process, which constitutes itself as a natural force against the people who carry it out” (938).
Estas memorias o recuerdos son intermitentes y a ratos olvidadizos porque así precisamente es la vida. La intermitencia del sueño nos permite sostener los días de trabajo. Muchos de mis recuerdos se han desdibujado al evocarlos, han devenido en polvo como un cristal irremediablemente herido. Las memorias del memorialista no son las memorias del poeta. Aquél vivió tal vez menos, pero fotografió mucho más y nos recrea con la pulcritud de los detalles. Este nos entrega una galería de fantasmas sacudidos por el fuego y la sombra de su época. (21)

These memories or remembrances are intermittent and at times oblivious because that is how life is. The intermittency of the dream allows us to sustain the days of work. Many of my remembrances have been undrawn as I evoke them, and they have become dust as a glass irremediably wounded. The memories of the memorialist are not the memories of the poet. That one lived perhaps less, but he photographed much more and recreates us with the pulchritude of details. This one delivers us a gallery of ghosts shaken by the fire and the shadow of their own epoch.

Perhaps Neruda’s window is that “glass irremediably wounded” that projects the Chilean present as a “gallery of ghosts shaken by the fire and the shadow of their own epoch.” It is perhaps along this line that we should understand Guzmán’s vision of Robinson Crusoe: a flashing sign projecting the promising and deceptive phantasmagoria that the Nerudian memorialist captures when he tries to remember what has happened through “the intermittency of the dream.”

Taken as a sign of promising and deceptive phantasmagoria, the allegorical dispersion unraveled in Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe (modeled on Neruda’s conception of memory as a “glass irremediably wounded” by “the intermittency of the dream”), could also be understood if we analyze Guzmán’s exploration of the Chilean landscape along the lines of Patricio Marchant’s critique of Neruda’s conception of landscape. Marchant argues that the political reality constituted by Neruda’s poetry ended up distorting the Chilean historical process since it aspired to extract a projection of the future destiny of the nation in the discovery of the beauty of the landscape that poetry unveiled. For Marchant:
La historia desmiente con una brutalidad inesperada al poeta chileno; la realidad geográfica –esa realidad humana– apareció como escena del horror y del crimen. Toma de conciencia de la densidad de la historia, conciencia que la “pura belleza” de Chile tan celebrada por Neruda sólo existía en sus libros … De la Cordillera al Pacífico, la tierra chilena se convirtió en un inmenso campo de concentración o, lo que es peor, en una tierra de hombres derrotados. Ilusión –subjetivismo– de la “invención poética” de Chile y de Latinoamérica. A diferencia de Gabriela Mistral, el “poeta materialista” también participaba de esa ilusión, aunque de una manera distinta de la ideología oficial. (“‘Atópicos’, ‘Etc.’ e ‘Indios Espirituales,’” Escritura y Temblor 410)

History disproved the Chilean poet with unexpected brutality; the geographic reality –that human reality– appeared as a scene of horror and crime. Raising of consciousness of the historical density, consciousness that the “pure beauty” of Chile so much celebrated by Neruda existed only in his books … From the mountains to the Pacific, the Chilean land became an immense concentration camp, or something worse, a land of defeated men. Illusion –subjectivism– of the “poetical invention” of Chile and Latin America. In contrast to Gabriela Mistral, [Neruda] the “materialist poet” also participated in this illusion, although in a way very different from the official ideology’s conception of it. (trans. mine)

According to Marchant, Neruda’s delusion lay in unveiling the beauty of the Chilean landscape in his poems and then in making both the beauty of the landscape and the beauty of his poems pass as a way of raising man’s historical consciousness. For Marchant, however, the moment of true consciousness comes once we recognize that the “pure beauty” of Chile existed only in Neruda’s books. While Marchant’s critique of Neruda’s conception of landscape is powerful, there still exists in it an element of that which he criticizes: Marchant, as well as Neruda, seems to equate landscape and man. In spite of the fact that Marchant unveils Neruda’s illusory landscape, Marchant’s own conception of the Chilean landscape as a real landscape in which we can come to see man’s defeat does not break with the mechanism it critiques. For both Neruda and Marchant, the question of landscape can only be responded to in relation to man. In other words, for both of them there is no landscape if it is not at the same time an anthropomorphic projection: in their perspectives, something like a non-human landscape does not exist. Since Marchant’s vision of landscape opens the possibility for
questioning the concept of man when it comes to show man’s defeat, however, it is possible to conceive of Marchant’s landscape anthropomorphism as one that tends to open the possibility of considering the non-human in man as the very sign of man’s defeat. Guzmán’s *Island of Robinson Crusoe* precisely explores this non-human aspect of man’s defeat as it appears in the landscape and the seascape of Chile in order to evoke the transformations that took place in his country: the triumph of neoliberalism after the repressive collapse of socialism.

4.13 “*El mar está peligroso*”: Seascape as Derealization

The non-human aspect of man’s defeat is the appearance of nature as commodity. Guzmán evokes man’s defeat as a process that involves the commodification of nature when he explores the image of the sea. After confronting problems in the airport, Guzmán goes to Valparaiso looking for a ship that will take him to the Island of Robinson Crusoe.

Me voy a Valparaiso para tratar de que un barco me lleve a la isla. Me siento mucho más seguro en barco. Sin embargo, me dicen que en estas fechas no hay ninguna goleta disponible, porque el mar está peligroso.

I depart to Valparaiso to see if I can find a ship that would take me to the island. I feel safer in a ship. However, some people tell me that there are no ships available on these dates because the sea is dangerous.

As he describes (in his voiceover narration) his intentions of finding a ship in Valparaiso because he feels safer traveling by sea, the screen shows the Valparaiso’s port landscape full of ships. But then Guzmán affirms that there are no ships available. At this point, we discover that the image in the screen is nothing but a postcard of the Port of Valparaiso filmed in a close up shot. Then comes a tilt down from the postcard of the Port of Valparaiso to another postcard showing a series of images taken at the
Island of Robinson Crusoe. It is then that we understand why Guzmán was not able to find a ship: the ships are all captured in the phantasmagoria of the image, which itself operates as a wish-image of the unreachable.

The reality and utility of the means of transportation have been transformed into a snapshot that condemns Guzmán to contemplative paralysis. The shock provoked by discovering that the Valparaiso Port’s seascape is a still image is intensified once Guzmán reveals the reason why the ships are not available in this time of the year: “some people tell me that there are no ships available on these dates because the sea is dangerous.” The dangerous sea that frustrates Guzmán’s travel plans is not the natural and real sea but the phantasmagoric sea trapped in the postcard. This dangerous sea is an allegory of the non-human aspect of man’s defeat: the commodification of nature.

The dangerous sea also serves as a comment about the triumph of neoliberalism in Chile. Later on, when thinking about Robinson’s capacity to navigate around his island, Guzmán will refer to the sea as “treacherous.” As we all know, the development of capitalism is closely tied to the development of the sea as a channel of transportation. The sea was the first channel that made commodity exchange as a global enterprise possible. Apart from serving as a symbol of commerce, the sea in Chile is also associated with military repression: those who opposed the imposition of free-market economy in Chile were thrown to the sea by Pinochet’s secret service in various state-sponsored terrorist operations.29 Taken as an allegory of commodity exchange and

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29 The sea as an allegory of free trade and military repression, and as a site for the extermination of those opposed to free-market economy, could be analyzed along the lines of Anna Neill’s description of Grotius’s doctrines in The Defense of the Sea (1608). In her essay “Crusoe’s Farther Adventures: Discovery, Trade, and the Law of Nations,” Neill explains that: “This designation of ocean as the common property of all coincides with another positive (secondary) law of nature, which recognizes that, although all things were originally given to all human beings in common, men living far apart from one another rely on commerce to provide them with many of the goods which they need or desire. […] This suggests that what remains under the jurisdiction of the primitive law of nations—that which is held in common by all men—is entirely encased in
military repression, the sea in the postcard operates as a ruin pointing to historical catastrophe: its dangerous and treacherous character exposes the collapse of socialism by projecting the triumph of the culture of amnesia in neoliberal Chile. This culture of amnesia promotes a non-historical image of nature to declare the end of history as a sort of new beginning that becomes ready for touristic consumption. The best example of this culture of amnesia is certainly the Chilean iceberg exhibited at the Seville Expo 1992.

While the sea in the postcard projects the culture of amnesia in neoliberal Chile, Guzmán refers to the sea as “dangerous” and “treacherous” in order to denounce the complicity of this neoliberal culture of amnesia with the military repression responsible for the collapse of socialism. 30

the secondary law [a law that “involves the modern distinction of ownership … both as private and public property’] which seeks above all to protect commercial relations between both individuals and states. Only nations in the positive sense are fully respectful of natural law. It is at this point that we can return to the claim that a people who are “incapable of political or commercial intercourse” cannot be recognized as beneficiaries of cosmopolitan right. Those who subscribe to the primitive law of nations [“under which everything is acquired in common and held as a community of goods’] are not properly speaking nations at all” (217-18). At the end of her article, Neill offers a transcoded version of this argument in the terms of Defoe’s The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe (1719). “The Crusoe who acted in this episode, as he did in the island, as master, judge, civilizer, and protective father, has been replaced in the later half of the novel by a merchant figure whose attitude toward the Tartars is determined by his contempt for subjugated peoples who live in an isolated state of nature and who are incapable of communication or commerce with other nations. […] The law of the nations into which Crusoe is educated in the course of the novel belongs to an enlightenment historicization of culture according to which those peoples capable of commercial intercourse are legitimate members of the community of nations, while those who are not are criminals against nature who cannot be bearers of right. To subjugate such peoples and to set oneself up as their absolute ruler and master is to become denationalized and dangerously removed from commercial culture. To make war on isolated savages and pagans in the name of cosmopolitan right and the freedom of trade, however, is to be at once profitable, lawful, and in the most strictly modern sense, English (228-29). Neill’s reading of Crusoe as a merchant figure in Defoe’s Farther Adventures could serve to articulate one of the darkest sides of the Pinochet’s neoliberalism: those opposed to free trade are condemned to die in the sea, that “common property of all’ that, ironically, serves to expand free trade. Under Crusoe’s and Pinochet’s commercial/cosmopolitan frame of mind, business becomes the only human activity that defines who deserves to live and who deserves to die. In that sense, the sea as channel of commercial exchange and also as a means of human extermination serves to perpetuate inequality and exclusion in a cosmopolitan world that is not cosmopolitan enough.

Up to a point, Guzmán’s vision of the sea as “dangerous” and “treacherous” recalls the “new myth about the ‘meaning’ of life and the absurdity of human existence in the face of a malevolent Nature” that Jameson, in The Political Unconscious, associates with Conrad’s Lord Jim. Jameson argues that: “These two strategies—ressentiment and existentializing metaphysics—allow Conrad to recontext his narrative and to rework it in melodramatic terms, in a subsystem of good and evil which now once again has villains and heroes. So it is no accident that Jim’s first experience of the violence of the sea is at once coded for us in existential terms, the sea, the source of this mindless violence, becoming the great adversary of Man, in
Guzmán explores the simulational appearance of this non-historical vision of nature when he visits the Valparaiso aquarium. Here, referring to the island’s deep-sea fauna and flora, Guzmán declares:

Robinson es un museo viviente, con especies únicas, que no existen en ninguna otra parte. Durante millones de años, estos seres han crecido sin contacto con el mundo exterior y todo esto me parece interesante.

Robinson is a living museum, with unique species that do not exist in any other part of the world. For millions of years, these creatures have existed without any contact with the exterior world and I find all this very interesting.

While Guzmán affirms in the voiceover that the island's living creatures are unique, what the visual track shows is not the creatures's uniqueness but their lifeless duplicity. Some of the images that duplicate the deep-sea fauna and flora of the Island of Robinson Crusoe in the aquarium are either dissected creatures or plastic replicas located inside water tanks. Guzmán also presents some posters containing drawings of the various fish species that live in the waters that surround the Island of Robinson Crusoe. The transitory and inorganic status of the island's deep sea fauna and flora presented in the visual track contrast with the archaic and almost eternal character of the habitat described by Guzmán in his voiceover narration. The discrepancy between the eternal image of the island’s deep sea fauna and flora in Guzmán's voiceover narration and the transitory status of that same fauna and flora appearing as images evokes Benjamin’s idea that “allegory established itself most permanently where transitoriness and eternity confronted each other most closely” (The Origin of German Tragic Drama 224).

much the same way that Camus’ vision of absurdity rewrites an essential non-human nature into an anthropomorphic character [...] (216). Guzmán escapes from Conrad's melodramatic characterization of the sea at the end of the film, when he rediscovers the sea in its messianic "non-human nature."
The discrepancy between Guzmán’s voiceover narration, affirming the habitat’s eternal separation from the rest of the world, and the film’s visible evidence, exposing the transitoriness of the island’s habitat after it becomes an image, reveals itself as an allegorical operation once it becomes evident that Guzmán’s “false narration” of what he sees allow us to understand better what we see. Whether or not the living creatures that occupy the island’s deep-sea habitat can establish some contact with the real world is something that cannot be confirmed. That is why Guzmán’s voiceover operates as a “false narration,” because it projects a crisis of truth that affects the way we understand the past as not necessarily true. However, Guzmán’s “false narration” also affects the way we understand the present since actuality is composed as the incongruity between the sound track and visual track. This disjuncture points to the incompatible habitat of the imaginary creatures imprisoned in the images of a “living museum.” In that sense, it is possible to understand that the living creatures are not necessarily those without contact with the external world. Rather, it is the simulacra of living nature as it finds its habitat in the realm of the image that lacks contact with the external world, the same world in which it circulates as trapped phantasmagoria.

Up to a point, the deceptive simulation of the sea projected in the postcard and in Guzmán’s visit to the aquarium corresponds to the Sartrean conception of the image as derealization, which Jameson defines as “a message transmitted by the quality of the image, rather than its structural implication.” In other words, the image is “a message transmitted by the unreal or derealized quality of the image, which consists in very precisely that unreality and that provisional aestheticism” (Geopolitical Aesthetic 208). We should not miss that Guzmán’s derealized images of the sea, in fact, have strong structural implications since their messages of unreality are transmitted in order to put
the film’s narrative transparency into crisis. The derealized image of the sea that Guzmán presents in Island of Robinson Crusoe could also correspond to the deceptive contemplation of the sea evoked by Neruda when he refers to himself as an amateur of the sea: “Yo soy un amateur del mar. Desde hace años colecciono conocimientos que no me sirven de mucho porque navego sobre la tierra” (Confieso que he vivido 263) [I am an amateur of the sea. For many years, I have been collecting knowledge that has not served me so much because I navigate over land]. Guzmán’s insistence on the simulative character of the sea may confirm Neruda’s own sense of frustration when he realizes that there is no way of obtaining any knowledge from collected items belonging to the culture of the sea. Neruda’s eclipsed vision suggests that the only result achieved by the collectible items coming from the sea is the perpetuation of the sea as derealization.

4.14 “Parece que nos ha tocado esta coincidencia”: “unseen Dangers”

The sea surrounding the island determines Robinson’s insular existence and Guzmán associates the sea with danger and betrayal:

Me pregunto como se las arreglaba Robinson Crusoe con este mar, que me parece muy traicionero.

I ask myself: how Robinson dealt with this sea, which appears to be so treacherous?

The idea of the sea as dangerous and treacherous in Defoe’s novel comes from the fact that the sea is the channel that gives other human beings access to the island. This channel becomes a threat to Crusoe’s personal security. For Crusoe, the arrival of other men does not necessarily mean the arrival of friends but could also mean the arrival of enemies. Guzmán himself puts it very accurately when he declares: “Que rara
experiencia! Tener dolor por la ausencia de los hombres y tener, al mismo tiempo, miedo de ellos” [What a strange experience! Feeling pain for the absence of men and at the same time being afraid of them]. Guzmán makes this statement just before he has the idea of imitating the footprint, a ritual that transforms the filmmaker into a savage and a threat to Crusoe, but also opens the possibility of a future friendship. Once Guzmán imitates the footprint, Robinson’s strange encounter becomes a familiar experience for Guzmán and his analysis of Crusoe’s reaction to the footprint could be taken as an allegory of the tragedy of the Chilean nation: “feeling pain for the absence of men and at the same time being afraid of them.” Robinson’s strange experience (the ambivalent promise of the footprint) becomes a national allegory in Guzmán’s re-elaboration of the myth because it articulates the anxiety provoked by the division of Chilean political space according to Carl Schmitt’s opposition between friend and enemy. At the moment in which Guzmán filmed Island of Robinson Crusoe, those feeling pain for the absence of the disappeared in Chile were afraid of the military forces, and Pinochet’s absence from Chile was a pain in the ass for the military forces who were also afraid of the return of the disappeared since their corpses could serve as evidence proving their crimes.

In Defoe’s novel, Crusoe conceives of all the threats to his personal security as threats to his sovereign power over the island’s territory. Crusoe’s political abilities include making friends out of his “subjects” (Friday, Friday’s father and the Spanish mariner) once he helps each of them to escape from the savages. The place of the enemy in Defoe’s novel is first occupied by the dangerous savages and then by the treacherous mariners who organized the mutiny against the English Captain. Guzmán projects these sources of danger and treachery into the verbal image of the sea that he creates in his narration. According to Guzmán’s account:
Robinson Crusoe vivió rodeado de incontables peligros. Sin embargo, todos estos peligros venían de afuera.

Robinson Crusoe lived surrounded by innumerable dangers (but also ‘untold dangers’). However, all these dangers came from the outside.

The sea is treacherous because it is the channel of “unseen Dangers” coming from the outside (Defoe, Robinson Crusoe 127). Guzmán associates the image of the sea with the dangerous return of the savages.

En el libro, Robinson miró el horizonte para ver a los salvajes, ellos podrían volver en cualquier momento.

In the book, Robinson looks at the horizon to watch for the savages, since they could come back at any moment.

And he shows an illustration of Crusoe as he looks at the sea with his telescope and then cuts to a shot in which the real sea of the Island of Robinson Crusoe appears. The montage sequence suggests a visual collapse: Crusoe’s vision of the sea, suggested by the book illustration, becomes Guzmán’s view of it. Moreover, at the end of the pan shot showing Guzmán’s view of the sea, the camera reaches a ship, as if suggesting the presence of the savages. As we see later, those outsiders who arrive at the Island of Robinson Crusoe in Guzmán’s documentary are the Chilean naval forces.

Tenemos una gran sorpresa cuando vemos entrar, en la bahía, un barco de guerra en este lugar tan tranquilo. Le preguntamos a los isleños si saben porque ha venido. Ellos nos dicen que la armada chilena, una vez al año, viene aquí para hacer maniobras, siempre en fechas diferentes. Parece que nos ha tocado esta coincidencia.

We have a great surprise when we see a war ship entering into the bay of such a peaceful place. We ask the islanders if they know why this war ship has arrived. They tell us that once a year the Chilean naval forces come here to practice military maneuvers, always on different dates. It seems that this coincidence has fallen among us.

By associating the arrival of the Chilean naval forces with Crusoe’s visual perspective when he searches for the savages in the sea, Guzmán links the crimes of
the savages to the crimes of the Chilean military forces. As Guzmán’s voiceover narration suggests, both the savages and the Chilean naval forces can arrive at the island at any given moment. This coincidence has fallen among them after touching Guzmán: “Parece que nos ha tocado esta coincidencia.” Guzmán also associates the arrival of the Chilean naval forces with the mutineers when, after describing their ships, he comments that “Robinson los hubiera confundido con la flota española, o con piratas” [Robinson would have confused them with the Spanish or with pirates].

The representation of the Chilean naval forces in the context of Guzmán’s documentary could be conceptualized as a condensation of the two sources of external danger opposed to Crusoe in Defoe’s novel: the savages and the mutineers. The plot of the mutineers against the English Captain could be transcoded in order to explain the coup of 1973 in Chile (the plot of the military junta): Allende (the Captain) is betrayed by the military forces (the mutineers). Once we associate the presence of Chilean naval forces with the role of the savages and the mutineers in Robinson Crusoe, it becomes clear why Guzmán considers that the sea is dangerous and treacherous. The sea serves as a mirror that offers the reflection of historical catastrophe. Perhaps, this play of projection and reflection of historical catastrophe coming from the mirror of the sea explains why Carlos Peréz Villalobos, in his essay “La edición de la memoria: La Batalla de Chile, La memoria obstinada y El caso Pinochet,” refers to the social actors who appear in Guzmán’s films as “survivors of a shipwreck” (Pensar en la Postdictadura 308). However, this is the dream image from which Guzmán wants spectators to wake up because, as becomes clear at the end of the film, the shipwreck is a fiction.
4.15 “Mirar el mar y ser feliz”: Dialectical Image

Ernesto, one of the social characters appearing in Chile, Obstinate Memory, explains that the 1973 coup in Chile was not a shipwreck but an earthquake. The problem with Ernesto’s formula is that the coup is understood as a natural disaster. In contrast to Ernesto’s formula, what Guzmán discovers in Island of Robinson Crusoe is that the destructive forces of nature could operate as creative forces. This idea is manifested in the travel interlude sequence when the filmmaker interviews a man who he describes as a volcanologist. The volcanologist explains that a volcano explosion formed the Island of Robinson Crusoe. In that sense, the volcanologist’s version of the island’s origin in Guzmán’s documentary operates as a reversal of the destructive characterization of the volcano in Verne’s The Mysterious Island. In contrast to Verne’s fiction, where the volcano explosion provokes the disappearance of the island, in Guzmán’s documentary the island appears as a natural remnant of the volcano. The role of the volcanologist as a man of science could be associated with the scientific knowledge of Cyrus Smith, an engineer who is one of the principal characters in Verne’s novel. Instead of exposing the conquest of nature as a scientific myth about to be surpassed, as the idea of progress of both Cyrus Smith and Captain Nemo suggests (Pierre Macherey, “Jules Verne: The Faulty Narrative” A Theory of Literary Production 190, 226-227), the volcanologist’s scientific explanation constitutes a mythical contemplation of the island’s natural origin. In both Verne and Guzmán’s fictions, scientific explanations of the volcano explosion involve the idea of progress as a regression to an origin. While Verne’s volcano explosion could be conceptualized as a regression that dismantles the idea of progress by also getting rid of the myth of origin, Guzmán’s regression to the volcano explosion exposes the myth of Robinson Crusoe as
a multi-linear exploration of the myth of origin that proliferates by duplicating aspects of its fictional and critical dissolutions. For Guzmán, it is not only “a question of the dissolution of ‘mythology’ into the space of history,” as for Benjamin in Convolute N of The Arcades Project (458), but of dissolving myth into the space of history with the tools of a fictional genealogy.

As is made clear at the end of Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe, a natural disaster did not provoke a historical catastrophe. Moreover, the sea, freed from the shadow of historical catastrophe, becomes a means for historical redemption. Guzmán’s vision of the sea is transformed once he listens to Daniel, the tourist guide, explaining the function of Alexander Selkirk’s panoramic viewpoint of the sea:

En este lugar, cierto, el marinero escocés Alejandro Selkirk escrutaba ansiosamente el horizonte, en busca y espera de la nave salvadora que le permitiera abandonar este dominio.

In this place, the Scottish mariner Alexander Selkirk observed the horizon anxiously, in search for a salvational ship that would allow him to abandon this dominion.

Historical redemption comes from searching for that salvation (dis)appearing in the seascape as “the rhythm of Messianic nature” (Benjamin, “Theologico-Political Fragment,” Reflections 313). “For nature,” Benjamin tells us, “is Messianic by reason of its eternal and total passing away” (313). Guzmán abandons the dominion of mythical history, the dominion of man’s defeat, in order to face the Messianic in this new vision of nature as happiness:

Aquí termina mi viaje y mi lectura. Pensándolo bien, ahora comprendo un poco mejor al viejo Robinson y le doy la razón a este Robinson adulto que sabe mirar el mar y ser feliz.

My trip and my reading ends here. Thinking again, now I understand a little bit more the old Robinson and I agree with this adult Robinson who knows to see the sea and be happy.
Guzmán’s view of the seascape as an image exposing man’s defeat (the commodification of nature and man’s violence) but also as an event freed from man’s defeat (salvation), corresponds to Benjamin’s view of historical perception in The Arcades Project. According to Benjamin, “what has been is to become the dialectical reversal—the flash of awakened consciousness,” which correspond to the recognition that “a not-yet-conscious knowledge of what has been” (388-389) emerges “as a reaction to a constellation of dangers” (475). For Benjamin, “the now of recognizability is the moment of awakening” (486): “the dialectical image is an image that emerges suddenly, in a flash. What has been is to be held fast—as an image flashing up in the now of its recognizability” (473). The seascape that appears at the end of Guzmán’s documentary could be conceptualized as a dialectical image in Benjamin’s sense:

In the dialectical image, what has been within a particular epoch is always, simultaneously, ‘what has been from time immemorial.’ As such, however, it is manifest, on each occasion, only to a quite specific epoch—namely, the one in which humanity, rubbing its eyes, recognizes just this particular dream image as such. (464)

In Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe, the seascape is the last image, an image that unfolds from “what has been from time immemorial.” In that sense, it operates as a dialectical image that allows Guzmán to recognize Robinson Crusoe as a dream image. In other words, the seascape is the image that allows Guzmán to wake up from the dream image of Robinson Crusoe, which in the documentary is represented by a series of book drawings that illustrate Daniel’s retelling of Alexander Selkirk’s adventures on the island. While the visual track represents the dream image of Robinson Crusoe, Daniel’s act of storytelling corresponds to the moment of awakening and to the now of recognizability: the image of Robinson Crusoe is only a dream, the dream-image staging the dream of history. Crusoe is the dream of history in Guzmán’s
imagination because, as Benjamin suggests, “history decays into images, not into stories” (The Arcades Project 476). Previously in Island of Robinson Crusoe, Guzmán represents the decay of history into images when he juxtaposes the marvelous view from Crusoe’s cave with various illustrations representing Crusoe’s labor.

I think that he (Robinson) never had time to contemplate this marvelous view because he dedicated his entire life to work. He was a ceaseless worker. He wanted to rebuild the English civilization on the island. However, one ends up loving him, because he was one of us after all, since he was able to live in an unknown world.

Guzmán emphasizes Crusoe’s lack of time for perceiving the island’s landscape, a lack of time for contemplation that Guzmán opposes with Crusoe’s labor time. Crusoe’s labor time seems to interfere with Guzmán’s contemplation of the landscape of the island as a time for contemplation which Crusoe misses as he spends all his time working. The drawings showing Crusoe’s labor-time interrupt Guzmán’s perception of the landscape in order to haunt the staging of history. The objectification of Crusoe’s labor time in the book drawings presents the decay of history into images, decay that results from the mystical character of the image as a commodity. Guzmán opposes Crusoe’s labor time, objectified in the book’s illustrations, to the virtual temporality of Crusoe’s contemplation in order to break the magic spell of commodities. The subjective vision of the filmmaker, however, is unable to evade the decay of history into images. The cave sequence ends when Guzmán penetrates the dream image of Crusoe in order to recognize the unknown world of social phantasmagoria. The phantasmagoria of living together in the dream image of socialism, that which sustains Guzmán’s connection to
Crusoe, corresponds to historical catastrophe, because the promise of the social cannot overcome its condition as an illustration, a “status quo” spectral appearance already trapped in the commodity form.

If Guzmán visits Alexander Selkirk’s panoramic view at the end of the documentary, however, it is to wake up from the dream image of Robinson Crusoe, an image that exposes the decay of history in images in spite of the unfolding of “history” as a story (the adventures of Alexander Selkirk narrated by Daniel, the tourist guide). If Daniel’s act of storytelling corresponds to the flashing instant of “awakening” and to the “now of recognizability,” however, it is because this very act of exposing Crusoe as a dream image is in itself a dream image that delivers a new commodity: the pains of Alexander Selkirk as a touristic adventure. It is true that Daniel’s act of storytelling exposes the crisis of Defoe’s novel, but it is also true that Guzmán does not buy the story delivered by Daniel and, in that sense, Island of Robinson Crusoe exposes the crisis of storytelling as a reified touristic adventure.\(^{31}\) Guzmán ends the documentary

\(^{31}\) Jameson’s conception of storytelling as “rationalization” (or “reification”) has been very useful in the context of this analysis: “It is clear that to return from the primacy of the Jamesian narrative category of point of view to the older fiction of the storyteller and the storytelling situation is to express impatience with the objective yet ever intensifying alienation of the printed book […]. The representational fiction of a storytelling situation … marks the vain attempt to conjure back the older unity of the literary institution, to return to that older concrete social situation of which narrative transmission was but a part, and of which public bard or storyteller are intrinsic (although not necessarily visible or immediately present) components: such literary institutions, once genuine or concrete forms of social relationships, have long since been blasted by the corrosive effects of market relations, and, like so many other traditional, organic, precapitalist institutions, systematically fragmented by that characteristic reorganizational process of capitalism which Weber described under the term rationalization. The older, inherited ways of doing things are broken into their component parts and reorganized with a view to greater efficiency according to the instrumental dialectics of means and ends, a process that amounts to a virtual bracketing or suspension of the ends themselves and thus opens up the unlimited perspective of a complete instrumentalization of the world: cultural institutions could scarcely hope to resist this universal process, which sunders subject from object and structurally colonizes each separately, producing hierarchies of functions according to their technical use […]. So the book or printed text is wrenched from its concrete position within a functional and communicational situation and becomes a free-floating object […]” (The Political Unconscious 219-220). Guzmán’s film could be conceived of as a restaging of this storytelling process that transforms the book into a “free-floating object,” but only in order to recognize that both the book and the storyteller’s dismantling of it are dream images from which it is crucial to wake up. Something else should be taken into consideration in relation to Jameson’s conception of storytelling as “rationalization.” When Guzmán presents the tourist guide as the island’s
declaring that now he understands the old Robinson (as a dream image) as well as Daniel, the adult Robinson, who himself becomes a dream image. By failing to deliver the reified version of Selkirk’s story as a commodity, Daniel allows Guzmán to wake up. Moreover, Guzmán wakes up in order to liberate the name of Robinson from the magic spell of commodities. What remains is neither Defoe’s novel nor Daniel’s dismantling of it through the revelation of Alexander Selkirk’s story, but the salvation of the sea that transforms the defeat of the adult Robinson (both Daniel’s reification of Selkirk’s story as well as his incapacity to sell it to Guzmán) into happiness. Almost as if rubbing his eyes after listening to the story of Alexander Selkirk told by Daniel, Guzmán looks at the sea in order to experience “the present as waking world, a world to which that dream we name the past refers in truth” (Benjamin, *The Arcades Project* 389). In other words, Guzmán’s memory approaches the “unexplored networks of historical intelligibility” (Richard, *Cultural Residues* 88) in order “to pass through and carry out what has been in remembering the dream!” (*The Arcades Project* 389).

Perhaps Daniel’s restaging of the dream image of Robinson Crusoe (the series of book drawings juxtaposed with the island’s landscape in the last sequence of Guzmán’s documentary) through his delivery of the Selkirk story is a dialectical image in the sense of a commodity fetish. Nevertheless, “that caesura in the movement of thought” (475) corresponding to “the materialist presentation of history” (475) (the book Indiana Jones, he not only insists on showing Daniel’s explorer-archeologist outfit, he also shows Indiana’s vehicle, a small jeep with real bull horns attached in the front part and painted with “zebra-like” stripes. If we read Indiana Jones’s jeep in Guzmán’s *Island of Robinson Crusoe* along the lines of Jameson’s emphasis on rationalization, it is possible to say that once the different characteristics of animals are rationalized, their segmented parts are reorganized in order to serve as ornaments of a new mechanism that hides its instrumental processes with the instinctually applied features of the animal. The schizophrenic look of Indiana Jones’s jeep announces Guzmán’s psychic fragmentation during the sequence in which he listens to Daniel delivering the story of Alexander Selkirk while seeing it through the illustrations in which Crusoe appears. As I have said before, however, Guzmán will present this psychic fragmentation only in order to recognize it as the dream image from which he has to wake up.
drawings that appear in the crosscut sequence alternating with Daniel's talking head exposing the reification of Defoe's novel as “free-floating object”) is a “dialectical image” penetrated by the rhythm of the Messianic nature of the sea, by the rhythm of that salvation transforming awakening into happiness. If we consider this from Guzmán's standpoint, “happiness” is therefore an after-effect which penetrates Benjamin’s “dialectics at a standstill” (“Expose of 1935,” The Arcades Project 10), precisely because in betraying the chronology of Benjamin’s thought (“Theologico-Political Fragment” was written in 1919), it also transfigures the pitfalls of Benjamin’s thought with its “weak Messianic power” (“Theses on the Philosophy of History” Illuminations 254). Rather than affirming the catatonic ambiguity of the dream image as it becomes fixed in the commodity fetish (and this is the way Benjamin solves the enigma of dialectical images in his “Expose of 1935”), happiness, in Guzmán’s documentary, is that element of the profane that “runs counter to the Messianic direction” (“Theologico-Political Fragment,” Reflections 312) but only in order to open “the caesura in the movement of thought” to the Messianic.

4.16 “Ni duelo ni melancolía”: “the Stain in the Eye”

Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe opens the path towards a post-transitional period by presenting the phantasmagoria of the Chilean transition to democracy in all its limits. In his essay “El otro duelo: a punta desnuda,” Alberto Moreiras offers the most profound meditation on this post-transitional period:

Ni duelo ni melancolía: a tantos años de postdictadura lo que llama, en ello, a pensar no es la pérdida dictatorial de objeto sino la necesaria preparación de un acto de pensamiento en libertad: contra el fetiche de la pérdida el contrafetiche de una renuncia a la pérdida; contra la temporalidad inhibida y vergonzante de la postdictadura el trabajo hacia un gesto transfigurador del tiempo; contra la figura
Neither mourning nor melancholia: after so many years of postdictatorship, what calls for thinking in all this is not the dictatorial lost of the object but the necessary preparation for a free act of thinking: against the fetish of loss the counter-fetish of a loss-renunciation; against the inhibited and shameful temporality of the postdictatorship the work towards a time-transfiguring gesture, against the phantasmatic figure that breathes between being and thought … the movement towards an antianamorphic and antiphantasmatic crossing which creates a new politics […].

Moreiras insists on the necessity of suspending the anamorphic vision of the postdictatorship and he conceives of this process through Federico Galende’s formula “the eye in the stain,” a formula used by Galende for defining the left in his essay “Postdictadura, esa palabra.” Over the course of his argument, Moreiras will reverse Galende’s formula in order to expose its critical power:

Cuando Federico Galende dice “nada más de izquierda que el ojo puesto en la mancha” cabría decir, sabientes de que es la misma frase, “nada más de izquierda que la mancha puesta en el ojo.” Pues es la mancha en el ojo la que permite que el ojo siga viendo la anamorfose en la anamorfose, el síntoma en el síntoma. […] Para Galende el síntoma, no su borramiento, es condición de libertad, pues solo el síntoma, al anunciarno o enunciarno la sutura de un mundo irreparable, promete también su disolución y así su trascendencia. (Pensar en la Postdictadura 319-320)

When Federico Galende tells us “there is nothing more leftist than the eye on the stain,” one could say, knowing that this is the same phrase, that “there is nothing more leftist than the stain in the eye.” For the stain in the eye allows the eye to keep seeing the anamorphosis in anamorphosis, the symptom in the symptom. For Galende, the symptom, and not its erasure, is the condition of freedom, because only the symptom, by announcing and enunciating the suture of an irreparable world, also promises its dissolution and, therefore, its transcendence.

The transfiguration of the seascape into “the sign of a Messianic cessation of happening” (Benjamin “Theses on the Philosophy of History” Illuminations 263) in Island of Robinson Crusoe occurs only after Guzmán blasts “open the continuum of history” (262) by exploring “the stain in the eye,” all the fragmented ruins that appear in the
island’s anamorphic landscape as symptoms of historical catastrophe. I would like to go back to the question of the enemy in Defoe’s novel in order to discuss how Guzmán explores the symptoms of historical catastrophe as they appear in the island’s anamorphic landscape.

Although Guzmán insists that all of Crusoe’s enemies come from outside, when he comes to represent the savages, he chooses to frame their apparition in a montage sequence that links them to Crusoe’s interior world. When Guzmán explores Crusoe’s cave, he shows the hole that supposedly served as the hero’s bedroom and then declares: “this is the bedroom, with 28 years of solitude.” After presenting the bedroom/hole, Guzmán cuts to an illustration from the book in which we see Crusoe sleeping. Then there is a dissolve to another illustration showing the savages dancing in what appears to be one of the cannibal’s feasts witnessed by Crusoe. Therefore, the savages from Defoe’s novel per se do not belong to the external world but only appear in Guzmán’s documentary as a psychological effect when they appear in Crusoe’s dreams. This coincides with Crusoe’s first close encounter with the savages, when Crusoe anticipated Friday’s escape from the savages’s cannibal appetite in a dream. Guzmán links the savages to Crusoe’s dreams is in order to suggest that Crusoe’s interior fears are projected into the interior space of the cave, an interior space that Guzmán explores in order to discover that it has the same dimensions of a modern apartment. Guzmán compares the cave to a modern apartment just before showing the savages in Crusoe’s dreams in order to suggest that the security projected by the reified interior of the cave is only an illusion. Why would Guzmán show the savages in Crusoe’s dream if not in order to suggest that the savages are the guardians of Crusoe’s sleep? The myth of Robinson Crusoe suffers a dramatic transformation at this point in Guzmán’s documentary: rather
than appearing to interrupt Crusoe's sleep, the savages appear to guarantee it. The savages in Guzmán’s film do not appear as a threat to Crusoe’s security, rather, they appear as a wish-image of Crusoe’s proto-bourgeois dreams of security. In that sense, Crusoe’s dream of the savages, as is represented by Guzmán in Island of Robinson Crusoe, could be conceived of as an allegory of the dreams of security that tie the Chilean bourgeoisie to the military coup and to the savage crimes of the Pinochet dictatorship.

There is another element that is interesting in Guzmán’s characterization of Crusoe’s dreams in the cave sequence. When Guzmán refers to Crusoe’s bedroom, the only visible thing inside the cave is a pile of stones surrounding the hole in which Crusoe slept by himself for 28 years. The image of the pile of stones will reappear later on in the film, when Guzmán visits the ruins of Hugo Weber’s house, the German who had to abandon the island in 1945 after being accused of serving as a Nazi spy. In both sequences, the presence of the pile of stones is “unheimlich,” but its sinister character becomes familiar once Guzmán associates it with the ruins of a house. However, that spectral house reduced to a pile of stones is holding a family secret. After Treblinka and many other concentration camps, the pile of stones emerges as a ruin that reveals the “scandal of death” as a secret of the state. The sinister presence of the pile of stones in Guzmán’s visit to Hugo Weber’s ruins and in Crusoe’s dream of the savages presented in the cave’s sequence could be taken as a cipher of the sinister presence of Nazism in Chile. It registers the non-presentability of human extermination practiced by the Nazis through the method of human disappearance, which was later imported from Germany by the Pinochet regime. Chilean artist Gonzalo Díaz explores the pile of stones as facticity defeating representation in Lonquén 10 años, an installation that takes the brutal
reference of a massacre as a point of departure to “put the finger of art in the wound of politics” (qtd. in Oyarzún 91), which is another way of understanding Galende’s “eye in the stain” and Moreiras’s “stain in the eye.” Regarding this installation, Pablo Oyarzún explains that Díaz includes an inscription (“In this house, on January, 12, 1989, the secret of dreams was revealed to Gonzalo Díaz”) that parodies an inscription that Freud, in a letter to Fliess, suggested to be put in a marble plaque on front of the Bellevue house (“In this house, on July 24, 1895, the secret of dreams was revealed to Doctor Sigmund Freud”) (qtd. in Oyarzún 89-90). As happened to Freud and to Díaz, the secret of dreams is revealed to Guzmán in Crusoe’s cave and in Weber’s house in a step-by-step presentation of the pile of stones’s sinister facticity. The secret of Crusoe’s dream of the savages is finally revealed in Hugo Weber’s house: that pile of stones structuring the bridge between the crimes of the savages and the Nazis is a ruin holding the secret crimes of the Pinochet dictatorship.

For Oyarzún, it is precisely the facticity of this secret and its heaviness that which demands a confession: “To confess what we are, to confess what we have become” (Oyarzún 93). This secret demand contained in the mute pile of stones could be conceived of as an allegory of the challenges of reconciliation described by Guzmán in the interview for Página 12: “yo no creo que los militares pidan perdón jamás, no está en su naturaleza. Eso quiere decir que todavía estamos a merced de ellos, incluso para no reconciliarnos jamás” [I don’t believe that the military will ever ask for forgiveness, that is not in their nature. That means that we are still at their mercy, even to never achieve reconciliation]. The silence of the pile of stones stands as an allegory of the nature of the military: silent self-petrification. If the military has something to confess is this: we have become piles of stones unable to confess our own petrification. In that sense, Guzmán
dismantles Neruda’s poetics of stone ruins as well as Patricio Marchant’s conception of it. In his reading of Neruda’s “Alturas de Macchu Picchu,” included in the essay “¿En qué lengua habla Hispanoamérica?,” Patricio Marchant argues that

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\text{las piedras de las ruinas le hablan a Neruda, son, de Neruda, ‘sus’ ‘ruinas’, ‘nuestras’ ruinas; piedras y ruinas como Lengua. (Escritura y Temblor 314)}
\]

the stones of the ruins talk to Neruda, are, of Neruda, ‘his’ ‘ruins,’ ‘our’ ruins; stones and ruins as Language.

While Marchant’s reading suggests that Neruda discovers his poetic voice as the voice hidden in the stone ruins of Language, Guzmán’s insistence on the image of the pile of stones suggests that it is no longer man who discovers his voice in the language of stone ruins, it is rather in the silence of stone ruins that man faces his defeat. The pile of stones appears in Guzmán’s documentary in order to denounce the petrified nature of the military where silence is indistinguishable from self-petrification.

This military self-petrification is itself a dream image that Guzmán discovers in Hugo Weber’s house: the pile of stones guarding Crusoe’s sleep. There is another dream that should be taken into account in this context since it operates as a dream-stage from which the question of logos unfolds: Derrida’s nightmare in his seminar “La bête et le souverain.” In this seminar, Derrida proposes to read Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* in the light of Heidegger’s 1929-1930’s seminar entitled *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*. The following passage comes from the notes on Derrida’s seminar taken by Zelina Beato which were posted on the website of the University of Campiñas:

\[
\text{Eu tive um pesadelo, estava diante de um tribunal, algo como um alto conselho de segurança durante o qual me foi dada uma missão bizarra: como advogado, deveria defender uma tese segundo a qual: Saddam Husseim, Bush, Rumsfeld, Aznar, Blair, Chirac, Sharon, Arafat, Putin e Poll, quero dizer, Paul, o papa João Paulo, e alguns outros, que no meu sonho pareciam executores que falavam grego ou alemão, eu deveria defender a tese de que todos os falantes desse}
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mundo, com todos os interesses que defendem, todos esses falantes, com poder de decisão, a todos deveria reconhecer, e essa é a minha tarefa, o acesso ao logos, não somente ao logo semantikos, mas também ao logos apophantikos, mesmo Bush, e mesmo Saddam Husseim. O pesadelo que agitou meu sono, apesar da gripe que tornou tudo um pouco unheimlich, não havia nenhuma, forma alguma de fugir à missão e me senti como um desses advogados públicos obrigado a defender um serial killer, ou um pedófilo ou um matricida. Mas... minha consciência profissional, a intransigência inflexível do meu superego filosófico, insistia, dizia mesmo: você deve, em nome da justiça e da verdade – você deve ser justo com todos, todos eles têm acesso ao logos semantikos, e mesmo ao logos apophantikos, e mesmo Bush. E são todos, além disso, culpados. “sim, você deve, é seu dever ser justo com todos eles...”. Se você não quiser estar com eles, (era isso que eu me dizia no meu pesadelo) reconheça, pelo menos, que há o logos apophantikos nesses personagens que falam ao mundo onde marcham seus generais, seus pobres soldados cegos e suas máquinas de guerra, ditas inteligentes. Eu me perguntei o que aconteceria se fechássemos todos esses “Poll’s”, se os isolássemos naquela porção de ilha denominada Guantanamo, para lhes ensinar a falar, para ai acompanharem um seminário intensivo sobre Robinson Crusoé, o seminário de Heidegger e o perigo ameaçando o horizonte. E desde que minha febre passou, devo reconhecer que isso não muda nada e que não há guerra possível sem logos apophantikos – essa é a tragédia. Isso que nos dá a pensar. (Beato, “Seminários EHESS” n. pag.)

I had a nightmare, I was before a tribunal, something like a high security council, and it was there where I was commissioned to a bizarre mission: as a lawyer, I ought to defend the following thesis: Saddam Hussein, Bush, Rumsfeld, Aznar, Blair, Chirac Sharon, Arafat, Putin and Poll, I mean, Paul, or Pope John Paul, and some others, that in my dream appeared to be executioners speaking in Greek or German, I ought to defend the thesis that all the speakers from that world, with all the interests they defend, all those speakers with decisional power, to all I ought to recognize, and that is my task, the access to logos, not only to the logos semantikos, but also to the logos apophantikos, to Bush and to Saddam Hussein. The nightmare that agitated my sleep, despite the flu that turned all into something a bit “unheimlich,” there was no way, no way of escaping that mission and I felt like those legal service lawyers obliged to defend a serial killer, or a pedophile or a matricide. But … my professional consciousness, an unflexible intransigence of my philosophical super ego insisted, was telling me the same thing: you ought to, in the name of justice and truth–you ought to be just with all, all of them have access to the logos semantikos and to the logos apophantikos, even Bush. And after saying this, all of them are guilty. “yes, you have, you have to be just with all of them …” If you don’t want to be on their side, (that is what I said to myself in the nightmare) you have to recognize, at least, that there is logos apophantikos in all these characters that speak to the world where their generals, poor soldiers and war machines (considered intelligent) march. I asked myself about what would happen if we leave all those Poll’s, if we isolate them in that portion of island known as Guantanamo, to teach them how to talk … And after my fever was
over, I have to recognize that this does not change anything and that there is no possible war without logos apophantikos— that is the tragedy. That is what makes us think.

Derrida’s nightmare is a critical delirium. It links the myth of Robinson Crusoe with the important figures of global politics today in order to approach the question of logos and war from the standpoint of “Poll”, a mixture of Crusoe’s talking parrot, global leaders and their voting supporters. Derrida’s nightmare projects the distinction between logos semantikos and logos apophantikos discussed by Heidegger in The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude. We should understand that this nightmare is, therefore, a secondary elaboration of Heidegger’s account of the Aristotelian Logos. Logos semantikos is “an utterance that inherently gives something meaningful, forms a sphere of understandability” (Heidegger, The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics 311), while logos apophantikos is “discourse as exhibiting … in its possibility of revealing-conceiling” (309). Heidegger explains:

That logos, therefore, to whose essence it pertains either to reveal or to conceal, is a pointing out, i.e., apophantic. This possibility characterizes what is meant by apophantic: pointing out. For the logos that conceals is also a pointing out. If this were not the case, in accordance with its inner essence, then it could never become a logos that deceives. For precisely whenever I want to pretend something to someone else, I must first already be in a position to want to point something out to him. The other person in general must in advance take my discourse as having this tendency to point out; only in this way can I deceive him about something (311).

Later, Heidegger explains that not all discourse is semantikos. In discourse, “what happens is not simply an agreement in general between the meaning and what is intended” (312). In Heidegger’s view, however, all discourse is logos apophantikos: “its ability to reveal or conceal … grounds the possibility for the logos to be either true or

32 I would like to point out that Derrida’s logos is itself a fiction in this text elaborated by Zelina Beato. Beato participated in Derrida’s seminar and became its translator into Portuguese. Her electronic notes are fascinating because they are haunted by Derrida’s spectral signature(s). My translation is a translation of a translation, and, therefore, a Derridean text in which the original is lost at the origin.
false” (313). In his nightmare, Derrida points out that global leaders are a bunch of liars. The tragedy is that all of them have access to logos. By pointing out this, Derrida does not necessarily defend a return to logos semantikos understood as an agreement between meaning and intention, he is precisely interested in pointing out the tragedy at the heart of all logos, the tragedy that all logos conceals: the possibility of war. If we compare Derrida’s nightmare with the dream image of the Chilean military as a silent self-petrification, it is possible to suggest that it is precisely this lack of logos revealed in the pile of stones that points out the speechless defeat of human self-annihilation. Since it is beyond logos, it is impossible for anyone to conceal it. In that sense, silent self-petrification is a pointing out which does not conceal, but rather reveals the call for an impossible confession that cannot be delivered by logos. This coincides with Oyarzún’s conception of the pile of stones’s facticity as a secret confessional demand. “To confess what we are, to confess what we have become” is to confess the impossibility of a reliable confessional logos (Oyarzún 93).

Guzmán’s approach to the landscape and the seascape in Island of Robinson Crusoe is very complex. It demystifies Neruda’s anthropomorphic vision of the beauty of the territory by showing man’s defeat (the commodification of nature in the images of the sea), but it goes beyond Marchant’s catastrophic vision of history (the sinister facticity of the pile of stones evoking the existence of concentration camps and the self-petrification of the military in Chile). After exposing precisely the sinister landscape of the concentration camp that, according to Marchant, was missing in Neruda’s poetry, Guzmán is able to gain a new vision of the seascape. He becomes aware of its non-human beauty, a beauty that comes back to view despite man’s awareness of his defeat (the salvation that he experienced when he visited Alexander Selkirk’s panoramic view
of the seascape). Therefore, Island of Robinson Crusoe could be understood as a non-human reconstellation of Neruda-Marchant’s landscape anthropomorphism. Guzmán questions Neruda’s optimism when he explores the promise of landscape in awareness of man’s defeat, but he also questions Marchant’s pessimism when he explores the non-human character of the seascape as an event freed from man’s defeat. The seascape is an event that restores happiness to man.

4.17 “Te escucho muy despacio”: Pérdida de la palabra

As I get closer to the conclusion, I would like to go back to the question that opens this chapter: how does Guzmán approach the challenges of reconciliation without dismissing the question of justice? In the interview for Página 12, Guzmán explains that for him reconciliation consists of constituting a popular court in which it would be possible to let enemies live together: “letting them (Pinochetistas and Allendistas) live together in the same space with the camera.” In order to approach the task of a possible reconciliation, Guzmán has to present the confrontation between two enemy forces that can live together in the single space of the frame and in the single temporality of a camera shot. I would like to argue that Island of Robinson Crusoe operates as a reconfiguration of Guzmán’s formula of reconciliation when the documentary approaches the figure of the enemy through the presentation of the Chilean naval forces that arrive at the island. Their visit coincides with Guzmán’s visit and they appear in the documentary as if condensing the two forms of external danger threatening Crusoe in Defoe’s novel: the savages and the mutineers.

In a brief episode that comes before Kerner’s revelation of the Nazi presence on the island, Guzmán presents the members of the Chilean naval forces as they try to use
the only public telephone in the town of San Juan Bautista. Up to a point, this episode shows a more human image of the military forces in comparison to other sequences in Guzmán’s other documentaries (both Chile, Obstinate Memory and The Pinochet Case) that come to represent the military as a distant and authoritarian force in total opposition to civil society. In that sense, this episode could be associated with Guzmán’s efforts to approach the challenges of reconciliation. Guzmán’s approach to reconciliation, however, is not so simple as to present a positive image of the military by showing its connection to civil society. Instead of presenting an idealized collective encounter that leads to social harmony, what Guzmán shows is how the telephone obstructs the mariners’s communication with their own relatives.

me? Hello]. Cut to black leader. Cut back to the phone. Voice of the last mariner: “¿Aló? ¿Aló? ¿Aló? ¿Aló?” [Hello! Hello! Hello! Hello! Hello!]. Finally, the last mariner hangs up the phone as we hear the mother ship’s siren calling up the Chilean naval forces.

At the end of the sequence, it is evident that all the efforts of the mariners to get in touch with their relatives were frustrated by the telephone, a mechanism whose failure reduces the speech of the mariners to the phatic function of language, that of “establishing communication itself” (qtd. in Chion, The Voice in Cinema 73). In other words, the sailors’s attempts to get in touch with their relatives through the only telephone booth that exists on the Island of Robinson Crusoe corresponds to one of the six communicative functions defined by Jacobson, the phatic, which according to Fineman “stresses the contact between addresser and addressee” (Fineman “The Structure of Allegorical Desire” 33). In Guzmán’s documentary, the contact between addresser and addressee is never established. After the phatic function fails, it leads to the interruption of speech, to silence, a silence that vanishes once we hear the siren of the mother ship calling up the mariners.

The telephone booth sequence shows that the personal speech of the mariners fails in its attempt to grasp an interlocutor, a failure confirmed by the siren of the mother ship announcing that personal time is over so that mariners are expected to go back to military business.33 In many ways, this sequence could be taken as an allegory of the

33 Up to a point, it could be argue that the closure of the sequence confirms “by ear” what José Gil tells us about the soldiers’s lack of voice in modern armies. In Metamorphoses of the Body, Gil argues that: “They can thus give themselves the illusion of a personal voice, synchronizing their movements to the rhythm of the voice; the noise of steps, hands on weapons, stocks hitting the ground and extending the order given by the voice. The body ‘makes a body’ with the voice, it hears itself (in the noise of its ‘articulations’) by listening to the others orders. […] In times of peace, while they parade to the sounds of military fanfare, they really seem to make up a single body. […] They perform a smooth dance with the articulations of this huge body, they play a gratuitous and inoffensive game; military music takes the place of voices, the better to create the
failure of the military to have access to civilian life after the dictatorship. Civilian life after the coup is marked by “la pérdida de la palabra” (which I translate as “the loss of speech”), an experience that Marchant describes in his book Árboles y Madres: “Un día, de golpe, tantos de nosotros perdimos la palabra, perdimos totalmente la palabra. Otros, en cambio, siguieron hablando” [One day, suddenly (“de golpe” but also “suddenly” like “el golpe” “the coup”), many of us experienced a loss of speech, many of us lost the word. Others, however, kept talking] (qtd. in Thayer “Vanguardia, dictadura, globalización” 254). In Marchant’s view, the abruptness of the coup (“el golpe”) produces the loss of speech, but not all are condemned to silence by the coup. One possible reading of Marchant’s aphorism includes the following: “we” (civilians) were silenced by the coup while “others” (the military and their supporters) kept talking after the coup. Guzmán’s telephone booth sequence could therefore be conceived of as showing the two sides of Marchant’s “pérdida de la palabra” (“loss of speech”). While the Chilean naval forces keep talking as if trying to get in touch with the civilian lives of their relatives, those very civilian lives disappear into silence because they come to mark the experience of the loss of speech. By reducing the speech of the military to phatic material, Guzmán not only shows that after the coup military speech is non-sense, but also that after civilians are condemned to silence, the military is condemned to keep talking a lot of bullshit while attempting to “maintain the connection.” Compared to the two roles of the telephone in Guzmán’s The Pinochet Case (where the telephone is conceived as a torture weapon but also as a channel of communication opened by

illusion of a collective body. Nevertheless in this body, and in the individual bodies, is inscribed the possibility— the profession— of murder” (194-195). The most striking articulation of this collective body as it tries to give itself the illusion of a personal voice comes in the soundtrack when we see and hear the last mariner hanging up the phone after hearing the mother ship’s siren. The ship’s siren becomes the military fanfare taking the place of voices and closing the sequence in the soundtrack while the image of two mariners marching to the ship disappear in a fade to black that closes the sequence in the visual track.
imprisoned torture survivors), the telephone in Island of Robinson Crusoe is a technical device whose failure allows Guzmán to approach the enemy and share the judgment of history with him.

Guzmán’s telephone booth sequence resembles Hofmeiser’s telephonic fantasy in Lang’s The Cabinet of Dr. Mabuse. In relation to Lang’s film, Chion comments that Hofmeister is reduced to a listening being:

A listening being, but a certain kind of listening: that which reifies the flow of the voice into a connection deprived of meaning, in which nothing can be said other than phatic material. ‘Hello, hello, commissioner!’ These repeated phrases say nothing more than ‘I am speaking to you, don’t hang up.’ [...] For what does the telephonic fetus hang onto, if not to the voice as the cord that transmits a blind nurturing flow? The voice here is no longer ‘subversion of umbilical closure’ (in Denis Vasse’s formulation), but a foreclosure of closure, and paying for this foreclosure the price of non-sense and terror. (73)

As in Lang’s film, Guzmán exposes the failure of the mariner’s phatic function in order to make them pay “the price” of their own “non-sense and terror.” In Guzmán’s documentary, the mariners are condemned to fail in all their attempts to establish a meaningful connection. If the mariners are reduced to the condition of telephonic fetuses attached to the umbilical cord of terror, it is only in order to expose them as listening beings that can only hear their own non-sense, their frustrated and frustrating attempts to find interlocutors once all interlocutors have been eliminated. This non-sense is enhanced at the end of the episode when the only effective signal transmitted through the soundtrack is the siren of the mother ship calling up the mariners, as if recruiting with its non-sense all those frustrated telephonic fetuses attached to the umbilical cord of terror. This may explain why Guzmán opens the mariner’s episode by establishing a counter-point narrative between “el buque madre” (“the mother ship”) and Juanita’s reading of Crusoe along with her daughter Vicky.
La escuadra que nos visita se compone de un buque madre para submarinos, un crucero y un destructor. “Robinson los hubiera confundido con la flota española, o con piratas.” En realidad, la entrada de los marinos no interrumpe la vida cotidiana de los isleños. Juanita empieza a leer Robinson.

The squadron consists of a mother ship for submarines, a cruiser, and a destroyer. Robinson would have confused them with the Spanish or with pirates. In reality, the entrance of the mariners do not interrupt the everyday life of the islanders. Juanita starts to read Robinson.

Guzmán established an allegorical confrontation between two kinds of motherhoods. Juanita, the civilian and silent mother who reads along with her daughter, is contrasted with the fake motherhood of the naval forces and the siren of mother ship. Guzmán includes the siren of the mother ship in order to let us know that the mariners attached to the umbilical cord of terror will never find their mothers at the other end of the telephonic line. In other words, the mariners “do not have a mother” (“no tienen madre”: an insulting phrase in Spanish) they can only inherit the mother tongue of the coup: the nurturing flow of terror as phatic failure, disconnection and non-sense. This is Guzmán’s way of sharing the judgment of history with the enemy, by stuffing the mouths and ears of the Chilean naval forces with “la pérdida de la palabra” that suddenly struck the nation. This could also be linked to Marchant’s description of the poetic possibilities of the “loss of speech.” Marchant associates the loss of speech with the possibility of opening a new scene of writing that would indicate the commentary of national catastrophe in Chile (“Desolación. Cuestión del nombre de Salvador Allende” Escritura y Temblor 213-214). He links this with the possibility of a new reading of Mistral’s poetry. Marchant considers that Mistral, mother of Chilean poetry, allows us to see the Latin American cultural and poetical attachment to the archaic figure of the dead mother (“Atópicos” Escritura y Temblor 412-413), a link that he contrasts with the European cultural and poetical attachment to the dead of the father. Marchant considers that the
dead of the mother can also be found in Neruda’s poetry. In Guzmán film, the death of the mother, taken as national catastrophe, invaginates the speech of the mariners.

Since it unfolds the figures explored by Marchant in his critical consideration of the poetic possibilities of “la pérdida de la palabra,” the telephone booth sequence in Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe could be considered as a Chilean poem commenting on national catastrophe. First, the visual and aural rhythms of the sequence are marked by numerous interruptions (the cut to black leader separating the episodes of each mariner and the pauses made by the mariners themselves as they try to hear if someone answers their calls). These audiovisual interruptions could be conceived of as a series of caesuras unfolding Guzmán’s poem through montage. Second, the sequence also operates as a poem that appears to embrace the Nerudian poetics of stone ruins because it give us access to the stone’s speech, but only in order to let us hear its dystopian tone: the mariners are military stones speaking through the umbilical cord of terror in order to cover up and never confess their own self-petrification. Third, the sequence, like “the poem today” according to Celan in “The Meridian,” as it “shows a strong inclination towards falling silent,” also “wants to reach the Other, it needs this Other, it needs a vis-à-vis” (181). Where is this vis-à-vis? Is it an on-screen or an off-screen encounter? With whom? Is the poem demanding an encounter with Crusoe? Or, is it demanding an encounter with the spectator? To whom is this encounter leading us? Guzmán’s poem leads to an encounter, to an encounter with “el que calla, pero que callando retorna” [“the one who shuts up, but who by shutting up, returns” (Casanova “Hay que hablar” 159) Guzmán’s poem echoes Carlos Casanova’s poetic re-elaboration of Blanchot’s and Agamben’s conceptions of testimony in the age of human disappearance:
No hay voz para los sin voz, de manera que la palabra deviene testimonio, en el momento mismo en que ella hospeda al silencio. Blanchot lo ha dicho con una intensidad desgarradora: pasa días y noches en medio del silencio. Esto es el habla. En el corazón de la palabra está lo testimoniable que desautoriza al discurso, volviéndolo —como sostiene Agamben— hacia el encuentro entre dos posibilidades: la de la lengua del testimonio que ya no puede significar, y la del desaparecido que no tiene lengua para prestar testimonio. Desde el instante en que nuestras palabras sueltan las armaduras de la comunicación, para dejar de significar, la no lengua del testimonio deja llegar el sonido silencioso de lo testimoniado desaparecido que habla a solas para anunciarse callando. (158)

There is no voice for the voiceless, so the word becomes testimony in the precise moment in which it becomes the host of silence. Blanchot has said it with tearing intensity: it spends days and nights in the middle of silence. It is what speaks. That which cannot be testified is in the heart of the word disauthorizing speech, turning it into the encounter of two possibilities: that which the language of testimony cannot signify, and that of the disappeared who does not have a language to offer his testimony. From the instant in which our words abandon the armors of communication and stop signifying, the non-language of testimony allows the silent sound of that which testifies in disappearance to arrive, to speak to itself and to announce itself by shutting up.

Against the non-sense tongue of the coup, Guzmán opposes the poetic excess of testimony. The caesuras of Guzmán’s poem project the impossible tongue of those who announce themselves by the fact of exposing themselves to silence. It is reasonable to consider Guzmán’s poem a call to remember those who disappeared in Chile after the coup, precisely at the very moment in which human disappearance vanished as a juridical concept from Pinochet’s extradition process. In that sense, Guzmán’s poem is a testimonial excess responding to the Lords’s decision of March 24, 1999, when it was decided that Pinochet could only be extradited for crimes of torture. To the disappeared excluded from the Lords’s decision, Guzmán’s poem offers a new site for justice which is also “a kind of homecoming” (Celan “The Meridian” 184). Poetic justice: to receive the testimonial excess of the disappeared as it arrives in the very spacing of the poem.
4.18 “It goes without saying”: Manchas en el negativo, Restitution and the objet petit a of justice

What happens with Crusoe and the spectator in this sequence? As the sequence shows, five mariners appear to be talking with their relatives although the soundtrack does not include the voices of the mariner’s relatives. Guzmán’s decision to exclude the voices of the mariners’s relatives could be read as an ethical concession made to a group of subjects who are not aware of being filmed. As a creative decision, however, this ethical concession transforms the position of the spectator in relation to what he is seeing and hearing. If we reconstruct the episode according to the terms that Chion uses to analyze telephone sequences in cinema, the mariners correspond to the “proxi-locutor,” “the character we see” speaking on the phone, while their relatives occupy the position of the “tele-locutor,” “the person on the other end of the line” (Chion 64).

According to Chion, “a phone conversation in which the spectator remains with one of the characters but does not hear the voice of the tele-locutor, generally works against

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34 I always thought that the voices of the mariners in this episode of Island of Robinson Crusoe had been dubbed by Guzmán, especially because, as is made evident by the naturalness of their gestures, it is clear that the mariners were not aware that they were being filmed by Guzmán’s crew. But I was wrong. In an email sent to me on January 19, 2007, Guzmán explains the soundtrack dynamics of this sequence: “El ingeniero de sonido del film sobre Robinson Crusoe puso adentro de la cabina telefónica un micrófono y él tenía un segundo micrófono en la mano. En algunos planos aparece él sentado delante de la cabina con este segundo micrófono que tiene apoyado en sus rodillas. Los marineros no se dieron cuenta de que estaban siendo grabados, pero para preservar su intimidad no pusimos las voces de sus familiares que también podríamos haberlas captado. No se me pasó por la cabeza “doblar” esas voces. El atractivo de esa secuencia son precisamente las voces originales” (“Micrófono.” Email to the author. 19 Jan. 2007). [The sound engineer of the film about Robinson Crusoe placed a microphone inside the telephone booth and he also had another microphone in his hand. In some shots, he appears sitting in front of the telephone booth with the second microphone, which he grasps with his knees. The mariners never realized that they were being filmed, but in order to preserve their intimacy, we did not include the voices of their relatives, which we also could have caught. It never occurred to me “dubbing” those voices. The charm of the sequence is precisely the original voices]. I would like to thank Patricio Guzmán for clarifying this point, because I was about to embark on an interpretative quest based on wrong presumptions, and his description of this sequence’s sound production allowed me to re-articulate my analysis of the whole film.

35 Chion explains that: “When you write or direct a phone scene in a film, you must choose among several options. If for example you keep your camera on just one side of the conversation, you already have the choice of whether to let your audience hear the person on the other end of the line. We might call that character the tele-locutor, and the character we see the proxi-locutor. (Of course if the conversation is shown in crosscutting, proxi-locutor and tele-locutor change place)” (64).
identification. It puts us in the position of third party or visitor.” (65) Following Chion’s hypothesis, the spectator occupies the place of the visitor or third party in this sequence of Guzmán’s Island of Robinson Crusoe. On the one hand, this episode breaks with the dynamics of spectatorial identification that sustain the whole film. During this episode, spectators no longer identify with Guzmán’s voiceover (a sort of flow of consciousness collecting subjective impressions of the visible reality). The impact of the sequence comes from the fact that the mariners’s voices appear in order to interrupt the spectator’s identification with Guzmán’s voiceover narration, which ceases to suture the subject’s distance from the objective reality that the film portrays. On the other hand, the spectator’s new position resembles Crusoe’s observation of the savages and the mutineers when he looked at them from afar. In that sense, as it liberates the spectators from Guzmán’s voiceover, the episode also liberates Crusoe’s spectral sensorium in all its virtuality.

Crusoe’s spectral sensorium penetrates the spectator with its virtual power to pass judgment over that which is visible and audible. In Guzmán’s documentary, the bodies and voices of the savages and mutineers that Crusoe perceived from afar are transformed into the bodies and voices of those mariners that we see on the screen as they try to get in touch with their relatives. If Guzmán liberates spectators from his voiceover in order to let them be haunted by Crusoe’s spectral sensorium it is only in order to confront them with the question of justice that Crusoe answered so disappointinglly in Defoe’s novel. Even if it would be possible for Guzmán to offer an alternative version of Crusoe’s juridical rationality through the invention of a new sensorium capable of serving for justice (for prosecuting the savages’s crimes + the mutineer’s betrayal = the military coup represented by the Chilean naval forces), such a
reparative restoration of Crusoe’s spectral sensorium would not be enough to account for justice. What this sequence ends up proposing is that the drive of justice does not come from a third party, from an alternative restaging of Crusoe’s sensorial powers, but, rather, from that which cannot appear to the senses: the unheard voices as they vanish. In order to understand the consequences of this episode’s unheard voices, let us refer to Mladen Dolar’s notion of the voice as the object of the drive. While “the dimension of signification … concurs with the dimension of desire” and “the satisfaction of desire is tied to the signifier,” Dolar also contends that “there is the dimension of the drive which does not follow the signifying logic but, rather, turns around the object, the object voice, as something evasive and not conductive to signification” (A Voice and Nothing More 72). Later, Dolar adds that:

In order to conceive the voice as the object of the drive, we must divorce it from the empirical voices that can be heard. Inside the heard voice is a unheard voice, an aphonic voice, as it were. For what Lacan called objet petit a—to put it simply—does not coincide with any existing thing, although it is always evoked only by bits of materiality, attached to them as an invisible, inaudible appendage, yet not amalgamated with them: it is both evoked and covered, enveloped by them, for “in itself” it is just a void. So sonority both evokes and conceals the voice; the voice is not somewhere else, but it does not coincide with voices that we heard. (74)

I would like to argue that the unheard voices in Island of Robinson Crusoe could be conceived of as the objet petit a of justice, as the object of the drive of justice that evades the desiring logic of the signifier. The logic of the signifier suggested by Guzmán’s documentary links the spectator’s sensorium to Crusoe’s sensorium in a play of corresponding structural positions (both playing the part of the third party). This logic wants to transform itself into a juridical machine in order to repair the Crusoe’s lack of judgment in Defoe’s novel (his lack of interest in judging the crimes of the savages and his nationalist and selfish conception of justice in the mutineer’s episode). As Guzmán
shows through his poem, however, the logic of the signifier (equating Crusoe’s sensorium to the spectator’s sensorium) is not an end but only the starting point of a regressive path that would lead to us to consider the drive of justice as an unheard voice that performs the main task of imperfect cinema. This task is to submit to judgment “the process of a problem” (Crusoe’s juridical rationality; the Chilean past and present: including the collapse of socialism, the triumph of neoliberalism, the poetic possibilities after “the loss of speech;” but also Pinochet’s arrest in London and the vanishing of human disappearance from Pinochet’s extradition process) “without pronouncing the verdict.” “It goes without saying” but not to become the formula and the goal of the market/state duopoly that Brett Levinson discusses in his book Market and Thought.36 Rather, the unheard voice “goes without saying” and Trompe-l’oreille because “it reaches its aim without attaining its goal, its arrow comes back from the target like a boomerang” (Dolar, A Voice and Nothing More 74). In other words, “it goes without saying” that consensus is the goal, however, that unheard voice appears to show that there is no possible suture to contain the social and its disruption of totality.

The Guzmán of the interview in Página 12 considered reconciliation as the constitution of an audiovisual popular court in which it would still be possible for enemies to live together: “letting them (Pinochetistas and Allendistas) live together in the same space with the camera.” The Guzmán of Island of Robinson Crusoe allow us to learn how the visible encounter in a popular court is not enough if it is not haunted by the drive of justice of those who cannot appear on the screen, those who reconfigure the present by turning reconciliation into restitution.

36 In Market and Thought, Levinson explains: “For if the completion of the market turns on a consensus that “goes without saying,” then the amplification of “saying,” attention to the “fact that there is language,” is fundamental to any disruption of that totality. Conversely, the “sweeping by” of the “saying,” its avoidance, cannot but feed consensus and neoliberalism, the “it goes without saying” itself” (8).
Between restitution, then, as the necessity of thought, and its accomplishment as achieved restitution, a way must be found to restitute the very possibility of thinking alterity (which is not the same thing as restituting alterity’s positivity as found object). [...] Justice is nothing but restitution. The opening to an ‘invening’ or other arrival, always in that sense ‘messianic’, is the necessary and sufficient restitutional demand within any epistemics of the other. (Alberto Moreiras, The Exhaustion of Difference 152-153)

In his essay entitled “Manchas en el negativo (Sobre la utilización de la ficción adentro del cine documental)” [“Stains in the negative (On the use of fiction inside documentary film)”] posted on his personal website, Guzmán offers a profound meditation on what he considers to be the new challenges of documentary film in relation to “non-visible reality”: “Estimo que hoy no basta con acumular datos y hechos. Los que se mueven en este espacio nunca podrán mostrarnos la realidad no visible que veía Cervantes o Kafka. Hay que ir más allá: enseñar lo que no sabemos, mostrar lo que no vemos” [“I consider that today it is not enough to collect facts. Those who move in this space will never be able to show us the non-visible reality that Cervantes or Kafka saw. We have to go beyond: we have to show (or teach) what we do not know, we have to show what we cannot see”]. This is perhaps one of the most profound lessons on today’s documentary since Guzmán recognizes that in order to move towards a deeper comprehension of reality, we have to consider audiovisual media as a form of hospitality, as a way of welcoming the many specters that allow us to learn how to live with them. It is precisely by exploring the “non-visible reality” of Crusoe’s spectral sensorium in all its limits that Island of Robinson Crusoe allows justice to appear as an open possibility emerging out of the telephone booth sequence’s “inaudible reality.” By exposing spectators to the legacy of Robinson Crusoe’s spectral perspectives (its promising moments, unsolved problems and deceptive closures), Island of Robinson Crusoe

allows spectators to learn to live with their most intimate ghosts, those for whom the promise of justice remains open in the space of a poem yet to be written. In that sense, *Island of Robinson Crusoe* could be conceived along the lines of Derrida’s notion of the politics of memory:

To learn to live with ghosts, in the upkeep, the conversation, the company, or the companionship, in the commerce without commerce of ghosts. To live otherwise, and better. No, not better, but more justly. But with them. No being-with the other, no socius without this with that makes being with in general more enigmatic than ever for us. And this being-with specters would also be, not only but also, a politics of memory, of inheritance, and of generations. […] If I am getting ready to speak … about ghosts, inheritance, and generations, generations of ghosts, which is to say about certain others who are not present, nor presently living, either to us, in us, or outside us, it is in the name of justice. Of justice where it is not yet, not yet there, where it is no longer, let us understand where it is no longer present, and where it will never be, no more than the law, reducible to law or rights. […] Without this non-contemporaneity with itself of the living present, without that which secretly unhinges it, without this responsibility and this respect for justice concerning those who are not there, of those who are no longer or who are not yet present and living, what sense would there be to ask the question “where?” “where tomorrow?” “whither?” (*Specters of Marx* xviii-xix)

I consider that Guzmán’s *Island of Robinson Crusoe*, contrary to Guzmán’s own conception of his documentary as a non-political travelogue, opens the realm of a politics to come in the “non-contemporaneity with itself of the living present.”
5. Conclusion

The first wave of critical attention to Guzmán’s documentaries appeared in the early 1990s, once international audiences received *The Battle of Chile* enthusiastically. Critical attention to *The Battle of Chile* was preceded by an editorial effort that included the publication of the film script along with a number of important documents created during the film production process by members of Equipo Tercer Año, the team that Guzmán organized to produce the film. *La insurección de la burguesía*, the film script of the first part of *The Battle of Chile* published in Venezuela in 1975, includes a set of introductory notes that present the general plan for the production of the film and two reviews. *La Batalla de Chile: la lucha de un pueblo sin armas*, published in Spain in 1977, is a more complete version since it includes the script of the first two parts of the film trilogy and an expanded set of production documents. This book includes a reflection on various methods made by the members of Equipo Tercer Año during the shooting and a passage from Guzmán’s letter to Chris Marker in which he requested film stock and explained the project. Another book about the making and reception of *The Battle of Chile* that also came out in 1977 was *Chile: el cine contra el facismo*, a collection of conversations between Pedro Sempere and Patricio Guzmán. It includes a series of critical essays on the film as well as Guzmán’s own testimony about his experiences inside the National Stadium once it became a detention center during the first days of the 1973 coup. In 1984, Julianne Burton included an interview with Patricio Guzmán in *Cinema and Social Change in Latin America: Conversations with the Filmmakers*. This interview offers English speaking audiences an abridged version of the
film production process discussed by Guzmán in his previous books published in Spanish in the 1970s.

I consider that *The Social Documentary in Latin America*, a collection of essays edited by Julianne Burton in 1990, articulates an interesting critical engagement with Guzmán’s *The Battle of Chile*. Apart from the introductory essays written by Burton and Chanan included in this book, Zuzana Pick’s “Chilean Documentary: Continuity and Disjunction” and Ana López’s “The Battle of Chile: Documentary, Political Process, and Representation,” deserve more careful attention. To this list I should add Carlos Pérez Villalobos’s “La edición de la memoria: La Batalla de Chile, La memoria obstinada y El caso Pinochet,” a remarkable critical effort that presents an analysis of *The Battle of Chile* in full connection with Guzmán’s postdictatorial documentaries. As I explain in the conclusion, Pérez Villalobos’s essay served as a point of departure since it made me understand the importance of studying Guzmán’s documentaries as a corpus, particularly because he excluded the documentary *Island of Robinson Crusoe* from Guzmán’s corpus, a film which is full of critical possibilities.

In the last 10 years, since the screening of *Chile, Obstinate Memory*, Patricio Guzmán has offered a good number of interviews that are available through the World Wide Web. Guzmán offers his vision of *Chile, Obstinate Memory* as well as interesting details about its film production in Claudia Urzúa’s “Patricio Guzmán, cineasta: ‘La memoria tiene que ser porfiada,’” an interview for *El Mostrador*, a Chilean electronic newspaper. Martín Pérez’s “La vida está llena de casualidades,” available at the website of the Argentine newspaper *Página 12*, proved to be crucial at the moment of understanding the link between Guzmán’s *The Pinochet Case* and *Island of Robinson Crusoe*. The Basque collective “kinoki documentales” from Bilbao posted an interview
with Guzmán in Cine Social, the news section of its website. Here, Guzmán discusses his vision of Allende. The most complete interview that I have read about ethic and aesthetic issues of The Pinochet Case is Patricia Aufderheide’s “The importance of historical memory: an interview with Patricio Guzmán,” published by Cineaste but also available at the website of The Center for Social Media at American University in Washington D.C. But, perhaps, the most important bank of sources available electronically is Patricio Guzmán’s personal website (La web de Patricio Guzmán), which includes valuable information on each of his films (synopsis, technical details and critical reception), an interview, and number of essays and photos that offer the most complete “biofilmography” of this Chilean director.

A second wave of critical attention to Guzmán’s documentaries emerged with the appearance of Chile, Obstinate Memory in 1997 and it has been more intense after The Pinochet Case came out in 2001. Carlos Pérez Villalobos’s “La edición de la memoria: La Batalla de Chile, La memoria obstinada y El caso Pinochet” as well as my investigation belongs to this second wave which also includes Patricia Keeton’s “Reevaluating the ‘Old’ Cold War: A Dialectical Reading of Two 9/11 Narratives,” Thomas Miller Klubock’s “History and Memory in Neoliberal Chile: Patricio Guzmán’s Obstinate Memory and The Battle of Chile,” James Cisneros’s “The Figure of Memory in Chilean Cinema: Patricio Guzmán and Raúl Ruiz,” Amalia Ortiz de Zárate Fernández’s and Rodrigo Browne’s “El síndrome de insularidad y aislamiento en Robinson Crusoe: análisis comparativo intercultural” and Jorge Rufinelli’s book Patricio Guzmán. I agree with Patricia Keeton when she argues that Guzmán’s The Pinochet Case should be understood as a film whose impact consist in reevaluating US Foreign Policy towards Chile during the Cold War Period in the context of the two September 11 (1973/2001), a
narrative frame first suggested by Ariel Dorfman in his essay “El último once de septiembre.”¹

I applaud Thomas Miller Klubock’s interest in connecting Guzmán’s cinema to the thought of Walter Benjamin. Klubock’s critique of the circulation of The Battle of Chile as a satellite TV commodity in Chile is also very persuasive. Nevertheless, many of his arguments do not convince me. One of the problems that I have with Klubock’s essay is that he insists on establishing a contrast, which in my view is false, between the collective dimension of discourse in The Battle of Chile and the personal dimension in Chile, Obstinate Memory. He argues that this apparent shift in Guzmán’s cinematic discourse from the collective to the personal is a symptom of Chilean neoliberalism since it erases the realm of collectivity that exists in the Chilean present: the collective organizations fighting for the rights of the families of the disappeared. If someone has paid attention the dimensions of human collectivity in the Chilean present, this is Patricio Guzmán. His documentaries show alternative views of human collectivity: football fans, film audiences, torture survivors, and “Pinoturistas” of all kinds (not to mention those who appear in Island of Robinson Crusoe). Klubock complains that Guzmán does not pay attention to militant organizations struggling for memory such as H.I.J.O.S and FUNA in Chile, Obstinate Memory. His essay, however, published two years after the premiere of Guzmán’s The Pinochet Case, misses the important fact that Guzmán does include a “Funao” operation (a public demonstration against exmembers of Pinochet secret forces) in The Pinochet Case. In this sense, Klubock’s essay confirms the need of

¹ Dorfman’s attention to the other September 11 (Chile-1973) has motivated a good number of critical responses. In an unpublished essay entitled “September 11 (Chile-1973/New York-2001) … a photographic wound,” I explore the images of Chilean photographer Camilo José Vergara included in his book Twin Towers Remembered in order to consider the visual discourse of an artist whose work captures the tensions and erasures of the two September 11.
examining Guzmán’s documentaries as a meaningful constellation instead of considering each of them as individual texts and closed circuits of meaning. The most problematic aspect of Klubock’s essay, however, consists on confusing the discourse of the documentary with the discourse of the witnesses it presents. Missing the cinematic specificity of Guzmán’s text, Klubock reads the discourse of the witnesses (testimony) as if it is consubstantial with the discourse of the documentary. Lacking critical tools to approach the image, Klubock argues that “the film’s powerful evocation of personal tragedy and loss produces a sense of memory that is restricted to the individual and denied by nostalgia, rather than a form of collective memory engaged with current political questions” (276). If we analyze the cinematic image in its own specificity, as I will attempt to do in the following pages, we will discover a new dimension not taken into account by Klubock (for whom “Memoria Obstinada” does not situates itself “in relation to contemporary realities or debates”) (275). Contrary to Klubock’s argument, I would like to argue that Guzmán’s sense of collectivity should not be reducible to the convenient or urgent representation of “contemporary realities.” “Memoria Obstinada” unfolds in the non-contemporaneity of the present to itself that is one of the aspects of the cinematic image as a play of shadows. Since Klubock does not take into consideration the play of shadows that liberates collective intensities in Chile, Obstinate Memory, the film is reduced to “personal tragedy.” This explains why, from Klubock perspective, it would be enough to include representations of militant collectivities in order to fix the film. For me, on the contrary, it is not the film’s discourse but its confusion with the discourse of testimony (a lack of attention to the film’s cinematic specificity) that which explains why the Guzmán’s “Memoria Obstinada” could be reduced to a “personal tragedy.” Klubock’s conception of “Memoria Obstinada” as a “personal tragedy,”
therefore, does not exhaust the semiotic possibilities of Guzmán’s cinematic discourse but rather manifests the problems of a reduced frame of critical interpretation.

Jorge Rufinelli’s book Patricio Guzmán, published in Spain by Cátedra in 2004, is a book that I just discovered. I look forward to read Rufinelli’s study of Guzmán’s cinema and to incorporate his ideas in the final version of this work. Recently, I read a wonderful piece about Guzmán’s cinema that deserves a special comment: James Cisneros’s “The Figure of Memory in Chilean Cinema: Patricio Guzmán and Raúl Ruiz.” Cisneros argues that:

While some memory strategies have responded with attempts to traverse the screen and recover the past’s lost or hidden information, others have adopted the discontinuity it imposes as constitutive element of their own historicity, as a necessary temporal condition of contemporary recollection. […] Several memory strategies emerging in Chilean cultural production account for their historicity by marking their difference from the idea of history that informed the past era, producing images of that era without reproducing the temporality undergirding it. They hence remember in a disjointed and anachronistic present, vacillating between multiple temporal registers, including the future, that remain irreducibly distinct. […] If Benjamin’s famous artwork essay describes the simulacrum’s advance –‘reality’, he writes, has become ‘a blue flower in the land of technology’– and attempts to recover film for experience, Ruiz and Guzmán demonstrate that the simulacrum’s screen has become a necessary element to show the empty space, to make visible the absence of the disappeared and the censoring hand that washes away their traces. In different ways, each structures his film with the vestiges of another time, with anachronistic images whose opacity forges a memory that remains to be seen. (59-61)

This study shares many of the historical, theoretical and interpretive insights that Cisneros explores in his essay: the Benjaminian mark of Nelly Richard, the Derridean approach to spectrality in connection to media and the exploration of the multiple temporal registers that various regimes of the image suggests. Cisneros and I coincide in conceptualizing Guzmán’s Chile, Obstinate Memory as a work of mourning in Derrida’s sense. His analysis of Ruiz’s Mémoire des apparences: La vie est un sognexplores various
aspects of the relation between cinema and literature that I study in the third chapter on Guzmán’s *Island of Robinson Crusoe*. His theoretical interest in Jacques Ranciere’s “definition of cinematic memory as a ‘fiction’ or a forging – from fingere– of an assemblage of elements taken from disparate signifying regimes” (60) is similar to my interest in Deleuze’s notion of “the powers of the false.” As I argue in my analysis of Guzmán’s *Island of Robinson Crusoe*, the genealogical configuration of Robinson Crusoe always operates through the unfolding of a chain of forgers. Although our interpretive emphasis and twists are slightly different, I consider that Cisneros’s work projects an interesting possibility for a more intense critical dialogue about Guzmán’s cinematic politics of memory. I hope that this future dialogue will contribute to the critical understanding of the struggle for global human rights in the age of total war and the politics of memory in the age of human disappearance.

This study aims to create a bridge between the fields of Latin American Cultural Studies and Documentary Studies in order to investigate two tendencies in Guzmán’s politics of memory: a tendency to re-stage history as a traumatic event and a tendency to re-construct the present as a messianic fabulation of the past. Studies on the politics of memory in Latin American Cultural Studies (Richard, Avelar) and Documentary Studies (Renov) tend to emphasize the first tendency I just described (the re-staging of history as a traumatic event). Although cultural productions narrating traumatic events such as testimonio, documentary and performance also tend to re-construct the present as a messianic fabulation of the past (for example, Menchú’s conception of culture as a public secret), this aspect has only started to be studied, especially after the politics of memory gained a new impulse and legitimacy with the Pinochet case.
The most radical contribution of this study is that it encourages us to look at how the critique of democracy from within democracy operates in documentary and how documentary serves to rethink democracy and political violence in two different historical periods. Another contribution of this study is that it helps us to conceive Guzman’s work as a cultural production emerging in connection to the debate about the globalization of justice. This study also tries to provide a historical narrative that would connect the Pinochet case to the history of global justice and global human rights. Moreover, the globalization of justice as one of the central problems of this study could be traced back from Guzmán to Crusoe. In that sense, this investigation explores the possibility of providing a new temporal frame for questioning the emergence of a sense of global justice.

This study opens a new line of investigation when it helps us to rethink the problem of justice in relation documentary. The following question expresses a traditional way of exploring this relation: is it possible for the legal system to integrate an audiovisual document into court proceedings, to transform it into evidence? This study offers a new way of thinking this problem that is not dependent on a legal but on a historical conception of justice: how does the documentary mode open a new possibility of justice by exposing the failure of the legal system?

This study also promotes a dialogue between canonical literature and minor cinema, Latin American and Transatlantic Studies, Marxism and Deconstruction, Critical Theory and Documentary Studies. The chapter on Island of Robinson Crusoe is perhaps one of the first critical investigations exploring the impact of a literary text in the documentary mode, since it considers Guzman’s documentary as a film adaptation of Defoe’s novel. One of the most interesting elements that I explore here is the tension
between first person narration and social subjectivity in the documentary mode, exposing the importance of autobiography as a real experience unraveled through fiction. In relation to fiction and autobiography, my research also invites to investigate the transnational dimension of the myth of Robinson Crusoe (French, Postcolonial and South American), and, in particular, the autobiographical re-elaborations of Defoe’s classic made by Neruda, Sarmiento, Walcott and Guzmán.
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