

UC Irvine

UC Irvine Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Trafficking and Violence on Bodies in Latin American Literature

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1d44j2mq>

Author

Rosen, Ann Billiaert

Publication Date

2018

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
IRVINE

Trafficking and Violence on Bodies in Latin American Literature

DISSERTATION

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in Spanish

by

Ann Billiaert Rosen

Dissertation Committee:
Professor Santiago Morales-Rivera, Chair
Professor Lucía Guerra Cunningham, Professor Emeritus
Professor Jacobo Sefamí

2018

DEDICATION

To

my family and in particular to

my husband Jim and

in loving memory of my brother Karl Billiaert, my mother Françoise Wijns Joubert,

my father Roland Billiaert, and Joyce Rosen

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
CURRICULUM VITAE	vi
ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION	vii-viii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1: Migrating Bodies	18
CHAPTER 2: Public Bodies	67
CHAPTER 3: Tortured Bodies	115
BIBLIOGRAPHY:	175

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	Page
Illustration 1: Burned Victim	18
Illustration 2: Cover Page Image of <i>Muñeca brava</i> por Ceibo	67
Illustration 3: Illustration by Raquel Partnoy	115

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to Professor Santiago Morales-Rivera, my Committee Chair. Thank you for your guidance, encouragement and wise counsel. Without your insightful advice on many aspects of my work, this dissertation might never have come to fruition.

I would like to acknowledge my Committee Member and mentor, Professor Lucía Guerra Cunningham. Although I was never able to attend one of your courses, words cannot express how fortunate I feel for having made your acquaintance after your retirement and for the invaluable help you have provided me. You took me “under your wing” and have been instrumental in helping me to develop the writing skills that have enabled me to complete this dissertation.

I would like to thank my Committee Member Professor Jacobo Sefamí. During the course of my studies at UC Irvine, I have many fond memories of the literature courses that I was fortunate enough to follow with you and for the help you provided me.

Finally, I would like to thank you, Jim, for the many hours you spent spell checking my writing. Thank you for believing in me, and for your support even during difficult times.

CURRICULUM VITAE

- 2010 B.A. in Spanish, University of California, Irvine
 B.A. in History, University of California, Irvine
- 2011 French Teaching Assistant, University of California, Irvine
- 2012 M.A. in Spanish, University of California, Irvine
- 2012 French Teaching Assistant, University of California, Irvine
- 2013 French Teaching Assistant, University of California, Irvine
 German Teaching Assistant (Fall 2013), University of California, Irvine
- 2014-16 Spanish Teaching Assistant, University of California, Irvine
- 2018 Ph.D. of Philosophy in Spanish, University of California, Irvine

FIELD OF STUDY

Twentieth and Twenty-first Century Latin American Literature

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Trafficking and Violence on Bodies in Latin American Literature

By

Ann Billiaert Rosen

Doctor of Philosophy in Spanish

University of California, Irvine, 2018

Professor Santiago Morales-Rivera, Chair

This dissertation studies the re-presentation of the body subjected to violence in Latin American literature of the twentieth and twenty-first century. The three instances that I examine are immigration, prostitution, and torture under fascist repression. In order to comprehend the importance of the body in the development, or loss, of a person's subjectivity and identity, I use Phenomenology that at the beginning of the twentieth century distanced itself from the dualism of body versus mind, to focus on the body/subject as a lived experience in the world.

The first chapter focuses on the re-presentation of personal and gang violence directed towards Central American citizens migrating north, through Mexico, fleeing poverty, social inequality, and political instability. I analyze the process of dehumanization that these bodies/subjects undergo in the borderlands after having paid a coyote to help them cross the border. In the second chapter, I concentrate on the evolution of the literary re-presentation of the prostitute who sells her body to a

customer to use as a sexual object. The third chapter of this dissertation examines the literary re-presentation of torture in exchange for a confession, during the Chilean and Argentinian dictatorships in the “Cono Sur” during the 1970s and 1980s.

Since transactions are central to all of the events that I look into, the three chapters can be seen from an economic perspective, a market driven perspective of supply and demand. But the market is dirty and the profit driven transactions often result in extreme physical violence perpetrated on objectified victims. That is what makes it particularly abject and “horroristic”.

INTRODUCTION

As in other areas of the world, in Latin America violence and aggression have prevailed. Apart from warfare and criminal delinquency, other modalities of violence have occurred throughout its history. The main objective of this dissertation is to study the literary re-presentation of bodies subjected to violence tangential to the most obvious expressions such as battles or murders.

In the three instances I will examine, there occurs a transaction: the immigrants who pay a coyote to help them cross the border and enter the United States illegally; the prostitute who sells her body to a customer to use as a sexual object; and the bodies tortured by a repressive system that promises to stop torture in exchange for a confession in which the political prisoner will offer information about leftists still free. These experiences diverge from the “normal” embodied everyday life encounters that, according to the phenomenologists, “form” the subject. Helplessness is generated when ethical societal norms are no longer adhered to and some bodies/subjects turn out to be less valuable than others and become the objects of others’ authority, violence, and/or cruelty.

Since transactions are central to all of the events that I examine, the three chapters can be viewed from an economic perspective, a market driven perspective of supply and demand. But this is a dirty, nasty market where the transactions are seldom what they appear to be. These particular profit driven transactions often result in extreme physical violence perpetrated on objectified victims, which makes it particularly abject and this is why I look into horrorism.

Focusing on the body requires a brief theoretical discussion to comprehend the relation between body and mind, and the essential role the body plays regarding Subjectivity and Identity. It is also important to establish to what extent space, immediate environment, and contact with others is engendered in the Embodied self.

A Brief Theoretical View of the Body

Understanding the body, a word that suggests materiality, necessitates the study of different discourses about the body in a specific geographic context and time. It requires understanding the value and the meaning given to that body, taking into account the significance of race, gender and class, and the perspective from which the notion of the body is produced. My research focuses on the re-presentation of the body in twentieth and twenty-first century Latin American literature and covers the topics of migration, prostitution, and torture. Both in Christian theology and in philosophy, for centuries a dualism predominated between the materiality of the body and the immateriality of the soul and the mind. At the beginning of the 20th century, Husserl and other phenomenologists did away with this dualism to replace it by an interaction where the body and perception or lived experience intertwine, giving rise to a new notion: the body/subject.

A brief analysis of phenomenology will enable us to better comprehend how the body can be considered as a “lived experience”. According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, “(the) discipline of phenomenology may be defined initially as the study of structures of experience, or consciousness. Literally, phenomenology is the study of “phenomena”: appearances of things, or things as they appear in our

experience (...)" (*Phenomenology*, 1) Phenomenology is the way we experience our contact with other people, a specific space or ourselves in a certain situation.

"Phenomenology studies conscious experience as experienced from the subjective or first person point of view (...) Basically, phenomenology studies the structure of various types of experiences ranging from perception, thought, memory, imagination, emotion, desire, and volition to bodily awareness, embodied action, and social activity, including linguistic activity." (*Phenomenology*, 1) Phenomenology is thus distinct from ontology, in the way that it studies what appears and how it appears to the subject instead of what is. Even though other philosophers had already used the term Phenomenology, Husserl really created it as the theory or discipline that we know today. Here, I will focus on the concepts of the Body and Embodiment in the theories developed by Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty. Although the field of phenomenology is immensely diverse, my present research concentrates on the phenomenological perception of the body.

For Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), the body was at the center of his lifelong research. It was not a material substance in opposition to the mind but rather:

a locus of distinctive sorts of sensations that can only be felt firsthand by the embodied experiencer concerned (...) In Husserl's phenomenology of embodiment, then, the lived body is a lived center of experience, and both its movement capabilities and its distinctive register of sensations play a key role in his account of how we encounter other embodied agents in the shared space of a coherent and ever-explorable world. (Behnke, 1)

Husserl's phenomenology centers on the subjective experiences of the body/subject in opposition to more scientific explanations that analyze the body (anatomy) and other

sciences. Moreover, for him, this scientific approach “ignores what is essential to the body as a lived body (Leib)—as my body, someone’s body, experienced in a unique way by the embodied experiencer concerned. In other words, what is missing in scientific approaches is the body of embodiment, which must not be taken physically, but as directly experienced from within.” (Behnke, 5)

For Husserl, “embodied experience is geared into the world as a communal nexus of meaningful situations, expressive gestures, and practical activities.” (Behnke, 6) The embodied experience is the personal and social experience of everyday life; Husserl calls it “Lebenswelt”, the “lifeworld”: “the “personalistic” attitude that characterizes personal and social experience in the world of everyday life—the “lifeworld” (Lebenswelt), the cultural world that is the province of the cultural or human sciences”. (Behnke, 6) When we meet someone, we pay attention to that person’s voice, his/her facial expressions, his/her behavior; that is the embodiment of that particular person. As Behnke states: “(...) we immediately see embodied persons, not material objects animated by immaterial minds, and the immediacy of this carnal intersubjectivity is the foundation of community and sociality (with culturally specific “normal” embodiment playing a privileged role as the measure from which the “anomalous” and the “abnormal” diverge).”(Behnke, 6)

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) was Husserl’s assistant at the University of Freiburg. His particular field of interest was the study of being (ontology) and he in fact used phenomenology as a tool, a method, to explore his main concept, the Dasein, which literally means Being Here; a lived body that exists in the world, with an openness towards the world. For Heidegger, consciousness, on which Husserl based

his phenomenology, was only one possible mode of research. (W.J.Korab-Karpowicz,

7) Akoijam Thoibisana uses three terms to explain Heidegger's view of "living in the world": "facticity", "thrownness", and "state-of-mind".

Facticity designates the irreducible specificity and always alreadiness of Dasein's being-in-the-world. The body I have is always unavoidably and specifically mine. The concept of facticity also implies that Dasein is meaningfully bound to the conditions of its existence and the entities it encounters. (...) Whether I have red hair or yellow skin or grow up in a brick veneer house are not just random, objective facts: they are important to me and to others, but I don't get to choose them. I think the 'there' of my existence is always and most proximally, my body. My bodily particularities are part of facticity, they constitute the 'mineness' of my existence (...) (Heidegger adds)

"thrownness" to connote this inescapable submission to existence itself. We are beings thrown into existence (...) For Heidegger we are forced to confront this "thrownness" most powerfully in 'state-of-mind'. State-of-mind, or mood, discloses existence prior to and beyond either cognition or will. We always find ourselves in a mood just as, I would add, we find ourselves in a body, while knowledge and intention come later(...) All these layers essentially constitute the Dasein's essential core and make it fragile and worldly. (Thoibisana, 2)

Thoibisana continues with questions that relate directly to my research: "What if the body I have is paralyzed or if my capacity to be touched is marred by sexual abuse? What if the body I have is judged to be less than human due to its color? What if my body becomes an object of exchange, a piece of merchandise? Can I still accept the body I have? Should I bear it?" She describes this as a "Being-thrown-into-a-world that is often strangely unfamiliar or unhomelike." (Thoibisana, 3)

Now Sartre, from an Existentialist perspective, uses phenomenology to study human existence and ethics, an extremely important view for this present work.

"Adopting and adapting the methods of phenomenology, Sartre (1905-1980) sets out to develop an ontological account of what it is to be human. The main features of this

ontology are the groundlessness and radical freedom which characterize the human condition (...)" (Onof, 1) In his work *Being and Nothingness* (1943), he "defines two types of reality which lie beyond our conscious experience: the being of the object of consciousness and that of consciousness itself." (Olof, 1) Central to his existentialist phenomenology is Husserl's consciousness but with Sartre it is "as being transparent, i.e. having no 'inside', but rather as being a 'fleeing' towards the world." (Onof, 4) Of importance to him is the bodily contact between lived bodies. "For Sartre, the flesh is presented as both the locus of contingency and also the point of contact with the flesh of the other (...) (the flesh) is our incarnation in the world in precisely this inescapable manner, our being 'thrown' into the world." (Moran, 10) According to Sartre, the other is not the result of one's subjectivity, as Husserl viewed it; it is rather an exterior encounter, an encounter in the world, in a more Heideggerian conception of Dasein, which Sartre called *la réalité humaine* (human reality). (Moran, 12)

In Sartre's view, there is one's experience (*le corps-existé*) and how one is viewed by the Other (*le corps-vu*) or eventually by oneself. One's body can be "experienced and indeed utilized by the other, and utilized by myself occupying the role of third-person observer of my body. This includes my ready-to-hand equipment engagement with the world and my body as the tool of tools" (Moran,13) In this intersubjective dimension, Sartre views the body as an instrument. An important point is how one experiences one's body under the gaze of the Other: "With the appearance of the Other's look I experience the revelation of my being-as-object, that is, of my transcendence as transcended" (Moran, 14) In other words, how does one feel, realizing one has become the objectified body of the Other? "Being-seen is a

particularly informative form of self-experience through the other. I experience myself as vulnerable, exposed, caught in a particular place and time, seized and frozen by the look.” (Moran, 22) “Sartre distinguishes sharply between this body understood as an object in the world, seen from ‘the physical point of view’, the ‘point of view of the outside’, of exteriority, and the body as experienced from within. From within, the body as lived is invisible, impalpable, ‘ineffable’” (Moran, 15) For Sartre though, during our exterior encounters, we do not focus that much on the body, but rather on the experience itself, on the outside world. We transcend the body to open towards the world. According to him, “intentionality is world-directed”. He calls it “self-transcendence” and adds that “(t)he body is necessary again as the obstacle to be surpassed in order to be in the world; that is, the obstacle which I am to myself” (Moran, 18)

Very important for this present study are the ethical interpretations of Sartre’s phenomenological analyses. He opposes the Freudian theory that says that “there are psychological factors that are beyond the grasp of our consciousness and thus are potential excuses for certain forms of behavior.” (Onof, 6) According to Sartre :

Emotion originates in a degradation of consciousness faced with a certain situation. The spontaneous conscious grasp of the situation which characterizes an emotion, involves what Sartre describes as a ‘magical’ transformation of the situation. Faced with an object which poses an insurmountable problem, the subject attempts to view it differently, as though it were magically transformed. Thus an immanent extreme danger may cause me to faint so that the object of my fear is no longer in my conscious grasp. Or, in the case of wrath against an unmovable obstacle, I may hit it as though the world were such that this action could lead to its removal. The essence of an emotional state is thus not an immanent feature of the mental world, but rather a transformation of the subject’s perspective upon the world. (Onof, 4)

Sartre views the ego as being produced by consciousness but being present in the mind only occasionally. “Husserl endorsed the Kantian claim that the ‘I think’ must be able to accompany any representation of which I am conscious, but reified this ‘I’ into a transcendental ego.” (Onof, 5) For Sartre, the ever-present “I” during consciousness would hinder our spontaneous experiences in the world. For him, there is the pre-reflective consciousness, a level at which much of the everyday activity happens, that does not involve the ego, and there is the reflective consciousness “that reveals an ego insofar as an ‘I’ is brought into focus: the pre-reflective consciousness which is objectified is viewed as mine.”(Onof, 5) But key in his ethical analysis is the fact that the person is fully responsible for his conscious acts, even the spontaneous ones at the pre-reflective level. (Onof, 6) According to Sartre, every person has unlimited freedom to make choices. This freedom is not only in terms of action but “as characteristic of the nature of consciousness.” After World War II, Sartre changed his view on the human or ‘ontological’ freedom, where consciousness has the ability to transcend or escape any material situation. After the holocaust, he shifts towards a more material view on freedom, where “humans are only free if their basic needs as practical organisms are met” (Heter, 7) For Sartre, freedom comes with consciousness of the consequences of one’s actions. With this freedom comes also the notion of authenticity, a certain mode of being in the world, of making proper choices. “This notion of authenticity appears closely related to Heidegger’s, since it involves a mode of being that exhibits a recognition that one is Dasein. However, unlike Heidegger’s, Sartre’s conception has clear practical consequences (...) As Sartre points out, by

choosing, an individual commits not only himself, but the whole of humanity.” (Onof, 15)

Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961), is also associated with existentialist phenomenology. Although he was never as combative or politically oriented as Jean-Paul Sartre, he dedicated much of his research to develop a radical re-description of embodied experience (with a primacy given to studies of perception) (Reynolds, 1). He thought Western philosophy to be too dualistic, with the body always subordinated to the mind, and the “nature of perception (...) conditioned by notions and concepts from natural science.” (Bullington, 5) His work, *the Phenomenology of Perception*, describes “that we are our bodies, and that our lived experience of this body denies the detachment of subject from object, mind from body, etc. “ (Reynolds, 6) The mental and physical are always engaged simultaneously although at different levels. “Psychological motives and bodily occasions may overlap because there is not a single impulse in a living body which is entirely fortuitous in relation to psychic intentions, and not a single mental act which has not found at least its germ or its general outline in physiological tendencies “ (Bullington, 29)

For Merleau-Ponty, there is the material body, the body that interacts with its natural environment, and the body “as a dialectic of a social subject and his group” (Bullington, 27) This is what constitutes what he calls human experience, a “dialogue” between the subject and his/her world. (Bullington, 6) The perception of the “other” is a lived experience; a way of seeing and interpreting the world through one’s own subjectivity. Merleau-Ponty calls the physiological and psychological experience

of the mind-body-world the “lived-body”, but for him, “there is mind in the body and body in the mind”. (Bullington, 7)

From a different perspective that gives emphasis to power and knowledge, Michel Foucault (1926-1984), focuses on “biopower” and “governmentality” and how it creates a discursive construction of the human body. As Angela King states: “It is a pervasive and powerful method of social control that both produces and restricts one’s mode of being.” (King, 36) And for him, the human being is as much the object as the participant in the power games. In *Discipline and Punishment*, Foucault describes how disciplinary our society is:

Discipline began not with prisons, but originally in monastic institutions, spreading out through society via the establishment of professional armies, which required dressage, the training of individual soldiers in their movements so that they could coordinate with one another with precision. This, crucially, was a matter of producing what Foucault calls “docile bodies”, the basic unit of disciplinary power (...) Schools, hospitals, and factories all combine similar methods to prisons for arranging bodies regularly in space, down to their minute movements (...) Like the prison, they all have educational, economically productive, and medical aspects to them (...) they produce a “soul” on the basis of the body, in order to imprison the body. (Kelly, 8)

In *The Will to Knowledge* (1978), Foucault describes how “(b)iopoltics is a technology of power that grew up on the basis of disciplinary power. Where discipline is about the control of individual bodies, biopoltics is about the control of entire populations. Where discipline constituted individuals as such, biopoltics does this with the entire population (...) Foucault calls this combination of discipline and bio-politics together “bio-power”.” (Kelly, 13) The term “governmentality” will take the place of “bio-politics” in Foucault’s later works.

In his discourse on the body, although he defines it as the site of cultural inscriptions, Foucault never specifically differentiated between genders, a fact for which he was much criticized. King highlights how much gender is, in fact, impacted by the discursive construction of the body:

Woman's historical association with the body has resulted in her being judged and valued for her appearance more than man, often above all else, and has also engendered the fear and dread of otherness. Even in this supposedly equal, liberated and progressive society, femaleness is still disturbing enough to require supervision and containment by forms of discipline that men are not subjected to. The story of women's emancipation and increasing self-determination is clouded by the continuing presence of restrictive ideals of womanhood (...) (Kelly, 9)

The social discourse and its codes, that have been imposed on a variety of domains such as sexuality, beauty, and fashion, continue to this day as strategies to better control and dominate. (9) Kelly declares that for Foucault, "sexuality had its beginnings as a preoccupation of the newly dominant bourgeois class, who were obsessed with physical and reproductive health, and their own pleasure (...) peaceful and civilized social arrangements are supported by people locked in a struggle for supremacy (...)". (Kelly, 11-12) The cultural inscriptions on the body are not only gender marks, but also signs of ethnic origin and social class, all three factors that function as signs of identity.

This dissertation has been organized into three chapters which analyze the literary re-presentation of the migrant body, the body sold for sexual pleasure, and the body under torture. In these three different experiences, the body/subject faces different situations where his/her identity goes through a crisis in a position of object or other sold as merchandise or used as an object of political interrogation and punishment.

The first chapter of my dissertation focuses on the re-presentation of personal and gang violence directed towards Central American citizens migrating north, through Mexico, fleeing poverty, social inequality, and political instability. I start with a brief historical overview of the racism and social inequity that persist to this day in Latin American society and how it permits criminal violence against migrants. Then, through the readings of two novels, *La fila india* (2013) by Antonio Ortuño and *La mara* (2004) by Rafael Ramírez Heredia, I analyze the different processes that these bodies/subjects undergo during migration: they are displaced subjects who lose the constitutional rights of their native nation. Their vulnerability transforms into helplessness when they are exposed to a hostile Mexican population that perceives them either as dirt, as a threat to their economic survival, as exploitable merchandise, or even as sinners. The normal societal rules, the normal environment, that make up the subject's "Dasein", according to Heidegger, are disrupted by violence and cruelty, and the migrants' subjectivities undergo a transformation that can go from the loss of identity to becoming dehumanized exploitable objects or even dead bodies. The re-presentation of this transformation stands in opposition to the archetype of the journey, exemplified in the *Odyssey*, and since then, a symbol of a positive transcendental experience, through several initiations which engender knowledge. (Cirlot, 164)

In addition, I examine the theoretical notion of "migration region" and more particularly the "borderland" using the studies of the "other space" or "heterotopia" by Michel Foucault, "no-place" by Marc Augé, or "third place" by Homi Bhabha, or even the "lugar intermedio" by Calderón Le Joliff. The borderland has become a battlefield, the epitome of a post-national "intermediate space" where organized crime at all levels

of society mocks centralized governmental power. In his article “Tierras de nadie. Repensar el caos”, Francisco Mercado Noyola states the following about the actual condition of Mexico:

En lugar de sumisión al poder legitimado, operan alianzas con poderes oscuros del imperio y ponen en jaque la gobernabilidad y el estado de derecho. Materializan una vendetta histórica soñada por los ánimos subversivos de las clases humildes, asestando también un golpe certero al centralismo político y cultural, a las políticas migratorias y a la impermeabilidad social de nuestra sociedad cuasi estamentaria. (np)

Both narratives depict in great detail the graphic violence that transforms the migrants into emotionally scarred, voiceless or disfigured dead bodies, “victimized bodies”, “victimized others”, or “bodies of abjection”. It is important to mention that these two authors are journalists and deal in general with real people, real life situations, which surely explains their graphicness in terms of the descriptions. Some of the descriptions fall in the category of “horrorism” and/or “abjection” and are analyzed with the help of Rina Arya’s work *Abjection and Representation*. (2014)

The second chapter of this dissertation focuses on the evolution of the literary re-presentation of the prostitute in Latin America. I start with a brief historical overview of Western’s patriarchal societal views of women and prostitution. In the Western tradition, the “masculine” and the “feminine” have been grouped in binary oppositions where women are considered inferior to men and therefore, their bodies and behavior must be regulated. The prostitute is the archetype of the sinner in opposition to the decent woman, the virgin, the mother. Naturalist writers since the end of the nineteenth century elaborated this patriarchal view in their texts and depicted the prostitute as a feeble, degenerate being, victim of her genetic background. I then turn succinctly to

Latin America's history of prostitution before analyzing the literary elaboration of the leitmotif of the prostitute starting in the beginning of the twentieth century.

Through the reading of *Santa* (1903) by Gamboa, I study the Latin American Naturalist perspective on the prostitute. I analyze the notions of “transgressing gender boundaries”, “order” and “hygienismo”. I examine how, as a prostitute, Santa loses her legal identity; she becomes a body, a commodity, a “living coin” whose value goes up or down according to the market's (the customers') demand. Her body, her flesh, is “butchered”, used and abused and eventually it becomes worthless. Santa's death is the inevitable Naturalistic ending.

I then examine the evolution of the leitmotif of the prostitute during the Latin American *Boom* in the second half of the twentieth century. The body of the prostitute takes on a wider range of functions such as the object of desire, transgression, parody, and sin... For example, in *Pantaleón y las visitadoras* (1973) by Vargas Llosa, it becomes a tool for mocking the incompetent military and a pretext to light entertainment, while in *Cien años de soledad* (1967) by Gabriel García Márquez, the whore house, with its prostitutes, becomes a site of the magic in Macondo about to fall into Apocalyptic destruction.

Some of the more recent novels in this chapter, written by female authors, and with a feminist perspective, deliberately turn the situation around and give agency to their female characters. *El infierno prometido* (2006) by Elsa Drucaroff and *Muñeca brava* (1993) by Lucía Guerra depict the prostitute as simultaneously the object and the subject of pleasure; focusing on the topography of their bodies from a female perspective. On the other hand, Myriam Laurini presents a social denunciation of

human trafficking and child prostitution. In *Que raro que me llame Guadalupe* (2008), she describes the alienating everyday life experience of the prostitute imprisoned in the brothel, and depicts how trafficked children's bodies are preyed upon for anomalous adult sexual practices that even include their killing.

The third, and final chapter of this dissertation examines the literary representation of torture and "disappearance" during the Chilean and Argentinian dictatorships in the "Cono Sur" during the seventies and eighties of the twentieth century. Thousands of "subversive" bodies/subjects underwent "punishment" and eventually were "disappeared", without a trace, by these authoritarian regimes. María Rosa Olivera-Williams declares the following:

Los prisioneros desaparecidos sufrieron inenarrables torturas en una tentativa de arrebatarles sus subjetividades, transformándolos en cuerpos, que como bultos o paquetes también se intentaron desaparecer. Esta política exterminadora que encontró en la tortura su arma más eficaz practicó la violencia sexual y de género contra todos los prisioneros-desaparecidos, independientemente de su sexo(...) Esta violencia contra la fibra más íntima del ser humano intentó borrar las subjetividades de los militantes, al mismo tiempo que dejaba constancia de la caída de los represores en la perversión al ejercer contra los prisioneros un exceso de poder. (61-62)

With the help of Daniel Rafecas' *El crimen de tortura*, I describe the historical context of torture in Latin America as well as details about the Chilean and Argentinian dictatorships. Additionally, I add a theoretical perspective on torture in which I primarily use Elaine Scarry's book *The Body in Pain* (1985) and José Santos Herceg's article "La tortura: todo es cuerpo". I explain what torture is; its methods, its main goal of breaking the mind and the body, and how prisoners "live" their tortured body. I examine who can torture. I describe the victims' experience from a phenomenological perspective, where the body/subject is dehumanized, transformed into an animalized body (and only body)

in pain. Marguerite Feitlowitz cites ex-prisoners who were tortured to the point that they declared: “You had to remember that you were human”. One prisoner stated “I got to the point during torture where I’d think to myself, this torturer, this guy torturing me now, is a man like me ... not a martian, not a cockroach’ ... I had just one goal- to stay alive until the next day ... But it wasn’t just to survive, but to survive as me.” (Preface, XII)

The works I analyze in this last chapter are testimonials given by people who have spent time in concentration camps. I explain the significance of the testimonial, not only as a means to represent the totality of the prisoners, dead or alive, but also as a means of reconstruction of the subjectivity of the survivor. Although some scenes of torture are presented, Aníbal Quijada Cerda author of *Cerco de púas* (1977), and Alicia Partnoy, author of *The Little School* (1986), were primarily focused on narrating details of daily life in the camps, with the importance of space and a harsh new environment that regulates the body. They both put emphasis on solidarity and resistance among the inmates as a means for survival. *Cerco de púas* brings into light the language transformation carried out by the dictatorships. It also depicts how torture annihilates language and how torturers have a tendency to ritualize their actions. The third testimonial, *La danza de los cuervos* (2012), is written by a journalist who obtained his information from an insider of the system; it has graphic torture scenes that approximate “horrorism”. In *La danza de los cuervos*, the reader feels the shift from terror to horror; I use the text *Horrorism* (2009) by Adriana Cavarero, who utilizes Hannah Arendt’s and Primo Levi’s experience in concentration camps, to explore the

enigmatic figure of the torturer, usually a good citizen and a normal human being who, all of a sudden, punishes and kills other human beings in the name of a fascist regime.

In the field of Latin American literature, there exists a vast bibliography on the topic of the body. Usually, this topic is restricted to one single author, a determined chronological period or a specific literary movement. My objective in this dissertation is to explore the literary re-presentation of the body/subject in three different transactions: migration, prostitution, and politically driven torture. I use novels as well as testimonials, but because of the intrinsic aspects of the texts, all based on a sad reality of violence tangential to warfare and criminal delinquency, the barriers between history and fiction are oftentimes blurred.

The type of violence described in the texts requires different strategies from the subject to survive and reconfigure the interrupted harmony of the interaction between subject and body.

CHAPTER ONE: MIGRATING BODIES

El fuego. Sus efectos sobre el cuerpo. La piel, como una tela, se aparta de la carne, desnudándola. Los ojos saltan de sus cuencas, uñas y cabello se vuelven ceniza. La lengua pende fuera de la boca como un ahorcado o, en cambio, si los dientes se apretaron por miedo, retrocede al fondo de la garganta y se agazapa.

Antonio Ortuño. *La Fila India*.



Illustration 1: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/559783428653868166/>

Emigration in Central America and the borderlands as an intermediate space.

This epigraph is part of the description Ortuño makes in *La Fila India* to refer to the effects of fire on a group of emigrants that were burned by a human trafficking gang working under the orders of the CONAMI, a government agency in charge of protecting the migrants, when trying to cross the border to the United States. Such description makes the UNESCO definition of migration quite simple and naive: “(...) the crossing of the boundary of a political or administrative unit for a certain minimum period of time. It includes the movement of refugees, displaced persons, uprooted people as well as economic migrants.” (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/migrant/>). UNESCO excludes tourism and organized relocation of passive refugees on the basis of their relocation being involuntary, with which they mean without agency. Migration has existed all over the world since ancient times because thousands of people have been forced to flee economic hardship, social inequality, political instability or war. When conditions in their native country became too difficult, agency in a desperate situation enabled them to leave.

Since the late twentieth century, migration has flourished due to globalization that, contrary to its promises, has drastically increased inequality between developed and developing countries. As we learn from Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Russell Hochschild, the improved quality of life in some countries has increased the desire to purchase easy, immediate, and affordable services such as unskilled labor, nannies, maids, sex... On the other hand, the increasing impoverishment and lack of employment opportunities in other countries have intensified a voluntary wave of

migration and, thanks to the globalization of information, has allowed people of the poorer countries to have a better understanding of the quality of life of people in the northern countries and of the material goods they possess (Barbara Ehrenreich, 2-4).

The first chapter of this study focuses on the leitmotif of the “migrating bodies” and the abject violence with which they are treated. We highlight the “untold” version of migration, including human smuggling and trafficking, facilitated by the outrageous corruption of the State apparatus and the gangs. Inside the migration region, and maybe as its most representative epitome, is the border region; we will study migration in terms of “la frontera” as a conflictive space.

Migration from Latin America towards the north has always existed as a consequence of its poor economy and its very unequal society; at the bottom of society have always been the native Americans, who have been and still are an important part of the northbound migration. Since the Conquest, indigenous people have been killed or subjugated for work. Jean Franco describes how “(t)he Conquest constituted the indigenous as a conquered race, just as slavery constituted the image of the black as an enslaved commodity...(some argued that) the indigenous were slaves by nature but also that they were contaminated with abominable lewdness: that is, they were sinners by nature.” (Franco, 46) Over the centuries, many have been killed during the process of nation building. The natives have been considered alien to the modernization of the nation, which included the annihilation of ethnic differences. Moreover, the natives lived in territories the nations wanted to seize (desert campaign in Argentina, Mapuche territories in Chile...) (46)

Inequality in Latin America. Breaking with History? situates the root of the problem in colonial times and the elite's desire since then to maintain its privileges:

For as long as data on living standards have been available, Latin America has been one of the regions of the world with the greatest inequality. With the possible exception of Sub-Saharan Africa, this is true with regard to almost every conceivable indicator, from income and consumption expenditures to measures of political influence and voice, and including most aspects of health and education... Latin America's inequality has deep historical roots and pervades contemporary institutions... The colonists developed institutions - notably those related to labor management (including slavery), land use, and political control - that consolidated and perpetuated their influence and wealth. In the post-independence period, domestic elites continued to shape institutions and policies to maintain their privileged positions, for example in the areas of restricted suffrage, access to education, and land policy." (De Ferranti, 5-17)

This statement is confirmed by Kenia Gabriela Aubry Ortégón who cites the author

René Jara, writing in a very direct way about the exclusion of the poor in Latin America:

El pueblo es bastardo, de piel oscura y sudorosa, excluido de la sociedad, marginado, analfabeto, étnicamente marcado, habla una lengua indígena o un español deficiente; es una mayoría de pobres... (cuando al contrario) la élite se percibe como externa a la nación; depositaria de la riqueza, blanca, educada, sus hijos asisten a colegios ingleses, alemanes, franceses [...] italianos; la élite viaja, se asocia con la comunidad extranjera, es bilingüe o multilingüe, habita y tiene espacios residenciales en diferentes partes del país, es una minoría que ha secuestrado la comunidad nacional en connivencia con poderes foráneos". (48)

In the 1960s and 1970s, a second model of modernity came into play in which developmentalism played a significant role:

Under the hegemony of the United States, the goal of developmentalism was to remove opposition to the world system. When challenged by the insurgency and guerrilla movements of the 1960s and 1970s, the military, already powerful, took charge of what it termed "the war against communism" and resorted to extreme terror and blanket repression not only of militants but also of their supposed supporters. (Franco, 6)

Migration thus increased substantially in the late 1970s and 1980s due to civil wars that left these countries in chaos. People, and oftentimes indigenous who were viewed as supporters of the guerrilleros, would flee persecution and economic hardship.

In Central America, El Salvador, as well as Guatemala and Nicaragua were caught up in civil wars that caused massive levels of death and relocation. In Guatemala alone, an estimated 200,000 persons were killed or “disappeared” during the violence of the civil war. Additionally, virtually all of Latin America was experiencing economic crises that served as the prelude to the “Lost Decade” of the 1980s, a period in which economic growth, per capita income, and investment dropped as unemployment/underemployment, inflation, and foreign debt increased. (Jonas, 3)

Presently, Óscar Martínez, a Salvadoran journalist who runs “Sala Negra” - a crime investigations unit for *El Faro*, an online Central American magazine that is based in El Salvador - describes how in his country, although the civil war has ended, violence has never stopped; it shifted from political violence to criminal violence. A civil war from 1980 until 1992 ended with 75,000 people killed and a peace deal that gave immunity to all. The bloodshed has never ceased even in times of peace; the main reason today is its location on the route of the drug trade between Colombia and the U.S. In the foreword of *A History of Violence*, Jon Lee Anderson writes: “There are as many as 50,000 Salvadorans directly involved in gangs and up to half a million more, out of a population of 6 million, who are economically dependent on them.” (XIII)

Honduras has had the highest murder rates in the world for several years: “(...) the United States, usually regarded as a violent country, has a current average of 5.5 murders per 100,000 inhabitants. Honduras has 90.” (XIII) He adds that there is an average of one murder an hour. “According to an August 2015 article in the *Guardian*,

the latest murder statistics suggest that El Salvador is ‘twenty times more violent than the United States, ninety times more violent than Great Britain.’ ” (XIII)

In the twenty first century, with the civil wars long over, Central America is still in chaos and its society is still structured on the basis of inequality. The State has no desire to realize changes: it prefers to maintain the misery that incentivizes emigration in order to keep receiving the money the migrants send back home. In El Salvador that money sometimes exceeds the national budget and much of the population lives on the remittances of migrants’ work.

So, as many people from the “Northern Triangle” (Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador) have made, and still make, their international migratory journey, they have impacted entire regions, and are impacted themselves, along the road from Central America to the United States. Susanne Jonas and Nestor Rodríguez call the social and geographic route the migrants take, the “migration region”.

Although the migrants are not creating new territory, they are resocializing preexisting regions in a continual process of sociospatial reproduction (Soja 1989; Lefebvre 1991)... the land-based migration of thousands of Guatemalan and other Central Americans is much more than simply trekking through an expanse; it is the mutual interaction between the social and the spatial with developmental consequences for both (6).

Inside the migration region is the border region; it is a bottleneck where all migrants converge in order to enter Mexico or up north in order to enter the United States. As the line that limits the sovereignty of a nation-state or the territory (contact zone) that borders that line, this geographical space may be understood from the perspective of three different notions: heterotopias (Foucault), non-places (Marc Augé), and third spaces (Bhabha). According to Foucault, heterotopias are spaces that exist -

in opposition to utopias - and “are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted.” (Foucault, 4)

Amongst his list of these spaces are the heterotopia of crisis and the heterotopia of deviation, and in fact, inverted characteristics of both of these spaces are present in the borderlands. The heterotopias of crisis “are privileged or sacred or forbidden places, reserved for individuals who are, in relation to society and to the human environment in which they live, in a state of crisis: adolescents, menstruating women, pregnant women, the elderly etc.”(Foucault, 5) Heterotopias of deviation are spaces “in which individuals whose behavior is deviant in relation to the required mean or norm are placed. Cases are rest homes and psychiatric hospitals, and of course prisons, and one should perhaps add retirement homes (...)” (5) In our modern world, the poor are in a state of crisis in relation to society. Central Americans take to the road because their countries have abandoned them and there is no space for them. As migrants, they create aporophobia (fear and hatred for the poor) and some would say that their behavior (being poor) is a sort of deviation from the norms of a society that worships richness. In the borderlands, although the migrants’ passage creates aporophobia, their passage also attracts many deviant people such as pimps, gang members (often, having themselves been part of the desperate poor), who gather there to objectify them and exploit their bodies. So, the borderland is not a place where deviants are detained and locked up, but where deviants gather to exploit other “deviants”.

Non-places are defined by Augé as open spaces of transience created by “supermodernity” - “in relation to certain ends (transport, transit, commerce, leisure)” -

spaces “which cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity.” (Kolb, np) They are in opposition to the traditional sociological understanding we have of places: “The layout of the house, the rules of residence, the zoning of the village, placement of altars, configuration of public open spaces, land distribution, correspond for every individual to a system of possibilities, prescriptions and interdicts whose content is both spatial and social.” (Kolb, np) On the other hand, Bhabha states that the third-place is “(t)he process of cultural hybridity (that) gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation.” (211) Bhabha’s postcolonial discourse also suggests that a “third space displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom.” (211) Indeed, the borderlands represent mixed populations but without the historical hybridity that Bhabha mentions, and where the new (political) initiatives are based on exploitation and violence. Based on these three notions, Calderón defines the borderlands as “un lugar intermedio” (an intermediate space): “... una evolución del arraigo a la identidad nacional (metáfora del árbol, de la familia, del árbol genealógico, de la persona o personalización) hacia su desterritorialización y su desacralización.” (34-35)

According to Calderón, literature that focuses on borderlands portrays that zone as a battlefield where the powerful act to maintain their dominance. The border line is what separates the civilized from the uncivilized (civilization against barbarism). “La representación de la frontera territorial en las literaturas mexicana y chilena lleva a pensar en un espacio de delimitación represiva instaurada por la necesidad de

mantener una narrativa nacional, en un desplazamiento constante introducido por flujos de identidades transgresivas.” Therefore, despite the Official History, this literature gives a voice to the untold stories: “En el espacio fronterizo se busca la memoria secuestrada por los historiadores, el ejército y las misiones. La historia alternativa está en un archivo confiscado que los poetas tienen que recobrar sin perpetuarlo.” (32) Another characteristic is the ubiquitous violence towards the migrants; sometimes expressed in detail, sometimes between the lines. Viviane Mahieux and Oswaldo Zavala state in the Introduction to *Tierras de nadie*: “La nación se desintegra y los sujetos fronterizos, en todas las obras estudiadas, exhiben cuerpos fracturados e identidades escindidas.” (35)

Part of migration is displacing your body from your native surroundings to a foreign land. In Heidegger’s phenomenology the Dasein is essentially a body inhabiting a place. Therefore, this displacement implies being uprooted from your home-place. In other words, we are dealing with existence and identity. In addition, these displaced body-subjects enter into a strange and foreign land with their own culture and as Edward Said asserts, “Exile (...) is the unsealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted (...) The achievements of exile are permanently undermined by something left behind forever.” (173) According to his perspective, being in this situation results in discontinuity.

These different aspects of migration and the borderlands will be examined through the analysis of two novels: *La Fila India* (2003) by Mexican journalist and writer Antonio Ortuño and *La Mara* (2006) by Mexican journalist and writer Rafael Ramírez

Heredia. In the first novel, *La Fila India*, Central American migrants are able to cross the Mexican border and board the train called “La Bestia” in the Southern part of the country. Ortuño focuses on the vulnerability of these migrating bodies along their journey through Mexico. Such a journey radically departs from the journey as a traditional symbol in our Western society, as a synonym of a geographical transit that engenders transcendental experiences and inner change. (Cirlot, 164). On the contrary, quite different from the archetypical hero who after his peril brings back new knowledge to his people, the journey of emigrants is condemned to death and defeat, to a suffering that surpasses any heroic deed in our collective imaginary.

La Fila India focuses on migrant smugglers and human traffickers who make the migrants’ journey become a descent into hell; through fire, and other means, human beings are mutilated, burned alive, and are transformed into corpses in a context of abject corruption and indifference. *La Mara*, on the other hand, focuses on the migrants’ passage through the Guatemalan-Mexican borderlands - a social and geographic space where the encounters between the locals, including the gangs, and the migrants are of an extremely violent and exploitative nature.

The Dehumanization of Migrant Bodies in *La Fila India*.

Ortuño’s novel, *La Fila India*, presents a group of Central American migrants who escaped from their coyotes after being locked up inside the infamous “Bestia” - the train so called because many migrants die or are mutilated as it crosses Mexico. Now, inside a humanitarian institution dominated by corruption, they become victims of a human trafficking gang. Among them, Yein and her husband departed from El Salvador

because of both economic problems and gang violence that the police and government, too weak and corrupt, are unable to stop: Their situation is described in the following passage:

se había hecho cargo de ella desde el día que se quedó huérfana pero la falta de trabajo los había obligado a mudarse cada pocos meses de los cuartos alquilados donde dormían; terminaron por vivir en las orillas, al límite de los cafetales, en una choza de madera... Luis les tenía pánico a los pandilleros del vecindario. No salía ni siquiera a tomarse una cerveza a la tienda aunque llegara a reunir el dinero para hacerlo. (131)

They, as many others, emigrate to the North in search of a better life, not knowing that human trafficking or present-day slavery thrives, hidden amidst an ever increasing flow of human beings traveling towards wealthier countries. According to Louise Shelley, author of *Human Trafficking. A Global Perspective*, the distinction between migrant smuggling and human trafficking is very fine and though most of the migrants depart voluntarily, oftentimes paying smugglers, they can easily get trafficked along the way (2). In the case of migrant smuggling, there is a mutual agreement between the smuggler and the migrants; an agreement that is often changed by the smuggler along the road. In the case of human trafficking, traffickers enslave and exploit their victims, often in brutal conditions, for sex, labor, marriage, to make them beggars, child soldiers, or victims of organ traffic. In *La Fila India*, Ortuño vividly portrays the close relationship between human trafficking and smuggling; he blurs the borders to emphasize how both are a moral threat to human rights and a threat to democratic governance. He develops in parallel two stories, one of migrant smuggling and one of small scale human trafficking, but with the death of all the migrants, the first story resembles more trafficking than smuggling.

In *A History of Violence*, Óscar Martínez explains how in 2005, some Coyotes started to pay off Los Zetas, a notorious gang, to avoid having problems on the road in Mexico. In 2007, Los Zetas decided to charge \$100 as a tax for every migrant who wanted to cross Mexico (that number has raised since). If a coyote decided not to pay them, or if a migrant traveling alone did not pay them, they would retaliate. “Those who don’t pay can’t cross. Migrating through Mexico has a cost, and those costs are set and collected by los Zetas.” (199) Questioning a veteran coyote, Martínez writes down the following answer:

An officer will even detain you, check to see if you’ve already paid Los Zetas, and if you’ve paid, they’ll let you go right away. If they realize you haven’t had contact with Los Zetas, then they’ll squeeze you, and you’re not going to go to jail, they’ll take you straight to them, to Los Zetas. That’s why people get disappeared. Mexico isn’t a problem if you’ve dealt with Los Zetas. But if not...” (204-205)

In *La Fila India*, the emigrants are presented as “victimized others” - as vulnerable human beings immersed in a net of the clandestine desire to profit from them. The migrant’s subjectivity, with its clear identitarian elements (dark skinned, poverty stricken, loss of a country...), is transformed into a body that also becomes merchandise when emigration enters the economic circuit of the “polleros”, the border-crossing middle-men, and drug traffickers. In the 1950s and 1960s, when Mexican seasonal farm workers were contracted by the United States’ government through the bracero program, illegal immigration already existed. Judith Adler Hellman who wrote “Pedro P., Coyote”, explains the origin of the migrants’ nickname “pollo” and their guide “pollero”.

The illegal migrants of the 1960s and 1970s were mostly peasants who sought work in the fields of California and Texas. Generally, they did not come on their own. Rather, they were recruited by agents who traveled

through the poorest rural areas of central Mexico collecting farm laborers and loading them into open trucks. The labor contractors transported the peasants to the border, packed like chickens in a poultry truck. This is how the migrants came to be called chickens, or pollos, and the agents, polleros. (719)

These people are looked upon by those on the administrative side of the smuggling business as pure merchandise, like chickens, from which they get a profit. Ortuño shows clearly how the migrants are stripped off any humanity and become “livestock”, “cargo”, an “animalized other” that follows the polleros’ orders in a succession of abuses that go from getting hit and raped, from having one’s vital needs and space reduced (crowds in train, lack of water and food), to getting killed. If these coyotes or gangs can’t obtain the expected profit, they prefer to destroy the merchandise.

Los polleros ... claro que no les va a gustar que la mercancía huya por sus propios pies, pollos congelados, chuletas de puerco que avanzan por la carretera. Por eso se dedican a pegarle de tiros a los que recuperan y a coser a tiros también los albergues de las oenegé. (50)

In *La Fila India*, Ortuño presents Central American emigration in the broader context of the Mexican nation dominated by political corruption, the power of drug dealers and racism. The route of the Central Americans emigrating towards the United States, called the “migration region” by Jonas and Rodríguez becomes, in the novel, the central theme that exposes through the plot the power structures, affected by migration and affecting migration, in their national setting. Very significantly, the Central American characters are “animalized and victimized bodies” that are voiceless. Those who have a voice are the Mexican social helper Irma (the sections in the novel about “La Negra”), the university professor (in the sections of “El Buempensante”) and an omniscient narrator with an ethical position on emigration towards the United States as

well as the Mexican nation. The university professor, who lives in the immediate neighborhood of the passage of “la Bestia” symbolizes how much people living in the “migration region” are deeply affected by it. He feels overwhelmed and voices his aggressive feelings towards the numerous migrants begging, invading his space, constantly knocking on his doors: “Harto de que toquen la puerta. La puta puerta... Piden agua, comida, monedas, ropa, zapatos, como si hubiera obligación de proporcionarles lo que ellos mismos no pudieron obtener.” (113-114) In the case of the professor, his prejudiced feelings towards the migrants are mixed with a sense of uneasiness regarding the direction his country is taking, and frustrations and anger in his personal life.

La Fila India is a counter text, the opposite of the classical detective novel or even hard-boiled novel; it is a “noir” novel, one without a rational and ethical solution. The “noir” novel is the perfect literary tool that enables the progressive unveiling of the corruption and violence in the Mexican society and state. It is not about a crime that needs to be solved in order to find the criminal, apply justice and thus restore the social order that was temporarily shaken. In *La Fila India*, Ortuño highlights specific societal difficulties that Mexico is enduring: violence, injustice, and corruption intensified by the historical-political event that is the migration from Central America to the United States. There are multiple crimes and cadavers consumed by fire or buried in ditches by delinquents allied with the government. Both criminals and government are united in their eagerness for profit, which brings impunity. The classical detective novel with its usual happy ending seduces the reader, but in this case, the author uses its structure and transforms its ideology to make it into a political novel, a denunciation,

that takes its distance with the triangle crime - truth - justice that was prevalent in the classical and even to a certain point in the hard-boiled genre. In the “noir” novel, law and justice are on opposite sides. William Nichols cites Paco Taibo II (the Mexican master of the ‘noir’ novel) in *Transatlantic Mysteries*:

In the introduction to *Cuentos policíacos mexicanos* (1997), PIT II describes the evolution of the genre noir as a means to transcend literary boundaries and create something political; “It dealt (and deals) with assuming certain generic codes in order to violate them, to rape them, to take them to their limits (as Vázquez Montalbán wisely said, if there is any sense to adopting genre literature it is in transgressing its boundaries) and at the same time to utilize the resources of adventure novels (the common elements in action literature: mystery, complicated plots, suspense, strong storytelling) and the immense possibilities of the heat, the surrealism, the palm trees, the insanity of our native lands; tied to the fury and ire, the strong doses of political and personal passion” (27)

In ‘noir’ novels, the detectives have no real power and often get hurt while investigating. In *La Fila India*, Irma, the main character, is not even a professional detective; she is a social worker who was asked by the government to go to Santa Rita where a massacre of migrants had taken place, to help the families of the victims. As the days go by, she starts to wonder and thus looks into why no action was taken when so many people died. As most detectives of ‘noir’ novels, she finds out the truth but cannot do much to change the final situation. Many detectives get hurt or sometimes even die in the ‘noir’ novel; she escapes death, but ultimately has to go into exile for safety reasons. As Ana María Amar Sánchez states: “... el detective se ha desplazado del espacio central del que sabe, tiene el poder y la ley a su favor.” (*Instrucciones para la derrota. Narrativas éticas y políticas de perdedores*, 18) but to Irma’s credit, “en un mundo corrupto, donde los gobiernos son responsables de los crímenes y las leyes protegen a los asesinos, el triunfo siempre es sospechoso, sólo es

posible cuando se ha pactado y se han aceptado connivencias con el poder.” (25) Irma refuses to be part of the government corruption.

Other characteristics often found in ‘noir’ novels are irony and sarcasm. Ortuño uses much irony in showing how appearances can be deceiving: no one is who he/she appears to be and it is the government agency in charge of protecting the migrants the one that instigates the killings. El Morro, a cold-blooded killer, has a tender baby face: “Una sonrisa en una cara infantil.” (16) Vidal, the head of the human trafficking gang whom Irma falls in love with is “choquante por guapo” (36) while Joel, the journalist, the good guy, who desperately tries to find the truth, is far from attractive: “Oía a sudor agrio, a cigarro mal apagado.”(73) Therefore, there is a sharp contrast between visible appearance and what these characters really are. A contrast reiterated at the government level and the Mexican nation itself.

The important event that initiates the narration corresponds to the arrival of a group of Central American emigrants in the town of Santa Rita, in the southern part of Mexico. They are brought to a shelter belonging to the CONAMI and that is where some days later, the first massacre of the migrants takes place. In the absence of the officials of the CONAMI, drinking and dancing at a local end of the year party, a trafficking gang, under the leadership of a young man, El Morro, throws gas bottles through the windows of the shelter previously locked to prevent any attempts to escape:

La primera botella entró por una ventila alta, sin protección. Aterrizó en el jergón de una anciana. La manta se prendió. Lo primero que escucharon algunos no fue el estruendo del vidrio sino los gritos. ...Las llamas se extendieron, saltaron de mantas a colchas y de las montañas de papeles a la ropa y la piel. Suma, llanto, chillidos de socorro...” (24)

El Morro and his gang enjoy the fire that kills these people who have no human value to them; they kill them with the ease of someone swatting a fly: "... concederles lo que, dado el caso, les correspondía: ser completamente aplastados. Una matanza. De animalitos. No: de moscas." (23) The migrants are looked upon as dirty insects, flies, that contaminate and irritate by their undesired presence in Mexico. In ancient times a variety of civilizations used fire to punish witches, heretics, sodomites...maybe to purify them from their ideas or actions. In *La Fila India* the hatred and rejection of emigrants is not based on dissident ideas or actions, but rather on their own bodies. Significantly, the word 'dirty' is often used to describe the Central Americans, so, fire with its very destructive power might be the perfect way to cleanse the earth of these filthy, contaminating people.

In *La Fila India*, the sacralizing power of fire is replaced by the dehumanizing impulse to kill the migrants viewed as the other who must be eliminated. The quote from the Bible, "Fuego de Dios cayó del cielo, quemó las ovejas y los criados y los consumió..." (29), refers to the justice of God. In contrast, in *La Fila India* Ortuño emphasizes the notion of the gang usurping God's power to render justice and how they view these migrants who deserve the worst. Death by fire is an extremely painful death, and those who escape death oftentimes wish they had died:

Larga mano, la del fuego. Porque cómo perdura incluso si se le sobrevive: las deformaciones en la piel, en especial las del rostro, serán su recordatorio definitivo; la pérdida de algún miembro, la botadura de un ojo, la imposibilidad de deglutir, de respirar sin que el aire nos arañe como una rata, las pesadillas, los ensueños en que el fuego regresa a buscar lo suyo, lo que logramos arrebatarse a su imperio: todos son motivos para que la vida posterior a nuestras bodas con él sea sólo sombra y parodia. (28)

In *Purity and Danger*, Mary Douglas describes, from a phenomenological point of view, how the outsider was considered in primitive societies; the outsider was experienced as a potential polluting danger to the established order and had to be eliminated in order to maintain purity:

(...) society does not exist in a neutral, uncharged vacuum. It is subject to external pressures; that which is not with it, part of it and subject to its laws, is potentially against it (...) separating, purifying, demarcating and punishing transgressions have as their main function to impose system on an inherently untidy experience. It is only by exaggerating the difference between within and without, about and below, male and female, with and against, that a semblance of order is created. (4)

In *The Conflict of Interpretations*, Paul Ricoeur mentions that:

(w)e speak even today, in a nonmedical sense, of contamination by the spirit of monetary profit (“filthy lucre”), by racism, etc.; we have not completely abandoned the symbolism of the pure and the impure. And this, precisely because the quasi-material representation of stain is already symbolic of something else. From the beginning it has symbolic power. Stain has never literally signified a spot, impurity has never literally signified filth; it is located in the chiaroscuro of a quasi-physical infection and a quasi-moral unworthiness. (428)

These migrants are victims of racism in a Mexican nation tinged by racial discrimination. Ortuño emphasizes a paradoxical situation: the discriminated on the basis of race and social status in the Mexican nation, now become the discriminators

towards the Central American.¹ Ortuño shows the racial component from the start by describing how a group of “dark-skinned” migrants from Central America, are looked-upon as animals by villagers. Escaping from a train in which they were locked up by their smuggler, they arrive in a poor village in Southern Mexico and ask for assistance in a hospital where no one wants to treat them or feed them.

Los niños eran deshidratados. No los quisieron atender... Los echaron a la calle y, mirados de reojo por los pasantes, escupidos por las familias de los pacientes y por los médicos, mascando trozos de pan y bebiendo a sorbos el agua que unos pocos les arrimaban, esperaron. Vino un tipo de Migración al cabo de horas. Los miraba como otros miran las vacas, las plantas. (22-23)

Only the belief that one is superior to another can justify spitting on that person. This is an action that shows contempt and physical disgust for an “inferior” being. Repeatedly throughout the novel, the migrants are described as having zoomorphic features; they are compared to cows, flies or chickens, who differ in their symbolism as to how they “are viewed at different moments; they are either perceived as being of low status, as an annoyance or as merchandise. The migrants are finally brought to a shelter by the Conami, Comisión Nacional para la Migración, migration services, where in the absence of the delegate of the refuge, they are simply locked up. Their basic human

¹ In *Racism. Key Concepts in Critical Theory*, Leonard Harris defines racism as following: “Racists believe that the human family is divided into stable racial categories of superior and inferior kinds from birth. For racists, groups have properties which cause unique behaviors or traits. Invidious distinctions between groups are justified, for a racist, because of alleged unique features endogenous to inferior races. Invidious distinctions include attributing character virtues such as honesty, thrift, or courage to one group while denying that members of another have or can have such virtues. To describe a situation as racist is to describe racially motivated predicaments of segregation, discrimination, and exclusion. Ideas about race in such cases are criteria for dicing, prima facie, personal character virtues, group memberships, rights, and privileges.” (17)

rights are violated at every step of the way. Can one still call it smuggling or is this already human trafficking?

Ortuño also describes the hypocritical attitude of the Mexican upper middle class, one of hidden racism towards a Southern and indigenous population. The idea that “some lives are less worthy than others” is particularly embodied by a college professor, a supposed role model in society. The author thus has an extremely sarcastic look at the role of the intellectual, the educator, who apparently withdraws from his moral responsibilities. With his intellectual background, he, more than anyone, should transcend the simplistic notion of the migrant as a bothersome undocumented person, but a person fleeing a system, fleeing for safety, for refuge. In the following dialogue between the professor and a colleague of his, racism permeates every sentence:

Pero los has olido? El error de quienes hemos defenestrado por decirlo es, justamente, que lo dijeron. Uno solamente lo piensa. Que huelen mal. Nadie respetable habla en público de un olor... ¿No saben que los van a tratar de basura, los gringos y sus propios compatriotas? Y sobre todo nosotros... No somos gringos, pues. Pero tampoco somos como ellos, como los centroamericanos... (51-52)

According to the professor, their difference is physical and consists in this particular case of their repulsive body odor. Ruth Benedict, who wrote “Racism: the ism of the Modern World”, says the following:

Racism is the new Calvinism, which asserts that one group has the stigmata of superiority and the other has those of inferiority. According to racism, we know our enemies not by their aggressions against us, not by their creed or their language, not even by their possessing wealth we want to take, but by noting their hereditary anatomy. For the leopard cannot change his spots, and by these you know he is a leopard. (32)

She explains the objectivist standpoint on race that views race as a biological, natural fact and that seems to be the professor's position. One belongs to a specific race by virtue of birth and physical characteristics that condemn someone, notwithstanding his personal achievements, or lack thereof, to remain amongst the losers or winners in society. (32) This standpoint on race is complemented by the constructionist one that asserts that race is a learned, construct concept, a cultural, social construct ingrained in the consciousness of a social and cultural group.

Coming back to the novel, the professor also underlines the Central American's moral inferiority: "¿Crees que todos son modestos y honestos, pobrecitos? Ni madres... no quieres a uno de esos pendejos a menos de quince kilómetros de tu casa, tu mujer, tu hija." (53-54) In the eyes of the professor, the Central Americans are described as abject beings in such a way that there is a physical and moral transgression of the norm that creates a repulsion: their bodies stink and they are morally unreliable, dangerous. From stained, these migrants have become sinners in the experience of the professor. Ricoeur describes the difference between stain and sin as following: "The symbolism of sin (...) is certainly richer than that of stain, from which it is sharply distinguished. To the image of impure contact it opposes that of a wounded relationship, between God and man, between man and man, between man and himself" (428) Ironically, this same professor, who has a young daughter, will not long after making these accusing remarks sequester a young woman, a Central American migrant who, in order to survive during her journey to the United States, knocked on his door to find a small job. He will lock her up and use her as a sex slave

in his home. So, he who warns his colleague that the Central American is a sinner, will himself give in to unethical and illegal passions.

Ruth Benedict states that racism, and the persecution that accompanies it, often hides or justifies political or economic interests. Ortuño highlights this important element: Mexican racism towards the Central American migrants is used to justify human trafficking, an important economic income for those involved in it. Expressions of racism are ubiquitous in the novel: remarks on the skin color, the body height or body odor. If the physical difference is sometimes hard to see between Mexicans and Central Americans, the Mexicans, conscious of not being considered gringos, feel nevertheless that they have a higher status than the Central Americans. This reasoning can be the consequence of a very hierarchized society, reminiscent of the colonial era. “Racial slogans serve the same purpose in the present century that religious slogans served before - that is, they are used to justify persecution in the interests of some class or nation.”(Benedict, 38-39) As Lucía Guerra explains, the notion of race has been a cultural construction invented for economic reasons:

Aunque Marco Polo en el siglo XIII se refiere a la raza persa, esta palabra no poseía el significado actual, sólo denotaba un tipo de persona o cosa. Entre los griegos, la diferencia entre bárbaros y civilizados se realizaba a partir de la capacidad de organizarse políticamente mientras en el Imperio Romano donde existía una población de origen africano, la distinción se hacía en términos de estructuras legales y no una supuesta diferencia biológica. Durante la Edad Media, la diferencia correspondía a la práctica religiosa (cristianos, moros, judíos) y el primer trazo biológico del concepto de raza se da en España con la “pureza de sangre” impuesta a los conversos por el inquisidor Torquemada. El imperialismo europeo creó la categoría de raza como una diferencia inherente y biológica asignando a los colonizados un lugar inferior. El primer texto sobre esta nueva acepción de raza fue el ensayo “Una nueva división de la tierra de acuerdo a las diferentes especies y razas que la habitan” de Francois Bernier publicado en 1684. (*La ciudad ajena: Subjetividades de origen mapuche en el espacio urbano*, 24)

Mexico, like other countries in Latin America, has been ruled by a white hegemony highly discriminatory of mestizos, blacks and indigenous people. As observed in *La Fila India*, under the influence of human trafficking, the ones who are discriminated within the nation have now become the discriminators against Central American immigrants, a situation Ortuño explains in an interview to 'Nido de Palabras' :

Cuando escribí *La fila india* mucha gente, como si fuera una confesión — porque era lo que había ocultado o de lo que no hablaba— me dijo que tenía padres o abuelos o ascendente directo centroamericano, pero eso no lo decían. A mí me sorprendió la cantidad de gente, muchas personas, que a raíz de leer *La fila india*, aparte, me decían: 'Oye, la novela me gustó y la sentí mucho porque fíjate que mi mamá era salvadoreña... fíjate que mi papá era guatemalteco...'. No hablaban de ello porque estaban acostumbrados a recibir burlas o piques. En Méjico se aborda cómo hay una cierta identidad mexicana que se quiere imponer sobre todos y termina siendo muy injusta porque niega a cualquiera. Niega al indígena, niega al extranjero... es como si todos tuviéramos la obligación de ser charros bigotones y priístas. La realidad es muy diferente. Hay mucha gente en el altiplano que de repente ve a los norteros como gringos, a los del sureste como centroamericanos porque piensa que ellos son el centro del universo. Es algo complejo y justamente porque no tengo las respuestas precisas escribí el libro, porque uno escribe planteando dudas.

This situation underlines the presence of a new modality of racism within which power structures are quite different from the Spanish Conquest. All throughout the novel, the professor shows a disgust with the skin color of the Central American migrant who is portrayed as dirty. It goes to the extent of an unconscious fear of contamination and in the street, he tries desperately to keep his distance from any Central American crossing his path. In spite of that, he is very conscious that he himself is darker than the gringo. It is as if the Mexican cannot escape his historical burden: he suffers from racism imposed on him from ancient times, from colonial times,

to the racism of the present day gringo, but he himself replicates it with the Central American, whom he despises. Thus, the binary opposition between the subject and the other is modified with the insertion of yet another category: the other of the other. This racist pattern repeats itself over and over again.

¿Cómo quién nos vemos y somos? Obviamente no como gringos. Muy pocos de nosotros, ni siquiera quienes se empeñan en sostenerlo, se confunden con ellos. Ni siquiera aquellos que pulen su acento y consiguen pronunciar como nativos de los suburbios de Boston, que los hay, ni siquiera quienes nacen con sangre extranjera, que son más de los que pensamos, se confunden. Algún tono particular de suciedad o derrota o escepticismo lo impide... No somos gringos, pues. Pero tampoco somos como ellos, como los centroamericanos. Que levanten la mano quienes se consideran dignos de ser confundidos con hondureños... No, la verdad, no es racial. También hay cuestiones culturales, de educación, no es lo mismo.... hay más negros en la selección de Honduras que en treinta estados de México. Total, somos distintos. Mírame... Pero los racistas son los gringos..." (52).

The irony of it all is expressed in the last sentence of this chapter: "Qué puta suerte tenerles tanto asco, despreciarlos de tal modo y ser tan putamente parecido, tan indistinguible, tan totalmente indiferenciable de ellos, que somos tratados precisamente del mismo modo en el único lugar del mundo donde deberían recibirnos mejor (U.S.A.). Puta madre." (54)

In that same optic of striving for whiteness, Ortuño devotes an entire chapter, "Santa Rita, lo que se da no se quita", to ridiculing the inhabitants of Santa Rita, for their foolish obsession with buying U.S. products and for creating a more northern look for their children and thus faking an affiliation with a European descendant.

¿No han visto a los retoños de los santarritenses con los pelos teñidos con shampoo de manzanilla? Es encantadora, la manzanilla. La delación perfecta de la imbecilidad de un padre. ... Aunque una norma de cortesía elemental es negarlo: cómo voy a usar ese shampoo, lo que pasa es que

mi niño nació güero porque tengo un bisabuelo, establece el cinismo de quien lo dice, portugués, noruego o de San Juan de los Lagos. (146)

Ortuño offers a reflection on a topic that was examined by Jean Franco: how up until recently, in many Latin American countries murders of indigenous people occurred with total impunity. In *La Fila India*, how many people are assassinated while the Conami, the governmental organization whose role is to guarantee protection of the migrants, is exempt from punishment? There is an official investigation going on, but the Conami does not undergo an internal investigation, one that examines its proper, or improper, treatment of the migrants. The Conami sends an official bulletin to appease the public from whom it appears they get some pressure, but there is a total suppression of the truth. There is no protection of the rights and prerogatives of the migrants; even more so, there is a direct involvement of the Conami in these crimes.

From his ideological perspective, Ortuño denounces immoral and abject crimes that transform the migrants into 'bodies of abjection'. A killer smiles while emptying his weapon and riddling bodies with bullet holes. Ortuño explains these actions as an entertainment during these young people's time off, because they feel disgusted with and irritated by these people who are in a place they should not be. In the chapter "La Cacería", as the title explains, el Morro and his acolytes "chase" the migrants whom they regard as flies that need to be crushed.

Para ser cazador de moscas lo fundamental son la velocidad y la agilidad. La fuerza tampoco sobra. Si eres veloz y golpeas con rudeza, la mosca quedará convertida en una pasta orgánica que ni siquiera evocará a un ser viviente. Se cazan moscas por ocio, el entretenimiento lo explica todo en este mundo, pero además se les aplasta por asco, porque han sobrevolado donde no deben y nos irritan. Hay que matar moscas porque sus patas se hunden en la mierda y la llevan, así sea átomo por átomo, a nuestras bocas. (161)

The violence Ortuño describes here goes beyond anything described previously. It is not only violence for profit or because of racism. It is morbid pleasure, it is violence “for the sake of violence”, “entretenimiento”. An article named “Monstruos posmodernos: figuras de la inmigración en el México contemporáneo” mentions that

”(m)onstruo moral” es aquel individuo que no simplemente mata, viola, secuestra o roba, sino que además se solaza en el ejercicio de estas transgresiones, o que es incapaz de sentir compasión, remordimiento o arrepentimiento. Diríamos: quien en medio del caos social, ha perdido conexión con el otro y con cuanto de humano hay en sí. No se trata, sin embargo, de una excepcionalidad psicológica ni de un desvío a corregir, sino de la adhesión a un sistema perverso que por sí solo sintetiza el conjunto de todas las perversions posibles, como demostró Arendt (...) a propósito del juicio a Adolf Eichmann. (9)

For the gang headed by el Morro, racism with its feeling of superiority and disgust, the desire to suppress the threat the “other” represents and that can destabilize “social order” as it is, violence as a tolerated option, violence as revenge for a desperate economic situation. All these elements combined make a lethal cocktail and in the eyes of the gang justify the dehumanizing way they view their victims and the extreme violence and cruelty they display before killing them. The process of development of abjection that takes place in the novel shows, in the words of Rina Arya, “.. a descent into horror.” (157) El Morro’s actions seem to become more and more violent and disruptive. He starts by killing one person, acting as a cold-blooded murderer, but his actions escalate in terms of horror as the novel progresses. He lights the refuge on fire and is simply waiting, while listening to the cries of the people inside, until the fire incinerates the refuge and many of those inside. “(los migrantes) No lo sabían, pero habían tomado la precaución de reforzar la jaladera con una cadena. Ninguno debía

salir” (24). They want to crush these insects forcefully enough to destroy any living or human origin from the mess. “Si eres veloz y golpeas con rudeza, la mosca quedará convertida en una pasta orgánica que ni siquiera evocará a un ser viviente.” (161)

The abjection increases in intensity in a stand-alone chapter in which the author gives graphic, almost scientific, details of the devastating effects of fire on the human body. Ortuño wants to remove the reader from his/her comfort level and ensure that he/she is made aware of the horrific nature of the events. He wants the reader to feel uncomfortable; he wants him/her to imagine the fire ‘s destructive work on the flesh of the human being...and to be fully aware that the person who is “lucky” enough to survive the flames remains scarred and in constant pain for the rest of his/her life. As we have already mentioned, the fact that Ortuño and Heredia are not professional writers but journalists, makes another turn of the screw regarding the process of dehumanization of art in general, mostly because they are dealing with real people in a specific moment in history. Adriana Cavarero writes the following about the increase in violence and the evolution of language to describe the unprecedented forms this violence takes:

While violence against the helpless is becoming global in ever more ferocious forms, language proves unable to renew itself to name it; indeed it tends to mask it (...) Yet, on closer inspection, violence against the helpless does turn out to have a specific vocabulary of its own, one that has been known, and not just in the Western tradition, for millennia. Beginning with the biblical slaughter of the innocents and passing through various events that include the aberration of Auschwitz, the name used is “horror” rather than “war” or “terror”, and it speaks primarily of crime rather than of strategy or politics. (Horrorism, 2-3)

Scenes like the ones Cavarero describes in her work are called “horrorist”, especially, as she says, if one sees them from the perspective of the victims.(3) The graphic

scenes this novel depicts in detail enable us to speak of “horrorism”; a previously unheard-of form of violence. As Cavarero says: “(...) linguistic innovation becomes imperative in an epoch in which violence strikes mainly, though not exclusively, the defenseless, and we have no words to say so or only those that misleadingly evoke concepts from the past.” (3)

During the third attack on the migrants, the novel describes a particularly abject action; a disturbing execution that leaves the migrant’s body an abject mass and the reader thoroughly nauseated:

Alcanzan el área de los catres y no permiten que ninguno de sus ocupantes se incorpore. Uno por uno, disparan. Dos, tres, cinco tiros en cabeza y torso, algunos dan pena tratando de esconderse o disolverse entre las cobijas. A otro, desafortunado, lo encuentran oculto al abrir las regaderas. Lo desnudan, le cortan una mano de un hachazo, le arrancan la verga entre risotadas y batallan cerca de diez minutos para tratar de metérsela por el culo pero sólo consiguen que expulse una masa negra que no saben si es sangre o mierda y en qué proporción. Cuando se aburren le pegan un tiro en la cara. (162)

The last killing is particularly abject in its design to dehumanize the victim and make him suffer. Cutting off the penis of the man “degrades” him into a woman. To this humiliation is added the act of sodomizing him with his own cut-off organ, which relates to the anal copulation of homosexuals. Homosexuality is still a very controversial subject, legal in some countries and illegal in others. It is still considered taboo by many because it crosses the boundary, the dividing line of what predominant discourse within society considers right and wrong. To this day, in gay sexuality, the one being sodomized is oftentimes viewed as a second class human being. So, the victim is not only killed but endures one degradation after another while being

subjected to horrific pain. At the same time, the victimizer reaffirms his notion of masculinity based on aggression and a display of power.

Another abject performance is the rape of the Central American woman:

También hacerla arrodillar e introducirle todos los objetos imaginables para el caso. Lo acepta con una pasividad animal que recuerda la de las vacas en la ordeña. Frutas, verduras, el mango del cepillo, el cuello de un rasco de shampoo, incluso la correa de mi relojito de bandera, aunque un perno la arañó y decidió no usarla más. No me dice mucho, a veces se queja por lo bajo o, quiero creer, se excita. (179)

She becomes his sexual object; he's the owner and she is the slave who satisfies his needs of pleasure and perversion, his sadism; he degrades her by putting her in an animal position and introducing all sorts of objects into her body. She is a woman but also somewhat of a domestic animal that belongs to him and with which he can realize his unlimited libidinal drives and assaults without consequences. Owning her, without boundaries, without the moral rules that society normally imposes on one's behavior, as well as her unexpected obedience, excites him sexually. Arya writes: "Kristeva informs us that the abject 'does not respect borders, positions, rules' and 'disturbs identity, system, order' " (41) Amazingly, his disgust has turned into an obsession and he even licks her ears and nose... massages her body with a cream that lightens her skin. By the end of the novel, he is so addicted to these sexual games that he wants to marry her in order to legalize her presence in his house, to enable him to take her out, and to enable him to explain her presence to his daughter and to his neighbors... So, this professor apparently leads a very normal civilized life, in respect to the societal rules, but that is a facade. He creates new rules inside his home, where he is completely in power, where he can indulge his excesses with a voiceless "sexual

object”, but in time he feels the need to normalize her presence in order to yield to his perversions even more, to abuse her “legally”, not to have to hide her, and at the same time safeguard his position in society.

The end of Ortuño’s novel gives us only partial satisfaction. On the positive side is the women’s agency; they show the power to act upon their own personal fate. The downside is that they cannot contain or stop the highest levels of immorality that corrupt the nation and all of them will be affected to the highest point, emotionally and physically. Yein, from merchandise that is hunted to be killed, transforms into a subject with agency who realizes her vengeance. There is a sort of retribution in the novel, a crime that is punished, although this punishment does not restore justice. The crime itself is irremissible. The fire she lights has here again all the symbolism of God’s punishment; this time towards the usurpers of his power who will die themselves from the flames: “A los incendiarios, por tanto, a quienes usurpan para sí los poderes del fuego sobre el cuerpo, se les ha reservado el castigo de la hoguera.” (29) Yein herself is killed; there is no Hollywood type of happy ending, but her actions, as inhumane as they are, somehow redeem what has been done to her, her husband and the other migrants, which brings her humanity back. Irma who has a voice and agency and who tried to put into light the generalized corruption, survives but has to flee her country with her daughter and thus becomes herself a (voiceless) migrant in the U.S. She might suffer from her new status as a “subaltern other”; by losing her country and its protection, she too might be subjected to aggressive behaviors, this time by “whiter” North Americans. The professor’s sex slave finds an opportunity to escape from the house she was sequestered in, ransack it and flee with whatever money she finds,

which enables her to attain her final destination, the U.S. But how will she heal from the physical abuse she endured during her sequestration? How will she overcome the degradation and build a new life and identity for herself? Moreover, corruption inside the Mexican nation continues; in *La Fila India* hierarchized power at the level of the State bureaucracy as well as in the criminal margins prevail and impose their power through violence and the possession of illegal bodies that they have transformed into illegal capital.

Mutilated Bodies in Chaos and Hell.

La Mara, by the Mexican writer Rafael Ramírez Heredia, takes place at the border of Mexico and Guatemala, with a focus on the lawless atmosphere of the frontier land that lays on each side of the Suchiate, the river that separates the two countries. Tecún Umán, situated on the Guatemalan side of the border, is a city from which all undocumented migrants on the road towards the north want to get away from; it is even called Tijuanita for its similitudes, although on a smaller scale, with Tijuana, the border city of Mexico and California. On the Mexican side of the Suchiate is Ciudad Hidalgo, and the immigration station at kilometer 30 from where the illegals, if caught by police, are sent back to Guatemala or Honduras. Heredia highlights the present day social problems, from poverty and domestic violence in Central America, causing many to migrate north, to the gang activity in Central America and Mexico. He focuses on the immense human obstacles that confront the numerous migrants arriving in the border region that will often strand them and transform their journey into a nightmare: extremely corrupt civil servants abusing migrants, people seeming to want

to help young girls while deceiving them in fact into prostitution... Once again, human trafficking, in the form of prostitution of teenagers, hides amidst the chaos and general violence generated by the desire of some to profit from the migration wave that flows into the borderlands. Kevin Bales, author of *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy* would call this space “a battle zone where the old rules are dead”.

(121) The Mara 13 gang members have invaded the region, killing, cutting to pieces, raping and stealing from as many migrants as they can get a hold of. According to Tom Diaz,

Mara, Central American slang for “gang” is derived from *marabunta*, a Spanish word used regionally for the fierce army ants (...) found throughout much of Latin America. *Marabunta* may also be used to mean “horde” and “disorder and destruction.” *Salvatrucha* is a neologism formed by combining the slang word *salva* - short for *Salvadoreño*, or *Salvadoran*- with *trucha*, which literally means “trout” but has the additional slang meaning of “watch out” (23)

The analogy to the ants that invade and devour everything in their path is particularly relevant to the behavior of the mara- members whose attacks on migrants when the trains come to a halt or when asked by the authorities “to clean up” a place are described at length by Heredia.

In this novel, one cannot find the thread of a unique plot; the narration of different fragments makes up a sinister patchwork that reflects the lack of commonality of the people present in the border space; there is not one and only argumental line that is typical of the novelistic genre that is recurrent in the traditional novel. On the contrary, like many other contemporary novels, its elaboration is based on hybridity. The genre of the novel might be called archegenre; it includes all genres... and yet, there is always a story behind a plot, even when the plot is about the impossibility of

plotting events. Through the technique of internalization of different characters evolving under different circumstances, the author creates a polyglossy of heterogeneous voices that move along in the same space.² The characters of the novel are brought together by the borderlands but instead of being united in a community, they create the opposite of a nation based on the family nucleus, the church, the law, or other institutions. This place disperses them by being a place of transit and human trafficking; the borderlands, as a heterotopian place, have their own rules and the main characters' relations or connections are based on exploitation and profit seeking. Here, a character such as the spiritual guide Ximenu, who puts make-up on to dramatize his role as a "clairvoyant", and who reminds us of the Greek prophet Tiresias who was changed into a woman, is in fact in contact with the Mara gang members; earning the confidences of people, he helps or discriminates according to his own interests. The police are involved in drug and human trafficking while prostitution is yet another source of profit. One could relate the novel to postmodern "dirty realism", a Latin-American "dirty realism" in terms of the subject matter. Cintia Santana described Carver's work (the father of "dirty realism") as "an original testimony to that absurd and devastating world." Her article includes the following comment about Carver's style: "(...) está al servicio de un mundo, de un universo en el que lo poético - la poesía del horror cotidiano- emana de las cosas mismas" (chapter 3, np).

² Calderón cites Mijaíl Bajtín to explain the concept of heteroglossy: "(...) para referirse a la diversidad de lenguajes socio-ideológicos que actúan como una fuerza opuesta a la homogenización del pensamiento... se puede relacionar con la mixtura cultural que surge en la frontera." (30)

The borderlands are a space of violence that enables the author to bring to the surface the nation's problematic with its postcolonial history, its culture and its politics. This, according to studies on the border, is a recurrent situation. Thus, Calderón states:

... una violencia hiperbólica así como estrategias de resistencia a una hegemonía impuesta. Se sitúan en un lugar intermedio, a la vez inter y extraterritorial. La frontera conforma así un lugar posible para la utopía donde surge un imaginario singular que permite una interrogación sobre la política, la historia y la cultura hispanoamericanos. La búsqueda o la pérdida de la identidad son hechos reveladores de los espacios fronterizos, más aún en los confines de América Latina, subcontinente marcado por la dominación colonial, donde se acentúa la escisión del sujeto subalterno. (23)

The narration starts with the raw description of the physical harm undocumented migrants suffer when they jump on the freight-train called the “Bestia” intending to travel for free from Chiapas to Veracruz, then Mexico City to finally reach the United States’ border; from discomfort to death. Some migrants are victims of the ‘jaws’ of the “Bestia” that regularly swallows some body parts or kills those whose fingers slip while trying to jump on it or while succumbing to exhaustion on top of it:

... lo que sucederá durante el viaje: La perforación de los mosquitos del dengue. Las pulgas. El mordisco de las ratas. El hambre sin tapujos. La terquedad de las niguas entre los dedos. Lo que las ruedas de hierro apachurrarán cuando alguno de ellos se canse y caiga. Lo que harán los maras tatuados. (16)

Some migrants are viciously attacked by other migrants who want a spot, or a better spot, on the train. “... se inicia el combate por obtener un mejor sitio. ... A un hombre se le desfigura el rostro por la patada lanzada desde una posición más alta en el ferrocarril.” (13) They all travel in inhumane conditions and they become smelly merchandise: “El olor de los furgones vacíos y el revolotear de los desperdicios recuerdan las mercancías que transportaron.” (15) ... As in *La Fila India*, these travelers

full of hope in fact lose control over their bodies; mutilation and death awaits them. The borderlands are depicted as a diabolic space of corruption and violence, where human beings are transformed into disfigured corpses.

A criminal organization that invaded the borderlands, attracted by the large numbers of migrants to exploit, is the Mara 13. The gang members abide by their own bloody rules contributing in large part to the heterotopian character of the borderlands. :“ ... tienen los ojos puestos más allá de la selva, dentro de la franja fronteriza que es su indiscutida comarca, donde su ley es la ley triunfadora... ... paren las orejas pa que lo oigan bien los que ora se nos arrodillan como al Papa...” (80-81)

The moral, ethical rules that are standard in most societies are not applicable in that region; the maras violate them all. The reader can almost smell the fear of the migrants, feel the cocaine highs of the gang members, the desperation of some living there and some trying to cross the border for the umpteenth time...The presence of the maras is ubiquitous. The gang members wait in the forest for the immigration services to stop a train so that they can prey on the migrants left behind by the immigration agents: “Las sombras múltiples deshacen el semicírculo formado por sus cuerpos y a trancadas se acercan al ferrocarril, hasta que una de ellas, la de sobrada fiereza o la más desesperada, la de temor hirviente o la de mayor cercanía, y después el resto, se trepe al convoy de hierros.”(12) Their blood thirst during these attacks is increased by their male bonding, their desire to impress their leader, as well as by their cocaine intake. The more violent they are, the higher they rank in the gang. Heredia describes the gang members as wild animals that prey on migrants as sharks prey on seals. Some Mara members even board the train hiding their tattoos and pretending to be

undocumented migrants before launching an attack at the first opportunity. "... en alguna parte de este tren ruidoso y trampero, van algunos de esos seres con el cuerpo oculto para no ser reconocidos y atacarán en los exactos lugares en que la ley espera... Los caminantes... no conocen la fiereza de unos colmillos ocultos, salivando el momento preciso, que no tardará en llegar." (17)

At thirty kilometers north from the Suchiate river, the immigration services, Defenders of the Mexican nation, stop *La Bestia* in order to arrest and deport as many illegal migrants as they possibly can:

... en alguna cuesta, en cualquier curva, el ferrocarril va a ser detenido por los hombres de la ley, no sombras sino realidades, armados con pistolas y placas y toletes y furia, y van a cobrar cara su osadía, a aprehenderlos, a meterlos en prisiones estrechas, a devolverlos a sus patrias, a quitarles lo que tienen, a reclamar violentos la insolencia de irrumpir en un país desconocido que es necesario cruzar para colarse al otro más al norte del norte. (16)

But they are themselves involved in human trafficking and shamelessly use the girls of the local sex industry. As Louise Shelley states: "None of this activity can function without the complicity of law enforcement and the corruption of officials in source, transit, and destination countries. (6) In some countries, "... a significant proportion of police income is derived as a result of their tolerance of trafficking." (6) The immigration agents abuse their power as representatives of the State; they are violent because they can be, without suffering any consequence as long as they wear the uniform that protects them in their country; that is why they avoid crossing the border into Guatemala where they could be recognized by one of the victims of their cruel treatment:

que tal si se calienta uno de los que han echado pa tras de regreso, o se pone bravo alguno de los que se les aplicó la ley sin medianías, la ley es la ley, y ni Artemio ni el Moro la hicieron, ellos están nomás pa aplicarla o pa ayudar a los que juzgan conveniente, y tercero, casi no frecuentan al Tijuanita, no vaya a ser la de pésimas que algún marido les quiera brincar pa ajustar cuentas, que algún hermanito que el Moro o Meléndez se pasaron por las verijas pa calmarle los ardores, que algún otro desgraciado ande ardido con la mentira de que a su hermano le testearon la pichula, y que tal si uno de esos mentirosos lo fuera a reconocer estando del otro lado de la frontera, capaz que se arma el tremolinero en ese lado del río donde él nada representa, o que uno de los orates que nunca faltan los ponga a parir iguanas y los quite de en medio... (128)

The previous extract is a detailed explanation of the physical violence and degradation that immigration officers impose on southern migrants. They rape the women and beat up the men, helping only those who are willing to play the game. This kind of treatment would not exist without rampant prejudice and racism against the Central Americans to whom they deny a humane treatment. They make the migrants read and smell their breath to know where they are from, distinguishing between Hondurans and others... They treat them as animals. (97) This prejudiced racist attitude exists at every step of the ladder: Calatrava, the bus driver who escorts the non-Guatemalan detained illegal migrants from El Palmito back to the Salvadoran border, has the same set of condescending beliefs. In the following passage, he describes how he perceives the migrants:

Diferente en cada viaje aunque parezca un grupo repetido en una película igualita. Las mismas actitudes. La mirada hacia el suelo. El olor tan rancio. Las ropas grises. Todos los indos son iguales. Hacen lo mismo. Nunca dicen lo que piensan. Pinchos indos. Por fortuna para los demás, y claro, para Calatrava, de El Palmito salen ya amansados porque el montonal de horas adentro le pesan al más chido de los chidos, tragando nomás agua, tortillas, frijoles y sardinas de lata. (161-162)

If Kevin Bales says about human trafficking that “(t)he common denominator is poverty, not color.” (11), this passage nevertheless confirms that poverty and color go hand in hand and that the majority of the migrants (amongst whom are the human trafficked) consists of the poor indigenous population and that the Mexican civil servants perceive themselves as mentally and physically different and superior. This is the case too with the North American immigration agents sent to the Southern Mexican border region in order to increase the number of daily arrests and minimize the arrivals at the Northern border. To motivate their work, they receive \$50 from the U.S. government for every non-Guatemalan Central American sent back South. (36) In this new version of racism, the “gringos” consider themselves superior to the Central Americans and the Mexicans, and have a hegemonic attitude at work where they take over the control of things and make uncomfortable the Mexicans who are used to do their dirty business without supervision and/or consequences: “... sin ponerse a clasificar de qué manera le han llegado esos dólares aunque él lo sepa y le amarre la saliva, pero no (es) por remordimientos que Artemio hace rato dejó de lado, sino por el miedo que tiene de saber en qué vainas anda metido y con los gringos olfateando el culo de cada uno de los agentes, mejor decirle comandantes...” (132)

In *La Mara*, the border territory is a synonym for disorder, for a space dominated by cruelty and delinquent acts. The Maras are the allegory of chaos. In *No Boundaries*, Tom Diaz relates the history of the MS-13 gang, which enables us to better comprehend the social conditions that lead to their infamous savagery: “(...) Mara Salvatrucha, or MS-13 - the violent transnational street gang born out of the misery of refugees from the Salvadorian civil war in the 1980s (...) started on the street corners of

the Pico-Union neighborhood of Los Angeles and is now pandemic in the United States, international in its reach, and barbaric in its violence.” (Diaz, 13) Diaz describes how “many of the children who endured the Salvadorian civil war and came to the United States were deeply scarred emotionally. Some were trained and experienced in warfare (...)” (Diaz, 28) Doctors seeing these kids talked about PTSD, with “(s)ymptoms includ(ing) emotional detachment from other people, inability to form loving relationships, sleeplessness, a sense of one’s being inevitably doomed and thus excluded from the possibility of a normal future, extreme vigilance and irritability, and the inability to control impulse and anger.” (Diaz, 17). Diaz adds that “Two powerful and conflicting armies - the cops and the gangsters - waited in Los Angeles to ignite the force of these children.” (Diaz, 28) Many of these kids became prey to the numerous Mexican-American street gangs and therefore created their own gang, Mara Salvatrucha, as a means of survival and revenge. In the late 1970s and 1980s more illegal immigration from Central America occurred with “(...) combatants, soldiers, and guerrillas tired of fighting.” (29) During the 1990s, if Central American criminals were arrested by law enforcement, they were deported back to their country, where, without professional opportunities, they eventually would reconstitute their gang :

(b)ut some senior federal and local law enforcement officials insist that precisely such hard-line immigration enforcement aimed at “criminal aliens” during the 1990s had the unintended and ironic effect of creating the worst of the Latino gang problem. The gang culture did not come to the United States from the South. On the contrary, deportees from the United States took the Los Angeles gang culture south with them. With no skills and no prospects in poor countries shattered by wars, they re-created the LA gangs in San Salvador, Tegucigalpa, and Guatemala City. (Diaz, 35)

So, these young men have had to learn to survive oftentimes traumatizing events in their childhood, and later, the struggle for dominance in the streets of L.A. Even if only two to ten percent of Salvadorian youth became delinquent, it is sadly the unprecedented cruelty and lethal violence used by the MS-13 members that put the gang in the spotlight. (Diaz, 36) If society is not solely responsible for individual acts of violence, there are nevertheless social conditions that help to develop, to shape, this radical gang behavior. In *Precarious Life*, Judith Butler describes this phenomenon as following:

(...) these individuals are formed, and we would be making a mistake if we reduced their actions to purely self-generated acts of will or symptoms of individual pathology or “evil” (...) to take the self-generated acts of the individual as our point of departure in moral reasoning is precisely to foreclose the possibility of questioning what kind of world gives rise to such individuals. And what is this process of “giving rise”? (...) How is it that radical violence becomes an option, comes to appear as the only viable option for some, under some global conditions? Against what conditions of violation do they respond?” (15-16)

In *La Mara*, the lack of traditional plot, so frequent in the novelistic genre, underlines all the chaos that can only be described by fragments, by heterogenous narrative pieces. Through interior monologues, the reader gets a glimpse of a chaotic space impossible to describe or narrate using literary techniques in the realm of reason and logic. First we see the Maras, who are acting like wild animals, killing and maiming solely for the pleasure and the gain. We discover the hidden activities of the immigration officers who abuse their position as powerful representatives of the Mexican state, and who are involved in the human and drug trade. The novel also describes at length the corrupt and “fallen” Mexican consul, Nicolás Fuentes, or as he liked to be called, Don Nico, who remains in Tecún Umán after having been retired a

year earlier due to a scandal he was blamed for that involved several deaths. He barely survives, as a shadow of the elegant man he once was, as a victim of the atmosphere of the borderlands that has sucked the blood out of him (after he sucked the blood out of the migrants): "... se aferró al umbral de la selva, a la pestilencia de las casuchas donde duermen enredados los puercos y los niños, al ruido de los balazos, al calor sin sombra, a la rabia escondida bajo la calma de las tardes."(25) He spends his days close to the "...Suchiate que mece sus aires y lo tiende en la hamaca vestido con una pijama deshilada y sucia, a él, a don Nicolás Fuentes, exconsul..." (23) thinking with melancholy of better times when he used to sell visas to migrants or "give" them to desperate women who would sell their body to obtain one:

Entregó la visa sólo por meter los ojos en el cuerpo de una chiquita...
Las visas son las vidas. Las requieren para subir hacia la otra frontera.
Las vidas son el pago de las visas... Él jamás cobró en exceso por lo de las visas y siempre lo pensó dos veces a poner su firma por una acostada con las niñas que se le ofrecían ahí mismo, o en su oficina con clima artificial... (20-26)

In this space ruled by delinquency at all levels, prostitution is yet another consequence of the trafficking of bodies. Doña Lita, a motherly figure who apparently helps young girls out of the streets, is an unethical woman who first tries to inspire confidence in the young girls with her protective behavior. But she deceives them, degrades them into prostitution. "... doña Lita la (Sabina) llevó a trabajar al Monavento con la consigna de que se portara bien y todos saldrían ganando, después de las lecciones de baile y las machaconas consignas de lealtad y silencio que le dieron en Chimaltenango, ya en Guatemala, pero todavía a un par de horas antes de la frontera..." (32-33)

These previously described illegal activities performed by civil servants or private individuals are what the Dutch sociologist Saskia Sassen calls counter-geography of globalization; alternative economic circuits, cross-border circuits, that develop by feeding on favorable dynamics of globalization. More and more women incorporate, and oftentimes are victim of, these circuits that can be legal or illegal; they include labor migration but also human trafficking, drug trafficking and prostitution... Sassen talks about “feminization of survival, because it is increasingly on the backs of women that these forms of making a living, earning a profit and securing government revenue are realized.” (506). These circuits thrive in developing countries that have welcomed a global economy but as Sassen states, endure a heavy burden in doing so: “Key indicators of such impacts are the heavy and rising burden of government debt, the growth in unemployment, sharp cuts in government social expenditures, the closure of a large number of firms in other fairly traditional sectors oriented to the local or national market and the promotion of export-oriented growth.” (“Women’s Burden”, 523) The novel clearly describes Sabina’s poverty stricken background that leaves her no other alternative to survive than to be part of the illegal entertainment (sex) industry.

The borderlands are thus a territory where a high number of people prey on weaker ones, take advantage of the hardships of others and far from being only chaos, in the borderlands many alliances are made between opposing forces such as the authorities and the Maras, the authorities and human traffickers, to enjoy or make a profit from those who are in need of help. Teenaged prostitution is enabled and encouraged by the many representatives of the corrupt local authorities. Doña Lita

admits that the well to do local male figures of authority, instead of working to close her business, all enjoy the young products she grooms for them:

...nadie puede poner en duda las rogancias que tiene que echarse pa que los coyotes no testaren a las muchachitas; los entuertos que se obliga a desarmar pa sacarlas adelante; porque si las niñas andan solas como cabras del monte no falta malaje que las quiera clavar como mariposa, y si las chiquitas son tan cuajes de dar todo creyendo en la jodienda esa del amor y del matrimonio, pues claro que se las mascan de un hilo, si andan como ánimas solitarias y no tienen quién las aconseje con buen tino, que pa eso está ella, pa llevarlas por el camino adecuado, con el consejo a tiempo, que a deshoras las consejas duran menos que las nubes del verano, por eso el licenciado Cossio confía en ella, por eso el general Valerrama la felicita de continuo y el ingeniero Santoscoy y toda la baraja de señorones la apoyan y le dan ánimos pa que no deje desvalidas a las que vienen del sur y son bien tratadas por doña Lita, de apenas treinta y ocho años bien llenitos de placer, porque no todo es trabajo, no, mis amigos, nada de eso, ella está en el mundo pa gozarla pa que las chiquitas del sur tengan sus oportunidades en la vida, que tantas cornadas les ha dado desde que llegaron vivitas y coleando a este valle de lloraderas. (68)

Dirty realism as defined previously by Santana is here reinforced by Celestina, direct allusion to the infamous Spanish character of *La Celestina* written by Fernando de Rojas (1499)

In the borderlands - counter text of the nation and order in general - time loses its linearity and teleological purpose. Emigrants are stopped and sent back to their native land and once there, they restart their journey to the north with a good chance that they will be deported again. Repetition and circular journeys mark a different progression of time and the goal of crossing the border is tinged by failure. Another particularity of the borderland is that time, as measured by the outside world, doesn't apply here; time has stopped, lives are pending. Migrants are awaiting the arrival of the next train, but many are caught by the Mexican migration officers and brought back into Guatemala; many attempt the border-crossing over and over again. Many have

little jobs that might one day pay for papers they need to cross the border. Sabina, a teenager continuously thinks of going to California; it is what keeps her going and what makes her everyday life bearable. Inside the brothel, Peredo, the Salvadoran man who announces the girls to the public, keeps that dream alive too; “las arrebatada de ilusiones de ir hacia el norte...” (29) As long as the dancers believe they can realize their dream and make it up north, they are willing to work. But Sabina is often frustrated with the passage of time and starts to realize that her dream of a better life in the United States is doomed to failure: - “Cuent(a) los meses que llev(a) trabajando... Que nunca va a salir de Tecún Umán y que sólo va a andar dando de vueltas por todos los lugares de la Calle de las Barras.” (33-34) Her journey has brought her to Tecún Umán to a threshold of a better life, but she remains stuck in Tecún Umán. She works for people who keep the illusion of the north present in her mind while actually having opposing interests and with no intention of ever allowing her to leave. Everyday she moves her body, not walking up north, but instead dancing naked for people who profit from her young age and precarious situation. As much as she wants papers, the Consul of Mexico likes her and wants her to remain at his disposal. Doña Lita provides fake papers for the girls who occasionally perform at high priced parties in Tapachula, Mexico, where they work for one or more nights. But the border crossing is risky: the immigration officers might stop a girl, interrogate her and she might have to bribe them by paying, monetarily or in other ways:

... lo caro que costaron los papeles, y la tonta panameña al primer apretón confesó que no era mexicana y quien le había dado los documentos, y ora anda con la refunfuñadera, chiquilla malcriada, diciendo que la engañaron y le va hablar al corresponsal del Orbe de Tapachula pa que los periodistas le pongan la mira a los migras mexicanos y al par de gringos que ni hablan español y en El

Palmito le rompieron sus papeles que le costaron el carajal de acostadas, el jodederal de amaretos con mineral, las monerías que le tuvo que hacer a don Nico que por lo visto no tenía llenadera, como dicen en Panamá cuando los hombres aguantan horas sin que la calentura se les baje. (72)

The example of Sabina shows how she loses everything: she loses her family when her brother kills their parents and sets the house on fire. “ le dijeron que después de lo que pasó, de su casa ni las maderas quedaban.” (34) As a citizen of Honduras, she loses the protection of her country when she follows to Guatemala the person who promises to help her enter the U.S.; because of that she fails to preserve the last thing that was hers: her body and the exclusive use of it. Thus, she loses her past, her identity, surviving the present while exposing her body everyday to the risk of being killed, beaten, infected... for a utopian dream of a future that will never come. She is definitely in an intermediate or interstitial zone, where she has lost her native country and where her own identity, being reconfigured by her experience in the borderlands, is now anchored in her degraded body. Space is critical in the construction of one's subjectivity. It is not simply an inactive physical environment that hosts the human being; there is rather an interconnection between the place and the subject that develops the subject on an ontological level. Sabina is in a place of the “in-between” always oscillating in chaos and perversion, stuck in a situation that will never end, where her new identity or ethos

(...) se hace imperativo de sobrevivencia - sobrevivencia real, no figurada - en un territorio de potestades en constante pugna, donde ante un Estado de derecho virtualmente inexistente, lo “normal” deja de ser el parámetro contra el cual se define lo monstruoso, para fundirse con él en una sinonimia promiscua y aberrante. Porque lo “normal”, en el tránsito de sur a norte de México, es que los migrantes sean secuestrados, violados, golpeados, vejados, asesinados.” (Monstruos postmodernos: figuras de la inmigración en el México contemporáneo)

In this space of evil and corruption, “La animita de El Carrizal” becomes the refuge of the sacred, of a solidarian community that congregates at the open sanctuary, directed by Papa Añorve, where the image of Animar, the young and innocent daughter of Tata Añorve, raped and killed by a Mara member (in fact Sabina’s brother) draws more and more migrants to pray, venerate the “sanctified” girl but also to condemn “... las agresiones a los indocumentados, la impunidad, la mezcla entre rapiñeros y autoridades, la explotación a los que vienen del sur... el avance de las enfermedades que inundan la frontera... el descarado traficadero de armas y del consumo de enervantes...” (367) Since Tecún Umán is a violent space, a space of evil, where religiousness and its rites are violated, where social awareness is a threat and thus exterminated. The combined forces of the police and the Mara 13 members ransack the place one night and kill whoever is present, including Sabina who in an act of agency had joined “la animita”. Only Tata Añorve can physically escape thanks to the river but he becomes haunted by the memories of the night he abandoned the others to their fate:

... Jamás entonó los cantos de la catracha ni se inclinó frente a una veladora. Nunca lo hizo en los años que transitó por caminos sin término llevando en los ojos y en la memoria la noche en que la Ermita del Carrizal fue un tumulto de balas, de filos metálicos, de gritos de odio, de quejidos leves y de su escape por el Suchiate, que lo llevó al silencio. (370)

The river leads Tata Añorve into a new life but one removed from his roots, from his nation. Moreover, the river Suchiate is also called Satanachia as a symbol of the borderlands where hell prevails. Everyone tries to cross this river, especially when the immigration officers are not there and the river flow becomes a metaphor for the

constant flow of migrants, of human beings transformed into merchandise. In contrast to the national flag waving at the immigration office, La Palmita station that protects the nation's boundaries, rather has become a post-national symbol.³

Conclusion

The two novels studied in this chapter describe how poverty and violence leave some Central Americans with no other alternative for survival other than to leave their country. They both focus on the horrible conditions of the journey and the violent human encounters the migrants might or might not survive along their migration road in Mexico and in the borderlands. Both writings condemn the prevalence of what Sassen calls the counter-geographies of globalization: alternative circuits that hide behind and thrive from the Northbound migration and that view and treat the migrants as objects of economic profit. Transcending social criticism, both novels also destabilize some prevalent paradigms in Western culture.

Utopia, or the idea of “a better elsewhere”, a place not spoiled by “war, violence, cupidity, exploitation, hunger and injustice” (Zarka) originates in both novels from the necessity of leaving one's country due to misery and social inequality. Zarka writes: “Thinking of utopia has been possible only when the historical reality of situations appear to offer no way out.” But, as the etymology of the word reminds us, utopia is a no-place, a philosophical ideal that remains in the realm of the unreal, and the utopian dream of the different characters is soon shattered when a new, nightmarish reality

³ Due to globalization, individual nations have lost part of their cohesion and have entered a post-national period. For example, Mexico loses control over its border region; as a nation-state, it tries in vain to contain the flow of migrants that has increased with globalization, and La Palmita station represents chaos and corruption rather than order.

must be endured: "... en cada rejuego está la caída, la pérdida de los brazos, las piernas cortadas, la deportación, la cárcel, el ulular de las anfetaminas y el polvo de la coca." But they persevere because "... es más terrible regresar hacia sus países quemados que sufrir las desventuras hacia el norte." (*La Mara*, 18) Contrary to the notion of flesh in the discourse of Sartre, who associates this primary state of the body with affection, love and sex, in *La Mara* and *La Fila India*, the notion of flesh is radically different. It is the synonym for merchandise, object of violence, and dehumanization.

The journey, and its epic connotations that go beyond the geographical transit to always produce intense experiences that provoke inner change, loses in these novels its mythical significance; the hero does not acquire new knowledge that he ultimately shares with his village on his return. The journey is the migrant's descent into hell, not in a religious sense, but in terms of being subjected to degradation, brutal cruelty and abjection in the name of profit. The journey is marked by a complete absence of ethics all along the way.

The readings modify our vision of "otherness" since the subaltern other transforms into a "victimized body" inside a new version of racism and human trafficking that cancels all historic agency or trace of subjectivity. The author of a review about *La Fila India* wrote of the following thoughts from Ortuño about migration: "Creo que la sociedad mexicana, como muchas, es bastante incapaz de lidiar con la migración, pese a que sea una sociedad, insisto como muchas, para la que la migración es un elemento fundamental. Partiendo por supuesto del hecho que hemos expulsado a unos cuantos millones de personas a los Estados Unidos al que se le adosa un discurso de victimismo, que contrasta con la paradoja terrible y grotesca por

la que somos incapaces de entender la migración centroamericana a partir de nuestro propio ejemplo.” (Alicia Escárcega Freixas) Although Mexican migrants continue to be victims of United States’ discrimination, Central Americans in their position of “the other of the other” suffer the discrimination of the Mexican now transformed into victimizer.

The migration region and in particular the borderlands represent a space that goes beyond all ethical, political or religious limits, undermining even the notion of the “human”. Therefore, in a significant manner, both novels transgress the structure of the traditional novel - a bourgeois literary genre which agrees or dissents with respect to ethical principles, the nation and other conventional systems. In these novels written by journalists who probably have first-hand information about migration, the social reality of the borderlands transcends the form and structure of the novel - (the cohesive nature of a main plot in the case of *La Mara* and the roman noir in *La Fila India*). Degradation, dispersion and fragmentation create a historical specificity for which systemic literary formats are not totally adequate or sufficient. These characteristics cancel order and rationality in a space that resembles hell or in the words of Rina Arya, “a descent into horror” . (157)

Chapter 2: Public Bodies

Y, claro, también hay nombres bastante elegantes. Por ejemplo, meretriz, ésa es la palabra que siempre aparece en los periódicos y se escribe con zeta al final, o ramera y la verdad es que nunca he entendido bien de dónde viene esta palabra, pero yo creo que significará que la mujer anda de rama en rama, como los picaflores o el clavel del aire... El nombre más usado, claro, es prostituta que me imagino tiene algo que ver con la próstata, ¿no cree? Y para que resulte más corto me llaman, usted sabe, puta.

Lucía Guerra. Muñeca brava.

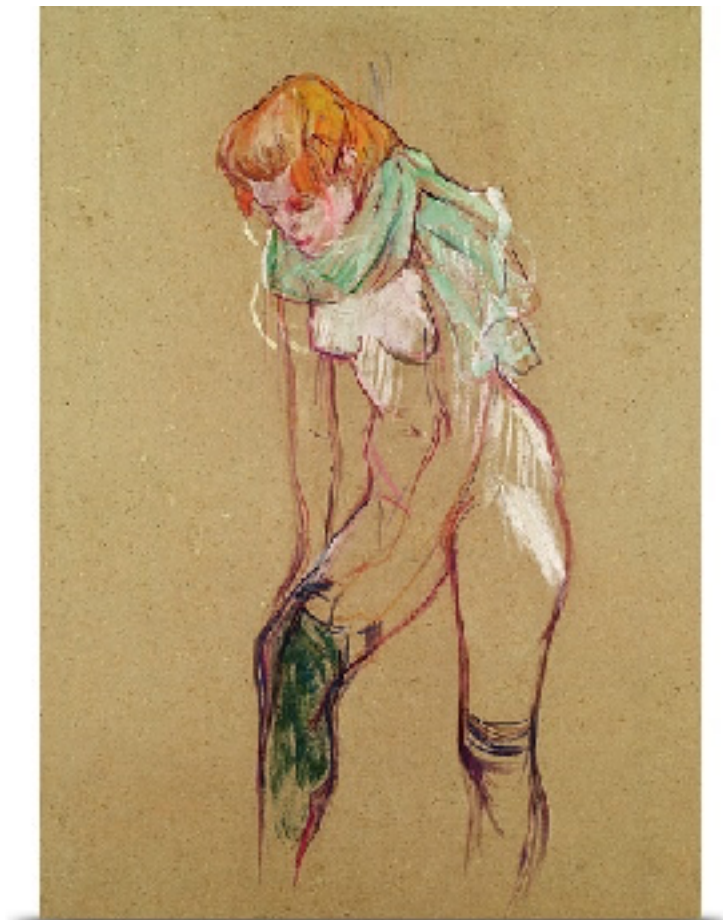


Illustration 2: *Muñeca brava* por Ceibo

The trafficking of bodies discussed in our previous chapter is facilitated by several factors, notably the global increase of migration and the proliferation of affordable sex services: the worldwide observation of many countries' ever improving quality of life, material goods and work opportunities have attracted an increasing number of people from impoverished countries willing to migrate to find a better way of life. In the wealthier countries, an improved quality of life has increased the desire for consumption, and one easily obtained and affordable service is sex, provided through prostitution and to some extent, human trafficking. In the case of prostitution, the sex worker is simultaneously the subject of pleasure and the object of pleasure, at the same time both merchant and merchandise; a kind of coveted "living coin" that fluctuates in value according to the market. (Solomon, 51,52) We have seen that in the borderlands, historical circumstances have changed the landscape recently, but prostitution has always been present. It is likewise relevant with patriarchy since it has known historical changes but its basic structure persists to this day.

A Historical Overview of Prostitution

Prostitution has existed since ancient times and in *A History of Prostitution from Antiquity to the Present Day*, George Riley Scott explains that the first (recorded) public brothel was established in Athens; the prostitutes were unpaid slaves.(78) Leah Lydia Otis, who researched prostitution in Europe, states that professional prostitution appeared with the growth of the cities. Prostitutes were generally tolerated in the

twelfth and thirteenth century. According to canons of the Middle Ages, their presence was considered a necessary evil in order to protect other women's virginity; the male population being naturally endowed with a sexual drive far more intense than that of women. This patriarchal preconception that ascribed a more active sexuality to men is a gender mark (Lamas, 20) that also justified the prescription for women to be virtuous and only to have sex with the objective to procreate. She was not allowed to be a subject of pleasure, just a passive object and a receptacle of gestation. These higher sexual urges attributed to men by a patriarchal hegemony justified prostitution from the very beginning.

Prostitution eventually became institutionalized in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. "... at no period in history have prostitutes (...) ranked higher than they did in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries." (Scott, 86) The "Institution (was) (d)ismantled" (through) active repression by an increasingly misogynistic sixteenth century" (Otis, 40) . The Protestant Reformation and the spread of diseases (especially diseases brought back by the military) have all been policy-making factors.

In the eighteenth century, regulation became more concerned with health and morality. The spread of venereal diseases was at the origin of the establishment of medical examinations of the prostitutes. In France, "... it was Napoleon, at the height of his fame and power, who was responsible for the establishment in Paris of the first really adequate system of medical examination of prostitutes." (Scott, 96) In the nineteenth century, the United Kingdom enabled the police to forcefully compel any woman they thought to be a prostitute to undergo a medical check for venereal diseases. Women were locked up for several months in a hospital if they tested positive.

This was a harsh treatment showing the inequality and injustice with which women were treated while the male clientele was never tested. Scott states: “Coincidentally with the English concept of degradation and shame is the firmly established idea that every prostitute is necessarily a girl of the feeblest mentality, in many cases little removed from an actual imbecile.” (Scott, 12)

Naturalist writers have described the hard realities of the economic and social climate at the end of the nineteenth century. The psychological profile of the prostitutes they portrayed would fit that of feeble beings and “sinners”. Zola’s *Nana* (1880), the ninth novel of the famous saga *Les Rougon-Macquart*, portrays a prostitute whose sexual life is explained as a consequence of her degenerated (due to alcohol abuse) genetic background. Zola said that *Nana* was: “la historia de una muchacha, retoño de cuatro o cinco generaciones de borrachos, de sangre viciada por una larga herencia de miseria y de embriaguez, que se transformaba en ella en un desquiciamiento nervioso de su sexo de mujer” (Ordiz, 8) This novel was influential in Latin America and naturalist authors highlighted the prevailing thoughts on “higienismo”.

According to Marta Lamas, prostitution increased tremendously in the twentieth century, due to economic and cultural changes: sexual liberation (1960s) and neoliberalism (1980s). She states:

Este notorio aumento surge de la liberalización de las costumbres sexuales y de la apertura neoliberal de los mercados que han permitido la expansión de la industria sexual como nunca antes, con una proliferación de nuevos productos y servicios: shows de sexo en vivo, masajes eróticos, table dance y strippers, servicios de acompañamiento (escorts) sexo telefónico y turismo sexual (...)(20)

Human trafficking hiding behind prostitution is one of the many reasons why prostitution was, and is still today in the twenty-first century, a highly controversial topic. Countries all over the world have very different policies concerning its status. Some feminists advocate for the abolition of prostitution thinking that women are deceived into it, trafficked or lead into it due to distressing experiences earlier in their life such as sexual abuse. Others support its legalization because, of all the bad options available to them, prostitution is economically the best solution. (Lamas, 11) Another concern is that working conditions for these women would be much worse if their activity were to be clandestine. But to this day, prostitutes, or sex workers as they are often called today to avoid the negative connotation, are still stigmatized while their clients often are not.

In Latin America, prostitutes were not stigmatized that way before the Spanish Conquest. After that, as time passed, prostitutes were viewed as “mujeres de la mala vida.” (23) Later, the different independent Latin American nations would pass their own laws concerning the legitimacy, or lack thereof, of prostitution, but it went in parallel with the nation building process under which “order” and “higienismo” were the prevailing ideas. (Solomon, 11-12) According to Claire Thora Solomon, during the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, “(...) Buenos Aires, and by extension, Argentina, became central to the discourse of prostitution both within Latin America and internationally; and the name “Buenos Aires” came to symbolize prostitution and trafficking, for which Argentinian Jews were disproportionately blamed.” (2)

Today, prostitution is legal in Mexico and Argentina although what is illegal is the intermediary person who organizes it, the pimp. (108) Nevertheless, prostitution is still

considered immoral - a profane activity that functions as a model of what decent women must not emulate in a society still guided by the religious principle of the sacred and the profane. In the symbolic repertoire of Western culture, the image of the prostitute in the Bible is a synonym of sin and redemption, in the case of Mary Magdalene. This image has prevailed through the centuries: in a collective imaginary where only a few times she has also been a rebellious figure of transgression. "Some sexual behavior (is) disapproved by social morality" (Eliade, 14)

This chapter will focus on the literary elaboration of the leitmotif of the prostitute in novels of different periods and countries, with an emphasis on the re-presentation of the female body. The first novel, *Santa* (1903), by Mexican author Federico Gamboa, portrays the main character, a prostitute, simultaneously as a victim of the male society and more particularly of the police who help the government to "clean up" a modernizing Mexico City. Following the Naturalist model established by Zola, *Santa* is a predestined sinner whose weakness causes her to become a target for men. Her clients will use and abuse her and the economic value of her body will fluctuate analogously to the "ups and downs of market values" (Solomon, 52) until, from a ripe fruit she will end up as a putrefied dissected cadaver on an operating table.

Important changes in the elaboration of the literary prostitute take place during the Latin-American *Boom* of the 1960s and early 1970s. A brief overview of some novels, and in particular *Pantaleón y las visitadoras* (1973), a parody by Vargas Llosa, highlights some variations. In a culture mainly produced from an androcentric perspective, the leitmotif of the prostitute in Latin American literature has mainly been created by male writers. It is only after the 1970's when women writers, under the

influence of the Feminist Movement, incorporate the figure of the prostitute in their fiction. *El Infierno prometido* (2006) by Elsa Drucaroff and *Muñeca brava* (1993) by Lucía Guerra denounce the inequality of women in an official nation ruled by a masculine hegemony and, at the same time, in an act of feminist solidarity, focus on prostitution with the goal of giving voice to women dispossessed of a legitimate discourse. The last novel, *Que raro que me llame Guadalupe* (2008), written by Miriam Laurini, offers a testimonial view on child prostitution and human trafficking. It leads us in a way towards torture, the theme of chapter three.

Body and Identity in *Santa* by Federico Gamboa

Santa (1903) focuses on the moral and physical decadence of a young country girl, who, after having been seduced by an army lieutenant and subsequently expelled from her home by her mother and two brothers, flees to Mexico City where she ends up working in a brothel. Through Santa's misfortunes, Gamboa highlights the different forms of violence that are perpetrated against prostitutes in Mexico City at the turn of the twentieth century. Using the biblical archetype of the prostitute as a sinner, Santa is a marginal subaltern who suffers moral criticism and police persecution during Porfirio Díaz' government whose goal was to modernize Mexico City and do away with "ethical plagues", among them the "barbarian poor"⁴ and the prostitutes.

Gamboa describes Santa's idyllic and innocent life in a small village in the surroundings of Mexico City. The arrival of Marcelino, a young army officer temporarily

⁴ Like in other Latin American countries, this notion of the "barbarian" is inserted in the positivist goal of implanting "civilization" to eliminate "barbarism" conceived as those instinctive forces present in indigenous cultures, the country versus the city, and in the poor population dominated, according to positivist ideology, by moral degradation.

stationed there, changes everything when he seduces her, abandons her, and provokes her disgrace when it becomes obvious that she is pregnant. In an article about Santa, the protagonist, Sandra Lorenzano criticizes society's hypocritical reaction to sexual conduct: "No cabe duda de que su "problema" es genético. La hipocresía de la sociedad celebra en el hombre lo que condena en la mujer: en un mismo acto, ella "pierde" su virginidad, él "se hace hombre" (...) La "pérdida irreparable", la de la "rosa más valiosa del jardín", convierte a la más pura en una "mala mujer", en una "mujer pública"" (199)

In the Spanish and Latin American tradition, losing her virginity, also defined as the most precious jewel a woman could possess, meant an act of transgression that deserved punishment. As Castillo states about men's general opinion: "decent women - la mujer, la madre - must be rigidly controlled in both body and mind" (12), a patriarchal rule that Santa transgressed. But, the father figure being absent in the novel, Santa escapes her mother and brothers' supervision and wanders by herself in the fields, a public space where no young woman should be without supervision. In *El laberinto de la soledad* (1950), Octavio Paz explains how in the beginning of the 20th century, the Mexican woman's duty was self abnegation and decency at all times; she could not be instinctive and let herself succumb to passion, as Santa does, and she will be severely punished for transgressing these gender boundaries. (33)

In *City of Suspects. Crime in Mexico City, 1900 - 1931*, Pablo Piccato views seduction as one of the multiple facets of violence against women; in Gamboa's novel, it causes Santa's predicament since it precipitates her departure to Mexico City where she will become a prostitute. When a young woman is seduced in a country where she

has to remain a virgin until her marriage, she is “(...) no longer either decent or wom(a)n but some other slippery and unfathomable being” (Castillo, 13) and she brings dishonor upon her family and more particularly on the father who apparently “has failed his parental vigilance. (Piccato, 127) Parents of a seduced girl sometimes go to the extreme length of negotiating a marriage of their daughter to the criminal who thereby avoids punishment. “Neither statutory rape nor abduction (...) was punished if the offender married the victim.” (Piccato, 123) Sometimes, the young woman would be punished and kept inside her parents’ house to live a servant’s life. In *Santa*, due to the impossibility of finding the young man who seduced her (she refuses to give his name), her mother, under the influence of Santa’s own brothers as well as the social pressure of an extremely patriarchal society, expels the sinner from her home to save their honor. This punishment will force Santa to step entirely outside her “stereotypically proper role” (Castillo, 3) due to being on her own and having no other option than becoming a prostitute. Thus, Gamboa portrays her mainly as the victim of a cruel society. He shows her, in a very nuanced way but nevertheless in contradiction to these previous statements, as a sinner, who trespasses her gender boundaries if no-one restricts her natural instincts. Gamboa alludes to her weakness, her inherent inclination to being a prostitute, transmitting thereby the general prejudicial Mexican male regard for women and, at the same time, using the Naturalist⁵ element of heredity:

(...) por lo pronto se connaturalizó con su nuevo y degradante estado, es de presumir que en la sangre llevara gérmenes de muy vieja lascivia de algún tatarabuelo que en ella resucitaba con vicios y todo. Rápida fue su aclimatación, con lo que a claras se prueba que la chica no era nacida para lo honrado y derecho...(70)

⁵ In an attempt to be “scientific”, Naturalism elaborated its literary characters according to two principles, the influence of heredity and social environment.

Castillo states: "Santa's fall, thus, is both tragic and inevitable; it is the story of seduction, and of natural propensities." (177) Decent women are portrayed as wives or mothers while the prostitute genetically possesses a:

tara fisiológica, como una desviación patológica del carácter que en otros individuos impulsa al crimen o al alcoholismo... Esta tara, o *fêlure* en terminología naturalista, se trasmite de padres a hijos; y de esta forma el novelista suele rastrear en los antecedentes familiares de la joven desgraciada en busca del origen de sus torcidas inclinaciones. (8)

Nevertheless, as Javier Ordiz observes, Gamboa's emphasis on predestination and not scientific determinism is a slight deviation from Zola's model. According to him, Gamboa and other Latin American authors focus more on the women's weakness and naivety, which explains why they are such an easy target for men, and dissociate from the very harsh descriptions of French Naturalistic authors such as Zola; he stipulates that these "narradores se distinguen por la simpatía, la comprensión, la compasión y hasta el cariño con que abordan la historia de estas mujeres que, lejos de ser un factor de destrucción social, son personalmente "destruidas" por un contexto vicioso y carente de humanidad." (9) Therefore, Gamboa, who according to his memoirs often visited the brothels, gives more emphasis to the social environment - an aspect which allows him to deliver a social denunciation and transform Santa into a symbol of the Mexican nation.

Gamboa's perspective contrasts with that offered by the scientists of the time who conceived the prostitute as a degenerate human being. *The Prostitute and the Normal Woman* by Cesare Lombroso and Guillaume Ferrero (1893), portrays prostitution as a disease and states that some women, of lesser mental capacity, have

innate psychological predispositions to becoming a prostitute. Another turn-of-the-century study, Luis Lara and Prado's book, *La Prostitución en México* (1908), argues that "'science' has proven that these women are psychologically inferior to decent women, lack the ability to reason, and are subject to nervous system perversions". (Castillo, 10) Del Campo, another researcher, adds that "(...) insufficient maternal affection (...) and chronic laziness (...) can also be contributing factors". (Castillo, 10-11) These studies, notwithstanding various testimonies of prostitutes, exclude the economic factor that forces women into prostitution (10-11). For these "scientists", prostitutes invent stories to excuse their immoral conduct or to sugarcoat the truth. Castillo cites Del Campo's book in which he doubts the prostitutes' testimonials:

[A]lgunas meretrices propenden particularmente a 'escucharse a sí mismas' y por eso confían al filántropo que las interroga que ellas han adoptado este oficio empujadas por el hambre, por el desempleo, por la insuficiencia de salarios, etcétera. Nada puede estar más sujeto a duda que este género de testimonios (11).

Castillo writes about the preconceived ideas of these scientists: "Interestingly, Lara y Prado and del Campo explicitly reject the stories told them by the women in favor of their own preconstructed hypotheses about their nature, behavior, and motivations." (11).

This is the "scientific" preconception that prevailed in the implementation of a biopolitics during Porfirio Díaz' government. As a reminder, Foucault considers "discipline" as the control of individual bodies, and "biopolitics" as the control of entire populations. Lorenzano mentions the following regarding prostitution:

El prostíbulo se convirtió (...), bajo control policiaco y médico, en una más de las instituciones disciplinarias de la época como la clínica, la cárcel o

el manicomio. El sistema que se impuso en México, a partir de Maximiliano, fue un sistema reglamentarista que dispuso la elaboración de un registro con los datos personales y la fotografía de cada prostituta. En 1904, la ciudad de México tenía 368 000 habitantes y 10 937 prostitutas registradas (...). (203)

As part of his project of modernization, Porfirio Díaz had the objective of “cleansing” Mexico City and instituting social reforms with the assistance of the police. It’s precisely this police control that forces Santa to stay at Elvira’s brothel because she has already been given a numbered health card by the police ascribing her an official identity which, according to Elvira’s threat, cannot be changed. The modernization of Mexico City was carried out with the help of the police according to Porfirian ideals, by and for the privileged, with the intent to physically separate the different social classes. To enforce better hygiene and security in the center of the city implied keeping the poor, the indigenous and the prostitutes at a distance, in separate neighborhoods where modernization would come later or partially. (Piccato, 17-21) By not being modern, they became a threat, an enemy to combat through the use of police force in a function that trespasses the mere protection of the community, as Agamben explains referring to the implementation of powers: “El hecho es que la policía, en contra de la opinión común que ve en ella una función meramente administrativa de ejecución del derecho, es quizá el lugar en que se muestra al desnudo con mayor claridad la proximidad, la intercambiabilidad casi, entre la violencia y derecho que caracteriza a la figura del soberano.” (90)

According to Castillo, author of *Easy Women*, prostitution was legal and although brothels were prohibited by federal law, “individual states have sometimes opted to legalize and regulate houses of prostitution in so-called *zonas de tolerancia* [red-light

districts]”(15). This enabled the health department and the police to keep a tighter control over the prostitutes in an alliance with the brothel owners, such as Elvira. Santa has to present herself every week for a physical examination, and that rule, implemented with the help of the police, is not intended to help the prostitutes but rather as Gamboa states, to “salvaguardar la salud de los masculinos de la comuna.” (138) Agents of the health department would go to the brothel if a prostitute would forget to present herself for her examination. Santa perceives her first physical examination by the department of health as a violation of her person rather than a medical exam:

...su pobre memoria, cual si se la hubiesen magullado, conservaba precisos y netos detalles determinados, pero en cambio adulteraba otros, los culminantes, más que los de escasa significación...no recordaba lo que los médicos le habían hecho cuando el reconocimiento, que al fin efectuaron después de excepcional insistencia; ... recordaba la vulgar fisionomía de un enfermero que la miraba, la miraba como con ganas de comérsela ... la hurgaron con un aparato de metal...(22-23).

Santa realizes that she is viewed as a second class citizen when: “la tutearon y aun le dirigieron bromas pesadas, que provocaban grandes risas en Pepa y enojos en ella, que desconocía el derecho de esos caballeros para burlarse de una mujer...” (23).

Gamboa never describes the police as an institution of protection that could help Santa in leaving the world of prostitution, but rather as an organization of repression which treats prostitutes in a degrading manner. The police, and society in general, respects and protects the customer, the man who pays to have sex with a woman but looks down on the woman who sells her body for sex. Octavio Paz in *El Laberinto de la Soledad* comments that : “Las mujeres son seres inferiores porque, al entregarse, se abren. Su inferioridad es constitucional y radica en su sexo, en su “rajada”, herida que jamás cicatriza.” (27). The prostitute is the one who not only opens up to receive a man

but who gives herself to all men. She transgresses her status as a woman and ceases to be considered as one; her active sexuality and thus her active open sex (organ) is what defines her and stigmatizes her: “ - No era mujer, no; era una ...!” (23)

On account of “hygiene” control, one day, two health department agents arrive unexpectedly at Elvira’s brothel and take Santa to the commissariat for not having her health card up to date. They never speak to her. As Solomon states, as a prostitute,“(...) she has an identity *the way that a commodity has a value* - and that this identity can be exchanged for another or even lost.” (52) For the police and the health department, she is nothing more than a number that didn’t follow the rules of a society that pretends to be “clean”; she missed two visits to the health department and could thus put in danger the male clientele of Elvira’s brothel. Peterson cites Solomon: “(...) the prostitute incarnates the flaw running through the notion of the subject: she cannot be innocent because she *isn’t* a subject - she is legally incomplete, and this is both her *fault* and her *lack*”. (168)) Usually prostitutes lose their name and if Santa keeps hers, “the meaning of her name has changed now: it has now become her trademark, the brand whose integrity she will have to protect by maintaining her resemblance to what it denotes - her durezas, her mórbidas curvas- a living statue, impossibly preserved, impervious to time.” (Solomon, 60) In chapter six of *Easy Women*, Castillo studies three testimonials of prostitutes. One of them is Antonia Mora’s book *Del Oficio* and, according to Castillo, if some details might have been sugarcoated in order to increase the sale of the book, the stories are nevertheless real. Antonia Mora talks about how she would pay the corrupt police agents with her body or the fruit of her robberies. When she ends up in prison and her case becomes publicly known, she reveals to a

reporter the police abuse and torture she endured in prison: “El médico legista no me hizo examen a conciencia y por lo tanto no me reconocieron los golpes ni el aborto que me ocasionaron los agentes de la jefatura ...” (178)

Prostitution will destroy Santa’s body, and her only value as a public woman. At first, as a virgin, her body is presented as the appetizing flesh of a perfect ripe fruit the young army officer could not resist. “ (...) ardía en deseos de morder aquella fruta tan a sazón que no perseguía por amor, sino porque creía tenerla al alcance de su ociosa juventud...” (54). After her defloration, as a fallen woman and a prostitute, her body will be flesh to be devoured. Upon her arrival at the brothel, Elvira’s manager feels pity for the young woman who arrives in an “antro que en cortísimo tiempo devoraría aquella hermosura y aquella carne joven que ignoraba seguramente todos los horrores que le esperaban.” (17) As Margo Glantz writes in her article “Santa”: “La prostituta es un cuerpo y un cuerpo está hecho de carne. En el prostíbulo se vende carne “palpitante de pecado” o simplemente “carne de placer” y la novela hace de esa carne el objeto principal de su discurso.” (2) The comparison is explicitly made the first evening when Elvira exceptionally has dinner with the girls: “(...) Elvira, que se dignó acompañar a su ganado en obsequio de la nueva res.....” (29) The prostitutes are flesh to be exhibited, bought and tasted by Elvira’s customers in the same way as the dangling cows’ bodies Santa sees on display in the butcher shop when she arrives by taxi, are admired, bought and tasted by the customer. Glantz adds:

La carne de las reses, su sangre fresca de animal “recién muerto” se iguala a la virginidad perdida cuando el “cuerpo es bárbaramente destrozado”. La pureza de la Santa “violada”, la carne mancillada se recrea con la imagen del degüello de la res que es llevada al matadero.

Muerta la virginidad, fuera de sus límites sagrados, el matrimonio (...), el cuerpo es un objeto consumible que se vende en el burdel como en la carnicería y como Santa en el libro de Gamboa. (4)

Glantz adds that Santa loses her humanity to become only a butchered body: “Santa no es mujer, es un cuerpo destazado.” (5) Santa becomes the queen of the brothel: “(...) por ser aún carne fresca, joven y dura, disputábasele día a día los viejos parroquianos y los nuevos que iban aprendiendo la existencia de tesoro semejante.” (68) With her fresh flesh, she is highly desirable.

Solomon describes Santa from an economic viewpoint where she passes from client to client as “living coin” in a market that fluctuates in terms of appreciation or depreciation of her “value”. (52) Being a prostitute means that she has violated the rules of a system that only respects women as wives or mothers and consequently, the male population will thus disrespectfully and even violently use and abuse her flesh:

Más que sensual apetito, parecía una ansia de estrujar, destruir y enfermar esa carne sabrosa y picante que no se rehusaba ni defendía; carne de extravío y de infamia, cuya dueña, y juzgando piadosamente, pararía en el infierno; carne mansa y obediente, la que con impunidad podía hacerle cada cual lo que mejor le cuadrara. Y aunque entre tantísimo caballero había padres de familia, esposos, gente muy adinerada y muy alta, unos católicos, otros librepensadores, filántropos, funcionarios, autoridades, como la muchacha tenía que perderse a nadie se le ocurrió intentar siquiera su rescate -¡que en este valle de lágrimas fuerza es que todos los mortales carguemos nuestra cruz y que aquél a quien en suerte le tocó una pesada y cruel, pues que perezca! (...) Puede decirse que la entera ciudad concupiscente pasó por la alcoba de Santa, sin darle tiempo casi de cambiar de postura. ¡Caída!, ¡caída la codiciaban!, ¡caída soñábanla!, ¡caída brindábales la vedada poma, supremamente deliciosa...! (69)

Lorenzano talks about “violencia antropofágica” (202) that reminds us again of consumption of the flesh. Even Rubio, so infatuated with her, loses interest in her body when he wins the fight for exclusivity.

he had fetishized her as a fusion of commodity and coin, value and price; and by taking her out of circulation, he committed the economic error of hoarding. Rubio, like Marx’s speculator, is left holding “inert metal” - the body of money - stripped of its *Geldseele*... It is in the mirror of still currency that the capitalist sees himself as a miser, and in getting what he thought he wanted, Rubio is forced to confront the fact that he never loved either Santa or his wife, who now appear identical to him. (Solomon, 62-63)

At the end, “Santa paid the ultimate price for the contradictions of economic thought - dying when her corporal coin was devalued to the point of worthlessness

(...)” (Solomon, 52) Solomon translates from *Santa*: “Just like all that rots or is moth-eaten and after a certain time no one and nothing can prevent it, thus was the descent of Santa quick, devastating, tremendous” (65) But Santa, after her death, speaks directly to the readers to admit that even in death she didn’t find rest and her flesh had been butchered: “ni en la muerte hallé descanso; unos señores médicos despedazaron mi cuerpo, sin aliviarlo, mi pobre cuerpo magullado y marchito por la concupiscencia bestial de toda una metrópoli viciosa.” (69)

Thus, Gamboa’s *Santa* portrays how women who transgress their prescriptive gender role and succumb to their feelings and emotions face heavy consequences in a patriarchal society that classifies them either as decent or as whores. Gamboa frames his novel in the Latin American Naturalistic format that focuses more on women’s weaknesses, causing them to become targets of the male society, than on their degeneracy (as French Naturalists such as Zola did). Santa’s weakness brings her into prostitution where the beauty of her body ignites the sexual desire of Mexico City’s male

society who will consume and abuse her flesh sold at market value. But as with all financial markets, her “corporeal value” or “coin value” ends up depreciating and Santa’s poor body will end up on the operating table where she will not survive.

Influenced by Zola’s *Nana* (1880), several Naturalist novels on prostitutes and urban brothels were written in Latin America at the dawn of the twentieth century; social allegories of nations that embrace Modernism while still caught up in the midst of corruption. Rodrigo Cánovas explains how they contrast with the “romances nacionales” in which the romantic couples are the metaphor of nation building with its ethnical, ideological, economic or regional difficulties. (Cánovas, 131) Another example of the naturalist novel is *Juana Lucero* (1902) by the Chilean author Augusto D’Halmar. It is the story of a young uneducated girl who works for various Chilean households, as a maid, seamstress or mistress before ending up in a brothel of Santiago. According to Cánovas, *Juana Lucero* is a critique of a hypocritical Chilean upper society of that time:

Siendo hija natural, no será reconocida como pariente (no es sobrina, sino criada), tampoco podrá aspirar al matrimonio (es una querida), ni menos a la maternidad, que aseguraría la continuidad de su estirpe (es obligada a abortar), quedando relegada a la función de prostituta. Expulsada de la casa chilena (hipocresía y arribismo donde su tía beata, violencia y conformismo en el hogar de los Caracuel, donde es violada por el dueño de casa), llega al burdel, espacio donde la familia chilena queda desenmascarada: su comportamiento vicioso, guiado por las elites (y que incluye a hombres y mujeres por igual) expulsa de su seno a nuevos actores sociales como la Lucero, condenándolos al anonimato bajo el estigma de la bastardía. (16)

This representation of the prostitute and the brothel changed during the nineteen sixties and the early seventies with the Latin American authors of the *Boom*, such as Donoso, García Márquez, Onetti and Vargas Llosa. Cánovas states that these authors:

Confeccionan un espacio donde se dan cita la escritura (alucinatoria), el sexo (como transgresión) y la modernidad (fallida), otorgando así una pintura expresionista de nuestro tiempo. (...) La literatura reinventa el burdel convirtiéndolo tanto en un espacio de sumisión, habitado por seres grotescos que actúan una erótica letal; como en un lugar de rebeldía, dramático o farsesco, donde se juega a cambiar el orden de las cosas (...) En estos relatos se despliegan las fantasías sexuales de una comunidad (en especial, las concebidas por el orden masculino), se las celebra, juzga y parodia; fantasías letales, emblemas de una modernidad mal gestada, pero también lúdicas, que simulan, recrean o inventan nuevas piezas para un puzzle no resuelto. La escritura se revela aquí como un artefacto, construido con los restos de una modernidad ya clausurada, siendo el prostíbulo su punto de inflexión, su eclipse.
(5-8)

Pantaleón y las visitadoras (1973) by Mario Vargas Llosa is a parody and satire of the Peruvian Army. Captain Pantaleón Pantoja has to accomplish a secret mission that consists in providing prostitutes, alias visitors, for the soldiers stationed in the Amazonian region of Iquitos. The lack of women in the region generates "(...) violaciones a granel y los tribunales no se dan abasto para juzgar a tanto pendejón. Toda la Amazonía está alborotada." (19) Thanks to his efficiency and his mathematical calculations, Pantaleón installs a logistics center in the forest from where he sends prostitutes by boat and plane to provide their services, which are strictly regimented in terms of a number of soldiers per prostitute and minutes spent per sexual act. "Pantilandia" becomes a successful enterprise, a heterotopic place that supplants the regional laws. (Cánovas, 44) From ten prostitutes it increases to fifty and it alleviates the soldiers' psychological and biological problems.

As a parody of the military, the prostitutes have to march, to sing the hymn and wear unit emblems, and their sexual activity is given a military lexicon: "(...) el capitán Mendoza, señalando su bragueta, apunta que habrá que bautizar correctamente esta nueva especialidad: Artillería, Infantería, Caballería, Ingeniería..." (Cánovas, 43) As

characters, the prostitutes are only bodies that concur with the stereotypical professional prostitute: "(...) la mujer tiene que ser itinerante, intercambiable, estar siempre dispuesta y ser de baja ralea...no hay conquista, solo paga (...)" (50-51) There is no internalization; the prostitutes execute a secondary role that emphasizes the role of Pantaleón. The author also tells the story of a religious charlatan and his crucifying sect, highlighting bigotry that is prevalent in military culture.

In this novel, the prostitutes are rather a means or a pretext to entertainment in an unusual and light-hearted plot focused on the sexuality of men; there is no moral stigmatization of the prostitute although she is the stereotypical object of desire. The corps of prostitutes "(...) otorga las metáforas que permiten desactivar fugazmente el canon cultural - la gran obra moderna, el doble estándar moral, las fantasías sexuales masculinas, nuestra retórica." (Cánovas, 48)

While in *Cien años de soledad* (1967), by Gabriel García Márquez, the brothel at the end of the novel is a space of carnivalesque imagination where the chronological flow of time is transgressed, in *El lugar sin límites* (1966) by José Donoso, the brothel is the site of sexuality as a wide spectrum which defies the heterosexual categories supported by patriarchal order. Here, the binary structure of the "masculine" and the "feminine" is deconstructed and mobilized. La Japonesa - the owner of the brothel - symbolizes the extreme case of femininity in a wide range of sexualities where Pancho is the emblem of masculinity. In this spectrum, La Japonesita (the daughter of La Japonesa) devoid of all sexuality represents an empty space, "una sexualidad blanca", and the homosexual La Manuela, as a transvestite, underlines the fact that gender is a cultural construction, a fabrication - as Judith Butler has demonstrated - which cancels

the patriarchal notion of a biological essence. (Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*). Moreover, the fact that La Manuela seduces Pancho - the macho who despises homosexuals, makes of sexuality and identity a changing flow that defies any fixed category.

In Latin American literature, the prostitute has been a character mainly presented from a masculine perspective. Either as a sinner conceived within a positivist ideology, as in the case of *Santa*, or as a transgressive figure in the novels of the Boom that use her as a pretext for parody, carnival or as a critique of heterosexual paradigms. The women's Liberation Movement of the 1970s in the USA engendered in Latin America a new wave of Feminism and writers started to produce a feminist discourse to denounce gender inequalities and to legitimize women's perspectives on women.

El Infierno prometido (2006) by Elsa Drucaroff and *Muñeca brava* (1993) by Lucía Guerra present a feminist denunciation of the official nation ruled by a masculine hegemony. At the same time, in an act of feminist solidarity, these two intellectual women investigated historical facts and prostitution itself with the goal of giving voice to women dispossessed of a legitimate discourse.

Jewish Female Bodies for Sale

El infierno prometido (2006) is a work of historical fiction authored in 2006 by the Argentinian professor and writer Elsa Drucaroff. It shares some of the characteristics of the detective novel and narrates the story of Dina, a young Jewish girl living in the small Polish village of Kaznlev in 1927, who is permitted to take classes at the local high school, which is mainly reserved for non-Jewish young men. While out for a walk

in the woods, she is raped by a fellow classmate. To save the family's honor, her parents arrange for her to marry a stranger, Hersch Grosfeld, who takes her away to Buenos Aires, where he forces her to work as a prostitute. Grosfeld is affiliated with the *Varsovia*, an infamous organized crime syndicate that operated from the 1860s to 1939, while changing its name to Zwi Migdal in 1927. It specialized in the trafficking of white women from Europe to Buenos Aires to sell as sex slaves.

We have seen how in *Santa*, the loss of a woman's virginity and consequently of her moral virtue and her identity are determined by a patriarchal construction that, in a strategy of power, confers to virginity an ethical value that masks the fact that marriage for a man is an act of possession anchored in the principle of private property.

Therefore, a wife shouldn't have been possessed by any other man. In the Spanish tradition, Fray Luis de León in *La perfecta casada* (1583) and Juan Luis Vives author of *Instrucción de la mujer cristiana* (1524) define virginity as a jewel women must protect.

Vives sets the following rules to defend such treasure:

- "Del cuidado que se ha de tener de la virginidad"
- "El mismo Dios no puede restituir la virginidad a quien la pierda"
- "Del cuidado que en la virgen se ha de tener en cuanto al cuerpo"
- "No han de beber vino, ni comer nada ardoroso o excitante"
- "Modestia del traje que conviene a la virgen"
- "Conveniencia del poco salir y de vivir en retiro absoluto"
- "La virgen retraída y silenciosa concebirá a Cristo en sus entrañas"
- "Cúbranse los pechos y la garganta"
- "Guárdese de reír sueltamente ni cacarear" (Vives, 53)

For Vives, a Christian woman's only moral virtue was chastity: "cuerpo cerrado y no tocado de varón". (53) Lucía Guerra explains Vives' comments on women's sexual repression in terms of hermetism: "La construcción patriarcal de la *virgo intacta* representada por la Virgen María posee, a nivel de la prescripción, la imagen del himen

no penetrado como signo seminal de una modalidad de la femineidad que se recluye y se domina a partir del hermetismo.” (*La mujer fragmentada*, 18). She adds that since marriage represented the opening of the hymen, chastity became the most desirable virtue for women who were consequently condemned to the restricted domestic space. (54) In the Middle Ages, this hermetism was even forced upon some women by means of the chastity belt: “Cinturón de castidad: Artilugio inventado por el hombre, alrededor del siglo XII y que, aplicado al bajo vientre y zona genital de la mujer, permitía por un pequeño orificio, la emisión de orina y/o sangre, pero impedía el acto sexual. (*Diccionario ideológico feminista*)” (53) This patriarchal view of women’s virginity, modesty and fidelity remained the same until the twentieth century with things only beginning to change in the nineteen sixties with the arrival on the market of the contraceptive “birth control pill”.

From a later and very much feminist perspective, Elsa Drucaroff strips the symbolism of virginity from its moral mask to give it its fundamental meaning. Notwithstanding the fact that Dina loses her virginity through rape, her intrinsic being (her intelligence, her creativity) doesn’t change; she remains the same person despite the fact that her hymen was torn apart. As Lucía Guerra states: “(...) el cuerpo es sólo el eje físico y concreto de una territorialidad simbólica que reafirma las estructuras de poder, insertas en una base económica que propicia la supremacía del sexo masculino.” (*La mujer fragmentada*, 14) It is nevertheless Dina’s own society that condemns her and views her as stained, invoking the likelihood that no other man will ever accept her. When Hersch Grosfeld comes along and doesn’t seem to mind her lack of virginity, she complies with her parents’ decision and marries him. On the ship,

she comes to realize that she knew, and that her parents also knew, who Hersch Grosfeld really was:

Porque lo otro que descubrió con claridad, junto con la razón por la que Hersch Grosfeld la llevaba a Buenos Aires, fue que ella había sabido desde el comienzo quién era ese hombre y qué quería, y que lo habían sabido también sus padres, igual que ella, como lo saben los imbéciles: sin palabras, sin escucharse, resueltos a tranquilizarse ... a tener los ojos cerrados mientras saltaban al abismo. (44)

In an article entitled "*El infierno prometido: una muestra de la constante relación entre literatura y sociedad*", Elsa Drucarof mentions that in spite of her characters' knowledge of the potential oppression that awaited them in Buenos Aires, they went there anyway and were, in fact, oppressed:

En una declaración dada en 2006 a Silvina Frieria, Elsa Drucaroff manifestó que el hecho de mostrar la conciencia que tenían las mujeres de su novela sobre su real destino en Buenos Aires, es un modo de acabar con el mito de la pobre inocente que fue vilmente engañada. Sin embargo, estar conscientes de su futura labor y la conformidad que los personajes demostraron frente a ésta, no acaba con su condición de oprimidas (Cardona Pueblo, 6)

Her Jewish husband, unscrupulously exploiting vulnerable women of his own race, views her purely as a commodity: "Sus ojos se posaban en Dina sin la menor emoción. El hombre la miraba igual que había mirado su tate a la cabra que había comprado en la feria de Markuszew." (34) His marriage to her is merely a business transaction: "Grosfeld se había casado con Dina como parte de una farsa, el pago de una compra." (62) Moreover, it facilitates their passage through customs upon their arrival in Buenos Aires. In the cabin of the transatlantic voyage that brings her to Buenos Aires, he makes her stand naked in front of him while he observes and appraises her body. She feels worse than when he penetrated her previously:

Esto era peor, algo nunca antes conocido, peor que lo que había ocurrido un rato antes, peor incluso que Andrei Koala (her raper). Porque ahora la mirada de Grosfeld se paseaba tranquila por ella como la caminata segura del conquistador por el territorio vencido, donde no quedan siquiera atisbos de la guerra en que los resistentes fueron masacrados, donde no hay amenaza alguna, urgencia alguna, un paseo por una tierra que ya no tiene voz, donde nada puede hablar porque no permanece nada humano con vida. (39)

Hersch is part of la *Varsovia*, that would eventually become the Zwi Migdal, a syndicate of several Jewish sex slave owners specialized in trafficking of “white” (Jewish) women. Rogelio Alanis writes the following about the Zwi Migdal, the human trafficking network that made Argentina infamous worldwide:

Para principios del siglo pasado la Argentina era una de las plazas más prestigiada en el negocio de trata. Ese honor se lo debemos a la Zwi Migdal ... Según las cifras más confiables, la Migdal llegó a disponer de alrededor de dos mil burdeles y se estimaba que unas cuatro mil mujeres trabajaban para más de 400 proxenetas... Ya a fines del siglo XIX se sabía que en el Café Parisien de calle Alvear al 3184 y en el Hotel Palestino se subastaban públicamente mujeres traídas desde Europa del este. Se trataba de jovencitas asediadas por la miseria, las persecuciones religiosas y la codicia o indiferencia de sus padres.” (“Zwi Migdal: Prostitución, rufianes judíos y anarquistas”, np)

Drucaroff describes a public sale of prostitutes in the back of café Parissien, (slightly different spelling from the real one) where they exhibit young women and put them up for auction. Every potential buyer can approach the women, touch them as slaves were touched in ancient times, and decide whether or not he wishes to buy them for his brothel. They are merely female bodies for sale:

El rematador hacía avanzar en ese momento a una de las mujeres de la fila.
- Nombre de guerra, Marianne. Tiene veintitrés años... Buena salud, bien alimentada, como podrán apreciar pronto - risotadas en el público -; trabaja sin protestar, resiste muchas horas. A ver la bata, Marianne (...)
La mujer se desnudó (...) Miraba a los hombres con mirada vacuna; a una indicación del rematador se dio vuelta para mostrar un culo

descomunamente ancho y redondo, que produjo en el público alguna exclamación festiva (...)

A invitación del martillero, algunos hombres subieron a examinar a la mujer o a su libreta sanitaria. Le hacían abrir la boca para mirar la dentadura, le pedían que mostrara la entrepierna y se agachaban a observar, seguramente buscaban chancros o ampollas sifilíticas. (106)

Drucaroff depicts how these Jewish men view women in general: “(...) tienen la psicología de animales domésticos... las esposas son inútiles como perros falderos y las rameras, valiosas como perros cazadores...” (108) Drucaroff describes in detail the criminal organization and its multiple connections with high level officials in the city, which make it imposible for prostitutes to denounce their pimps or to seek safety by running away:

meterse con la *Varsovia* no es meterse con el negocio de un grupo de cafishios. Es meterse, escuche lo que le digo, con buena parte de los que mandan en la Argentina, por no hablar de los ingresos legales del municipio de Buenos Aires y de cada ciudad, los ilegales de la policía, de los médicos, del Poder Judicial, de los legisladores...(...) Estoy seguro de que el gobierno polaco también recibe sus dinerillos por dejar salir a las pibas, y qué decirle cuando las que llegan tienen catorce años y documentos donde dice dieciocho... los cafishios tienen el apoyo de nuestra gloriosa Nación Argentina! (...) el Concejo y la policía prefieren que haya cafetos organizados que negocien y paguen coimas suculentas porque están “prohibidos”, y que la cana y las normas de regulación estrictas y molestas se encargan de que pocas chicas puedan arreglarse solas con su negocio, sin contar con que cuando alguna logra arreglarse, ahí le cae la policía y le hace la vida imposible. (171)

On the other hand, Drucaroff, from her feminist ideological perspective, elaborates her prostitute character as a figure that destabilizes phallogocentric paradigms. The prostitute, by “selling” or “renting out” her body, is simultaneously the merchant and the merchandise, which dismantles the clear binary structure between the object being sold and the seller in the capitalist system. By offering her body as merchandise, she finds herself in the position of “subject” in a commercial transaction.

During the sexual act, her body is a coveted object of pleasure, but additionally she also is a performing Other in charge of a specific performance, which simultaneously makes her a subject. “(...) había que ser amable y mimosa para que los clientes regresaran y hacer así más dinero (...) había que mostrar que les gustaba mucho lo que los clientes les hacían, diciéndolo en voz alta. “ (70) Dina takes initiatives to select her customers and to make her work as bearable as possible: “(...) fingía su orgasmo para ayudar a un hombre maloliente a que por fin tuviera el suyo...” (89) Therefore, the ontological distinction between subject and other is also destabilized. Furthermore, the notion of flesh offered by Jean-Paul Sartre is also destabilized and opens new questions: Is the flesh caressing another flesh lack of transcendence? What happens to that other-subject-body (Dina) when she falls in love with one of her customers?

Moreover, we wonder to what degree Dina is exclusively an object of pleasure, or if, breaking with parameters in place at the time, she transforms herself into a subject of pleasure and desire. This occurs in the novel with both Ceferino and Vittorio. With Ceferino, she discovers sexual pleasure for the first time and realizes that being with a customer can be enjoyable: “(...) algo tendría su miembro porque el cuerpo de Dina se estremeció con agrado cuando ingresó. Por primera vez en su vida, el tiempo que él estuvo adentro le pareció demasiado breve y lamentó que se terminara.” (115) With Vittorio, her pleasure reaches new heights: “(...) Dina no se asombró tanto por sentir placer, porque eso algunas veces le había pasado; lo inusual fue el fuego que le subió de pronto, sin aviso, desde el centro de su cuerpo, la sacudió con delicia y se fue.” (143) Sexual pleasure and penetration are described in the novel from a woman

writer's perspective who also creates a topography of the female body under the sadistic punishment of Doctor Tolosa:

Pegaba con fuerza pero se tomaba su tiempo. Cada tanto paraba, se acercaba a ella, le sacaba la mordaza y le ponía el pene en la boca. Apenas unos segundos, era un hombre de placeres refinados. Después, sistemático y concentrado, volvía a ajustar la mordaza para seguir pegando (...) Hasta que sí terminó. Los cincuenta latigazos, el ano sangrante, herido por el mango del rebenque, y sobre eso la otra violación, a esta altura la más benigna, sobre todo porque anunciaba el final. (202-203)

To pay a prostitute for a sexual service makes a man a “temporary customer” stripped from his identity and sharing with the other customers a common goal: sexual pleasure and a phallic penetration. The sexual act, perceived as a commercial transaction, transforms a man from “a rational subject superior to women” according to the patriarchal structure, into a coarse tin token. “También pensaba que, agradable o desagradable, el hombre pagaba igual y se transformaba al final del día, como todos, en lata.”⁶ (89) In contrast to the trafficking of bodies in the border region, here, the merchandise has agency and participates actively in the capitalist economy of exchange of objects for money with its consequent profit.

Repasaba su fortuna y sus destinos posibles: le convenía comprar joyas porque era lo más parecido a acumular dinero de ese país que la Varsovia permitía, pronto sería una mujer muy rica y seguramente llegaría a ser libre como Brania, a tener ella las llaves de las puertas y a pasear por la hermosa ciudad cuanto quisiera. (89)

There is no value added or surplus in a sexual act as there is when one sells a product for more money than the cost of its manufacture. The body of the prostitute is subject

⁶ In the brothel's system, Dina and Rosa are paid in tokens that they have to return to Brania who repays the equivalent in jewelry or other items after having subtracted the price of the room, board and clothing.

to other factors that make the market fluctuate: youth, beauty, culture, social sphere of the place where she practices her profession. Salomon cites that "(...) being cultured was a disguise that increased the value of the merchandise" and within the project of a liberal nation in Argentina, the European (civilization) was a priority against the indigenous (barbarism). (79)

Dina is the victim of human traffickers and has been locked inside a bedroom with a priori no opportunity to escape. The bedroom is inside the borders of the domestic space usually reserved for the women's world, according to patriarchal order and the place of the sacred family - nuclear basis of the nation. *The* brothel is nevertheless that site where men have extramarital sex - an activity conceived at the time as an excess of conventional sexuality.⁷ The binary opposition of the public and the private is thus destabilized. Even though the sexual act takes place in a private bedroom, the body that is sold for a certain amount of time, is at the service of the public - passing customers, usually strangers who come from the street. The public invades the "private" space that is not even really private due to the fact that Dina has no say in the decision making process. This ambiguity is also reiterated at the level of the nation since the brothel and prostitution itself is legal and illegal at the same time.

Drucaroff's discourse changes drastically from Gamboa's in choosing a character who accepts her fate in a pragmatic way, choosing between the lesser of two ordeals: on one hand, prostitution in Buenos Aires, which entails benefitting from beautiful lingerie and plentiful good food, and on the other hand the extremely hard

⁷ According to the 19th century society, men were naturally endowed with a sexual drive far more intense than in women whose sexuality only served the purpose of procreation and therefore women's main role was to engender the nation. It is precisely this notion of male sexuality the one that has justified prostitution from the very beginning.

living conditions in a poverty ridden and gray Poland. During an interview by Rayén

Daiana Pozzi and Rocío Celeste Fit, Elsa Drucaroff said the following:

Con lo que gana en un día su familia polaca podría vivir un mes; estamos en 1927, tiempos del peso fuerte argentino. En esas circunstancias, ¿no es la prostitución una salida económica posible? Como escritora, dejo que fluyan preguntas sobre los proyectos de vida o las situaciones en las que puede estar una mujer sean o no políticamente correctas. (“Género y revisión del campo literario. Conversación con Elsa Drucaroff”, 172)

Moreover, Drucaroff believes that the younger generation of feminist writers don't write systematically about gender with the perspective of “transgression”, as did the previous generation:

Ya no es preciso exhibir y cuestionarse la propia condición de mujer. En este sentido, sentir la escritura con consciente perspectiva de género como transgresión fue una tarea sobre todo de las generaciones anteriores. La perspectiva de género en las escritoras jóvenes es espontánea, ni siquiera es en general intencionada. (“Género y revisión del campo literario. Conversación con Elsa Drucaroff”, 174)

Dina reclaims her freedom three months into her ordeal thanks to the support of a customer, Vittorio, an Italian immigrant and anarchist, with whom she falls in love, and who persuades her that if her body was stained, she as a person is not; what happened to her did not affect her in an ontological manner. She was rather the victim of a society that did not protect her:

(...) no había nacido para ser puta, no estaba destinada a perderse en Buenos Aires como pensaba su madre. Ni para ser puta ni para ser regenta... La culpa de la escena del bosque era, decía Vittorio, de ese polaco canalla que la había violado, de los polacos que mantenían a su pueblo en la miseria y el desprecio, de la religión judía, opio de su pueblo, de los prejuicios religiosos, de un mundo donde los hombres oprimían a las mujeres y las castigaban por los crímenes que ellos mismos cometían. (188)

With the realization that neither rape nor prostitution has deprived her of her intrinsic value, she develops agency, a belief in a life beyond prostitution, a belief in freedom, and consequently she escapes the fate that others had decided for her.

The novel has a historical dimension that gives the reader a variety of perspectives on Argentina's society in the 1920s. Vittorio and Godofredo, El Loco, who both help Dina, represent anarchism, a very important movement at the time. The judge Leandro Tolosa, who belongs to "La Liga Patriótica", represents the catholic right.

Cardona writes:

Los años veinte en Argentina constituyen una época de conservadurismo político y pretendida pureza moral, pero al margen de este imaginario oficial, surgieron posiciones contrarias que promovían la completa transformación del sistema social y político establecido. No es casual entonces que dentro de la novela la liberación de Dina haya venido del lado de los anarquistas. Vittorio, el joven de origen italiano integrante de la FORA, es quien hace caer en cuenta a Dina que su trabajo como prostituta es denigrante, no por una cuestión moral, sino por una cuestión de explotación laboral. Este personaje encarna así una perspectiva diferente sobre el tema: mientras algunos consideraban la prostitución como una muestra de perdición y de degradación moral por ser un asunto de carácter sexual, para Vittorio y quizás para ciertos grupos sociales de la época, se trataba de una muestra más de explotación obrera, no muy distinta de la que padecen los trabajadores de una fábrica. (9-10)

According to Cardona, the social value of the novel resides in its unveiling of an unofficial history: "Entre *El Infierno prometido* y la sociedad a la que nos remite, hay una relación de reclamo, de ajuste de cuentas, en tanto que se actualizan hechos que la historia oficial se resiste a registrar." (12)

Solomon adds another dimension to the historical interpretation of the novel: the prostitute as a means of rewriting Argentina's history. This novel has a very recognizable start, similar to *Santa*, and typical of the Naturalist novel, where girls who

transgress their gender roles are guilty and deserve whatever plight befalls them. But what were Naturalist details in *Santa*, written in the beginning of the twentieth century, are now historical details, some seventy years later. Solomon states: “(...) the novels appropriate the “History” of prostitution by rewriting selected events and characters of national records in ways that “feel” historical principally because they crib from Naturalism’s discourse of prostitution. “ (91-92). But Solomon adds that “(t)he contemporary historical fiction of white slavery alters forms to fit and define the contemporary meaning of ethnic-national Jewish-Argentine identity.” (96) To explain this statement Solomon focuses mainly on alterations of real life figures, such as the police chief Alsogaray, who appears much less anti-Semitic in the novel than he was in real life.

Dina’s life turns around thanks to the assistance of Vittorio and El Loco, and together they represent the change in Argentina’s landscape; the racially diverse, Europeanized Argentina that Sarmiento had started to create in the nineteenth century. Through cultural adaptation, Dina becomes a symbol of Jewish-Argentinian identity, accepted by a new type of citizen, of mixed origin, with whom she will form a new and collective “nosotros”, and rejected by another, represented by the sadistic and anti-Semitic judge. According to Solomon, these historical fictions “help create an origin myth of contemporary Argentine-Jewishness as a good faith collaboration between Jews and gentiles, Argentines and immigrants, at the height of organized prostitution in the 1920s.” (98)

The Argentinian State is represented on one hand by the revision of historical police commissioner Alsogaray, who tries with limited results to help prostitutes. His

real life historical figure is supposed to have been very anti-semitic, which does not correspond with Drucaroff's character. On the other hand, as said before, the reactionary nation is represented by the fictional sadist and anti-Semitic judge Tolosa who vehemently opposes changes brought to his country with the arrival of immigrants. Solomon explains how the degenerate and lying "prostitute" from the hygienist perspective of the Naturalist format becomes the degenerate and lying "Jew" in a more historical context. Dina's beautiful facial features not only conceal her degeneracy, which is assumed by the fact that she is a prostitute, but moreover her Jewishness, that is a menace to his country.

She doesn't even have a Jewish face, she even hides her race with those falsely angelic eyes and that small nose, so different from those of her race...A woman like that, on the loose, is a danger for society, a center of infection against which men can't defend themselves... The physiognomic traits of the Jew not only failed to expose her race but even concealed maliciously her degenerate temperament. (Solomon, 108-109)

He is infatuated with Dina and hates himself for it, but can relieve his contradictory feelings and guilt by punishing her and subjecting her to his whippings and other sadistic acts. Her escape with the help of an anarchist, drives him mad and, obsessed with finding her, he wants to disfigure her face to set free and show to everyone "the Hebrew serpent curled up" underneath it.(Solomon, 109) Solomon states it in the following way: "The most potent representation of the political machine remains that of a sex-crazed Judge mobilizing every resource of the state in order to satisfy a perverse psychosexual desire to inflict pain and punish Jewish women for attracting upstanding gentiles." (Solomon, 121)

This novel tells the story of a young woman, who by the fact of having been raped is depreciated by her own society and sent off to Buenos Aires where she will become a prostitute. Despite her physical stain, her torn hymen, she will learn that her intrinsic value remains intact and through agency, strength and action combined, she will change her fate. Drucaroff portrays at first an existing naturalistic view embedded in phallogocentrism in which the moral virtue of a woman is associated with the untouched, closed hymen, only to condemn it later and unveil her feminist approach focusing more on the prostitute's agency, the antithesis of the virgen Mary, instead of on the despicable plight of human trafficking. Solomon also explains how some contemporary writers such as Elsa Drucaroff, while fictionalizing prostitutes of the beginning of the twentieth century, "rewrite" Argentina's History.

The Female Body as a Metaphor of the Nation

Lucía Guerra's novel *Muñeca brava* (1993) describes how prostitutes, after having been victimized during a raid by the military in 1985, politicize and enter the resistance. The novel is divided into three chapters. Each one starts with the voice of an agonizing woman whose body is the metaphor for a suffocating Chile that has been oppressed for twelve years under a cruel dictatorship. (11) Lucía Guerra's use of a woman's body, describing its physical and moral suffering due to the military's abuses, including rape, torture and even death, heightens the reader's emotions from the very start.

Mi cabellera ondea en el aire nauseabundo de las tumbas abiertas de la libertad mientras el golpe regular de las botas militares me pulveriza las vísceras, viola los últimos resquicios de mi útero despedazado y la

sangre me corre por las piernas manchando el territorio virgen de los ventisqueros australes. (11)

Her repeated use of “yo soy” focuses on the identification of that tormented female voice and body, who is a symbol of Chile - a happy paradise according to the National Anthem - now subjected to the yoke of the military: “Yo soy pura alma mutilada vomitando la desesperanza en lo que fue la patria feliz del Edén.” (12)

At the start of the plot, Guerra depicts a group of prostitutes preparing themselves for the coming night in “la calle de la noche”, a “red-light” neighborhood of Santiago. Her terminology focuses on the subordinate position of the prostitute in a social system that exploits her and commodifies her body:

A las ocho en punto, las mujeres enjauladas (...), se acercan a los balcones para exhibirse a los transeúntes que rondan por la calle. Cada una posee un espacio asignado por la empresaria quien, en el momento de finiquitar el contrato, delimitó aquel fragmento del cuerpo que representaba la mercancía de mayor valor (...) Tras los barrotos, caderas y piernas hacen una fugaz mímica sexual (...) (13)

Paula Daniela Bianchi’s definition of the term prostitution in “Mujeres bravas: representaciones de la violencia en *Muñeca brava* de Lucía Guerra“ describes the stigmatization suffered by these women:

(...) prostitución enmarcada en la concepción de un cuerpo femenino — excluido y estigmatizado— sometido a condiciones de violencia, precariedad y vulnerabilidad extremas donde éste se vuelve el objeto en el que se inscribe su pérdida como sujeto y alcanza valor como mercancía establecida para el intercambio, uso y abuso. (154)

The oppression that persists behind the commodification of the prostitute’s body is also observed by Bladimir Ruiz in his article titled “De señoras y putas: las mujeres malas en la narrativa de Lucía Guerra”:

Desde sus primeras páginas aparece este "personaje colectivo" y el campo semántico creado por la terminología usada en esta parte introductoria, palabras y frases como "mujeres enjauladas", "exhibirse", "vitrina carcelaria", "cuerpos mutilados" y "muñecas" (11-13) refieren en un nivel denotativo a las mujeres que desde los balcones y ventanas de sus cuartos muestran sus cuerpos (o aquellas partes sexualizadas de sus cuerpos) para tentar a sus posibles clientes; en un nivel connotativo refiere a un sistema de opresión y objetificación, y a la vez, como cuerpos incompletos, intervenidos, sugiere violencia. (133)

As a counter-point, the figure of the dictator, (the "Gran Benefactor de la República"), is presented as the sole owner of power. He defines himself as the savior who has brought "el orden y el progreso en esta nación que parecía haberse perdido, para siempre, en las fauces del desorden y el pecado".(17) He assigns Colonel Arreola a mission to study the mystery behind the prostitutes described by him as "(...) estas mujeres inmundas que venden su cuerpo y se dejan hacer cochinas (...) mujeres tan horrendamente pecadoras (...) vidas malignamente dedicadas a los pecados de la carne." (17-20). Thus, we find the sempiternal patriarchal dichotomy of the good and the bad woman, epitomized here in its most extreme version by the military. This identical polarisation is valid for Colonel Arreola, who is convinced that "las mujeres no son más que vientre y vagina, dos fragmentos de cuerpo que las destinan, desde el mismo nacimiento, a ser madres o prostitutas - ambas igualmente atadas a un placer masculino que, en ellas, se transforma en sublime procreación o en pecado deleznable." (46)

As a parody of phallogocentric rationalism, Arreola meticulously uses a logical method in designing torture techniques as well as the course of his own life. Thus, after classifying women in different categories, he decides his own wife should possess the qualities of that type of women he has classified as "Sumisa y buena madre" (31):

(...) las muchachas que fumaban eran descaradas y rebeldes en potencia; tacos altos y faldas ajustadas correspondían a las futuras adúlteras, collares de perlas eran indicio de mujer gastadora, el exceso de maquillaje escondía siempre huellas de acné o alguna cicatriz y la nariz de ventanillas anchas denotaba, por lo general, una sensualidad excesiva que era propia de los hombres y que, en el caso de las mujeres, indicaba una desviación pecaminosa. Antes de encontrarla, él ya sabía que su futura esposa debía usar blusas de encajes en el cuello, zapatos de taco mediano, faldas plisadas y un anillo de oro delgado con un pequeño rubí en el centro. (31)

His detailed classification of women written on a notebook after an observation intended to be scientific is parodically alluding to the patriarchal cultural practice of defining women, in the subaltern position of an Other, as an act of territorialization. As Lucía Guerra states in *La mujer fragmentada*:

(...) Si por una parte, la sobrevaloración de lo masculino se nutre de la devaluación de lo femenino, esta sustentación del poder patriarcal se fundamenta también en un proceso esencial de descripción y definición del elemento subordinado. Adscribir significados a lo femenino es, en esencia, una modalidad de la territorialización, un acto de posesión a través del lenguaje realizado por un Sujeto masculino que intenta perpetuar la subyugación de un Otro. (14)

Thus, Lucía Guerra shows that it is by prescribing behaviors, putting frontiers to women's femininity and sexuality, that men acquire a sense of their own masculinity, based on the exertion of power. In *Muñeca brava*, Colonel Arreola explains how he suffocated the spontaneous signs of sexual arousal his wife showed at the beginning of their marriage: "Al año de casados, dos veces, ella intentó mover las caderas, pero él, con movimiento presto, la detuvo sujetándola por los muslos mientras urgía el descenso de su propio orgasmo." (31) This manipulation of his wife's body evinces, in a literal way, the fact that the body, in general, is the site of behavioral inscriptions that

correspond to a particular ideology within a power structure (Michel Foucault, 2006, and Judith Butler, 2004).

At the same time, as in the case of Drucaroff, Guerra explores the female body, creating a new topography and a new vision of phallic penetration as illustrated by the scene where Alda, with her eyes covered by a blindfold, is raped by Colonel Arreola:

Las manos de dedos finos empiezan a desabrocharle la blusa, hacen saltar el gancho del sostén y unos labios se le prenden a los pezones mientras ahora las manos han entrado por debajo del calzón...(...) la empuja de espaldas sobre el lecho, le arranca la falda y el calzón que caen al suelo junto con los zapatos. Las manos, en un ávido frenesí, le estrujan los senos mientras la marea (of his breathing) se le instala pesadamente en el cuello. Un movimiento rápido libera el bulto de piedra que ella ha sentido contra su bajo vientre y los dedos le abren con fuerza, los labios de la vagina que ceden a la penetración de la carne erecta. (*Muñeca brava*, 99-100)

Alda, the main character of the novel, is one of the prostitutes raided by the military and locked up in a concentration camp to serve as a case study (in which torture is not excluded). Transposing the questioning usually used with political prisoners, Coronel Arreola in his scientific zeal to investigate prostitutes, interrogates Alda. In a funny and sarcastic way, she comments on the proliferation of names assigned to a prostitute. In contrast with the brief etymological definition Arreola has written in his research notes “ramera (del latin ramus, miembro viril)... Puta (Del ant. latín putida, hedionda)” (*Muñeca brava*, 34) Alda’s long list is a testimony of the linguistic proliferation of the forbidden in our culture, (mujer mala, mujer pública, mujer de la calle, mujer de mala vida y mujer de vida alegre, patinadora, pecadora, compañera de la noche, proletaria de la noche, vendedora de los placeres nocturnos,

flor tostada de maiz, chey, flor de pecado, juguete de pasión, meretriz, ramera..., prostituta, puta) (*Muñeca brava*, 40-45)

On the other hand, prostitution is defined in the novel as an ancestral practice in the margins of History: “En la rutina ancestral de la mercancía de los cuerpos, se reitera un eterno presente - flor nocturna y milenaria que extiende sus pétalos difuminando los vértices de reinados y batallas.” (*Muñeca brava*, 14) At the periphery of History, the prostitute sells her body in a praxis that despite modernity and other significant changes in History, remains the same.

This marginality ends when one of them, Débora, is cold-bloodedly murdered by the military: because of that action, the remaining prostitutes enter History and gain agency by becoming actively involved in the country’s resistance to the regime.

Era como si el espejo que, durante tantos siglos, había repetido, en forma cíclica, los semblantes de hetairas y concubinas milenarias, se hubiera fragmentado dejando, entre sus trizaduras, un vacío oscuro que no permitía ningún enlace con los círculos de lo ancestral y que, de manera simultánea, en su calidad de espacio borrado, ahora daba a luz una brecha que se insertaba en el otro tiempo, horizontal e irrepetible, de los sucesos históricos. (*Muñeca brava*, 72-73)

By overcoming their isolation, they find in fact a new meaning to their lives and new roles through active political participation in their nation.

The Woman’s Body as an Implement of Resistance

In the same way that Guerra uses the female body to portray the rape of Chile by the military regime, or to depict the commodification of the prostitute, she describes the prostitutes’ agency evolving around the female body, alive or dead as in the case of Débora. The killing of Débora and the absence of her discarded body is what generates

the creation of an “animita“ that becomes the soul of the prostitutes’ community. In Chile and other Latin American countries, according to the belief of popular culture, the fact that the victim suffered a violent death endows him/her with the power to intervene in Heaven in favor of those who pray for him /her asking for help. The symbolic tomb of this sacralized figure is adorned with flowers and lit candles and among the poor, he/she represents hope amidst injustice and misery. (Oreste Plath. L’animita)

When the prostitutes discover the biblical meaning of the name Débora, a female judge and prophet of God, who initiated the resistance of her people against an abusive king and his army, a common movement of resistance arises. “Como si el cadáver ausente de Débora fuera un útero en multiples partos rabiosos, el epitafio comenzó a engendrar frases que rellenaron los surcos desteñidos de la pared: “dictador de mierda“, “más cruel que una hiena hambrienta“, “eres más malo que el demonio“, “mataríai a tu misma madre si fuera comunista“. (82-83) Bladimir Ruiz states:

Santa y puta, Débora se convierte en mártir que posibilita la identificación y la desestabilización de los valores canónicos del patriarcado...La canonización propuesta de Débora (de puta a santa) inicia el proceso definitivo de inversión de valores asignado a la figura de la prostituta. El cuerpo de la prostituta se politiza. En efecto, el epitafio escrito por una de las mujeres en la tumba simbólica de la prostituta asesinada por los militares (“Débora, no sabemos dónde está tu cuerpo, pero aquí está tu alma”) comienza a ser intervenido y expandido y al texto inicial se le van agregando paulatinamente frases cargadas de odio en contra del sistema represivo dictatorial. (136)

Bianchi adds that the prostitutes “(...) se transformarán en representaciones de cuerpos activos de la historia que transitan.“ (4)

In the third part of her novel, Guerra shows how after twelve years of oppression, people from all layers of society slowly stand up after the terrible blow that left them paralyzed, and show a new solidarity; a movement that foresees the light: “Presiento la luz. Esbozando una sonrisa, torno mi cabeza hacia la cordillera y diviso las nieves eternas teñidas por los primeros rayos del sol.” (114) That solidarity includes the prostitutes, who become allies in a common fight against terror and death. In allying with Alda and her younger colleague Meche, Doña Leonor transgresses her moral and spatial boundaries that require her, as a decent upper class woman and mother, to remain in her domestic space:

Qué nos van a importar las reglas de la moral cuando está reinando la muerte (...) Ustedes se ganan la vida siendo prostitutas y de acuerdo a la moral, cometen muchos pecados todas las noches. Pero no debemos olvidar tampoco que las leyes de la moral las han hecho los hombres, no las mujeres. Y yo, como mujer, le digo que no importa que ustedes sean prostitutas, sobre todo cuando hay que luchar por mantener la vida. (*Muñeca brava*, 80)

Alda and Meche agree to work with señora Leonora; they will receive and transmit messages for the resistance. This agency in History and against the stereotypes of the prostitute produces a metamorphosis in Alda, who gains a new inner strength and feels her new commitment as an awakening, an excitement in terms of feeling her life becoming meaningful. Bladimir Ruiz states that “(l)a solidaridad, primero entre el grupo de las prostitutas, y después hacia otros grupos marginados, dispara en Alda un proceso de revisión y concientización que le permite descubrir los móviles que motivan las acciones personales y muchas veces grupales.” (137) Alda will use her body as a tool to gain power over Colonel Arreola, who raped her, and communicate to the resistance the information she gathers during their encounters. Her body is no longer a

piece of merchandise; the political use of her body has granted her a real sense and meaning to her existence:

Por fin al cuerpo se le da el uso que le corresponde (...) sus piernas que, algún día terminarán encerradas en una tumba, ya han adquirido una razón de ser, del mismo modo como sus pechos que siempre supo lucir haciéndole las alforzas precisas a cada escote y a cada sostén, se integrarán con dignidad al polvo de los muertos (...) su propio cuerpo que sólo le había servido para ganarse el pan, ahora sirve el propósito de ayudar a los perseguidos. (*Muñeca brava*, 127)

As Bianchi mentions: “El cuerpo en *Muñeca brava* será un instrumento de resistencia, un territorio de disputa, un lugar de deseo y elecciones a pesar de estar atrapado en redes de violencia cruenta...” (3) Lucía Guerra herself states the following in a conversation with Gloria Gálvez-Carlisle:

Muy conscientemente quise en mi novela borrar el estereotipo de la pecadora [...] y, de adrede, nunca las puse a ellas 'trabajando'; el prostíbulo es, más bien, un hogar donde se entrelazan vidas de mujeres que culminan unidas en la solidaridad absoluta. En este trasfondo real e histórico, ubico a Alda en un proceso de toma de conciencia que la transforma en agente de la Historia. Quise hacer de ella un yo o 'Self' marginado que gradualmente se integra en la resistencia por azar. (220)

Thus, Guerra describes in detail how Alda's resistance, in which she becomes involved by accident, develops in a very different way from that of more educated young women who willingly integrated into revolutionary organizations: “Tanto el acceso a la educación como participación política de estas jóvenes urbanas les abrieron la entrada al espacio público y a nuevos discursos que originaron a una nueva mujer latinoamericana, a partir de la figura de la revolucionaria.” (Bernardita Llanos, 19) In the next chapter of this dissertation, we will see how the body of these militants will be used as a weapon in the frame of State violence during the dictatorships of the Cono

Sur. In her new reality, Alda becomes “Muñeca brava” in opposition to the symbolic figure of the *muñeca* as a sign of traditional femininity equated to passivity, object of desire, adornment, and a trivial and not intellectual attitude towards the world. As Bladimir Ruiz asserts, the novel “re-semantiza el cuerpo de la prostituta... La novela, al igual que *Más allá de las máscaras*, propone estrategias de resistencia centradas en la solidaridad “desde abajo” y la subversión de ideologías dominantes a partir de procesos de resignificación.” (137-140)

On the other hand, Guerra makes a parody of the military as a symbol of hyperbolic masculinity. She also mocks the Gran Benefactor by making a caricature of his stuttering speeches and ridicules Colonel Arreola’s obsession with order, planning and obedience (in a parody of Latin American Positivism). To further undermine the military, she adds the counter-text of witchcraft and clowns who, as much as the prostitutes themselves, are outcasts, condemned by the official system in power. Martina, the older prostitute, who works in the kitchen talks to the ghost of *señora Rosa* - a mapuche curandera who gives witchcraft instructions so that Alda obtains the unconditional passion of Colonel Arreola. Ultimately, while Arreola believes that men have a “glorioso destino (que) les está cifrado por haber sido los inventores del conocimiento y de las armas, de todo aquello que se erige verticalmente hacia las alturas...” (*Muñeca brava*, 46), he will instead become Alda’s victim. As Gloria Gálvez-Carlisle states: “Con una mordacidad demoledora 'poder, método, orden, lógica falocéntrica (epítome de lo masculino, según la ideología dominante), será menospreciado, ridiculizado y finalmente vencido por el desorden, intuición, hechicería y erotismo femeninos’.” (218)

The defeat of masculinity is underlined by the overthrow of the dictator in a dialectical movement of History. The final words of Julieta at the end of the novel (“A empellones se hace la Historia, compañeras”) implies that the death of Alda has not been in vain.

Apart from cancelling the patriarchal traits attributed to prostitutes, Guerra, from a feminist perspective, creates a community of women as a counter-text of the nation governed by masculine hegemony. This community is united by a solidarity that erases both social classes and ethnic differences.

Bodies in Capture

Both in the case of *El infierno prometido* and *Muñeca brava*, the leitmotif of the prostitute is elaborated within the larger context of the nation and the authors, well-aware of the wide intertextuality regarding the prostitute in literature, deconstruct the traditional meaning of virginity, masculinity and the prostitute stereotype.

Que raro que me llame Guadalupe (2008), by Myriam Laurini, is presented as the testimonial account of a marginalized poor prostitute in a discourse devoid of literary sophistication.

Guadalupe, her “nombre de guerra” being Bere, is a prostitute who is accused of three murders; that of her infant son, her father, and a young trafficked girl. She is in prison and tries to persuade her lawyer that she’s innocent. She uses a colloquial language, an unstructured and contradictory monologue, showing to what degree she is alienated, barely able to make a distinction between right and wrong, and incapable of any emotion. She describes her son’s fall as following: “El bebé se cayó solito de la

mesa, se cayó de cabeza y se la rompió . Yo no lo empujé, ni lo tiré; él solito por su propia cuenta se echó un clavado y se partió la cabeza. Sonó crac, igualito que si hubiera caído un melón." (9) Some time later, she admits that she is guilty of killing her son, but without witnesses or proof, she believes that she cannot be prosecuted.

Bere's reasoning shows how her experience of the brothel, with all its atrocities, has become a normalcy; cocaine, abuse, incest... Her mother, a prostitute, her father, the procurer, and also the father of her infant child, are her only moral compasses along with the fifteen older prostitutes of the "hotel". Bere's body has never belonged to her and in order to survive and become the favorite of her father she started working as a prostitute at a very young age: "Soy puta de nacimiento. Al haber nacido hija de una puta, a fuerzas me tuve que hacer puta desde el mismo día en que vi el mundo." (9) The title of the novel *Que raro que me llamo Guadalupe* shows us how Bere is in fact the counter text of the Virgen de Guadalupe, who is the Mexican Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus Christ in the Catholic religion, and therefore, symbol of maternity, whereas in Mexico, she is one of the symbols of the Nation.

Bere's father, el Puroloco is the masculine figure of power. The prostitutes are his capital; he's the owner of the hotel and the procurer, the pimp, of these women whose bodies are merchandise for sale... and he castigates them when they don't perform well enough. He has three men helping him in managing "El Universo" and in deceiving young girls in order to attract them to the hotel. In addition to the prostitutes, there are six very young girls who are trafficked and locked up in a hidden space in the back of the hotel, the "Kinder". These children, some eight years old, are sold as "special service" to a limited clientele of the hotel, the regular well-to-do customers,

such as the politicians. These men fulfill their more obscure and shameful desires on these small vulnerable and subordinate bodies, exercising their culturally assimilated masculinity that translates into the expression of violence and power; they dominate these bodies like some colonize a territory. Paul Daniela Bianchi mentions the representation of the body of Jacqueline, a very young girl victim of trafficking:

La representación de su cuerpo se construye en el relato no como sujeto sino como un objeto ambiguo –de deseo y de rechazo – del que se obtienen ganancias. Es un cuerpo definido como territorio para poder ser colonizado (Segato 39), es un cuerpo confiscado, silenciado, violado y finalmente asesinado. Un cuerpo en relación de subalternidad, anónimo. Es usado y abusado sin el consentimiento del otro (Segato 35). (Escenas del cuerpo violentado. Representaciones de la violence en dos escenas de la literature ‘prostitucional’ latinoamericana, 3)

Customers assault, rape, and in rare occasions kill, without consequences but for the money they pay to have the body disappear. Bere narrates how Jacqueline was found in the Kinder after the visit of a customer

Jacqueline estaba tirada en un diván, los ojos abiertos y la mirada inmóvil, la boca cerrada con cinta adhesiva (...) los diminutos senos repletos de heridas delgadas y profundas, heridas de la hoja de afeitar, el vientre, los brazos, las piernas con quemaduras de cigarro, y sangre, mucha sangre, demasiada sangre, toda la sangre que encerraba un cuerpo de doce años (...) El excremento, los orines, la sangre de la niña. El vómito del ayudante. Los meados del asesino sobre el rostro de la víctima, capricho final, rúbrica del crimen. (101)

Apart from this crude description of a dead female body, Laurini inserts a discourse of the body from a feminine perspective, as in the case of giving birth - a blank space in literature written by men:

Parir no fue fácil, creí morir, se me abrió toda la carne, parecía que me estaban retorciendo las entrañas con tenazas calientes. Me tapaban la boca con toallas para que mis alaridos no espantaran a la clientela, me hacían morder trapos, la comadrona me empujaba la panza para abajo pero el muy puto no quería salir. Por fin salió después de horas y lloró y no paró de llorar.

Quedé con la carne cosida, con hilo y aguja de coser botones, y muchos dolores. (26)

Perversion, excess of power, and the abject are crudely presented in *Que raro que me llame Guadalupe* in a text that speaks for itself and intends to inscribe the darkest side of prostitution in the lower sectors of society. Guadalupe has only had one horizon in her life: to be a prostitute and as such, her body and her self are owned by Puroloco - a degraded Father figure. She is also condemned to live in a poor environment and to witness the atrocity of children being raped and killed. No redemption is possible, no exit.

Conclusion

The figure of the prostitute in Latin American fiction has been elaborated in diverse ways. From a masculine perspective, in *Santa*, masculine domination stigmatizes the prostitute's body that is "fated to be destroyed" (Solomon, 106). In the 1960s and early 1970s, writers of the Latin American Boom use the leitmotif of the prostitute to explore parody and the grotesque in a denunciation of the inadequacies of the nation as in *Pantaleón y las visitadoras* while *El lugar sin límites* destabilizes the notion of gender. *El infierno prometido* and *Muñeca Brava* present yet a different elaboration, now from a feminist perspective that explores a topography of the female body and, at the same time, is a contestatory statement about masculinity and patriarchal power. *Que raro que me llame Guadalupe*, in a more pessimistic note, narrates child prostitution and human trafficking, the extreme experience of alienation and destruction of the body that we will develop further in the third chapter. In torture, violence on the female body is represented more as a cultural signifier than as a sexual

release; the woman's body being a battlefield before becoming a showcase of masculine domination.

CHAPTER 3: TORTURED BODIES

Our stream was killed,
torn away by its roots,
what remains is just a hole
half dirt and half mud.

Alicia Partnoy, *The Little School* (105)



Blind by Raquel Partnoy in "Lost (and Found) in Translation - Potomac Review -

Montgomery College

Historical Context

The Spanish Conquest, as an official coercive and punitive power operating hand in hand with the Catholic Church, used torture in a brutal way in Latin America. It mainly targeted the non-baptized population; the Indians and later the Africans who had been brought to the Americas against their will. In *Crimen de tortura*, Daniel Rafecas describes torture in colonial times:

(...) la tortura (...) fue ciertamente impuesta de un modo brutal e ilimitado, enmarcada en una empresa criminal de inmensas proporciones, a la que se llegó merced a la completa deshumanización de aquellas poblaciones - traficadas *por cabeza*, en un status apenas superior al del ganado -, motivada en la avidez de riqueza de los conquistadores (...) “buscaban (...) el oro, y no contentos con eso, a los indios que capturaban vivos los desgarraban con cruelísimos tormentos para que indicasen cómo estaba escondido el tesoro del oro (...) a cuántos indios, con la marca del hierro encendido en la frente, aquellos cruelísimamente despedazaron?” (45)

Thousands of men, women, and children were taken from their native Africa and transported to the Colonies where they were exploited under the most inhumane conditions. “(...) se los consideraba naturalmente como delincuentes y en el trato que se les otorgó en la mayoría de las regiones de América fueron los azotes, la horca o el cepo, para las mínimas transgresiones o faltas.” (45) Although the slave trade was abolished by the British Crown in 1807, it was not officially banned in Argentina until 1840, first through a treaty, and later, by the Constitution in 1853. (Slavery was abolished throughout the Americas by 1886.) In Argentina, a statute enacted on May 21, 1813 had previously prohibited torture but nevertheless,

tampoco sepultó su empleo aquella abolición formal de la tortura, en tanto institución dirigida más que nada a infundir el terror de Estado y al encarnizamiento contra enemigos políticos y extraños a la comunidad (...) Así la tortura como método de obtención de confesiones pasó a ser

empleada de un modo ciertamente clandestino pero muy difundido en otras instituciones que emergieron y se consolidaron precisamente para esta época: las agencias policiales, que fueron colocadas bajo la supervisión del poder político y dotadas de facultadas de investigación criminal, en el marco de las cuales la tortura subsistió con comodidad, en no pocos casos inducida por motivaciones políticas. (Rafecas, 49-50)

In the twentieth century, among the many Latin American democracies that fell victim to authoritarian regimes were Chile and Argentina; Chile in 1924 and 1925, Argentina in 1930, and later, when Juan Perón was overthrown in 1955. During the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s many additional countries endured the military dictatorships of Cold War Latin America, all of which had torture as a common denominator. (Rafecas, 50-51 and *The Chile Reader*, 259) The military justified repression as necessary to stop chaos and guerrilla activity, and state sponsored violence was seen as the single best way to assure political stability.

No fue con las herramientas del ejercicio de poder punitivo formal que el régimen autoritario en cuestión llevó a cabo tales crímenes contra los que consideraba sus enemigos políticos, sino que fue a través de un premeditado ejercicio masivo de poder punitivo ilegal, de quienes consideraban sus enemigos, metodología que fue mantenida en secreto por todos los medios posibles y que, como todo ejercicio de violencia estatal liberada de las sujeciones del Estado de derecho, degeneró en forma inmediata en terrorismo de Estado (...) el poder auténtico comienza donde empieza el secreto.” (Rafecas, 54)

In *The Body in Pain*, Elaine Scarry comments that it is because of their intrinsic fragility that certain political regimes use torture as a central part of their governance: “It is, of course, precisely because the reality of that power is so highly contestable, the regime so unstable, that torture is being used.” (27) In Foucaultian terms, we can talk about military bio-powers put in place through torture. These authoritarian regimes have left a legacy of “military abuse of human rights, free-market economic policies, and the legal

marginalization of the Left.” (*The Chile Reader*, 434) They were backed by the United States’s anti-Communist foreign policy that wanted to ‘extirpate the cancer’ of Marxism and end Soviet and Cuban influence in (...) the western hemisphere.” (*The Chile Reader*, 437-438)

In Chile, on September 11, 1973, a military junta overthrew Salvador Allende’s Popular Unity government. In the ensuing weeks, thousands of people “were taken from their homes, classrooms, offices, factories or farms, even from the streets in full daylight, and were summarily detained with no notice to friends or family of where they were being held or on what charges.” (*The Chile Reader*, 435) Some of these people were taken to sport stadiums or secret detention centers and were tortured for weeks or months before being either released or executed. In Chile, the Valech Commission determined that more than 38,000 people were imprisoned and tortured and more than 3,000 were eventually “disappeared”. “Chilean military and security forces borrowed techniques such as disappearance and torture from other regional authoritarian regimes such as Brazil, a process facilitated by officers’ shared experiences at U.S. training centers for foreign officers in Panama and the United States and the exchange of experts in interrogation techniques.” (437) Some 200,000 Chileans went into exile during the military dictatorship. The dictatorship, under General Augusto Pinochet’s rule, lasted seventeen years, until 1990, the year of transition to civilian democracy. In the years that followed, not all of the highest ranked involved in the dictatorship were put on trial. Javier Rebolledo, a journalist specialized in investigations related to violations of Human Rights in Chile, writes the following in *La Danza de los cuervos* (2012): “(...) una parte importante de los responsables permanece libre. Varios

condenados han visto rebajadas sus penas durante el gobierno de Sebastián Piñera, o han sido dejado libres antes de cumplirlas.” (33)

In Argentina, the last dictatorship, which began in 1976, was not organized around a single strong military man; members of the three armed forces combined to form a series of military juntas. (*The Argentina Reader*, 397). About 30,000 persons, labeled “subversives” were disappeared. As in Chile, these “desaparecidos” were tortured in detention centers and killed; some were shot, some didn’t survive their torture sessions, and others were thrown from airplanes into the La Plata river. In the prologue of *Nunca más* one reads:

Arrebatados por la fuerza, dejaron de tener presencia civil. ¿Quiénes exactamente los habían secuestrado? ¿Por qué? ¿Dónde estaban? No se tenía respuesta precisa a estos interrogantes: las autoridades no habían oído hablar de ellos, las cárceles no los tenían en sus celdas, la justicia los desconocía y los *habeas corpus* sólo tenían por contestación el silencio. Nunca un secuestrador arrestado, jamás un lugar de detención clandestino individualizado, nunca la noticia de una sanción a los culpables de los delitos. Así transcurrían días, semanas, meses, años de incertidumbres, dolor de padres, madres e hijos, todos pendientes de rumores, debatiéndose entre desesperadas expectativas, de gestiones innumerables e inútiles, de ruegos a influyentes, a oficiales de alguna fuerza armada que alguien les recomendaba, a obispos y capellanes, a comisarios. La respuesta era siempre negativa. (9)

In 1982, when the Argentinian dictatorship began to lose strength from the strikes, demonstrations, international pressure, and a chaotic economy (Partnoy, 17), General Galtieri launched an ill-advised war against the United Kingdom in Las Malvinas, or the Falklands as they have been named by the British. The ensuing humiliating military defeat precipitated the end of the military dictatorship. In October 1983, Raúl Alfonsín was democratically elected as president. Several different commissions gave voice to the many women and men who had been abused, but due to pressure from the

military, Alfonsín had to limit public trials to the highest ranking officials involved in the dictatorship. Justice was slow and only partially served; many suspected of high crimes remained in their positions. To make matters worse,

(i)n April 1990, Menem (Alfonsín's successor) declared that the convicted ex-commanders of that *de facto* government would also be pardoned and free "in time for Christmas". On December 29, 1990, - against massive, anguished opposition- President Menem not only pardoned, but praised the convicted ex-commanders, who have lived on fortunes they looted from the national treasury and extorted from the families of desaparecidos. (Feitlowitz, X)

Theoretical Perspectives on Torture

The legal definition of torture outlined in the United Nations Torture Convention of 1984 includes three important characteristics: 1. intentional infliction of pain, 2. by a public official, and 3. in order to obtain information. Torture is defined as:

Any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions. (*The Telegraph*, Dec 9, 2005)

The Inter-American Convention to Prevent and Punish Torture has a broader interpretation of the term; it has no motivational restrictions and includes the "use of methods upon a person intended to obliterate the personality of the victim or to diminish his physical or mental capacities, even if they do not cause physical pain or mental anguish". (*The Telegraph*, Dec 9, 2005)

In Latin America, “al menos hasta comienzos del siglo XX, la definición de tortura era coincidente con la de *tormento*, vocablo que proviene del *tormentum* romano, que se practicaba en el marco de la *quaestio* o indagación judicial (...)” (Rafequas, 99) In the second half of the twentieth century, in cold war Latin America, torture was utilized extensively by the dictatorships. In *Precarious Life*, Judith Butler states how the individual is vulnerable to the “other” especially under certain military political systems:

Violence is surely a touch of the worst order, a way a primary human vulnerability to other humans is exposed in its most terrifying way, a way in which we are given over, without control, to the will of another, a way in which life itself can be expunged by the willful action of another (...) This vulnerability, however, becomes highly exacerbated under certain social and political conditions, especially those in which violence is a way of life and the means to secure self-defense are limited.” (28-29)

For these authoritarian regimes, the purpose of torture is to secure their power. Scarry states that “(...) having as its purpose the production of a fantastic illusion of power, torture is a grotesque piece of compensatory drama.” (Scarry, 28) Butler calls these regimes “an institutionalized fantasy of mastery” (29)

Interrogation and pain go hand in hand; torture in general consists of inflicting severe physical pain or discomfort during or after the questioning of a person. There is a systematic connection between the two actions. Interrogation is the “official” motive for torture. Scarry explains though that “It is crucial to see that the interrogation does not stand outside an episode of torture as its motive or justification: it is internal to the structure of torture, exists there because of its intimate connections to and interactions with the physical pain. “ (29) Lucía Guerra describes it as follows:

(...) además de su carácter punitivo, estas acciones coercitivas implican también el proceso de desciframiento de una verdad con el propósito de adquirir conocimiento acerca de otros sujetos que promueven acciones de resistencia (...) para aquél que fuerza y desentraña una confesión por medio de la violencia, ésta posee un valor como dato de conocimiento en el proceso que aspira a conocer para luego destruir (...) (“Polivalencias de la confesión en la novela chilena del exilio” 227-228)

Scarry adds though that, if the answer given by the prisoner is not always relevant to the regime, what is crucial on the other hand is that he/she *answers*; it shows the power of the torturer and thus the regime, and the vulnerability of the victim, whose world disappears as torture proceeds. “For the torturers, the sheer and simple fact of human agony is made invisible, and the moral fact of inflicting that agony is made neutral by the feigned urgency and significance of the question. For the prisoner, the sheer, simple, overwhelming fact of his agony will make neutral and invisible the significance of any question as well as the significance of the world to which the question refers. Intense pain is world-destroying.” (29) Scarry formulates it as follows: “As in dying and death, so in serious pain the claims of the body utterly nullify the claims of the world.” (33) Consequently, one person’s excruciating pain, which makes his world crumble, makes the other’s world, thus his power, greater. Otto Dörr declares that the physical pain, and moreover, the destruction of the victim, had precedence over the obtainment of information: “La tortura fue aplicada en Chile siguiendo un método riguroso y orientado más a la destrucción de la persona en cuanto enemiga del sistema que a obtener una información precisa.” (55)

What were the methods of the torturers and, in phenomenological terms, what was the experience of the victims? Let us remember that in *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty declares “that we are our bodies, and that our lived

experience of this body denies the detachment of subject from object, mind from body, etc. “ (Reynolds, 6) In *El crimen de tortura*, Daniel Rafecas asserts that a requirement in the case of torture is that the victim’s body be detained: “(...) la imposición dolosa de un grave sufrimiento físico o psíquico debe verificarse en el marco de una privación, legal o ilegal, de la libertad.” (124) Rafecas describes how a person would be transformed into a “non-person” in the illegal prisons, places where the “state of exception”, famously described by Agamben in “Medios sin fin”, reigns and where people are completely deprived of their basic human rights:

Para cumplir los objetivos propuestos, todo Estado policial sustrae por la fuerza al supuesto enemigo de sus ámbitos de pertenencia, no solo el político, sino también el familiar, el social y el cultural, colocándolo así fuera del alcance de los circuitos de comunicación social. Una vez aislado del mundo que conoce, se le despojará de toda significación sociojurídica: paso esencial en el camino hacia la dominación - sostiene Arendt - es matar en el ser humano a la persona jurídica. Ello se logra al colocar a estas categorías de personas fuera de la protección de la ley. El hasta entonces ciudadano, con nombre y apellido, ocupación, etc... con derechos y atributos de diversa índole, pasa a ser una no-persona. Alguien a quien solo le queda remanente un cuerpo vital, lo que Agamben ha llamado la nada vida del homo sacer, un cuerpo que está en manos del sistema penal subterráneo no solo para privarlo ilegalmente de la libertad, destruir su mundo normativo por medio de la tortura, negarle alimento, agua o condiciones sanitarias mínimas, sino además para disponer definitivamente de esa vida, anulándola en cualquier momento impunemente, sin necesidad de racionalización alguna más allá del puro acto de poder, negándole inclusive los rituales debidos a toda muerte, propios de la condición humana.” (Rafecas, 55)

Anonymity is one of the factors that enables the torturer to use extreme violence towards the victim: what he sees in front of him is the representative of a collective entity that is the enemy of the regime: the person is a “communist” or a “terrorist”. For the victim, his torturer is the oppressive state. There is no personal relationship between the torturer and his victim. “(...) uno de los factores que pone en juego la

agresividad en el hombre es la despersonalización del otro.” (Dörr, 60) But where normally the physical proximity would have a tendency to inhibit violence, this is not the case with torture, where the torturers would be very intimate with their victims. As Agamben mentions, in terms of the victim’s space, the detention centers typically have extremely bad sanitary conditions; cold/hot and humid places, sometimes underground, where victims share their cells with rats, roaches, and other vermin. All this increases the corporeal vulnerability of the prisoners. The torture room and its contents are the elements of deconstruction of the prisoner’s world: “In torture, the world is reduced to a single room or set of rooms (...) The torture room is not just the setting in which the torture occurs; it is not just the space that happens to house the various instruments used for beating and burning and producing electric shock. It is itself literally converted into another weapon, into an agent of pain.” (Scarry, 40) Dörr corroborates this by saying: “Las técnicas de quebrantamiento ...buscan convertir todo el tiempo y todo el lugar, hasta la propia celda, en un constante tormento que no permite al sujeto recuperarse de su sensación de inermidad” (60)

This is also valid for the objects inside the torture room, objects representing civilization. The objects are transformed into weapons which annihilate the notion of civilization: the bed, symbol of wellbeing, where one usually finds rest, becomes a weapon in itself to which one is tied, chained, while receiving on different parts of his/her body, electrical shocks; the bathtub, in which one goes for relaxation and cleansing, becomes the symbol of horror in what in some countries they call “the submarine”... These domestic objects usually in place to enhance the wellbeing or the protection of the civilized person, are transformed into weapons that do just the

opposite, they hurt; besides the fact that the person gets severely hurt, there is in parallel a deconstruction of civilization. The disappearance of the original signifiers (bathtub, bed...), causes the disappearance of the rational external world of the prisoner. There is thus, on one hand, the pain that originates from physical torture and on the other hand, the pain that originates from a theatrical inversion of the prisoner's domestic world; together they provoke the disintegration, the dissolution of his world. (Scarry, 41) Dörr explains that the rupture and reversal of the "lived-space", "(...) lleva a la gente torturada a la pérdida de un lugar propio en el mundo y, finalmente, a una pérdida de patria, entendida ésta no como nación o estado, sino como hogar y fuego iluminador (...) De este modo, el torturado se transforma en un exiliado, en un ser sin patria, consumándose en él, por desgracia, el perverso objetivo perseguido por el torturador." (65)

In terms of the prisoner's vital space, Dörr explains that only in love, do two bodies mutually consent to come closer together, disregarding the principle of one's vital space.

La intimidad que se produce entre el torturador y el torturado es sólo comparable con la del amor, pero con signo contrario: el amor engrandece, mientras la tortura empequeñece; el amor dignifica, mientras la tortura representa la máxima indignidad que puede sufrir un ser humano; el amor es vida y en cierto modo vida externa, mientras la tortura es pura inmanencia, es una muerte incesante. (63)

In regard to the victim's notion of time, Dörr explains how the normal advance of time, from a past towards a future, stops; in torture there is only circularity, for there is no known ending. The testimony of many victims points to the hardship of never

knowing when torture would start or end. They would have the impression that there might be no end at all.

En la tortura la existencia es arrancada de ese perfecto juego entre presente, pasado y futuro, para ser reducida a un puro presente insoportable: no existe otro futuro que una nueva sesión de tortura o quizás la muerte con lo cual la víctima es amenazada una y otra vez, mientras el pasado es reducido a cenizas por medio del insulto, la descalificación, las acusaciones falsas, el desprestigio del proyecto político o de la concepción del mundo en la cual la víctima había invertido lo mejor de su vida, o quizás a través del empleo de la más cruel de las calumnias, cual es la que se refiere a presuntas traiciones de familiares y amigos. (64)

Another critical perception in torture is that which the victim has of his/her own body. How does one “live” one’s tortured body? Scarry mentions:

This unseen sense of self-betrayal in pain, objectified in forced confession, is also objectified in forced exercises that make the prisoner’s body an *active* agent, an actual cause of his pain. He may be put in a contorted posture in a cramped space for months or for years as happened in Vietnam; he may be made to walk ceaselessly on bended knees as in Spain; squat until he collapses (...) he may be made to stand upright in his cell each day for eleven hours as in Argentina (...) Part of his sense of his body as agent comes at the moment when his failure to sustain the prescribed posture or exercise brings from the torturer another form of punishment; but, for the prisoner and those present, the most emphatic and direct exhibition of self-agency comes from the exercise itself. Standing rigidly for eleven hours can produce as violent muscle and spine pain as injury from elaborate equipment and apparatus (...) (47)

She adds that torture thus creates a separation

between a “me” and “my body”. The “self” or “me”, which is experienced on the one hand as more private, more essentially at the center, and on the other hand as participating across the bridge of the body in the world, is “embodied” in the voice, in language. The goal of the torturer is to make the one, the body, emphatically and crushingly *present* by destroying it, and to make the other, the voice, absent by destroying it. (49)

Conversation is destroyed, becoming only interrogation, confession, cries. To conclude, torture through pain destroys not only a person's world, but also his/her voice and his/her self, and the self is the site of one's own identity. (50) The body is the locus of pain, the voice the locus of power. Dörr adds that one's own body, creator of one's identity, is transformed through torture into something hateful because it hurts so much, something disgusting if sexually abused, or something that doesn't belong to oneself anymore because sometimes the only way to survive a session of torture is to stop feeling one's body as one's own. (62) The "other"'s body, "en la vida normal compañía y calidez, objeto de admiración estética o atracción sexual, es transformado en la situación de tortura en el más perverso y refinado instrumento de martirio, ya sea por los dolores que provoca o por ser el vehículo de esa infinita humillación que es la violación sexual (...)" (62)

Also, the possibility in the concentration camps of dying the next day during a torture session, or to be among the ones thrown out on the flights over the Plata River or the Pacific Ocean, makes one more conscious of the body, the body to which one is tied, and through which one will die: "The body, this intensely - and sometimes, as in pain, obscenely - alive tissue is also the thing that allows (...) anyone, to be one day dead." (Scarry, 31)

Two institutions of the civilized world are usually present, or represented, when one is tortured; health and law. But as domestic objects, they are, however, converted into weapons. Often, doctors are present in concentration camps, but they treat the victims only to enable them to endure more torture sessions; they stop torture sessions just before the death of the prisoners... A testimonial mentions the following: "Your

body jumps around a lot on the parrilla⁸, at least as much as the straps permit. It gets twisted around, shakes, tries to escape contact with the ... electric prod, which was handled like a knife by a 'specialist.' [He was] guided by a doctor who would say when more would kill you" (Feitlowitz, 65)

Some of these doctors lived in the camps as though the camp was their private laboratory, existing only to enable their experiments on the bodies of the inmates; experiments that would sometimes lead to their death. Doctors also systematically accompanied the prisoners who were taken onto the death flights. A witness mentions that "A doctor... always accompanied the transfer... All of the transfers were injected with Pen-Naval, a strong sedative. Then they were loaded onto trucks, from there into an airplane from which they were thrown alive, though unconscious, into the sea." (60)

In terms of the law, the trial has been reversed. In a normal world, the prosecution presents evidence that may lead to the conviction of the accused, with the resulting punishment. Here, the punishment is used to create, or fake, the evidence. (Scarry, 44)

As Scarry states: "(...) the unmaking of civilization inevitably requires a return to and mutilation of the domestic, the ground of all making. This world unmaking, this uncreating of the created world, which is an external objectification of the psychic experience of the person in pain, becomes itself the cause of the pain." (45)

If some prisoners were kept for months or years before being freed, many never came back. Dead or alive, these persons were "disappeared". The concept of

⁸ Parrilla was the name given to the bed without a mattress where the victims were laid down to apply electric shocks to their bodies. As further mentioned in this chapter, the linguistic designation of the different elements of torture, is usually based on a sarcastic euphemism. In this case, "parrilla" (traditional grill for cooking meat, sausage and chicken) alludes to the burning produced by electricity.

individuals made to vanish originated with the Nazis, as part of the doctrine of Night and Fog (Nacht und Nebel):

The prisoners will disappear without a trace. It will be impossible to glean any information as to where they are or what will be their fate. (Marshal Keitel explaining Hitler's decree to his subordinates)
In Argentina the infernal mist of Nacht und Nebel was ushered in by the unprecedented, obscurant usage of a single word: *desaparecido*. It was coined by the Argentine military as a way of denying the kidnap, torture, and murder of thousands of citizens. Then-commander of the army Roberto Viola put it this way: A *desaparecido* was someone who was "Absent forever", whose "destiny" it was to "vanish". Officially, a *desaparecido* was neither living nor dead, neither here nor there. The explanation was at once totally vague and resoundingly final. Night and fog drawn like a curtain in the collective mind. (Feitlowitz, 57-59)

In Argentina as well as in Chile and other countries of the "Cono Sur", many disappeared without a trace, through the air, by means of the death-flights. In Argentina, death-flight duty was rotated among virtually all naval officers of the ESMA, who were ordered to load *desaparecidos* onto planes, undress them, and throw them into the sea. Much information about it came from Retired Navy Captain Adolfo Scilingo, who publicly confessed to his participation in two death flights during his stay of two years at the ESMA:

(...) the prisoners selected to "fly" were called by their numbers, ordered to form a line and march - shuffle, really - in leg irons to the basement where, the brass explained, they were being flown to a recuperation camp in the south, and would now be getting "vaccinations". Whereupon a physician administered the first dose of a tranquilizer (sodium pentotal) dubbed by the force as Pen-Naval. "It made them drowsy," Scilingo recounted, "and we had to help them on the plane. Once onboard, a physician administered a second shot to knock the prisoners out. The doctors moved back to the cabin so as not to violate their Hippocratic oath," Scilingo glossed, without irony. "Once the prisoners were asleep - this is very morbid," he allowed, "we undressed them, and two of us would drag one prisoner down the aisle and then push him out into the sky..." Scilingo shoved thirty individuals to their deaths: thirteen on the first flight, seventeen on the second. Among them was a sixty-five-year

old man, a sixteen-year-old boy, and two pregnant women in their early twenties. On his first flight Scilingo slipped and nearly fell out of the plane with a prisoner who was struggling and would not let go. (Feitlowitz, 69)

A person who has been tortured is likely to suffer lifelong consequences. The body might heal, but the mental, emotional condition of the tortured is oftentimes affected for life, even if the symptoms might fade in time. The clinical title is “acute post traumatic stress disorder” and Dörr describes it as follows: “angustia y miedo permanentes, pesadillas con la situación traumática, un cierto grado de ‘anestesia emocional’, incapacidad de gozar con actividades que antes de la experiencia traumática producían agrado; insomnio, estado de hiper-vigilia, culpa por el hecho de haber sobrevivido y otros no, etc...” (57) Dörr also describes how, as a result of torture, a person can undergo a dramatic change in his/her personality, including an increased disposition towards anxiety. To this can be added a diminished psychic health that results in a difficulty in handling interpersonal relationships. He enumerates some symptoms such as: “el empobrecimiento general de la vida psíquica, la disminución de capacidades previas, la profunda quiebra del proyecto vital y de la confianza en el ser humano.” (58)

In the years after the dictatorships, the frequency of the testimonials that talk about sexual and gender violence, especially from women victims - although men have also been subjected to sexual violence - has opened new discussions to consider this violence as crimes against humanity. (Olivera-Williams, 63) María Rosa Olivera-Williams explains this sexual and gender violence in the context of a patriarchal society: the involvement of women in politics and resistance is considered by the military, who embody the patriarchal social system, a deviation of nature: “ El actuar político de

estas mujeres, desde la perspectiva de los militares que ejercían el poder, parecía desnaturalizarlas. Asimismo, el actuar político de los hombres militantes que se oponían al poder hegemónico los volvía, para los militares, “mujeres desviadas” y se los emasculaba.” (63) These women would not respect the domestic space that the traditional society assigned to them, and these men would not embody the qualities of heroism and courage that the military traditionally strives for. But worse, Olivera-Williams declares that

La actuación política y militante de mujeres, por ejemplo, no fue vista como una desviación de la performance (the role people assume in society according to their sexual behavior which also determines their identity) de lo femenino solamente por el régimen dictatorial militar, sino por los propios militantes. Abundan los ejemplos de militantes hombres que pensaron que sus compañeras habían sobrevivido delatándolos pero también “ofreciéndose sexualmente” a sus captores. (65)

According to Olivera-Williams, since the political deviation of the prisoners had a sexual codification, their punishment needed to be applied through their sexuality. (65)

Many who have endured torture during the dictatorships are still alive and many of their torturers are still alive and free. *A Lexicon of Terror* describes how after the dictatorship, after the election of Alfonsín in Argentina, survivors of torture would encounter in the streets or in the public transportation, individuals who had been involved in the concentration camp that they had been kept in. They would be out there unpunished and would even want to chat with the former inmates as if nothing had happened. Mario, a survivor, explained in *A Lexicon of Terror* how he had several times encountered Julián the Turk, a former torturer, who inquired about his life and who even tried to send him to someone he knew to help Mario find a job. These encounters were in general very difficult for the survivors and served to immediately bring back the most

unpleasant memories of their confinement and torture. It also proved that Argentina, as well as Chile, presented a face of 'normalcy' where none existed, where many of the old regime retained at least some of their power and operated in the dark.

Breaking the Mind and Body

In this third and final chapter, I intend to analyze the literary re-presentation of torture and disappearance in the context of the dictatorships of Chile and Argentina. The theme is extremely sensitive and the many existing testimonials vary in their approach towards discussing torture. Some go from merely allusions to (sexual and gender) violence while others narrate torture in a detailed fashion. This is valid in fiction, where some authors depict torture through the absence of words and where the reader needs to read between the lines: "el lector puede "ver", imaginar, aquello que está presente por omisión (...)" (Amar Sánchez, 4) Some authors write about the Stockholm Syndrome⁹, others such as Aníbal Quijada in *Cerco de púas* (1977), embrace the literary testimonial, in which he shows an animalization of the human through torture. Some authors give detailed descriptions of the perpetrated violence, while others choose the chronicle that focuses on everyday survival of the individual and the group, the interactions with the guards, as well as the historical context. Some, such as Alicia

⁹ Forty years ago, the term Stockholm Syndrome was coined at the end of a six-day bank siege (...) While the term is widely known, the incident that led to its coinage remains relatively obscure (...) It was 23 August 1973 when (...) four (Swedish Bank workers) were taken hostage in the Kreditbanken by 32-year-old career-criminal Jan-Erik Olson - who was later joined at the bank by a former prisoner mate. Six days later when the stand-off ended, it became evident that the victims had formed some kind of positive relationship with their captors (...) The term is most associated with Patty Hearst, the Californian newspaper heiress who was kidnapped by revolutionary militants in 1974. She appeared to develop sympathy with her captors and joined them in a robbery. (Westcott, np)

Partnoy in *The Little School*, give a more poetic testimonial. Lucía Guerra states the following:

Las circunstancias históricas originadas por el Golpe Militar de 1973 han motivado en los escritores chilenos un deseo de asumir la realidad concreta para hacer de la novela un testimonio, para fijar en la crónica vivida un presente que debe difundirse como conocimiento de una verdad que ha sido ocultada por una estructura de poder de tipo dictatorial. Del sector de la verdad reprimida por el orden oficial, los escritores han escogido representar precisamente los mecanismos del poder que, a través de la tortura y la confesión, intentan el castigo para aquéllos que se han convertido en una amenaza para el sistema.” (“Polivalencias de la confesión en la novela chilena del exilio”, 227)

Ana María Amar Sanchez comments on the existing polemics concerning the representation of the *unimaginable*; the controversy is not about if one *can* write about these horrific facts but more about *how* to represent them, and which literary genre is more effective. (9)

la dificultad para abordar los implícitos límites de estas representaciones; esta dificultad plantea dilemas no sólo estéticos, sino también éticos. De hecho, numerosos trabajos parecen coincidir –como señala Friedlander en el prólogo a su antología *En torno a los límites de la representación*– en que « hay límites para la representación que no deben ni pueden ser fácilmente transgredidos ». La naturaleza de esa transgresión está, por supuesto, lejos de ser un punto de coincidencia entre los distintos autores. (2)

Also, writing explicitly and in detail about torture, without having been a victim of it personally, presents for some an ethical problem about which Guerra writes the following:

(...) existe un consenso crítico con respecto a la importancia de la experiencia vivida como núcleo generador del texto testimonial, no se ha definido claramente la polisemia implícita en dicho concepto pues en “lo vivido” se puede tener tanto un papel protagónico como de testigo ocular e incluso aquéllo que sólo nos ha sido contado pasa a ser parte de

nuestra experiencia. En la vasta producción literaria que ofrece un testimonio de la tortura en Chile, la distancia del Sujeto con respecto a esa experiencia vivida constituye en sí un problema estético de representación. (“Polivalencias de la confesión en la novela chilena del exilio”, 228)

Victimization of the Body and its Subjectivity

As explained in the Introduction, Phenomenology analyzes the experience of embodied agents who share a supposedly coherent world. The day-to-day personal and social interactions with others is what Husserl calls the “lifeworld” or Heidegger the “Dasein”. These experiences, enabled through contact with other lived bodies, based on “normal” ethical communications that follow societal rules, configure the uniqueness of each human being, his/her subjectivity. Otto Dörr explains how fundamental symmetry is in any relationship. But belligerent dictatorial governments flout the rules, flout human rights, and create not vulnerable, normal status of beings exposed to the outside world, but helpless, degraded victims. Some citizens are at once perceived as evil sub-humans who threaten the survival of the new, fragile and adversary regime, and their freedom, their right to self-determination, ends right there. The political opponents’ physical bodies, being the materiality of that evil, being the “dialectic of a social subject and his group” (Springer, 27) need to be degraded and dehumanized, treated as animals and ultimately destroyed. In the concentration camps, the victims cease to be free and cease to be subjects; they are objects that the regime considers as superfluous and doesn’t hesitate to physically eliminate. It reminds us of the thought that Sartre had about eliminating obstacles: “in the case of wrath

against an unmovable obstacle, I may hit it as though the world were such that this action could lead to its removal.” (Onof, 4)

For the citizens belonging to the political parties of the left, the military coups in Chile and Argentina had the effect of a disaster. The political ideals of more just and more equitable nations were abruptly annihilated and the nations converted into a battlefield divided between citizens of the right, supported by the Armed Forces and the citizens of the left, at once ferociously persecuted. As in every disaster, the Order and the Known World (Scarry) suffered an abrupt rupture that converted these bodies and subjectivities into persecuted and captives, into victims of torture and death. Apart from being converted into objects of torture, that “other” is victimized by a torturer whose position is one of a subject in power. The victim’s subjectivity is deprived of its habitual space, of its quotidian now transformed into military rules, of its identity, and transformed into an “other” dominated by fear and repression. In the testimonial texts analyzed here, I will focus as much on the specific cases of victimized Body/Subjectivity as on the process of the writing, which, in the case of *Cerco de púas* and *The Little School*, relate to the reconstruction of the subject and the inscription of memory.

Testimonial narrative has existed in Latin America since the Conquest, in the form of diaries, and was even adopted later during the wars of independence by Bolivar and Martí. These first person accounts, written using the narrative “I”, oftentimes become a collective “we” for the victims of dictatorial governments who have spent time in detention camps and who want to transmit the facts, representing not only themselves, the narrator/victim, but the totality of the inmates, many of whom

didn't make it out alive. (Manzor-Coats, 158) Alicia Partnoy writes the following in *The Little School*:

The voices of my friends at the Little School grew stronger in my memory. By publishing these stories I feel those voices will not pass unheard (...) Today, while sharing this part of my experience, I pay tribute to a generation of Argentines lost in an attempt to bring social change and justice. I also pay tribute to the victims of repression in Latin America. (18)

Written often from exile, the testimonial is at the border of History and fiction. The testimonial wants "to bear witness" to an illegal imprisonment and the author attacks the authoritarian government, and thus the official History, that denies any "disappearances". Manzor-Coats declares that "it has been hidden, covered with rhetorical "make-up" by the official historiography which negates that the facts ever took place." (160). In the case of Chile, where the estimates of deaths vary from 2,279 to 3.000, according to the sources, Norberto Flores talks about the testimonial narrative as "(...) fuente indispensable para acceder a un cabal conocimiento de lo acontecido en la reciente Historia de Chile, aquella generada a partir del golpe militar de 1973." (2)

The testimonial enables the inclusion of historical facts through a non-historiographic voice; a non-hierarchical and a highly subjective voice. Flores states the following: "(...) uno de los principales factores de cuestionamiento del testimonio como documento historiográfico: el grado de interferencia del emisor en el discurso, dado que el testimonio es un sustituto de la memoria y, en tanto tal, puede inventar -en el sentido latino de in-venire- la memoria." (3) Guerra explains the subjective and esthetical filters of fictionalization in the testimonial:

(...) reconstruir no sólo significa rescatar del pasado para que lo sido vuelva a ser sino también ficcionalizar aquello que verdaderamente

existió en la realidad empírica. Y el proceso de ficcionalización en sus etapas básicas de síntesis y extensión, reorganizar, editar y representar se impone como filtro subjetivo y estético de la realidad vivida. Por consiguiente, la potencialidad mimética del texto aminora y, al mismo tiempo, se enfrenta con vacíos y suturas imposibles de representar literariamente. (“Polivalencias de la confesión en la novela chilena del exilio”, 229)

Partnoy herself writes about the difficulty in keeping clear boundaries: “Beware: in little schools the boundaries between story and history are so subtle that even I can hardly find them”. (18) In the case of Quijada Cerda, the testimonial *Cerco de púas* is written as an ensemble of short, independent, non-chronological stories; the disorder in which the events are narrated reflects the prisoner's loss of a logical notion of time.

Another important aspect that Manzor-Coats mentions is the testimonial as a psychological tool for survival:

More than being a testimony or “a way of erasing the guilt and shame of all that went unsaid” (...), the writing itself becomes a form of catharsis, in the psychiatric sense of the word: by being able to name the terror and physical pain of torture, the fragmented subject is able to reconstitute him/herself and companions, dead or alive, through writing. (158)

But “(s)ince detention and torture are acts which destroy a person’s world, self and voice, it is other acts, those which help restore the voice that will be heard.” (Manzor-Coats, 166). For Quijada Cerda as for Partnoy, the reconstruction of their body/subject takes place through writing, mostly about the everyday resistance, the solidarity between inmates, and for Partnoy more specifically the labors of imagination.

The military coup and the dictatorship in Chile, as much as in Argentina, produced an abrupt change, not only in the nation, but also in the daily life of the citizens. As in every disaster, the reality was transformed and in the case of the bodies/

subjectivities in captivity, they had to face a space and unfamiliar ways of behavior very different than what had been their habitual normal life.

Cerco de púas

The first work that I will examine in detail is *Cerco de púas* (1977), by the Chilean author Aníbal Quijada Cerda. It received the prize of the “Casa de las Americas” in the category of testimonial. (Blanes, 2) Quijada was a civil servant at the time of the Chilean military coup d’état in 1973 and was taken as a political prisoner to the secret detention camp of Cochrane, near Punta Arenas, port and capital city of Chile’s southernmost region Magallanes and Antártica Chilena. Cochrane was one of the “banishment” centers created under the dictatorship of Ibáñez. (Epple, 36) Quijada eventually spent time in the infamous Dawson Island detention center where well known and high ranking officials of Allende’s government were also detained.

Cerco de púas is divided into three parts that together outline the process of reconstruction of a subject who had been the victimized “other”: In part one, Quijada narrates events recalled from memory, not in a chronological order. The disorder in which he narrates them corresponds to the loss of his logical notion of time while a prisoner. In part two he feels alienated, as much from himself as from the world that surrounds him, and that has been converted into a barbed wire compound in a nation that is divided between persecutors and persecuted:

Comprendí después que no estaba libre. Había un cerco que salía de los centros de detención y se prolongaba afuera rodeando la ciudad. Podía verse en las calles alrededor de cada casa, circundando a las personas, con sus púas bien dispuestas. Esas púas habían adquirido variadas formas: patrullaban las calles en oscuros vehículos, apuntaban en las armas amenazadoras de soldados y policías, estaban fijadas en las miradas

vigilantes, tenían sonidos de metal en los pasos solapados que acosaban, escribían en listas y papeles delatores, tomaban voz y acción en los sucesos de cada hora, en el día y en la noche. (136)

In this part of his work he says: “Era, ahora, un hombre sellado, mudo.” (136) The encounter with a dog marks the beginning of his reconstruction as a subject. The dog can’t talk either and delivers him a message: “Si era imposible hablar, más tarde o más temprano, podría escribirse.” (140)

Part three of Quijada’s work is a poem dedicated to the barracks, places of detention and themselves witnesses to the prisoners’ hopes and despair.

Bodies under torture

As previously mentioned, in the first part of *Cerco de púas*, the author narrates his lived experience as a prisoner in a detention camp; which means that he gives an account of events that he consciously and personally experienced or that he directly witnessed. As a prisoner, his “Dasein”, or his “Lived experience in the World” (that had suddenly been reduced to the camp) is mainly focused on actions imposed upon him, emotions these actions create in him, his bodily awareness, and the “social” activity in the camp. Physical and verbal abuses of all kinds are forcefully perpetrated on the prisoners upon their arrival in the camp. This technique is intended to immediately start the psychological breakdown of the victim. In *Cerco de púas*, the elderly protagonist is forced to squat and remain in this very uncomfortable “stress position” for many long hours.

La postura era bastante incómoda. Afirmé lo mejor que pude los tacos de los zapatos entre los champas de pasto. El abrigo largo, tipo “viejo Alessandri”, me ayudó, tanto a disimular, como a soportar el frío en las

piernas. No iba preparado a soportar el frío en las piernas. No iba preparado para sufrirlo y cuando me detuvieron no me dejaron abrigarme mejor. Nunca imaginé, por otra parte, que llegaría a encontrarme en estas condiciones (...) había descubierto que metiendo los brazos entre el estómago y los muslos se producía alivio a la incomodidad, aunque las piernas se acalambaban.” (Quijada Cerda,10)

Not only does the body/subject lose his physical freedom by being confined in a detention center, but moreover, he is forced to remain in an extreme posture without moving, which emphasizes the inferiority of the prisoner, violates his human dignity and is considered to be torture: “(...) atar o sujetar a la víctima en posiciones retorcidas, hiperextendidas o de cualquier otra manera antinaturales, (...) causa grandes dolores y puede producir lesiones en los ligamentos, tendones, nervios y vasos sanguíneos.” (Rafecas,143) Adriana Cavarero mentions the importance of the special “arrival treatment” in the creation of helplessness:

The transformation of the prisoners into “miserable and sordid puppets” began as soon as they entered the Lager, with a cruel and incomprehensible ceremonial of humiliation and blows (...) The “miserable and sordid puppets” are the upshot of a process of dehumanization that, while always fierce, works initially on prisoners who are still “exposed to insult, atrociously naked and vulnerable.” That is, it unleashes its ferocity on the helpless who can still feel the *vulnus*. (35)

Cavarero mentions both vulnerability and helplessness. Every human being is vulnerable by being a body exposed to the exterior world and eventually being wounded. The prisoner though is helpless; he loses not only his physical freedom by being detained in a camp, but he loses the ownership of his own body. He is beaten, forced into certain degrading positions, tortured, all that without his authorization and without him being capable of defending himself. “Defenseless and in the power of the other, the helpless person finds himself substantially in a condition of passivity,

undergoing violence he can neither flee from nor defend against. The scene is entirely tilted toward unilateral violence.” (Cavarero, 30) The torturer is omnipotent and his actions are willed and well prepared. The helpless person can not defend himself physically and in time, after much inhumane treatment, he may become what Primo Levi calls “a hollow man, reduced to suffering and needs, forgetful of dignity and restraint, for he who loses all often easily loses himself” (Cavarero, 37) Levi calls this man who lost his humanity a “miserable and sordid puppet”. In the concentration camps, that person close to death was called “Muselmann”: he who “no longer had room in his consciousness for the contrasts good or bad, noble or base, intellectual or unintellectual. He was a staggering corpse, a bundle of physical functions in its last convulsions.” (Cavarero, 34) This shows how torture, repeated over and over, ends up affecting the body/subject in an irreversible way. Phenomenology explains how physical torture, besides demolishing the body, has a psychological effect, as much as psychological torture has a physical effect, for the reason that the body and mind can not be separated. It corroborates Thoibisana’s explanation about Heidegger’s “living in the world” that mentions that “Dasein is meaningfully bound to the conditions of its existence and the entities it encounters.” (Toibisana, 2)

If Sartre argued in *Being and Nothingness* that a prisoner could remain free no matter the experience, even if only in his mind, he changed position after World War II and the holocaust. From an ontological freedom that would be independent of the outside world, he shifted to a more material freedom, a freedom that needed prerequisites. As Storm Heter writes:

Sartre’s new appreciation of oppression as a concrete loss of human freedom forced him to alter his view that humans are free in any situation.

He did not explicitly discuss such alterations, though clearly abandoning the view that humans are free in all situations. “[I]t is important not to conclude that one can be free in chains,” and “It would be quite wrong to interpret me as saying that man is free in all situations as the Stoics claimed” (Heter, 8)

If having choices makes a man free, in the concentration camps, the inmates have no choices or only inhumane choices. Thus freedom requires material freedom, it requires no-coercion. (Heter, 9)

Torture in *Cerco de púas*, as in many other testimonials, is associated with loud music, screams and contortions of the tortured bodies, and the voice, the yelling, of the torturer. The protagonist, Aníbal, is blindfolded, immobilized, and is compelled to listen to the following noises while waiting in the torture room:

Tocaban tangos. Fuertes aullidos los apagaban por momentos. Una voz fuerte, de mando, lo dominaba todo (...) Nuevos golpes (...) Ahora eran quejidos ahogados. El ruido de varios cuerpos estrellándose contra el piso. Del lado derecho, desde un rincón, como de otra pieza, se percibían espantosos alaridos (...) Sentí el estampido de un látigo chocando contra carne desnuda. (82)

Scarry describes what happens to language under torture: “Physical pain does not simply resist language but actively destroys it, bringing about an immediate reversion to a state anterior to language, to the sounds and cries a human being makes before language is learned.” (4) Aníbal is terribly affected by it and wonders if : “¿(s)ería mayor el tormento de oír o el de recibir los golpes?” (82) The torturer’s intent is to inflict the most possible suffering (the louder the cries, the louder the tango); he usually carefully avoids causing the prisoner’s death which would stop the pain, the torment. Torture, “whose etymological root lies in the Latin verb “torquere” (supplying English with the verbs “to torque” and “to distort” and the nouns “torture,” “torment,” “torque,” “torch,”

and “tort” but normally translated as “to twist”): to torture is to twist and distort the body, to make it into “a body broken to pieces by tormentum.” (Cavarero, 32)

Aníbal, while blindfolded, imagines the suffering of these bodies; bodies reduced to objects that are totally available to the torturer. For the one who is tortured, there is nothing else than the present reality of this body in pain. There is no more body/subject, there is only body in pain. (Cavarero, 31) Santos writes the following: “sólo en la tortura el hombre se transforma totalmente en carne ... El torturado que aúlla de dolor es sólo cuerpo y nada más” (35) In his testimonial *Tejas verdes*, Hernán Valdés describes the ordeal of his body in the following way: “Siento pena de mi cuerpo. Este cuerpo va a ser torturado, es idiota. Y sin embargo es así, no existe ningún recurso racional para evitarlo. Entiendo la necesidad de este capuchón: no seré una persona, no tendré expresiones. Seré sólo un cuerpo, un bulto, se entenderán sólo con él” (161)

This corroborates the thoughts laid out in the introduction of this chapter in which I cite Scarry, who explains that torture destroys what solar has been one’s own normal world. Now, Aníbal, like so many other prisoners, has been deprived of the possibility of seeing the world around him and blindfolded, he is submerged in total darkness.

Santos cites Sergio Vuskovic who was tortured in “la Esmeralda”, who wrote: “Tengo que hacer confianza en mi cuerpo, que él continuará solo, como las otras veces, llevando adelante sus funciones. Por ahora te dejo aparcado aquí, en el mástil. En cualquier emergencia retornaré a ti. El cuerpo aprende a cuidarse a sí mismo cuando se le abandona.” (36) This shows how Sergio Vuskovic needed to trust his body to be strong and continue its vital functions even though he would lose consciousness, incapable of resisting further torture. More often though, the body has

been seen as an enemy, an enemy that weakens one: “El cuerpo del torturado se ha transformado en su enemigo en tanto que sus “componentes físicos y sensoriales (...) se vuelven en contra de él, ofreciendo al torturador otros tantos puntos vulnerables donde administrar el tormento.” (Santos, 36) Scarry too states how one’s body becomes one’s enemy under torture: “The prisoner’s body - in its physical strengths, in its sensory powers, in its small and moving gestures friendship toward itself - is, like the prisoner’s voice, made a weapon against him, made to betray him on behalf of the enemy, made to be the enemy.” (Scarry, 48) So, following Sartre’s logic, one’s experience (*le corps existé*), viewed by the other - the torturer - as a tool, is observed by oneself occupying the role of third person (*le corps-vu*), as an enemy.

In certain torture sessions, the torturers transform the human body into an animal. In the chapter called “El aullido volador”, Quijada is the eyewitness to an extreme dehumanization of prisoners. A professor, one of the prisoners, has to walk on the edge of a platform in the water. He can’t fall in the water or he will be executed. At the same time, the guards are playing games with a shrieking object that flies over the head of the profesor, the noise causing him to duck his body in time to avoid a collision. Later, the professor learns what the object was: “Mucho después supe lo que era el aullido. Era el grito desesperado del secretario del Partido. Lo habían amarrado a una especie de grúa y con ella lo lanzaban al aire, arrojándolo en picada a las aguas del Estrecho, repitiendo el juego muchas veces. Ellos llamaban al tratamiento “El vuelo de la gaviota”. (66) This shows one of the many ways in which torture takes away the humanity of the Other, the victim. The human body is seen as an animal by the regime that even uses a metaphorical language to deal with it. Primo Levi wrote the following

about feeling oneself to be sub-human, an animal, during his stay in Auschwitz: “A naked and barefoot man feels that all his nerves and tendons are severed: he is helpless prey ... He no longer perceives himself as a human being, but rather as a worm: naked, slow, ignoble, prone to the ground.” (Cavarero, 36) In many camps, prisoners were stripped naked as soon as they arrived, which put them in a condition of extreme helplessness, blurring the line between human and animal.

Torture itself was mostly done outside the camp, in Punta Arenas, in a place ironically named “el Palacio de las sonrisas”. The treatment at the camp was nevertheless extremely harsh and torture took place sporadically. The official reason stated for torture was to find weapons that were hidden in the University, the “Juventud Comunista”, or the “Partido Comunista”. In the story “El hombre calafate”, Quijada Cerda details a “tratamiento”, a torture session. It is about torturing a young man with blows, as well as vicious dogs that bite him, in the ice cold of the Southern night. Almost dead, they give him alcohol to bring him back to his senses and start beating him again. They put leaves of Calafate, an evergreen native shrub that has shiny box-like leaves, around his head. They throw him in the bushes where thousands of thorns puncture his skin. The scene, written in a very allegorical style, becomes the symbol of Christ’s crucifixion (45):

El montón de carne aullante se revolcaba sobre la escarcha. Pronto lo engancharon de los brazos con las cuerdas y empezaron a arrastrarlo, cada vez más rápido, por la depresión del camino ripiado. Las piedrecitas se le incrustaban en la piel, rasgándola. (...) La sangre se deslizaba por el cuerpo del muchacho en bolillos que se reunían en la cintura, para seguir después hasta los pies y la tierra fría. (...) Ahora se dirigieron a la empalizada próxima y lo izaron sosteniéndolo de sus maderas. Quedó con las piernas recogidas y la cabeza caída sobre un hombro. Para que no resbalara, apoyaron sus pies en una tabla. La figura se recortó claramente contra el cielo iluminado por reflejos distantes. (...)

(the sergeant speaking:) se parece a Jesucristo este degenerado. Le falta la corona (...)

Un soldado cogió un palo y lo hundi6 en los excrementos. Acerc6 despu6 el palo a la boca del prisionero (...) Le untaron los labios varias veces mientras un soldado trataba de abrirle las quijadas. El sargento aprovech6 la postura para dar su golpe. Afirm6 la punta de la bota en el nacimiento del muslo y con el taco, fuertemente, le golpe6 los genitales. Un alarido horroroso taladr6 la noche. El prisionero salt6 y qued6 sentado (...) Los soldados movieron los cordeles. El prisionero cay6 de bruces. Lo arrastraron de nuevo. Esta vez hasta las matas de califatos. All6 lo alzaron y arrojaron en el mismo centro de arbustos. El hombre grit6. Miles de espinas se clavaron en su carne. Se agitaba tratando de liberarse, pero ca6a otra vez, sumi6ndose en las espinas (...) Por mucho tiempo ese cuerpo conservar6a cientos de ellas y marcas que los meses har6an definitivas. (47)

As Jesus Christ, *el hombre calafate*, was innocent of any wrong doing; he was a university student who “(m)ilitaba en la Juventud como simpatizante.” (41) Christ’s message of peace and justice threatened the imperial power of Rome and he was condemned to be crucified, one of the worst forms of capital punishment for criminals. The little stones and the thousand thorns that lacerated *el hombre calafate*’s body when he was dragged on the ground and thrown in the bushes, reminds us of Christ’s scourging during his calvary. (Scourging was usually done with a whip that had thongs ending with pieces of bone, stone, metal, or a hook, all tools intended to increase the pain and bring the victim close to death.) *El hombre calafate* is the scapegoat for the sins of the left - now enemies of the military dictatorship - the same way as Christ was the scapegoat for Humanity’s sins. Jesus Christ said: “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46) *El hombre calafate*, facing the abandoned values of the torturers, can only cry: “¡Mamita, me est6n matando!” (43) Whereas Christ is a sacred symbol of the redemption and resurrection, in the case of *el hombre calafate*, calvary does not have any redemption value. This episode also throws light on an aspect still

not sufficiently analyzed: the tendency of torturers to create rituals in a perverse modification of the sacred.

Regulated Bodies

In the concentration camp, as explained in *Cerco de púas*, the bodies are strictly regulated. During the first days of the prisoners' confinement in the camp there is enforced silence. A severe punishment awaited those who were caught talking:

El que habla paga (...) varias horas al frío o la práctica de duros ejercicios. Había sargentos que preferían las “buchadas”: el detenido debía arrojarse de cara al suelo apoyándose únicamente en las manos y en las puntas de los pies, con los codos hacia afuera. Enseguida, sin tocar el piso con el cuerpo, debía realizar 10, 20 , 30 ó 50 buchadas. (...) Había otra alternativa a elección: en vez de las buchadas, “la pata en la raja”. En ésta, el detenido se inclinaba y recibía violentos puntapiés de los soldados en el trasero. (15)

The prohibition to talk is the mutilation of language - an essential component of the self as a human being who expresses his/her feelings and communicates with others. Food is distributed at certain times of the day, often thrown on the floor to increase the process of dehumanization. Going to the restrooms is only authorized twice a day, when notified by loudspeaker: “¡Los que van a la Corte (in fact “la corta”)¹⁰, en fila aquí, de inmediato!” (16) Public defecation was another attack on the prisoners' dignity. Not only was there no privacy but, moreover, the guards would deliberately pay particular attention to whether the prisoners would defecate or if it was only a pretext to talk to another prisoner:

¹⁰ In the language created in the abnormal environment of the concentration camps, “la corta” meant “to urinate” while defecating was designated as “la larga.”

Para la larga salían custodiados, dos grupos de cinco detenidos. Mientras los primeros ocupaban el palo - justamente alcanzaban cinco sentados en su longitud - los otros esperaban a un lado. La larga era un WC de campaña, a la intemperie. Se trataba de una zanja estrecha que había sido cavada por los propios presos. Parecía una tumba sin llenar... A muchos, de sólo tener que usarla, se les producía estreñimiento. Para la larga, los detenidos disponían de dos minutos. En ese tiempo, había que soportar el frío, y los ojos de los guardias que no perdían detalle de la operación. De eso, después supimos la causa: los guardias miraban para saber si el preso había llegado hasta ahí con una necesidad real. (17)

If a prisoner couldn't defecate in the allotted two minutes, he would be accused of faking the need to go in order to communicate with other prisoners and he would be punished: "Sorprendido filtrándose en las largas para cambiar informaciones." (18)

Cavarero writes the following: "Levi emphasizes that (...) public defecation was "a deep wound inflicted on human dignity" (...) this was one of the clearest symptoms of the Nazi will to reduce men to beasts, through a perversion of the difference between the human and the animal."(36)

Language Transformation

The dictatorship created two worlds, one public and one clandestine. For each one of these worlds there corresponded a language. In the public world, the language was used as "a weapon in the arsenal of the regime, used as propaganda. The junta seriously undertook to 'recover the meanings of many embezzled words.' High on their list for idiomatic repair were (.) 'reality', 'rationality', 'truth', 'sacrifice', 'patriotism', 'duty', 'democracy', and 'honor'." (Feitlowiz, 37) Some terms became suspicious such as 'conditions', 'contradiction', 'criticism', 'relative', and 'reactionary'. (40) Others were banned such as 'human rights' (40)

In the clandestine world, the torturers would use codified language. In the camps, torturers would transform the language to create a new reality, one where the prisoners would not exist. In a *Lexicon of Terror*, Feitlowitz mentions that

In the clandestine camps there developed an extensive argot in which benign domestic nouns, medical terms, saints, and fairy-tale characters were appropriated as terms pertaining to physical torture. Comforting past associations were translated into pain, degradation, and sometimes death (...) Language helps to ritualize torture; it lends structure, provides a “reason”, an “explanation”, an “objective”. (57)

She states that “persuasion”, “interrogación” or “trabajo” were some of the names given to torture. In *Cerco de púas*, the physical beating and yelling at the prisoners upon their arrival was identified by the euphemism of “recibimiento”. The torture room from which Aníbal witnessed the screams, the beatings, and in which he could imagine the contortions of the faces of those being tortured, was ironically called “el palacio de las sonrisas.” Those who were thrown from planes into the Plata River were named “*Comida de Pescado*” (Feitlowitz, 63) “Submarino”, which was a “traditional Argentine’s children’s treat consisting of a chocolate bar slowly melting in a cup of warm milk, which was in fact a type of torture in which the prisoner’s head was held under water befouled with urine and feces. When the victim was on the verge of suffocation, his head would be raised and then dunked again.” (Feitlowitz, 67) Guerra states that

(e)l enmascaramiento de la palabra como signo que no devela la verdad sino que la oculta viene a ser así el concepto que subyace como uno de los significados de la carnavalización de la tortura y la confesión (...) en una concepción del mundo que hace del Bien y del Mal una disyunción categórica donde el Mal debe ser anulado por la violencia. (“Polivalencias de la confesión en la novela chilena del exilio”, 245)

Feitlovitz writes that language has been changed dramatically during the dictatorship and that repression continues through language:

The repression lives on in such aberrations of the language, in the scars it left on the language. When a people's very words have been wounded, the society cannot fully recover until the language has been healed (...) At once public and intimate, language is a boundary between our vulnerable inner selves and the outside world. When, like skin, the language is bruised, punctured, or mutilated, that boundary breaks down. We have then no defense, no way to protect ourselves. (71).

Acts of Resistance

To the dehumanizing tactics and actions experienced by the prisoners in the camp, the author contrasts and highlights a frail resistance; a resistance born from the solidarity between prisoners that ultimately enables them to survive and sporadically to feel human again. During the torture of "el hombre calafate", they force the young man to sing. To show their solidarity with him, the prisoners sing along:

*Desde el hondo crisol de la patria
se levanta el clamor popular...
Ya se anuncia la nueva alborada,
todo Chile comienza a cantar... (46)*

"Eran los prisioneros del galpón que acompañaban en la distancia al atormentado." (46) In another story named "Distensión", the author describes how a slight loosening of the rules enables the prisoners to organize discussion sessions and sing songs that create a better spirit inside the camp.

Todo impresionaba en este revivir, en el anhelo colectivo de olvidar tantas sombras y soledades (...) Con los días, a estas charlas se fueron sumando las guardias cada vez con más interés y asombro. Paralelamente fue produciéndose comprensión y respeto. Los soldados pudieron apreciar por sí mismos que esos detenidos políticos no eran vulgares hampones ignorantes, y mucho menos cuatros degolladores." (70-71)

These sessions, which the guards would eventually monitor, would even create a certain connection between the prisoners and the guards.

Trajectory of Aníbal

The traditional *bildungsroman* is structured by a learning process with different initiation steps that lead to a successful entrance into the bourgeois order. Here, the process is very different: from prison and torture that have transformed the subject into an other/object, and from a social space where all the paradigms of what it is to be “human” are substituted with fascist values, Aníbal has to reconfigure his “self” that went through the destruction of his identity. When he receives a conditional freedom, he realizes that outside the camp there is no freedom: the barbed wire has been replaced by army and police patrols, curfews, that force Quijada to remain mostly inside the house, mute. But one night in front of his house, before the curfew, he identifies with a shaking dog, who, like him, is fearful and voiceless. The incident inspires his writing.

Conocía eso. Era miedo. Miedo a lo desconocido. Tal vez ese perro intuía que no llegaría a su refugio. La orden era disparar contra toda forma en movimiento que no contestara al alto. También él, como yo, no podía hablar. Lo dejé entrar. Fue mi asilado hasta el día siguiente. No obstante, me entregó el mensaje.
Si era imposible hablar, más tarde o temprano, podría escribirse.
Es lo que hice. (140)

Deciding to write shows a new power of consciousness, a new internal freedom and, although he has to wait until he has the material freedom to start writing, in exile, it

shows how Quijada's willpower to resist surfaces. It is a step towards the reconstruction of his identity, a step towards rebuilding himself as a body/subject. If in the first part of his work, he gives a direct testimonial of his experience in a detention camp; experience that is at the origin of the loss of his identity: "(...) una realidad donde lo humano culturalmente codificado asume las formas insólitas del castigo corporal y la represión" (232), in the second part of his work, and outside the camp, he goes beyond that to analyze the new reality of Chile. He chooses the dog as a metaphor to express his shaken view of humanity, a humanity from which he feels alienated. As an example, in "Los tiempos del perro" he identifies with his old dog which, after having lived a traumatizing experience in the streets, has become fearful and jumps at every noise. He would like to help his dog but he feels old, fearful and defenseless himself after his stay in the camp. Guerra writes the following:

El temor que se ha transformado en una vivencia de la cotidianidad bajo el sistema fascista resulta ser el elemento igualador que le permite al Sujeto, en su nueva circunstancia histórica, auto definirse a un nivel primario donde la esencia intelectual que distinguía al Hombre de los animales ha sido anulado. ("Polivalencias de la confesión en la novela chilena del exilio", 233)

Through writing, Aníbal reconfigures his own self and, at the same time, he inscribes in history, his experience and the experience of many others who have gone through the calvary of torture and political imprisonment.

The Little School

The Little School (1986) is another literary testimonial written from exile, but from a woman's perspective about the dictatorship in Argentina. Alicia Partnoy was the young mother of a little girl, Ruth, when on January 12, 1977 she was taken from her home by

Army personnel and brought to “The Little School”, a secret detention camp in Bahía Blanca, her home town. At that time, as a student at the University of Bahía Blanca, she had been elected student government representative and was also part of the Peronist Youth movement (Juventud Universitaria Peronista). Most of her friends and colleagues involved in religious or political movements disappeared from that same “Little School” leaving her with no answer in terms of why she was re-appeared and spared. (12) In the introduction of her memoirs, she writes about that important question that still haunts her to this day: “I never discovered why the military had spared my life. My parents, who knocked at every door looking for me, might have knocked at the correct door. Yet it is also true that some of the most influential people in the country were not able to rescue their own children. “ (15-16) After three months in The Little School, Alicia was transferred to Villa Floresta, in Bahía Blanca, and thereafter to Villa Devoto, an official prison in Buenos Aires. In 1979, she was forced to leave Argentina and arrived in the United States with her daughter, two months after her husband, who himself had survived the prison camps. They were given “U.S. visas and refugee status”. (16)

In 1983, Partnoy wrote a manuscript in Spanish to enter the contest of Casa de las Américas in Cuba, in the “testimonial” category. That original version was comprised of thirteen stories and was sent with the diplomatic pouch, but it never arrived. (Bocchino, 6) *The Little School*, was first published in English in the United States, where she lived in exile, in 1986. The Spanish version, *La escuelita*, was published in Argentina in 2006 “por la Editorial La Bohemia aunque varios capítulos se conocieron por fotocopias y algún diario de Rosario y otro de Neuquén cuando, según

otro género –el de la declaratoria-, Partnoy concurrió a la audiencia del Juzgado que lleva adelante la causa que investiga a los jefes del centro clandestino del Batallón 181 de Neuquén, La escolita.” (Bocchino, 7) According to Alicia Salomone, who wrote “Afirmación subjetiva y deber de memoria en *La Escolita*, de Alicia Partnoy” , many guards and torturers who were working at La Escolita, were identified thanks to Alicia’s testimonials and declarations to different Commissions for the Truth. (178)

Partnoy’s text is divided into two parts: a historical section that includes an introduction, two appendixes and a sketch of the Little School and a more poetic and subjective section, composed of twenty fragments that narrate her “Being-in-the World” (Heidegger), a world that has suddenly narrowed itself to the Little School, and to the limited relationships she has with people and objects she can see from under her blindfold, the noises she can distinguish or the sensations she experiences. To relate the reconfiguring of her new world, with a new existential time and spatiality, she transcends a purely realistic and descriptive style; her fragments are her personal and poetic way of describing those with whom she shares her new world. They are her subjective answer to the dehumanizing and annihilating discourse of the guards. Although she touches upon it, Alicia Partnoy’s main focus is not the physical abuse and torture suffered by all in the Little School; rather, she narrates her new awareness of things, her new “Dasein” in its everydayness, her new “Dasein-with”, and her attempts, as well as those of her fellow inmates, through resistance with humor, language, sight and friendly touch, to counter the degrading system and to keep their identities whole, in other words, to remain human beings. She describes the difficulties of daily survival

in a camp where the guards' goal is to annihilate the boundary between life and death (Cavarero, 42).

We have already read in *Cerco de púas* about the difficulty for the prisoners to use the restrooms in detention camps due to the regulated times and the complete lack of privacy. In her story called "Latrine", Partnoy adds the physical problem of constipation coming from the lack of decent food and physical movement. She nevertheless is able to turn this physical plight into an act of resistance through humor: "Yeah, just pretend that Chiche's face (Chiche being a shift supervisor) is inside the latrine and shitting becomes a pleasure (...) Of course, you end up exhausted from pushing but it's worth it." (29) Many of Partnoy's tales have similar descriptions of negative bodily experiences, which are purposely put in place to nullify the humanity of the inmates, and that she renders bearable through humor and disobedience. These stories of shared connivance highlight the positive attitude of these prisoners and show that their ontological freedom, their individual subjectivity has not been extinguished yet by the inhumane treatment and conditions in the camp.

Another story, "A Conversation Under the Rain" is a similar description of physical sensations and resistance through language and sight. The story details the filthy living conditions of the inmates, the reaction of the women's bodies that stop menstruating, putting themselves in a survival mode, as well as the physical punishment for talking. Partnoy nevertheless focuses once again on how to minimize the impact of the dehumanization process. She describes how raindrops on her body, which had had no contact with water in more than twenty days, have the magic power to make her heart melt and feel alive again, and to wash away not only the filth but also

some of the bitterness in her heart. (67-70) The harsh new reality imposed on her body is such that small raindrops acquire a whole new significance. Language, civilization's embodiment, is banned inside the compound and there is a price to pay for sharing her feelings with her neighbor inmate and both women are condemned to stand naked outside in the cold and the rain. Her capacity to invent a story about Chinese torture diminishes the harshness of her punishment, and the fact of having had the opportunity to communicate verbally with her fellow inmate helps her to defy her torturers and to fight to maintain her strength and self-esteem:

In the corridor that led to the iron grate, Peine kicked her roughly several times. She thought he was mad because she had neither cried nor pleaded for mercy, because she had not even trembled. She thought he was upset because in spite of the blows and restraints, in spite of the filth and torture, both women had had that long and warm conversation under the rain. (73)

Alicia Partnoy answered the following during an interview with "Talk of the Nation" on NPR News: "(...) our power as a sweetness, as something that overcomes the destruction that they wanted to establish." (Ludden, np)

Partnoy presents a parody of the military, which reminds us of Guerra and Vargas Llosa in the previous chapter. Olivera-Williams mentions that "Partnoy se apropia de la ironía y asume la voz de una estudiante. En cierta manera, su texto parodia el discurso autoritario de los militares, sus bromas groseras, sus intentos de cosificar a sus enemigos, todo lo que irónicamente materializa la falta de autoridad de la maquinaria concentracionaria." (69) In the story named "Benja's First Night", Alicia describes how Benja, the youngest member of their group, was hassled by a guard, who, bored, wanted to "box a little" (46) Alicia challenges the guard to arm wrestle with her to stop him from attacking Benja and stall for time until the changing of the guard.

When she wins he can't believe it and she proposes a rematch: "He accepts; the motherfucker's tired of boxing. Damn him, why doesn't he fall asleep like Pato, who guzzles down a lot of booze and drops dead?" (48) Alicia draws a pathetic portrait of the guard who uses unnecessary violence because he is bored, and who is manipulated by Alicia without even realizing it.

The blindfold is present in most of Partnoy's stories. The blindfold is a barrier between the prisoner and the outside world, made to increase the helplessness of the prisoner who can't see, who can't move easily, who can't escape, and especially who can't see the blows as they come. With her habitual humor, Partnoy narrates how she finally reconciled with the shape of her nose that enabled her some visibility: "(...) it's thanks to my nose that I can see. What happens is that its shape keeps my blindfold slightly lifted. Portions of the world parade before these small slits (...) my nose seems to grow, proudly, with every new blindfold. The reason is that, finally, my nose and I have reconciled." (60)

The story named "The One-Flower Slippers", narrates her peeping under her blindfold and discovering the slippers they gave her at the Little School: only one has a flower, but a flower whose beauty seems obscene to Partnoy who is surrounded by filth in the camp. She shares with Vasca her friend and co-detainee:

The flower, a huge plastic daisy, looked up at them from the floor. The other slipper, without flower was more like them. But that one-flowered slipper amid the dirt and fear, the screams and the torture, that flower so plastic, so unbelievable, so ridiculous, was like a stage prop, almost obscene, absurd, a joke.

Vasca smiled first and then laughed. It was a nervous and barely restrained laughter. If she were caught laughing, it was going to be very hard to explain what was so funny. Then blows would come, with or without explanations. (27-28)

Partnoy's tales show a consistency: the systematic disobedience of the prisoners, notwithstanding the risk of a beating or even torture, for the sake of a true human contact, a stolen moment of laughter, the physical contact with a fellow inmate through shaking hands, all gestures that heal, that restore, even if it is for just a moment, their sense of belonging to the human species. These stolen moments of humor, complicity, compassion, and courage serve to brighten even their darkest days. In that spirit, every tale is preceded by the drawing of a blindfolded woman who lifts the blindfold in an act of resistance. And, of course, every tale is ultimately born from an act of resistance.

When Partnoy was caught at home, she writes "ella", as if watching as a third person her failed escape (*le corps-vu*), as if her body was the obstacle that enabled her imprisonment. Inside prison, she writes "yo" but she also writes a plural "yos" that configures a collective "we", that includes the voices of her fellow detainees, whom she brings to life. As Manzor states,

This "we" is the affirmation of an individual created as a "collective subject" (...) Partnoy's collective "we" also functions as another form of resistance against authority. On the other (hand), by giving a voice to characters who died in a conscious attempt to bring about socio-historical changes, by reinserting into history stories which would have remained disappeared, Partnoy's writing and the characters' actions are equivalent, that is, to let the people without history "write" history. (159-160)

Olivera-Williams highlights the fact that Partnoy mentions the physical and gender abuse that occurred in *The Little School*, while omitting the sordid details:

rechaza dar testimonio de los detalles más cruentos de los vejámenes sufridos por el *yo* y el *nosotros* para defender el cuerpo plural y solidario y ahora fragmentado por la desaparición de los que ya no están, pide que se lea lo que no se dice. Reclama justicia en nombre de una violencia de género que transforma a los prisioneros en alterada y a esa alterada en la lectura que un sistema patriarcal hace del cuerpo de la mujer y de lo

femenino: se humilla vistiendo de mujer a dos adolescentes varones encarcelados, se transforma la relación afectiva de las parejas de jóvenes detenidas en aliciente para que los guardias se masturben, se trastorna el ciclo biológico de las mujeres por medio de las torturas físicas y psicológicas, se torturan a las mujeres embarazadas, se las cuida antes de que el niño esté por nacer para luego del parto matarlas y desaparecer al bebé, como en el caso de Graciela Romero de Metz. (70)

Therefore, her writing becomes a purge and exorcism of the Evil displayed by the torturers.

Partnoy's work *The Little School* was written from exile with the purpose, as was Quijada's, to resist and denounce the authoritarian regimes, and to pay homage to the disappeared.

Today, while sharing this part of my experience, I pay tribute to a generation of Argentines lost in an attempt to bring social change and justice. I also pay tribute to the victims of repression in Latin America. I knew just one Little School, but throughout our continent there are many "schools" whose professors use the lessons of torture and humiliation to teach us to lose the memories of ourselves. Beware: in little schools the boundaries between story and history are so subtle that even I can hardly find them. (18)

As observed in Quijada's work, Partnoy's testimonial is "at the crossroads between History and fiction or, better yet, at that limbo site of encounter between untold History and fiction." (Manzor, 160) The narrative structure of *The Little School* is made to blur even more the line between History and fiction. Besides the poetic elements, Partnoy's work contains a pure "descriptive" part that includes the introduction in which she briefly introduces herself to the reader, explaining when, where and why she was arrested by the military, and what her stay at *The Little House* was about. At the end are two appendixes: a first appendix named "Cases of the Disappeared at the Little School" gives the names of her fellow detainees, details of their stay and their death (or

survival). A second appendix “Descriptions of the Guards at the Little School” gives brief physical descriptions of the guards. These passages are purely informative, they are excerpts of judicial testimonials, and give the impression that she wrote down the details before giving her memory the opportunity to betray her. A diagram of the detention center separates the two appendixes. This historical information counterbalances a more fictional “body” of the work, described previously, and gives it its “historical feel”.

Three beautiful drawings by her mother, Raquel Partnoy, embellish the text and evoke Alicia’s stay in the detention center. The first one, represented on the first page of this chapter, shows three faces, of which two are blindfolded. One of the two blindfolded is lifting the blindfold in an act of defiance. A horizontal bust that joins the three figures represents the tortured body, and the blurry faces in the back are the dead. The second drawing represents two blindfolded women, one of which wears one-flower flippers and thus must be Partnoy. Their bodies touch. Behind a wall are faces that watch; they might be the guards waiting to surprise them while talking in order to punish them. The last drawing represents nativity and depicts a Christmas tree on the bottom of which are represented the mothers and/or grandmothers of “la plaza de mayo”. An infant on a typical Christmas tree represents nativity; here, the infant is the symbol of the stolen children that the women of “la plaza de mayo” desperately search for. On the top level of the tree appear faces that from the right to the left transition from alive to dead. They are the “disappeared” parents, whose fate at any given time is unknown. Dead or alive?

The torturer

Compared to what we know about tortured people due to a vast number of testimonials both in the Holocaust and other fascist camps, the torturer is an enigmatic figure. He/She usually remains silent when a repression period ends.

La danza de los cuervos (2012) by Javier Rebolledo, is a journalistic investigation, a documentary research of the life of Jorgelino Vergara, nicknamed el Mocito, who worked inside the DINA (Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional), the secret police of the dictatorship, and later the CNI (Centro Nacional de Informaciones). When he was seventeen years old, he witnessed (or participated in) from inside the system, the work of “la Brigada Lautaro” and “el Grupo Delfín” extermination agents of the DINA, in el cuartel Simón Bolívar, at 8800 Simón Bolívar Street. Not until 2007, did what happened in this cuartel become known because he “narró a los detectives una parte importante de los horrores que presencié mientras servía café a los torturadores durante los atroces interrogatorios, o cuando vió a los detenidos desangrarse sobre una multicancha en el patio del cuartel (...)” (20) After he admitted to the police, “(s)etenta y cuatro personas, entre agentes pertenecientes a la Brigada Lautaro y directivos de la DINA, procedentes de todas las ramas y rangos de las Fuerzas Armadas y de Orden, estaban tras las rejas gracias a la memoria fotográfica de el “mocito”.” (22) Since that time, el Mocito has received repeated death threats and he fears for his life.

Cuartel Simón Bolívar was an extermination camp, mainly for communist prisoners; not one prisoner came out alive. Prisoners would die there in a maximum of two weeks after their arrival and after extreme torture, be they innocent or guilty. “caía

de todo, justos y pecadores”. Y los justos... bueno, pasaban por pecadores, porque ahí la regla básica era que ningún detenido salía con vida.” (Rebolledo, 127)

This confirms what was said previously about torture being more a weapon of destruction than a means of gaining information. There is a shift from terror to horror. If totalitarian regimes use terror as a political strategy to frighten and bludgeon a population into submission, there is a moment when that is not necessary anymore, when most of the opposition has been silenced in one way or another. That is when terror becomes “total terror”, “a terror that is no longer strategic, because it has departed from the logic of means and ends.” (41) For Cavarero, “total terror” means that “everything is permitted”. But, “the final shift, the approach to extreme horror that characterizes radical evil, requires a further step still: that of going beyond the principle that “everything is permitted” to embrace and activate the unprecedented principle that “everything is possible.” (42) “And it was precisely in that inferno that total terror, meaning terror that has finally “lost its ‘purpose’ and is no longer a tool for striking fear into people, finally came to coincide with the extreme form of horror.” (42) Arendt’s horror describes the “living dead” or “walking corpses” of some of the Auschwitz inmates, who, although still alive, had lost their human condition. Arendt portrays them as “ghastly marionettes with human faces (...) transformed into specimens of the human animal”. (Cavarero, 43) In Argentina’s and Chile’s camps, similar instances of dehumanization took place. In *La danza de los cuervos*, innocents or guilty were treated equally, as easily disposable objects.

In *Precarious Life*, Judith Butler writes the following:

Violence is surely a touch of the worst order, a way a primary human vulnerability to other humans is exposed in its most terrifying way, a way

in which we are given over, without control, to the will of another, a way in which life itself can be expunged by the willful action of another. (...) In a way, we all live with this particular vulnerability, a vulnerability to the other that is part of bodily life, a vulnerability to a sudden address from elsewhere that we cannot preempt. This vulnerability, however, becomes highly exacerbated under certain social and political conditions, especially those in which violence is a way of life and the means to secure self-defense are limited. (28-29)

La danza de los cuervos, a testimonial from an eye-witness from inside the system, shows exactly how these vulnerable prisoners were transformed into non-persons, bodies, objects, annoying bulk. Olivera-Williams says that “(e)sta violencia contra la fibra más íntima del ser humano intentó borrar las subjetividades de los militantes, al mismo tiempo que dejaba constancia de la caída de los represores en la perversión al ejercer contra los prisioneros un exceso de poder.” (62) This book shows how these guards or “doctors” “normalized” torture, and how the corpses were disappeared. El Mocito was a young man hired to take care of odd jobs such as bringing coffee and sandwiches to the guards, feeding the prisoners, cleaning up after a session of torture... One day el Mocito is asked to bring coffee to “Doctor Tormento” who is at work in his office:

Una persona estaba sobre la camilla. Era un detenido, las manos sin esposas, amarradas con correas. De su boca salía una espuma blanca, se veía semidormido, hipnotizado (...) El doctor Pincetti interrumpió momentáneamente su trabajo y con su calma característica le dictó la norma a futuro. “Mira, para que sepas cómo me gusta el café. Tres cucharadas, pero llenas hasta arriba, sin azúcar” Así, amargo le gustaba. Muy bien. Y el doctor entonces le ordenó dejar la habitación. Debía continuar con su “paciente”. (120)

So, who are these torturers, who can appreciate a good coffee while killing someone? Or this young man, el Mocito, who continues to work in such a place, notwithstanding what he discovers? For Sartre, each person is endowed with freedom that inevitably

goes with making meaningful choices that have ethical dimensions. These choices have consequences not only for oneself but also for the others. (Onof, 15)

Notwithstanding his denials, it is unclear whether el Mocito remained only a spectator or if he more actively participated in torture.

In “La tortura: todo es cuerpo”, José Santos Herceg declares that “(...) entre los torturadores no hay, al menos no habitualmente, ‘agresividad instintiva irremediable’, como tampoco hay locura ni inanidad mental, anomalías psicológicas perversión natural.” (30) According to him, no one is born a torturer, one becomes a torturer although

no (se) puede descartar la existencia de ciertas condiciones previas: una formación fuertemente ideologizada - incluso desde el núcleo familiar -, la existencia de fuertes prejuicios y, sin duda, la concurrencia de rasgos de la personalidad como son (...) ... tener creencias rígidas, ser intolerante hacia la debilidad (propia o ajena), ser altamente punitivo, receloso y exageradamente respetuoso de la autoridad; muy incomprensivo y, correlativamente, inclinado a la indignación moral; muy conformista y tradicionalista. Estos rasgos son relacionados con una debilidad del yo, con una inseguridad que busca compensarse en modelos inmovibles de conducta (30)

Santos explains that by training the body, one can teach someone to become a torturer:

El cuerpo del futuro torturador es entrenado, en primer lugar, al nivel de las emociones. El asco, el horror, la repugnancia, por ejemplo, deben ser bloqueados para que no se interpongan en su tarea. Del mismo modo, emociones positivas como son el amor, la ternura, la solidaridad, la compasión, la protección, simplemente deben ser neutralizadas con el objeto de que pueda desempeñar su labor sin problemas (Cf.: CODEPU, 1985:25) (31)

Blocking the ethical and positive values of the torturers who rule these detention camps show us how these places become counter-spaces. Scarry mentions the

following: “For the torturers, the sheer and simple fact of human agony is made invisible, and the moral fact of inflicting that agony is made neutral by the feigned urgency and significance of the question.” (29) As with the borderlands in chapter one, detention camps are heterotopias. They are antithetical places; sites of crisis that distort, deviate from, or invert the normal spaces. This is valid in terms of physical torture but also in terms of space and time. The private space becomes public, the logical notion of time is erased. The detention camp flouts the rules of the “Dasein” experience of the body/subject: the contact with other lived bodies, based on “normal” ethical communications, and which configures the uniqueness of each human being, his/her subjectivity, is deviated into torture that denies human rights, and creates helpless, degraded victims and dead bodies.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have examined different literary re-presentations of the body under torture. Although these testimonials vary in style, from literary, poetic, to chronicle, all were written with a sense of duty to keep the memory of the happenings alive, the desire to alert the world, and to ensure that these events will never be repeated. In many cases, they are a process of emotional, psychological restoration/reconstruction of the body/subject, who was transformed through violence into an alienated other/object.

For the survivor of torture, Feitlovitz states though that the victim never fully recovers. She cites a holocaust survivor who wrote:

Whoever was tortured, stayed tortured (...) (t)orture is ineradicably burned into him ... He loses something we will call ‘trust in the world’... the

certainty that by reason of written or unwritten social contracts, the other person will spare me... that he will respect my physical, and with it also my metaphysical, being. The boundaries of my body are the boundaries of my self. (70)

So, when torture is utilized, boundaries of both the body and the self have been trespassed and the breakdown is thus complete; physical and psychological. Some torture techniques are more oriented towards hurting the body and others towards hurting the psychic, but the “lived body” is affected as a whole; the physical and emotional that deal with a hostile environment in which they have no say. The victim endures physical torture, mental torture, constant threats, simulated executions, drugs, insalubrity, food deprivation, isolation, sadness, humiliation, and dehumanization. This combination can generate motor, sensory and even hormonal imbalances.(Santos, 36)

A victim of torture said the following: “Sufríamos males reales e imaginarios que a veces nos producían disturbios hormonales y dolores imprecisos y, de repente, nos enmudecíamos por días” (Santos, 36)

Feitlovitz adds that

(t)he body’s knowledge cannot be contradicted, the body’s knowledge is forever. As Foucault tells us, “it is the knowledge of the body - of the punished body - that gives rise to the soul.” (70) Vos no existís, Vos no sos nadie (“You don’t exist,” “You’re nobody”) - these expressions of ultimate scorn, these signs of ultimate vulnerability were indeed burned into the victims (...) (70)

The portrayal of torture is limited in *Cerco de púas* and *The Little School*, as these texts are personal testimonials. *La danza de los cuervos* by Javier Rebolledo, on the other hand, depicts in detail the radical evil that Cavarero describes in *Horrorism*. *La danza de los cuervos*, relates how governmental institutions condoned total terror; a

process where the torturers inflicted excruciating suffering on the guilty and the innocent alike. Rebolledo captures the essence of horrorism: a form of modern political violence devoid of strategic goals, where torturing and killing were perpetrated just because everything was possible.

Conclusion

In this dissertation, I mainly focused on the literary re-presentation of subjects/bodies exposed to violence, cruelty and/or repression in Latin America from the beginning of the twentieth century up to the present day. The re-presentations all depict interactions that bring about important changes in the lived experience of the characters. As a tool to explain how the body is key to the development or the loss of subjectivity and identity, I used phenomenology, a science that studies the lived body, or the body in the world, immersed in its natural environment and in contact with others. Phenomenology perceives the person as an “embodied experienter” of meaningful situations, happenings, and activities in a usually coherent world. Merleau Ponty, for example, uses the paradigm mind-body-world experience to emphasize the interaction of these three inseparable elements. For this purpose, I have chosen texts specifically depicting experiences in three different situations: migration, prostitution, and political persecution.

The world presented in the texts analyzed in this dissertation definitely deviates from any notion of coherence and therefore, embodiment is disrupted by the “anomalous” or “abnormal”: societal rules are transgressed, bodily contact becomes violent, and the body/subject is perceived as an “other” in the position of object and merchandise.

Objectification was undoubtedly, one of the main elements of the literary re-presentation of the subject/body in a situation of violence in which there is a subject in power and another as a victim. This situation certainly exceeds Jean-Paul Sartre’s

phenomenological description of the experience of being seen under the gaze of the other (le corps vu). In “Sartre’s: Treatment of the Body in Being and Nothingness” it is said that: “Being seen (...) is a particularly informative form of self-experience through the other. I experience myself as vulnerable, exposed, caught in a particular place and time, seized and frozen by the look. Touching, on the other hand, sets up a different chain of relationships.” (Boulé, 22). In a normal situation, “my being-as-object” under the gaze of someone unveils the vulnerable in one self, in the case of migration, prostitution, and political torture, objectification dehumanizes the body/subject, uses it as a real and not just metaphorical object, and imposes severe punishment.

In the texts analyzed in this dissertation, the three different circumstances, immigration, prostitution, and fascist detention/torture, the body acquires a different specificity. In the case of immigration, which I studied in chapter one, the dispossessed subject, who, with great difficulty, saves money to pay a coyote to help him cross the border, becomes for that same coyote a body or merchandise that needs to be transported. The utopian dream of “a better elsewhere” without violence and inequality is shattered when during the journey, the body/subject is mutilated, his/her subjectivity rendered invisible. There is a rupture of the conjunction body/subject that becomes only body in a materiality subjected to degradation and deprived of any identity, in an only-corporeal “other” visibly marked by gender and skin color. Mexico’s criminal violence peaks in the borderlands, depicted in both novels studied in this chapter, *La file india* and *La mara*. The borderlands are the “heterotopian”, “no-place”, “third place”, or “intermediate space”, theoretical notions described in chapter one that characterize “different” spaces, spaces that function by their own rules. The

borderlands epitomize racism, gang violence, and human trafficking that cause the migrant to experience the loss of his/her subjectivity and embark on his/her “descent into horror”. (Arya, 157). These novels portray the migrant as a “victimized other” whose rights are abused and who cannot protect his/her own body in a country where at all levels of the power structure, he/she is seen as the “uncivilized other” who offends by his/her transgressing a borderline and thus an established and protected national order (civilization versus barbarism, national versus global).

Again exceeding philosophical notions, the concept of “thrownness” postulated by Heidegger here becomes a literal situation. For Heidegger, to be thrown-in-the-world means that one’s social background, one’s physical particularities, such as the color of one’s skin or one’s hair, are what constitute one’s “mineness”, characteristics over which one has no say, but nevertheless has to endure. Moreover, one is thrown into a body before being thrown into the world. In the case of the migrant, a subject/body displaced from his/her native environment, he/she is at the hands of the coyote, the border patrol, and the gangs surrounding the borderlands. As an “outsider”, the migrant is perceived as a threat, a “wrong” that is made “right” through exploitation, and if exploitation is impossible, annihilation. Mexicans’ racism towards the Central Americans engenders the contempt with which they view the Southern migrant, obviously inferior and of low status, and thus a “stain” that contaminates by its filth and moral unworthiness. Ironically, the Central American becomes the “subaltern other of the other”, knowing, as we do, that Mexicans are already the “social other” of the gringo.

The violence portrayed against the migrant body has a specificity that transcends any racist or economic motive; it is depicted as violence for the sake of entertainment. The perpetrator lacks any empathy regarding the other, has even lost his own humanity, to exhibit an abnormal perversion that only finds gratification in subjecting the other to extreme degradation and agony. The helplessness of the migrant's situation, who already is "displaced" from his habitual environment, is such that agency is nearly impossible when the wave of violence hits.

In the case of prostitution, which I examined in chapter two, something else occurs with the body, in addition to it being sold as a sexual object. In a contradictory fashion, the prostitute is simultaneously the merchant and the merchandise. This means that she is the subject who sells and the object that is being sold. Paradoxically, the body as the object of pleasure does not lose connection with its subjectivity and the body/subject is not divided or fractured. Thus, the body is the "other" used as a sexual object, but at the same time, the prostitute maintains her self-conscience; she can experience pleasure and eventually use her body as a tool to attain her personal goals. In a performance, she remains a subject capable of seducing and manipulating the subject who paid for the sexual use of her body. In this sense, the subject who pays for sex is also an "other". From a feminist perspective, in the case of *El infierno prometido* and *Muñeca brava*, the prostitute's agency enables her to regain her freedom, to eventually use her body as an instrument of resistance, or to mock the destructive dominance of a male society that uses prostitution to protect the virtue of "decent wives". With her nascent engagement, the prostitute transgresses the marginality traditionally assigned by social order.

This literary elaboration of the leitmotif of the prostitute from a feminist perspective radically modifies the notion, in texts written by men, of prostitution as a synonym of sin and immorality, as in the case of *Santa* by Federico Gamboa.

Nevertheless, as depicted in *Que raro que me llame Guadalupe*, based on white slavery and child abuse in Mexico, human beings can also become totally devoid of any agency. According to Sartre, human reality, *la réalité humaine*, consists of encounters in the world and some of these encounters can be lethal. In the case of human trafficking or child prostitution, the prostitute's subjectivity is destroyed and the body/subject becomes a body without agency, without voice, owned by someone else. The body's helplessness and alienation are total and its destruction occurs in a matter of a few years due to diseases and the customers' violence; customers whose money allows them to act with total impunity, even in the case of murder.

During dictatorial repression, which I studied in chapter three, the body under torture during an interrogation is initially a hermeneutical body. According to Guerra, who states in "Polivalencias de la confesión en la novela chilena del exilio", the "(...) acciones coercitivas implican también el proceso de desciframiento de una verdad con el propósito de adquirir conocimiento acerca de otros sujetos que promueven acciones de resistencia." (227) But at the same time, it is through this body that the fascist authority tries to cancel its vulnerability. As mentioned previously: "It is, of course, precisely because the reality of that power is so highly contestable, the regime so unstable, that torture is being used." (Scarry, 27). In the case of torture, the body/subject can be transformed into mere organic life: "Para lograrlo se debe erradicar la pluralidad y la diferencia que existe entre los seres humanos, reduciéndolos a lo

mínimo que todos tienen en común, a una igualdad originaria (...): la vida orgánica, la funcionalidad corporal. Todo en la víctima, en tanto víctima, es cuerpo.” (Santos Herceg, 35). This relates closely to two concepts mentioned in chapter three: the one by Scarry that states that physical torture is world-destroying and the victim becomes only body, and the one by Cavarero (following Primo Levi’s testimonial) describing the “Muselmann”, the Jewish prisoner of Auschwitz who “no longer had room in his consciousness for the contrasts good or bad, noble or base, intellectual or unintellectual. He was a staggering corpse, a bundle of physical functions in its last convulsions.” (Cavarero, 34)

In spite of the dehumanization imposed upon the prisoners during the process of torture, which inflicts physical and moral pain, isolation, animalization, and the destruction of the victim’s language, the destruction of the subject in the conjunction body/subject is oftentimes only ephemeral (depending on the subject and the duration of torture). Despite cruelty and abjection, that subject, whose body has been tormented, is generally able to regain his/her subjectivity through solidarity with the other victims or at a later date, through writing.

Throughout this dissertation, a sort of meditation on the effects of violence on the vulnerable human being, we have seen significant differences between the aesthetical treatment of the protagonists in the varied texts. They are all denunciations of an unethical treatment imposed upon an “other”. Some portray the objectification of the other, be it through human trafficking, child prostitution, or torture, leading to such violence that to describe it requires a specific vocabulary that Cavarero calls “horrorism” or that Area calls “abjection” (following closely the known research by Julia

Kristeva); a vocabulary that contains abundant and graphic details about the transformation of the body/subject into a blood-stained corpse. Bonnie Honig, author of *Democracy and the Foreigner* wrote the following about horror: “(...) its worst offense is an ontological crime: that of erasing the singularity of persons and transforming all humans into mere insignificant body matter.” (Cavarero, cover page)

A more positive message often came from texts written by women. Although these writings were also denunciations, they were written from a feminist perspective that highlights self-determination through the development of inner awareness; they depicted characters who through exterior help and/or inner thought and reflexion, acquired a deeper consciousness of their experience and were able to maintain the conjunction body/subject or who, through agency and solidarity, or even writing, could distance themselves from a certain alienation vis-a-vis society. These writings portrayed perhaps a more constructive viewpoint, not only explanatory, in terms of “remaking” the world that had been deliberately “unmade”; these texts focused on the strength of personal agency, resistance, and even the possibility of personal contribution in a world where gang violence, human trafficking, and state terrorism still prevail.

Bibliography

- Alaniz, Rogelio. "Zwi Migdal: Prostitución, rufianes y anarquistas". 2016. <http://rogelioalaniz.com.ar/zwi-migdal-prostitucion-rufianes-judios-y-anarquistas/> 9 October, 2017. Online.
- Agamben, Georgio. "Medios sin fin. Notas sobre la política." Translation by Antonio Gimenó Cuspinera. *Pre-textos*. 2001, pp 13-100. Print.
- Amar Sánchez, Ana María. *Instrucciones para la derrota. Narrativas éticas y políticas de perdedores*. Barcelona: Anthropos, 2010. Print.
- Anderson, Jon Lee. "Foreword" of *A History of Violence. Living and Dying in Central America* by Óscar Martínez. Translation by John B. Washington and Daniela Ugaz. Brooklyn, NY: Verso, 2016. Print.
- Arya, Rina. *Abjection and Representation: An Exploration of Abjection in the Visual Arts, Film and Literature*. United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. Print.
- Aubry, Kenia Gabriela. "La Novela Suprarreal: Fernando Vallejo, Rafael Ramírez Heredia, Elmer Mendoza, Daniel Sada, Roberto Bolaño y Jorge Franco." Tesis doctoral de Kenia Gabriela Aubry Ortegón. Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, June 2013. <https://minerva.usc.es/xmlui/handle/10347/9557>. Online.
- Bales, Kevin. *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2012. Print.
- Behnke, Elisabeth. "Edmund Husserl: Phenomenology of Embodiment". Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <https://www.iep.utm.edu/husspemb/>. Online

Benedict, Ruth. "Racism: the ism of the Modern World" in Racism. Key Concepts in Critical Theory edited by Leonard Harris. New York: Humanity Books, 1999. (31-49). Print.

Bhabha, Homi. "The Third Space. Interview with Homi Bhabha".

<https://www.scribd.com/document/.../The-Third-Space-Interview-With-Homi-Bhabha>. 8 AUG 2017. Online.

Bianchi, Paula Daniela. "Escenas del cuerpo violentado. Representaciones de la violencia en dos escenas de la literatura 'Prostitucional' latinoamericana."

<https://ijournal.commons.gc.cuny.edu/2009-2-bianchi-texto/>. 26 Jan 2018. Online.

____ "Mujeres bravas: Representaciones de la violencia en Muñeca brava de Lucía Guerra". *Nómadas* no.39 Bogotá July/Dec. 2013, pp.152-163. <http://www.scielo.org.co/pdf/noma/n39/n39a11.pdf>. Online.

Bilbija, Ksenija, Ana Forcinito and Bernardita Llanos. Editors. *Poner el cuerpo*. Santiago: Editorial Cuarto Propio, 2017. Print.

Bourdieu, Pierre. *La domination masculine*. France: Editions du Seuil, 1998. Print.

Bullington, J. *The Expression of the Psychosomatic Body from a Phenomenological Perspective*. Chapter 2: "The Lived Body". <http://www.springer.com/978-94-007-6497-2>. 2013. Online.

Bocchina, Adriana. "La escuelita de Alicia Partnoy: una escritura del límite". https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280732059_La_Escuelita_de_ALICIA_PARTNOY_una_escritura_del_limite. 3 Apr 2018. Online.

- Buffington, Robert. *Criminal and Citizen in Modern Mexico*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999. Print.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble*: London and New York: Routledge, 1999. Print.
- _____. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. London-New York: Verso, 2004.
- <http://www.wkv-stuttgart.de/uploads/media/butler-judith-precarius-life.pdf>.
15 Mar 2018. Online.
- Calderón Le Joliff, Tatiana. “La poética de la frontera en la literatura hispanoamericana contemporánea (Chile-México)”, introduction to *Afpunmapu fronteras borderlands: Poética de los confines: Chile-México*. Valparaíso: Ediciones Universitarias de Valparaíso, 2015. Print.
- Cánovas, Rodrigo. *Sexualidad y cultura en la novela hispanoamericana. La alegoría del prostíbulo*. Santiago: LOM, 2003. Print.
- Cardona Puello, Sindy Patricia. “El Infierno Prometido: Una muestra de la constante relación entre literatura y sociedad”. <http://qellqasqa.com.ar/ojs/index.php/algarrobo-mel/article/view/18>. 1 Nov 2017. Online.
- Castillo, Debra. *Easy Women*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998. Print.
- Cavareiro, Adriana. *Horrorism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009. Print.
- Cirlot, Juan Eduardo. *A Dictionary of Symbols*. Translated from Spanish. London: Rutledge & Kegan Paul. Second Edition, 1971. Print.
- De Ferranti David, Guillermo E. Perry, Francisco H.G. Ferreira, and Michael Walton. *Inequality in Latin America. Breaking with History?* Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2004. Print.

Diaz, Tom. *No Boundaries: transnational Latino gangs and American law enforcement*.

Michigan: University of Michigan Press. 2014, 5th ed. Print.

Dörr, Otto. *Espacio y tiempo vividos*. [https://books.google.com/.../](https://books.google.com/.../Espacio_Y_Tiempo_Vividos.html?...)

[Espacio_Y_Tiempo_Vividos.html?...](https://books.google.com/.../Espacio_Y_Tiempo_Vividos.html?...) 26 Mar 2018. Online.

Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*.

London and New York: Routledge.

[https://monoskop.org/images/7/7d/Douglas_Mary_Purity_and_Danger](https://monoskop.org/images/7/7d/Douglas_Mary_Purity_and_Danger_An_Analysis_of_Concepts_of_Pollution_and_Taboo_2001.pdf)

[_An_Analysis_of_Concepts_of_Pollution_and_Taboo_2001.pdf](https://monoskop.org/images/7/7d/Douglas_Mary_Purity_and_Danger_An_Analysis_of_Concepts_of_Pollution_and_Taboo_2001.pdf). 13 Mar

2018. Online.

Drucaroff, Elsa. *El infierno prometido: Una prostituta de la Zwi Migdal*. Buenos Aires:

Editorial Sudamericana, second edition, 2006. Print.

Ehrenreich Barbara and Arlie Russell Hochschild, eds. *Global Woman - Nannies,*

Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy. New York: Holt Paperbacks,

2004. Print.

Eliade, Mircea. *The Sacred and the Profane*. New York, A Harvest Book. Harcourt,

Brace & World, Inc. 27 Jan 2018. Online.

Epple, Juan Armando. "Esa literatura que surge de un cerco de púas". [http://](http://www.revistadelauniversidad.unam.mx/ojs_rum/files/journals/1/articles/10731/public/10731-16129-1-PB.pdf)

[www.revistadelauniversidad.unam.mx/ojs_rum/files/journals/1/articles/10731/](http://www.revistadelauniversidad.unam.mx/ojs_rum/files/journals/1/articles/10731/public/10731-16129-1-PB.pdf)

[public/10731-16129-1-PB.pdf](http://www.revistadelauniversidad.unam.mx/ojs_rum/files/journals/1/articles/10731/public/10731-16129-1-PB.pdf). 01 Apr 2018. Online.

Escárcega, Alicia. Reseña: *La Fila India* de Antonio Ortuño. Revista Digital

Universtitaria. revista. una. mx. 1 de febrero de 2014. Vol. 15. Nº 2.

<http://www.revista.unam.mx/vol.15/num2/art14/>. 31 Jul 2017. Online.

Feitlowitz, Marguerite. *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture*. New York: Oxford University Press, revised edition 2011. Print.

Flores, Norberto. "Dos voces en pugna: la historia oficial como narrativa de legitimación y el relato testimonial chileno 1973-1989. Rasgos caracterizadores del discurso histórico". <https://web.uchile.cl/publicaciones/cyber/14/tx15nflores.html>. 25 Apr 2018. Online.

Foucault, Michel. "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias". www.vizkult.org/propositions/alineinnature/pdfs/Foucault-OfOtherSpaces1967.pdf. 8 AUG 2017. Online.

Franco, Jean. *Cruel Modernity*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2013. Print.

Galgani, Jaime Alberto. "La Mara, la historia interminable. La migración centroamericana en el relato neopolicial de Rafael Ramírez Heredia". http://www.scielo.cl/scielo.php?pid=S0716-58112009000100002&script=sci_art_text&lng=pt. 5 APR 2017. Online.

Gamboa, Federico. *Santa*. Madrid: Drácena, ficciones y relatos, 2013. Print.

Gálvez-Carlisle, Gloria. "*Muñeca brava*: Lucía Guerra y la rearticulación de estructuras y estrategias postmodernas". Centro virtual Cervantes. AIH. Actas XII (1995). pp 218-224. Online.

Glantz, Margo. "*Santa*". Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes. http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra-visor/santa--1/html/7247861f-370c-40b9-bae0-e1b93e67a1d9_2.html . 25 Aug 2017. Online.

Gonzalo, Danny. "Dawson: Isla 10. La importancia de la memoria histórica". Oct 2009.

<http://artepolitica.com/comunidad/dawson-isla-10-la-importancia-de-la-memoria-historica/>. 11 Apr 2018. Online.

Green, Graeme. "El Salvadorean journalist Oscar Martinez on cartels, human traffic and surviving 'The Beast'". <http://www.curiousanimal.com/oscar-martinez/> 19 Apr 2016. Online.

Guerra, Lucía. *La ciudad ajena: Subjetividades de origen mapuche en el espacio urbano*. Santiago de Chile: Ceibo Ediciones, 2014. Print.

_____. *La mujer fragmentada: Historias de un signo*. Santiago de Chile: Editorial Cuarto Propio, third edition, April 2006. Print.

_____. *Mujer y escritura*. Mexico, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2007. Print.

_____. *Muñeca brava*. Santiago de Chile: Ceibo ediciones, 2015. Print.

_____. "Polivalencias de la confesión en la novela chilena del exilio" in *Texto e ideología en la narrativa chilena*. Minneapolis: The Prisma Institute, 1987. Print.

Harris, Leonard. *Racism. Key Concepts in Critical Theory*. New York: Humanity Books, 1999. Print.

Hellman, Judith. "Pedro P. Coyote" *The Mexico Reader. History, Culture, Politics*. Gilbert M. Joseph & Timothy J. Henderson, editors. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002. Print.

Heredia, Rafael. *La Mara*. México, D.F.: Alfaguara, 2004. Print.

Heter, Storm. "Sartre's Political Philosophy". *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://www.iep.utm.edu/sartre-p/>. Apr 24, 2018. Online.

- Honig, Bonnie. *Horrorism* by Adriana Cavarero. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007. Cover page. Print.
- “Jean Paul Sartre: ‘Mind and Body, Word and Deed’”. Edited by Jean-Pierre Boulé and Benedict O’Donohoe. Newcastle upon Tyne (UK): Cambridge Scholars, 2011. https://www.academia.edu/3092311/Sartre_s_Treatment_of_the_Body_in_Being_and_Nothingness_The_Double_Sensation_?s=t via @academia. Online.
- Jonas, Susanne and Nestor Rodríguez. *Guatemala-U.S. Migration. Transforming Regions*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014. Print.
- Kelly, Mark. “Michel Foucault: Political Thought”. *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Mar 2, 2018. <https://www.iep.utm.edu/fouc-pol/#H6>. Online.
- King, Angela. “The Prisoner of Gender: Foucault and the Disciplining of the Female Body”. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 5(2), 29-39. Mar. 2004. Available at: <http://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol5/iss2/4> . Online.
- Kolb, David. “Augé on “non-places””. *SprawlingPlaces*. <http://www.dkolb.org/sprawlingplaces/generalo/placesto/augonnon.html>. 8 AUG 2017. Online.
- Korab-Karpowicz, W.J. “Martin Heidegger”. <https://www.iep.utm.edu/heidegge/>. Online.
- Kunz, Marco. “La frontera sur del sueño americano: La Mara de Rafael Ramírez Heredia” *Negociando identidades, traspasando fronteras: tendencias en la literatura y el cine mexicanos en torno al nuevo milenio*. 5 APR 2017. Online.
- Lamas, Marta. *Cuerpo, sexo y política*. Mexico: Editorial Océano de México, 2013. Print.
- _____. *El fulgor de la noche*. México: Editorial Océano, 2016. Print.

- Langewiesche, William. "The Maquiladoras". *The Mexico Reader. History, Culture, Politics*. Gilbert M. Joseph & Timothy J. Henderson, editors. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002. Print.
- Laqueur, Thomas. *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*. Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1992. Print.
- Lennon, Kathleen, "Feminist Perspectives on the Body", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/feminist-body/>. Online.
- León, Fray Luis. *La perfecta casada*. Biblioteca virtual Miguel de Cervantes. http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra-visor/la-perfecta-casada--1/html/ffbbf57a-82b1-11df-acc7-002185ce6064_3.html. 23 Mar 2017. Online.
- Llanos, Bernardita. "Carmen Castillo: filmar y escribir las resistencias" in *Poner el cuerpo*. Santiago: Editorial Cuarto Propio, 2017. Print.
- Lorenzano, Sandra. "Ella no era una mujer, era una..." *Debate Feminista*, Vol. 27 pp. 199 - 204. 9 Dic. 2014. http://www.debatefeminista.cieg.unam.mx/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/vols_completos/027_DF.pdf Online.
- Lowenthal, Abraham F. "Foreign Affairs." *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 67, no. 2, 1988, pp. 185–185. JSTOR, JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/20043825. (review of isla 10)
- Ludden, Jennifer. "Talk of the Nation" from NPR News. 20 May 2013. <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=185559556>. 30 Apr 2018. Online.

Mahieux, Viviane and Oswaldo Zavala. "El somos del norte" Introduction to Tierras de Nadie. *El Norte en la Narrativa Mexicana Contemporánea*. Mexico City: Fondo Editorial de Tierra Adentro, 2012. Print.

Maldivia, Beatriz. "Goya 2010: 'Dawson: Isla 10'. Mientras esperamos que llegue la muerte". Feb 2010. <https://www.espinof.com/premios-goya/goya-2010-dawson-isla-10-mientras-esperamos-que-llegue-la-muerte>. 11 Apr 2018. Online.

Manzor-Coats, Lilian. "The Reconstructed Subject: Women's Testimonials as Voices of Resistance" in *Splintering Darkness*. Edited by Lucía Guerra. Pittsburgh: Latin American Literary Review Press, 1990, pp. 157-171. Print.

Martínez, Óscar. *A History of Violence. Living and Dying in Central America*. Translation by John B. Washington and Daniela Ugaz. Brooklyn, NY: Verso, 2016. Print.

Migrant/Migration. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/migrant/>. 9 AUG 2017. Online.

Moran, Dermot. "Sartre's Treatment of the Body in *Being and Nothingness*: The "Double Sensation". Chapter 2 of Jean-Paul Sartre: *Mind and Body, Word and Deed*. Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011. Online.

Nunca más: informe de la Comisión Nacional sobre la desaparición de personas. 10th ed. Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 2017. Print.

Olivera-Williams, María Rosa. "Maldito cuerpo de mujer: violencia de género y violencia sexual dentro del terrorismo de estado en Argentina y Chile". *Poner el cuerpo*. Santiago: Editorial Cuarto Propio, 2017, pp. 61-83. Print.

- Onof, Christian. "Jean-Paul Sartre: Existentialism". *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. University College, London. <https://www.iep.utm.edu/sartre-ex/>. May 14, 2018. Online.
- Ordiz, Javier. "En las márgenes del Naturalismo - mujer, religión y sociedad en Santa, de Federico Gamboa". *Iberoamericana* (2001-), Nueva época, Año 9, No 35 (Septiembre de 2009), pp. 7-17. 9 Dic. 2014. Online.
- Ortuño, Antonio. *La Fila India*. México: Editorial Océano de México, 2013. Print.
- Otis, Leah Lydia. *Prostitution in Medieval Society: The History of an Urban Institution in Languedoc*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press. 1985. Online.
- Partnoy, Alicia. *The Little School*. San Francisco: Midnight Editions, 1998 2nd. Ed. Translated by Alicia Partnoy with Lois They and Sandra Braunstein. Print.
- Paz, Octavio. *El Laberinto de la Soledad*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica. Print.
- Peris Blanes, Jaume. "Una poética de las ruinas" testimonio y alegoría de Aníbal Quijada". *Santiago: Revista Chilena de literatura*. N.74, 99-121. Apr. 2009. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4067/S0718-22952009000100005> . Online.
- Peterson, Amanda. "Review of *Fictions of a Bad Life: The Naturalist Prostitute and her Avatars in Latin American Literature* by Claire Thora Solomon" *Letras femeninas*. 42.2 Winter - Spring 2016-2017. Print.
- Piccato, Pablo. *City of Suspects*. Crime in Mexico City, 1900 - 1931. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001. Print.
- Plath, Oreste. *L'animita*. Santiago: Grijalbo, 1995. Print.

- Poblete Alday, Patricia. "Monstruos posmodernos: figuras de la inmigración en el México contemporáneo". Universidad Academia de Humanismo Cristiano, Chile. <https://www.facebook.com/literaturafantasticamontevideo/posts/918432358257965>. Print.
- Quijada, Aníbal. *Cerco de púas*. Havana: Casa de las Americas. 1977. Print.
- Rafecas, Daniel. *El crimen de tortura. En el Estado autoritario y en el Estado de derecho*. Buenos Aires: Didot, 2015. Print.
- Rebolledo Javier. *La danza de los cuervos*. Ceibo Ediciones: Santiago de Chile, 2012. Print.
- Reynolds, Jack. "Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961)". *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://www.iep.utm.edu/merleau/>. May 14, 2018. Online.
- Ruiz, Vladimir. "De señoras y putas: las mujeres malas en la narrativa de Lucía Guerra" *Hispanófila*, No. 152 (ENERO 2008), pp. 125-143. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43808514>. 17 Oct, 2017. Online.
- Said, Edward. *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000. Print.
- Salomone, Alicia. "Afirmación subjetiva y deber de memoria en La Escuelita, de Alicia Partnoy". *Clepsidra. Revista Interdisciplinaria de Estudios sobre Memoria*, ISSN 2362-2075, No 1, marzo 2014, pp. 176-191.
- Santana, Cintia. *Forth and Back: Translation, Dirty Realism, and the Spanish Novel*. https://books.google.com/books/about/Forth_and_Back.html?. 13 Mar 2018. Online.

Santos Herceg, José. "La tortura: todo es cuerpo". *Revista de la Academia*. Vol. 20/
Spring 2015/pp.27-45. Print.

Sassen, Saskia. "Women's Burden: Counter-Geographies of Globalization and the
Feminization of Survival". *Journal of International Affairs*; Spring 2000; 53; N° 2;
ABI/INFORM Global pg. 503. Print.

Sau, Victoria. *Un diccionario ideológico feminista*. Barcelona: ICARIA, 1981. Print.

Scarry, Elaine. *The Body in Pain*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985. Print.

Scott, George Ryley. *A History of Prostitution from Antiquity to the Present Day*. New
York: AMS Press. 1976. Print. (Reprinted from an original edition of 1936)

Shelley, Louise. *Human Trafficking - Global Perspective*. New York: Cambridge
University Press, 2010. Print.

Solomon, Claire Thora. *Fictions of the Bad Life. The Naturalist Prostitute and her
Avatars in Latin American Literature. 1880-2010*. Columbus: The Ohio State
University Press, 2014. Print.

sparknotes. <http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/oldtestament/section11.rhtml>

The Argentina Reader. Gabriela Nouzeilles and Graciela Montaldo, editors. Durham and
London: Duke University Press, 2002. Print.

The Chile Reader. Elizabeth Quay Hutchison, Thomas Miller Klubock, Nara B. Milanich,
and Peter Winn, editors. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2014.
Print.

The Telegraph. "How the law and UN define torture". 09 Dec 2005.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1505073/How-the-law-and-UN-define-torture.html>. 22 Mar 2018. Online.

- Thoibisana, Akoijam. "Heidegger or the notion of Dasein as Habited Body". *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, Volume 8, Edition 2. Sep. 2008.
<http://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/ipjp/v8n2/05.pdf>. Online.
- Torres, Ig. "En la huida" in *Nido de palabras*.
<http://igtorres29.blogspot.com/2016/02/entrevista-con-antonio-ortuno.html.pdf>.
8 AUG 2017. Online.
- Valdés, Hernán. *Tejas verdes*. Diario de un campo de concentración en Chile.
Barcelona: Editorial Ariel, 1974. Print.
- Vives, Juan Luis. *Instrucción de la mujer cristiana* (1524)
<https://www.scribd.com/doc/129622044/La-instruccion-de-la-mujer-cristiana-Juan-Luis-Vives>. 28 Jan 2018. Online.
- Westcott, Kathryn. "What is Stockholm Syndrome?". BBC Magazine. 22 Aug 2013.
<https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=stockholm%20syndrome>.
1May 2018. Online.
- Wilkinson, Tracey. "The Honduras neighborhood of Chameleon is a network of gang turfs where residents' survival depends on playing by gang rules." San Pedro Sulas, Honduras. <http://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-c1-honduras-violence-20131216-dto-htmllstory.html>. 31 MAR 2017. Online.
- Zarka, Yves Charles. "The meaning of Utopia." The New York Times. Translated from French by Edward Hughes. August 2011.
<https://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/08/28/the-meaning-of-utopia/?mcubz=1&r=0>. 30 JUL 2017. Online.