Ximena Faúndez, Ximena Goecke

Psychosocial Trauma Transmission and Appropriation in Grandchildren of Former Political Prisoners of the Civic – Military Dictatorship in Chile (1973-1990)^{*}

This article introduces and discusses a research which sought to comprehend, through the analysis of the narratives of the grandchildren of victims of the Civic-Military Dictatorship in Chile, the phenomena of transgenerational psychosocial trauma. The research involved 14 grandchildren of former political prisoners (FPP), between 18 and 25 years old, both from the Metropolitan Region of Chile and from the Araucanía Region. It considered life story as the productive technique, and applied a narrative analysis to the sample collected. The results of this study allow us to state that the life story of the grandchildren of FPP is included in a logic of transgenerational transmission and appropriation of the psychosocial trauma. Which implies that inside the families of FPP still persists the avoidance and silence dynamic around the torture's experience, determining the relationship of the grandchildren with the traumatic experience. Also, the results show that there are important gendered features to take into consideration while listening to the narratives of transgenerational transmission.

Este artículo presenta y discute una investigación que buscó, a partir del relato de los nietos de víctimas de la dictadura cívico-militar chilena, comprender el fenómeno de la transgeneracionalidad del trauma psicosocial. En el estudio participaron 14 nietos de ex presos/as políticos/as, de entre 18 y 25 años de edad, procedentes de las regiones Metropolitana y de La Araucanía. Se usó el relato de vida como técnica de producción de información y se realizó un análisis narrativo. Los resultados de este estudio permiten plantear que la historia de vida de los nietos de FPP de la dictadura cívico-militar chilena se inscribe en una lógica de transmisión y apropiación transgeneracional del trauma psicosocial. En las familias de FPP persiste una dinámica de evitación y silencio en torno a la experiencia de tortura, la que determina la relación de los nietos con dicha experiencia traumática. Finalmente se discuten los resultados considerando una perspectiva de género.

Dieser Artikel dokumentiert eine Untersuchung des Phänomens des Generationengedächtnisses psycho-sozialer Traumatisierungen anhand von Erzählungen der Enkelkinder von Opfern der chilenischen Diktatur. In dieser Studie nahmen 14 Enkel im Alter zwischen 18 und 25 Jahren (Frauen und Männer) früherer politischer Gefangener teil. Die Opfer stammten sowohl aus der Hauptstadtregion als auch aus der Provinz La Araucania. Die Ergebnisse der Studie erlauben, die Lebensgeschichten der Teilnehmer im Kontext einer Logik der Übertragung und Aneignung psychosozialer Traumata von einer Generationen an die nächste verstehen. In den Familien der Opfer bleibt eine Dynamik der Verdrängung und des Verschweigens als Reaktion auf die Erfahrung der Folter bestehen, die die Beziehung der Enkel zu dieser traumatischen Erfahrung bestimmt. Diese Ergebnisse machen auch deutlich, dass die Generationenübertragung stark durch Geschlechterspezifika beeinflusst wird.

Keywords:

Transgenerational transmission, civic-military Dictatorship, psychosocial trauma, political prison, torture, gender, education

1 Introduction

Torture is an extreme kind of exposition to violence, the effects of which largely surpass the descriptive repertoire of physical and psychological aggression involved in. It implies planned actions, which are applied over a subject

Ximena Faúndez, Psychologist, Professor Escuela de Psicología at Convenio de Desempeño para las Humanidades, Artes y Cs Sociales, Universidad de Valparaíso. Universidad de Valparaíso, Blanco 1215, Oficina 101, Valparaíso, Chile Email: ximena.faundez@uv.cl Ximena Goecke, Historian, Graduate Student in Gender and Culture at Universidad de Chile. Universidad de Valparaíso, Blanco 1215, Oficina 101, Valparaíso, Chile Email: xgoecke@uc.cl with the purpose of destroying his/her beliefs and convictions, taking out of them the core elements which used to be the base of his/her identity (Viñar, 2006). The traumatic character of torture is based on the unexpected simultaneous impact of multiple life-threatening stimulus, and the subsequent subject, family and social group disorganization (Lira, 1990).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) state that nobody should suffer torture or wicked treatment. Nevertheless, under the civic-military Dictatorship leaded by Augusto Pinochet, torture was a systematic practice. Ninety-four percent out of 28.459 cases presented to and legitimated by the first National Commission for Political Prison and Torture (CNPPT, 2004) claimed they had been exposed to torture, being their testimonies convergent in the methods and techniques applied, the places where it happened and the institutions and agents of the State involved. According to the Commission final Report:

...almost everybody thought that prison and torture had devastating effects in their lives. To the mental and physical effects it was added a disturbance of their social, affective and sexual relationships, which frequently tended to damage family and couple ties, causing in many cases insurmountable ruptures. (CNPPT, 2004, p. 495).

During the Chilean civic-military Dictatorship, tortured survivors had to reintegrate themselves to a social and family life affected by silence and negation of the political violence, together with the impunity of the State agents involved in them (Faúndez & Cornejo, 2010). This produced both, in the direct victims as well as in their families and social environment, consequences which have persevered through the years and marked the relationships they keep with each other.

The complexity of the diverse forms of political violence traumatic impact have demanded from thinkers, researchers and professionals dealing with victims in therapy, new conceptual and clinical frameworks. The challenge is to find out alternative concepts both to "psychological trauma" from psychoanalysis, and to the "post-traumatic stress" from the medical tradition. New concepts were needed to express the inner features of this phenomena and provide efficient orientation for clinical treatment of the victims.

In Latin America, the concept of psychosocial trauma is highlighted by the works of Ignacio Martín-Baró (1990), who states that the main feature of the experiences of political violence is that both their origin and consequences are located within social relationships. Therefore, speaking about "psychosocial impact of political violence" emphasizes the idea that this kind of trauma always affect social relationships, though there may be differences in its expressions among people and groups (Cornejo, Brackelaire & Mendoza, 2009; Morales & Cornejo, 2013) Several investigations have shown that this psychosocial trauma produced by political violence has effects not only in direct victims but over generations of descendants. A phenomena which has been called "transgenerational trauma transmission" (Volkan, 1996).

Among the authors of those studies, there isn't consensus regarding how to label the children of the victims. Some researchers don't think about them as a "second generation", because they may be considered as first generation too, if they were there, as witnesses, while their parents suffered threat, house raid, detention, and when they were killed or made disappeared. Nevertheless, in this article we have decided to label former political prisoners as first generation; their children as second generation and their grandchildren as third generation.

This article is based in a research done in Chile, with the purpose of understanding the way psychosocial trauma is transmitted and integrated into the life stories of the third generation of victims of political prison and torture during the last Chilean dictatorship (1973-1990).

1.1 Historical context

In 1970 a popular socialist candidate, Salvador Allende, was elected President of Chile. A sociocultural "revolution of expectations" that had developed slowly for a couple of decades, moved people and pushed the UP to promote deep changes. Chile at that time was changing very fast, introducing new relationships among generations and genders, new cultural habits and technologies and expanded democratization and a great hope of social change. That ended in a violent way in 1973, when a *coup d'etat* happened and a civic-military government ruled for seventeen years.

At the beginning, they acted with extreme brutality and indiscriminated violence. Massive numbers of left wing supporters and government leaders were taken to prison or killed. Huge centers were used to concentrate prisoners, like stadiums of military infrastructure. The idea was to inflict a full overcome of any possible resistance and to use terror as a way to keep order and discourage protests or other kind of resistance.

Later, they chose a more selective repressive policy. They followed specific groups, killing the most important leaders of the Communist Party mostly in 1976 or MIR leaders between 1974 and 1975. Also they attacked opposition leaders, exercising a strong control over civic rights, which were suspended for the most part of the seventeen years period. This stage ended around 1978.

After 1978, *State Terrorism* -based on the *National Security Ideology-*, was practiced efficiently. Any effort to surpass the order imposed was suffocated violently. Resistance of any kind, like massive protests in the early eighties and any attempt to reorganize unions, students organizations or political parties¹ or movements, suffered harassment and violence, though many of them finally managed to persevere. Any emergent leader was subject of continuous acts of threatening, arbitrary arrests and even killing. In that context, terror and torture were used as a method of social disciplining, and systematically applied.

Gender had some influence too in the kind of violence experienced. Therefore, it is important to highlight the fact that most of the women prisoners' experiences were marked also by sexual abuse and rape. Sexual political violence, as it has been called lately, was highly common and had severe effects on women's subjectivity, and through them in their families and Chilean society.

It is important to notice that this civic-military regime produced its own counter-revolution. Instead of a guick putsch they persevered in government and promoted deep changes in almost every area of social life. They intervened in all the areas of the economy, opening it as widely as they could while reducing the State's ownership and participation and introducing neoliberal economy even in the sensitive zone of welfare (health, retirement, housing and education). They changed the Constitution, the Labor Code, State institutions, redistributed population over urban areas through "eradications", and reduced social investment of any kind. This new socioeconomic model, imposed under fire and threat, produced high levels of social suffering, increasing the painful psychosocial effects of living under dictatorship and repression.

In March 1990, the civic-military Dictatorship formally ended, and a long transitional period started. Exiled people were allowed to come in again, and a hard process of searching for truth and justice started. Since then, the so called Rettig Report produced a first *official* explanation of the former period and recognized a list of about 3,000 people who disappeared or were executed, in 1991. A second one, almost fifteen years later, known as the Valech Commission, produced a list of about 35,000 people tortured and imprisoned for political reasons during those 17 years of Dictatorship – a list which is known to be partial because of fear, the difficulty to demonstrate this condition, and also because of the passing of time. Nevertheless, human rights claims are still far from being concluded yet.

1.2 Transgenerational psychosocial trauma transmission

There are different concepts which describe psychosocial trauma. Albeck (1993) refers to it as the "intergenerational" traumatic features; Danieli (1998) works with the "multi-generational" trauma concept, and finally, Volkan (1996), based on Freudian principles, came up with the "transgenerational" trauma concept. In this research we applied the concept of *transgenerational transmission of trauma*, the most commonly used term in specialized literature.

From the Systemic Theory point of view, two different processes have been emphasized regarding family development: *multigenerational patterns* in the family and the processes and events of the *family life cycle* (Lev-Wielse, 2007). Boszormenyi-Nagy and Spark (2003) sustained also that certain *relational guidelines* are transmitted to the members of the family through each other's loyalty and debtedness. These authors argue that there are *invisible loyalties* inside the families, which may explain some *structured expectations* inside the family group, in relation to which all members acquire a compromise. These loyalties mould and lead individual's behaviour.

Regarding the second and third generations, there have been also some theories which have tried to explain transgenerational transmission. Some of the main frameworks for the study of this topic have been provided by the Holocaust experience. After that violent process, some major psychosocial consequences', like persistent deterioration, occurred in victims' family relationships. The first publication on the effects of the Holocaust on the second generation corresponds to Rakoff (1966) and since then, there have been an important number of articles that support the existence of transgenerational transmission of trauma.

Initially, research focused on the psychopathological aspects of the second generation of Holocaust survivors and identified the presence of symptoms such as depression, anxiety, phobias, guilt and separation anxiety, associated with pathologies in their parents (Rowland-Klein, 2004) Children of survivors experienced these symptoms and suffering very frequently, which led researchers to explore their family relationships, and they came up with three main findings. First, lack of parent's emotional availability (Krystal, 1968 & Wardi, 1990 cited in Chaitin & Bar-On, 2002). Second, problematic communication patterns, either too much communication or absolute silence on the experiences of traumatization (Danieli, 1998). Finally, the survivors'

involvement in the lives of their children, making autonomy extremely difficult (Barocas & Barocas, 1973).

Regarding military dictatorships in Latin America, it has been developed an extensive research on the effects on the victims of political persecution, their families and descendants of second generation. In Argentina, Edelman, Kordon and Lagos (1998) identify two types of effects on the children of the disappeared ones. On the one hand, the lack of underpinning for the development and growth of children due to the disappearance of one or both parents, which may lead, for example, to show traits of social adaptation, assuming adult roles. And secondly, they have highlighted the impacts on the personal identity of the second generation.

In Chile, professionals dedicated to victims' care, have studied the consequences of trauma both in direct victims of political violence and in their families (Becker, 1994; Díaz & Madariaga, 1993; Huneeus, 1991; Morales, 1991) As for the transgenerational transmission specifically, they have examined the effects of extreme trauma in children of politically persecuted persons during the military dictatorship (Becker & Díaz, 1998; Biedermann, 1991; Brinkmann et al., 2009; Díaz, 1991, 1995; Faúndez, Estrada, Balogi & Hering, 1991).

Becker and Díaz (1998), Díaz (1991, 1995) and Faúndez et al. (1991) agree that the former political prisoners's trauma is incorporated into a kind of *relational dynamic* which makes difficult the process of individuation and identity formation of the children. Then, children raised in those families have been and still are confronted with a series of mandates, expectations and legacies that impact directly into the realization of their life projects. It has been observed that families cannot tolerate individuation in teenagers because it rewrites the feelings of loss and grief that have not been processed yet.

Studies made in other areas, such as Marianne Hirsch's works on *"Postmemory"*, have also contributed to the knowledge of transgenerational *cultural* transmission of highly traumatic experiences. Hirsch highlights the fact that youngest generations may keep not only loyalty, but also feel a *"sense of living connection"* with their ancestors past, through a *"repertoire of embodied knowledge"*, as Diana Taylor has called it, which has marked the subjectivity of the descendants. Those memories were transmitted in a way which produced an imagined, indirect experience made out of fragments: stories, images and behavior, so deeply and affectively transmitted that may have not only determined but also replaced part of the own descendants' experience memories with the ones of their ancestors.

Postmemory's connection to the past is thus not actually mediated by recall but by imaginative investment, projection, and creation. To grow up with such overwhelming inherited memories, to be dominated by narratives that preceded one's birth or one's consciousness, is to risk having one's own stories and experiences displaced, even evacuated, by those of a previous generation. It is to be shaped, however indirectly, by traumatic events that still defy narrative reconstruction and exceed comprehension. These events happened in the past, but their effects continue into the present." (Hirsch, pp. 107, 2008).

1.3 Third generation: Grandchildren victims of political violence

Holocaust trauma transmission researches, up until the third generation, are scarce, since most of the research has focused on the transmission between the first and second generation (Lev-Wiesel, 2007). However, evidence on trauma transmission to third generation has increased, mostly through the works developed by Bar-On and colleagues in Israel (Chaitin, 2000). Research has also been developed with the third generation in Germany (Rosenthal, 1998) and the USA (Bender, 2004).

Chaitin (2000) highlights the fact that each generation gives different meanings to the Holocaust. Third generation of family members of survivors living in Israel believe that the Holocaust is not an issue that can be easily forgotten. Either through commemorative activities and school learning, many young people have become active participants in learning from their grandparents, often silenced within their families. Bar-On introduced the concept of *partial relevance* to refer to the level of importance of the Holocaust in third generation descendants. According to him, for the members of the third generation, *the past is important but does not explain all phenomena in their lives* (Bar-On, 1989 cited in Chaitin, 2000).

In the United States, Bender (2004) supports the implementation of the concept of *partial relevance* to refer to the impact of the Holocaust on children and grandchildren of survivors. Furthermore, this author points out the need to study the impact of the Holocaust on the identity of the third generation, and hypothesizes that *historical facts that have not been directly experienced by an individual may generate identity marks.*

In Germany, Rosenthal (1998) developed a study comparing family discourses about the past associated with the Holocaust. In his study were included members of three generations of families of victims of the Holocaust, Nazi perpetrators families and families of Nazi sympathizers. Regarding to Holocaust victims' grandchildren, Rosenthal (1998) notes that their narratives are reluctant to acknowledge the sufferings endured by their grandparents. Grandchildren are unable to imagine their grandparents in situations of extreme suffering, which may have them lost dignity or risked death to themselves or other family members. Rosenthal (1998) interprets this as a response of self-protection but also relates it to the guilt that these grandchildren are facing the inability to relieve the suffering endured by their grandparents.

The results of those studies are consistent in indicating that traumatic experiences caused by political violence have transgenerational effects. The dynamics of avoidance and silence surrounding the traumatic experience characterized the relationships within families of the victims, determining the relationship of the grandchildren with the traumatic experience.

2 Research

In the context of the completion of a doctoral thesis in psychology, an investigation was conducted to understand the phenomenon of psychosocial transgenerational trauma in grandchildren of former political prisoners (FPP), of the Chilean military dictatorship. The research was qualitative, since this methodology allows an understanding of social phenomenon in dynamic, local and historical terms (Sandoval, 2013; Sisto, 2008).

It involved 14 grandchildren of FPP, eight women and six men, with an average age of 21,4 years and 14 years of schooling. Eight of them were from the Metropolitan region and six from La Araucanía. All of them middle class. In twelve cases, the FPP was the grandfather and in two cases was the grandmother. In four of the 14 cases the FPP grandfather had died before the study. In all cases the FPP grandparent or other family member was involved as an activist in a human rights group.

Life story was used as a technique for producing information. It is defined as a storytelling that the subject makes on his/her life or part of his life (Cornejo, 2006). This technique provides a diachronic approach to the subjects and their contexts, adding time, processes and trajectories in the biographical narratives, which enables us to get a transgenerational perspective, which is the main objective of this study.

Life stories were conducted between May 2010 and January 2011. A common initial motto was used for all participants. This methodological choice aimed to stimulate a life story building by the grandchildren, promoting a reflection and description of their relationship with the grandparents' story. The motto was:

Tell me the story of your life as a grandchild of a person who suffered political imprisonment during the Chilean military dictatorship. Take as long as you want for this. I won't do any questions. I'll just take some notes which may be helpful to ask you later today or in our next meeting.

After evaluation and approval of the research project by the Ethics Committee of the School of Psychology at the Catholic University of Chile, the contact process and participants' recruitment began. This was done in two stages, first through contact with key informants, FPP leaders, and human rights organizations. Informants had no direct contact with grandchildren, so that through their grandparents or parents got their names and phones. Then, the researcher called by phone the potential participants, to inform them about the project and to invite them to participate.

With each participant there were three meetings, which lasted between an hour and an hour and a half each. The sessions were conducted by the researcher according to criteria of non-directivity, having a warm listening and empathic understanding (Cornejo, Mendoza & Rojas, 2008).

The meetings were held in places and dates previously agreed with each participant. The interaction between participant and researcher was dynamic. The first three cases were used to adjust the strategy to produce information. The second meeting was held 15 to 20 days Participants signed an informed consent, where they authorized the recording of each meeting. These recordings were transcribed by removing any other information which might individualize them. It was decided to retain the transcript as faithful as possible to the story, keeping failures in language, hesitations, using everyday language, pauses, interruptions, silence, laughter, and all other possible data recorded, which helped to describe meticulously the dialogic process of co-construction of the story (Roulston, Marrais & Lewis 2003).

Given the dialogic nature of life stories, and because of the sensitive topic of our study, which was capable of arousing emotions in participants and researchers (Lee, 1993), it was decided that the production conditions and the dialogue interaction (Cornejo, Besoain & Mendoza, 2011), in all the stages of production, analysis and interpretation of the life story. For this purpose, three listening devices were developed, following the proposals of Cornejo (2008) and Legrand (1999) who consider the subjectivity of the narrator and the narratee, as well as the physical conditions in which this interaction takes place.

The first device used was the *reflective notebook*, where the researcher took notes on the dialogue interaction and the production conditions of the life stories. The second corresponds to the *research field notes* taken by the assistants who listened and transcribed the stories; these were focused in listening the process of narration and the interaction between participant and researcher. The third is the inter-analysis process, developed at research meetings with the three research assistants. At these meetings, the transference and countertransference aspects which were implied in the interaction were analyzed and discussed.

The analysis of the life stories was developed in two stages. First, each case was analyzed in a *multidimensional* perspective, following a unique pattern based on interdisciplinary contributions from the theory of interpretation (Ricoeur, 1995) and discourse analysis (Jofré, 1990). This stage of analysis allowed to investigate if preliminary categories were suitable, and allowed the development of new categories. At this stage, it was considered not only the life story, but also the reflective notebook and the field notes transcribed, together with the reflections made in inter-analysis meetings. Therefore, all the information collected, from all stages of the process, were supposed to give greater analytical density to the conclusions drawn.

In a second step, each singular report was analyzed transversely, through a process of conceptualization, reduction and data processing based on the Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). It allowed the construction of axis of analysis and transversal hypothesis which helped to answer the research questions.

The results of the investigation with the grandchildren of FPP of the civic-military dictatorship in Chile were organized in four dimensions which, taken together, produce an account of the phenomenon of transgenerational transmission of psychosocial trauma. Each dimension was focused on a relevant aspect of the phenomenon, and emerged from the data analysis. They are going to be described below.

2.1.1 Grandchildren's life narration: transmission and appropriation of the history of political imprisonment and torture.

The first dimension shows that the grandchildren of former political prisoners, during the process of building their life stories, located themselves in a variety of positions regarding to the history of political imprisonment and torture of his grandparents. It ranged from a distant one to another of proximity and ownership of their relative's story (for more details to see Faúndez, Cornejo & Brackelaire, 2014a).

Narrator as witness

2.1 Results

At the beginning, grandchildren of FPP started building up their stories as a *witness narrator*. This means they expressed themselves as a third party, without feeling involved in it. They were giving testimony for something that it is considered true and they can tell as witnesses, as observers. They start their stories telling it as past, a distant story, which is owned by parents and grandparents. It is an inherited story, that they have rebuilt drawing data from family narrations and silences.

From what I was told, my grandfather was taken when he lived in the country, up there, the soldiers looked for him there, and brought him down, while kicking him. (Jorge, E1, 6)

In their narratives, there was a strongly predominant use of the third person: it / them, which is related to telling the other person's story. The main characters of the story are the victims, who suffered the surprise of unjustified coercive treatment and violation of their rights, by their perpetrators. Raids on family home, kidnapping in the street, violent arrests and subsequent political prison are described. These descriptions emphasize the inequality of power between victims and perpetrators.

Ehm, we were on a normal day at home, true..., everyone in the house [...] And, and, according to what my grandfather told me, and all my uncles, eh military personnel arrived Right? And obviously they took... took arrested my grandfather [name of grandfather] and no one really understood why, but they took him away. (Jenny, E1, 10-12)

Here, in the first stage of the story, the testimonial description of the facts prevails, in the sense described by Leonidas Morales (2001) since grandchildren try to rebuild the event and report the suffering experienced by the victims. With that purpose, they build up a discourse which not only highlights the power relations associated with political violence, but also they speak on

behalf of FPP. Grandchildren offer their testimony just like a witness, or a third party, reports a crime in a lawsuit between two contenders. They tell the story striving to simply state "what happened", performing detailed descriptions of "facts", and avoiding their own interpretations on them. They try not to speak about the emotional impact associated with the fact that the characters in the story narrated are their own grandparents.

Narrator involved

As grandchildren advance in the construction of their stories, that neutrality and lack of emotional engagement –just like the typical witness who tells another tragic events of the past of another person- begins to disappear, and a less neutral version of the family history emerges. Grandchildren suddenly take the place of a narrator involved in the story; they show a more personal version of the family history, and express their own emotions and thoughts. Facts are then interpreted and connected from their own point of view as grandchildren.

And I think that's not easy to talk, I find that... well, my mom wasn't able to speak about it for some time, she locked herself in her room (...) I think that it is a sensitive issue. I don't think that it is a subject that you come up immediately the next day. It comes like a whole process of healing, reflecting, and getting relief... because people need to take it out, or this thing keeps inside... keeps inside... so, eh... the moment you take it out you too... you release yourself" (Alejandro, E3, 96).

"Rage. Anger. Pain because of my grandfather. But about them rage. I do not know if they have ... it's just that I cannot understand how there were so many bad people, who did these things... then I say it should have been something good, it should have been someone who didn't want to do harm either, someone who was forced to, and to them –maybe- who knows what did they do to make them torture others. But I cannot let that feeling of rage go, rage against them [lower voice] I just can't. (Andrea, E1, 69).

Pain is an emotion that is expressed and updated in the meetings with the researcher, while trying to grasp the physical and psychological scars left by torture, not only in their grandparents but also in their parents. Grandchildren also expressed their anger, regarding to the torture experience suffered by their grandparents, as an emotion that is channeled towards the torturer. Torture and torturers are presented as irrational concepts, and they demand major efforts to be somehow understood by the grandchildren. They question themselves about the limits of human behavior, and they constantly wonder -without getting an answer- how a human being is able to torture another?

Narrator as main character

At the end of their life stories, grandchildren take the place of a main character narrator, and talk about themselves as part of the story they are telling. They very frequently use the pronoun "I". They speak about their political – social involvement. Their engagements and future plans. They introduce themselves as community/social/political leaders. They speak about their professional choices and their life projects, which

are interpreted as inspired by the life stories of their FPP grandparents.

I belong there in [name of the commune] to a group, a social movement, where I have comrades who are ranging from communists, and even more to the left! They say they belong to the Frontⁱⁱ ... until DCⁱⁱⁱ [...] So I belong to this organization since 2006, when I was almost 16. Then, we used to go to talk with the regional Director of Culture, we went to the Ministry, or spoke with the Governor...at the end we gave the first battle...we stopped the bidding of the land, because it was a public space ..." (Alejandro, E3, 217).

"... Later, when I become a teacher, I would like to raise awareness about these situations... but even more... that's why I want to become a teacher, because you get in a relationship with so many people that it is more possible to inform them and make them think. I want to make them "click", to open their eyes beyond the computer or TV, you know... because today, youth over all, they don't care about nothing else but partying, well... drugs also, they are so present in them... [...] these small details are very important, because from what you can tell o what you could transfer to them maybe, this things may not happen again... (Andrea, E2, 88, E3, 44).

Finally, at this stage, grandchildren introduce themselves as leading actors in history and in some cases show themselves as social agents of change. Speaking of their political-social acts, commitments and future projections, grandchildren realize that they have built up an identification with the image of their FPP grandparent. They make efforts to integrate the FPP traumatic experience into their own life story. Grandchildren give new meaning to the story of their grandparents, and despite the damage it implies, they reflect on the importance of their testimony today.

The stages described allow grandchildren to reach the last meeting with the researcher developing a relationship with those memories which we may call "appropriation of FPP story", which means that the grandchildren bear family history as part of their own personal history.

2.1.2 The origin of the traumatic story of political imprisonment and torture: the scene of detention

The second dimension, recognizes in the stories of grandchildren fragments of textual images (Rancière, 2008/2011) which together make up a scene (for more details see Faúndez, Brackelaire & Cornejo, 2013). This scene points to the arrest of their grandparent; where the fragments of images are connected through the integration of sensitive data, such as physical characteristics of the protagonists and witnesses as well as places where the narrated events occur. These textual images are rebuilt, and at the same time imagined by the grandchildren, drawing them from the story and the silences of their family history, since no one was direct observer of the experience.

Ehm, it was that ... at that time in 1973 he was engaged in what it was. He is a master, a master carpenter, he was devoted to that... My grandmother was pregnant at the time, she was expecting one of my uncles... eh and he came out that morning, came out because he always got up very early, he was very hard working. He got up and went out to fetch some wood, wood... woods and he left with his wheelbarrow, very early, and when he was walking down the streets of the town [a town close to the mountain range in the south of Chile] a car stopped, a police car, and arrested him. His wheelbarrow

was left behind, thrown there, without speaking to anybody, without telling him why he was being arrested, but with violence and they took him to became a prisoner, arrested (Valeska, E1, 4).

... One night, specifically my grandparents, were in the business... that business was downstairs, it was a restaurant, and upstairs it had twelve pieces [...] They used to live, all of them, upstairs [...] So, one night they were... they were all lying in bed on the second floor, when the militaries arrived. They came in at once, like this, like out of nothing, no explanation, "like Peter at his own home", they got the book of visits, the register of who has visited the house... because obviously it was the register of who used to go there, and it was... [...] He was crossed out, because he was –let's say it like this- he was identified as a socialist, a communist or an extremist. Because of that, he was popularly considered as of the same party. So they got him, my grandfather... they entered to his room and took him out, in pajamas, in underwear and a white shirt, and he didn't know anything... (Eduardo, E1, 11-17)

The arrest of grandparent comes up, in the grandchildren stories, as an event that started the traumatic family history, and the interpretation of the occurrence of it involves also an unexpected breakdown in family history. This event destroys the possibility of development and continuity of the grandparents' life, but it also has a direct impact on the family history and in the grandchildren's life.

The arrest itself, may be defined as the source event of the traumatic history, in the sense described by Legrand (1993). This role is linked to its unexpected occurrence. The arrest of the grandparent, by agents of the State, has a temporal dimension, when it suddenly appears on the phenomenal world of the family. However, this event paradoxically does not create anything new, rather it destroys what existed before and its a prelude to the unspeakable that is going to happen later. Its unique and unexpected occurrence, breaks up daily life and what was usual within family experience. The effects of this event have a direct impact on family history, with negative, deep and long lasting effects on the family system as a whole.

That arrest corresponds to the first act of abuse of power over the grandparent. After the arrest, the families of FPP lost all contact with their loved ones, who were violently taken away from them and transferred to secret detention centers where they remained as hostages for some time. Speaking about the detention, grandchildren deliver very detailed descriptions of where this happened (eg, house, street, field) and describe certain objects present in the scene (eg, clothing, weapons, military vehicles) and the main characters and witnesses involved, and even provide information on their behavior and some interpretations about them.

The story about the arrest is built on three stages: political imprisonment and torture, and grandparent's return, and it has an heroic sense. The events described by the grandchildren in this way, follow the same pattern described by Campbell (1972) in his cultural analysis of the adventure of the hero: departure, initiation and return (Faúndez & Hatibovic, 2015).

2.1.3 Violent detention/hero departure

The arrest of the grandparents is described by the grandchildren as a violent and surprising act which make

the whole family a victim. Military, police or other state agents violently raid their home in search of the grandparents, and any act of opposition was punished with beatings, insults or threats by armed officials. After the raid is effective, and the grandparent was arrested, they left the whole family steeped in fear and confusion (for more details to see Faúndez & Hatibovic, 2015).

... My uncle was younger. When they wanted to take my grandfather handcuffed, my uncle threw himself at the feet of the "milico^{IV}" for them not to... not to take my Tata... for them not to take him away. And the "milico" pointed him out with a shotgun, saying he better left because if not he was going to kill him. And my uncle began to cry and all... and my grandfather cried. That was the most traumatic event that my uncle had to go through. (Heidi, E2, 123)

2.1.4 The political imprisonment and torture / heroic initiation

The narrative constructed by grandchildren about their grandparents' traumatic experience can be interpreted as the initiation process of the hero. This stage consists of a series of tests, pain and suffering, that transform the grandfather into a person different from what he was.

And I won't assume that they didn't do anything to him. I mean, obviously he was tortured. But when he arrived home he never spoke with anybody. And my grandmother said he never... that he arrived "different". (Alejandro, E1, 22).

Torture is denounced by the grandchildren, but they fail when trying to represent it. They cannot integrate into their accounts specific temporal and spatial parameters around the torture experience, parameters which are necessary for the reconstruction of the experience. Hence it happens in contrast with the rebuilding of the arrest of the grandparents, already mentioned. Faúndez (2013), suggests that torture is an impossible story for the grandchildren, because it is a story that fails to recreate or replace the magnitude of the events associated with it.

2.1.5 The return of "another" person / The Return of the Hero:

The return of the grandfather after political imprisonment, is often subject to external aid, offered in most cases by the spouse. It is described by some grandchildren, as a return to life. Then they notice that the grandparent had come to life, their family had integrated again; but... grandparents are not the same: suffering has changed them. The grandparent is now a holder of a secret, a mystery that remains silent, inside family.

My grandfather was someone that...that used to speak a lot, who was very affectionate. But when he arrived he never said a word of what they did to him. Not even to his friends, which are still alive. Never to nobody. Nobody ever said what... what happened to him. Or about what happened there. Nor he talked about what happened there, about torture details... or what really happened there" (Alejandro, E1, 22).

"... She felt the Coup changed her, changed her husband, that is what she feels. Later he left her for another person. But when he came back, she felt she had another husband. So it is different... you sleep with a husband and eight months afterwards you are lying beside another person, until he finally left home. (Eduardo, E3, 60) According to the account of the grandchildren, the return of the grandfather after the traumatic imprisonment reveals the suffering endured. His face, physical appearance and behavior show the harm suffered. They are not the same as before, and furthermore, they don't relate in the same way than before to their family. Grandparents have physical and psychological signs of torture, and remain silent about this experience (Faúndez & Hatibovic, 2015).

2.2 Transmission-appropriation of the history of political imprisonment and torture of grandparents

In life stories of these grandchildren, it was possible to distinguish between means of primary and secondary transmission and appropriations. The primary ones, correspond to different ways of psychic interplay between generations, ranging from oral history of family history of political imprisonment and torture, to silence associated with certain aspects of the story. The secondary means correspond to other forms of transmission, such as books, music, movies and document-taries, which differ among the grandchildren, but are recognized by them as important elements for the reconstruction of the history of political imprisonment and torture (for more details to see Faúndez, Cornejo & Brackelaire, 2014b).

2.2.1 Narration and family silence as the primary means of transmission-appropriation of history of political imprisonment and torture

The oral narration of family history of political imprisonment and torture, is the one that was built up by family members -which belong to the parents and grandparents generations- about the experience of political imprisonment and torture. That experience it is primarily characterized by suffering and injustice spanning different generations. The family member which is the most noticeable presence in the construction of this oral story is the son or daughter of the former political prisoner grandfather, ie the father or the mother of the narrator. But this tale of family history also draws on the contributions of other family members. Its construction depends on the existence of permanent links with members of the family: parents, uncles and grandparents, which may facilitate the constant physical encounter between all of them, allowing the emergence of fragments of and the subsequent development of the story's reconstruction.

Eh, I don't know, I think... I think I was born knowing these things. Hey, my mom always, always tells eh, how terrible it was to go there, and then turn around and leave my grandfather just there. (Marcela, E1, 148)

In most cases, this oral history of family history of political imprisonment and torture is limited to the description of the events associated with the political imprisonment and torture. Like the home raid, the subsequent arrest of the grandparent, release and return of the grandfather from the prison. Emotions surrounding these events fail to become integrated into the story, either because of lack of processing or because of the fear that the expression of these emotions could harm children or grandchildren.

Likewise, torture is not explicitly incorporated in the narrative of the family history of political imprisonment and torture. It is a fact which has no evidence, no witnesses. Grandparents are the only ones who know this experience and have generally kept quiet about it; silence which has also been kept also by other members of the family. This is conjugated with the building of a fragmented story, discontinuous, descriptive and with a lack of reflections on the causes and meanings attributed to the political imprisonment and torture of grandparent.

This allows us to suggest that those characteristics of oral story of family history of political imprisonment and torture are due to the psychological limits while thinking and representing experiences such as torture (Puget, 2006) Just like the active establishment of denial and emotional freezing are measures to control the damage that knowledge of torture may produce in younger generations.

I do not know what kind of torture they had inflicted on him. I know that he was tortured, yes, but do not know what was that they did to him, or how long it was on each detention. I was not told. Whenever they talk about the issue I tried not to investigate further, because I knew they were already making an effort, in telling. Also, I didn't want to become invasive with my parents, or with my uncles, when they are talking to me about it. Because I know it's still painful for them. (Millaray, E1, 128)

As there is a bond between family members, it is very difficult for them to tell or to hear the story of the family history of political imprisonment and torture, characterized by the sufferings and injustices reported by their parents and grandparents. Therefore, developing certain communication patterns is necessary. They are built up in an intergenerational dynamics. Grandchildren become loyal members of their families, they learn to listen the fragmented, enigmatic, full of silences and interruptions, family narrative. Because of the emotional load of this experience, they are invited to identify themselves with the story, and not to ask about this, as a way to protect their parents and grandparents.

... I find that it is not easy, it is a sensitive issue, an issue that costs, which is hard and it also takes dedication, because I also good if I see that my mom is sad not you ever wonder more... (Alejandro, E3, 99)

Thus, through the story of family history of political imprisonment and torture, grandchildren not only appropriate their own family history, but also assume certain *family loyalties*. Boszormenyi-Nagy and Spark (1983/2003) suggest the existence of frames of *invisible loyalties* inside families with past characterized by suffering and injustice. This would imply the existence of *structured expectations* inside the family, in relation to which all members acquire a *compromise*. These invisible loyalties *act as a mandate*, shaping and directing the behavior and identity formation.

Consequently, it is possible to argue that the transmission of family history contributes to the

formation of the identity of the grandchildren; an identity which bears invisible loyalties to the family history of political imprisonment and torture.

2.2.2 Cultural productions as transmission mediaownership side of the history of political imprisonment and torture

The stories of grandchildren give awareness on the presence of streaming media-appropriation of history of political imprisonment and torture of grandparents, as an alternative to oral account of family story. There are some cultural productions that contribute to the process of transmission and appropriation of the violent experience of political imprisonment and torture: books, music and documentaries on the military dictatorship; and them, together with other kind of products, as well as participation in activities of human rights groups, consist in what was called secondary means. These provide information that allows grandchildren to respond and generate new questions, regarding the history of political imprisonment and torture of their grandparents.

Some grandchildren said they have read the report of the CNPPT, which includes the testimonies of victims of political imprisonment and torture during the military dictatorship and granted their recognition as former political prisoners. Others admit they have seen documentaries or TV shows associated with the era of military dictatorship. Others said that the lyrics of some songs of protest, created during the dictatorship period, generated questions in them about family history of political imprisonment and torture. In this way, grandchildren bear the need to know and try to understand what their families lived, specially their grandparents. This media are inquired by the grandchildren, in search of information which may be integrated to the family and social life. Most of the times, it involves media that is accessible and part of the familial or social culture to which they belong.

But I felt this need to know strongly when I reached Eighth (Primary) grade and First (Secondary) grade [...] First, I think, it was music. [...] Huh? Because of folk music, Inti Illimani^v and all those things... because of the stories of the songs and so, and because I heard my dad singing those songs [...] And in Eighth, First grade... when they started to tell me more, not because of my age, but just because that's the way things were then, and because I got more into this instrumental music and Inti Illimani at that time started telling me things. Since then, they started telling me things, telling... and furthermore, just like I told you the other day, I started to look for the origin of the song 'Testaccio market'. Then I had questions about being an exiled or a fired person and things like that; why people went out of the country. what was the dictatorship, ...questions that came out because of the music and not because somebody told me anything about it. (Eduardo, E2, 215-220)

Participation in political demonstrations and social activities commemorating the *Coup d'etat* anniversary every September 11th, allowed some grandchildren to integrate their family history in the historical and social context of the country. This participation initially appeared to be mediated by the family. Some grandchildren, noted that since they were children they

had attended these activities, mainly because their parents and grandparents or to participated in them. However, over time, many decided to continue doing it, and participated more actively in these or other public demonstrations and protests, because they believed it helps them express their emotions and to express publicly their rejection regarding violations of human rights committed during the civic-military dictatorship.

4- The torture scene: the impossible story of the traumatic history of political imprisonment and torture

Grandparents' torture, while denounced by grandchildren, fails to be represented through words, as well as integrated into their specific temporal and spatial parameters. narratives that allow the reconstruction of this experience, unlike what does the story of the arrest, release and return of the grandparent from political imprisonment (for more details to see Faúndez, Brackelaire & Cornejo, 2013).

I think my grandfather was not like that. As I read his report, from the major collection of testimonies, I think that he was like that because they changed his mind. That is, after living something so... maybe he even lost every hope of leaving that place alive, that is... maybe he went out because he was lucky ...I don't know... maybe they were resigned to die ...because they endured torture. (Eduardo, E1, 221)

It is usually mentioned the impossible narrative or the impossible scene of torture, because it is a story that fails to recreate or replace the magnitude of the events associated with this. To grandchildren it isn't possible to speak about torture inflicted upon their grandparents, and about the physical and psychological characteristics of the victims and perpetrators, because this is well known only for those who witnessed the experience, maybe because for them it is impossible to represent this experience.

Despite the impossibility of telling torture, grandchildren refer to it from its consequences, defining it as an event that destroys, which produces an absolute break, irreparable damage to the lives of their grandparents, leaving permanent marks on the victims and their families for generations.

It is possible to interpret that the testimony of the survivor, which is transmitted to the grandchildren of former political prisoners, is constructed from a nonplace of articulation between the living and the speaker, between bodily materiality that survives as rest and that voice that seems anchored in the former subjectivity expropriated. Grandchildren are heirs of a family history which includes political imprisonment and torture, and that it is expressed through a process of paradoxical and incomprehensible transmission to them which cannot be represented.

... I don't know how to explain it. I know you still cannot find one, one, one explanation because my grandfather used to repeat me so much, so often these stories, because every time he repeated them he cried. He was so moved... When he was sick, he got crazy and he went back, he went back on time until that date. I don't know... I don't know... I cannot find an explanation. How...how...how...[] how could something be so traumatic that left him like that for the rest of his life ... (Valeska, E1, 27)

It is possible to state that, unlike what happens in the story of the raid on the home and subsequent arrest of grandfather, torture is an event whose occurrence -although it is recognized by the grandchildren--- they cannot fully represent the experience. They fail to communicate and fail to integrate into their narratives the specific parameters that allow the understanding of this. It is an event of irrepresentable nature. Therefore, it is called the impossible scene, because it is a story that fails to recreate or replace the magnitude of the events involving torture. However, grandchildren can refer to the destructive consequences or permanent markings produced by those experiences inside the family. They point out that torture meant a break, an irreparable damage to the life of their grandparents, who radically changed their way of being and acting upon that experience. Grandparents have physical and psychological signs of torture, but it is impossible to talk about this experience.

3 Discussion of the results

The results of this study showed that life stories of grandchildren of FPP from the civic-military dictatorship in Chile, are part of a logic of transgenerational transmission and appropriation of psychosocial trauma. The results also points out that in FPP families a dynamic of avoidance and silence surrounding torture experience persists and determines the relationship of grandchildren with their traumatic experience.

These results are consistent with studies developed with third generation of victims of political violence in Israel (Chaitin, 2000), Germany (Rosenthal, 1998) and the USA (Bender, 2004). The grandchildren of FPP Chileans, like their parents, are faced with a story or family traumatic memory that becomes partly their own identity. In this sense, the political imprisonment history can be defined as an identitarian relevant memory (Haye & Carvacho, 2011), leading to the younger members of the third generation to identify with the traumatic family history and assume the position of FPP grandchildren.

The grandchildren of FPP of the Chilean military dictatorship, have been and still are being confronted with a past of suffering and injustice which was directly faced by their parents and grandparents. At the same time, they have been confronted with a speech installed in the post dictatorial society which, from the perspective of grandchildren, denies the experience of suffering that their families had to go through. That is evident when we notice that the main mean used for transmission of the political imprisonment experience was the oral history account, which is characterized by fragmentation, lack of contents and silences.

In general, grandchildren said that were their parents, uncles and grandparents who lived or witnessed directly the political imprisonment experience, the main builders of the FPP story. Outside the family system, grandchildren accuse the absence of mediators, a fact that makes it difficult to integrate their personal and family history in the social context. Given the fragmented family story, and lack of social recognition about the history of PPT, grandchildren responded through their own stories, positioning themselves as heirs to a family legacy, a brand new identity, and assuming the main characters' position, of a story that continues to be built up nowadays.

Probably the gender of the FPP grandparent is also relevant to understand this experience. However, from the results of this study we cannot refer to it in depth yet. While analyzing the 14 cases studied, we considered 2 FPP women. It is interesting to notice that, when speaking about their grandparents' experience, most of them tend to focus the story of men. In a case were both the grandfather and grandmother were arrested, the grandson spoke almost exclusively about the experience of the grandfather. The same happened in the case where the grandmother was the only detainee from among the members of the family. Here the narrator referred exclusively to the political participation of the deceased grandfather, and not to the story of the arrest of his grandmother. This is consistent with the lack of visibility of women when studying about this period.

On another hand, the structure of this narratives, organized according to the heroic path, though observed in the material collected, tends to follow a narrative strategy which is more common in men who suffered different traumatic experiences than in women. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce gender analysis in future studies, which may help to discriminate which are the main relationships and differences when analyzing the narrative of women and the way they transmit their memories to younger generations. Studies on other events, for example the Holocaust, have shown some significant differences between them. For example, in those studies it is possible to perceive that the heroic dimension -related to an individual path- is less emphasized by women, which tend to focus in themselves as being part of a collective.

These results open a wide variety of possible interpretations. One of them is the increased silence that exists within families and Chilean society, associated mainly with violence against women during the military dictatorship (CNPPT, 2004). It highlights the need to address the experience of transgenerational transmission of trauma from a gendered perspective. Consequently, it is suggested to continue studying the phenomenon of transgenerational trauma psychosocial, deepening the experience of FPP women, which could be achieved by developing research designs that focus exclusively on this phenomenon. For example, through the inclusion criteria and exclusion of participants, it could guide the selection of grandchildren only to those whose grandmothers were FPP.

Finally, results allow to interpret some grandchildren's appeal to the metaphor of the hero, to describe the experiences of detention and political imprisonment suffered by their grandparents. In these cases, the experience is described as Grandpa heading to an unknown place, where it is subjected to cruelty. Thus, as in the epic hero, FPP may be meant as an experience in

which a person is subjected to severe pain and suffering. The return of the grandparent is often subject to external assistance for spouses and children, and is described as a return to life.

4 Some reflections on psychosocial trauma transmission and education

Transition to democracy in Chile has been an incomplete process. Failure to close this political period has a strong connection with the democratic deficit, strongly related to the persistence of the political and economic structure inherited from the Civic-Military Dictatorship, and the lack of truth and justice regarding human rights issues. In this area, measures like the imprisonment of a few middle range officials and torturers, the so called "Rettig" (1991) and "Valech Comission" (2004) reports, and the creation of new institutions like the Human Rights Institute (INDH) and the Museum of Memory and Human Rights (inaugurated in 2010) have not been successful to accomplished that closure too.

One of the indicators and consequences of such failure is the lack of an assertive inclusion of both human rights and civic education, and the weak historical narrative about the period included in the national educational curriculum. Major changes in the national curriculum happened few years after 1990 election of President Aylwin and the Concertacion de Partidos por la Democracia coalition, which started the transitional process. The decision taken regarding these issues were partly moderated by the need to keep the consensus and partly by the ideological limits of the coalition itself. They decided to eliminate the subject of civic education. To include in the same subject history, geography, economy and some elements of the former civic education, but mostly focused on children's rights and community issues. Transversal values and attitudes would reinforce this teaching.

The introduction of human rights topics and historical processes associated to them, even from another geographic frameworks, like the Holocaust, has been also problematic. For a long time there was not a textbook for the level where this topic had to be taught and nowadays there is only a small reference to the topic on them. Even now, ten years after the UN agreement on Holocaust education and commemoration, there is no public policy regarding that topic.

Moreover, according to law, City Councils are in charge of what is left of public education at the local level, and can choose between the materials suggested by the Ministry of Education or provide their own materials. Wealthy City Councils leaded by right wing majors have chosen to use books where topics like the Holocaust and the Dictatorship are avoided or misrepresented.

Therefore, most of what can be done in this area depends exclusively on teachers. According to their own interest and capabilities they may choose to give more emphasis to human rights education, in different subjects. And in the history class, they can choose to highlight these topics over, let's say, major political currents, economic issues or military strategy, and choose methodologies which may stimulate inquiry, dialogue and awareness in the students. But, again, there is a strong lack of preparation and support for innovative practices inside schools, both public and private. Teaching about the period is still considered as "doing politics" inside the school. Inquiry and debate is scarcely promoted. Pacific resolution of problems is also barely developed. When compared with the human rights educational policies, curriculum, materials and teacher' training of our neighbor country Argentina, which lived a similar kind of Dictatorship in the same period, Chile is decades behind.

On the other hand, most of the measures taken by the State recognize FPP as victims, but have avoided the narrative of the project that mobilized them before the Coup d'état. No faces or personal experiences are shown to give students a sense of "human experience". Testimonies, both in person or to be read or watched, are out of the classroom. Even the Museum keeps silence of the political identities, specific experiences and points of view of those victims, they appear with no ideological historical background. Terror narrative and is emphasized over the experience of conflict between different political projects and its violent resolution in the midst of Cold War, which could have been solved, in a better democratic framework, through pacific methods and democratic tools.

State doesn't seem to be connected clearly to those violent episodes too. Narrative tends to naturalize conflict and subsequent violence, and to charge with responsibility only individuals. Most of the texts spend more pages talking about economic advances and social transformations in an idealized version, without mentioning State Terrorism and the need to replace it with a strong democratic State.

In this context, though still a matter of research, it is easy to understand why there is a lack of social narrative which may help FPP descendants to develop a more healthy relationship with their family past. As Boris Cyrulnik (2003) has proposed in his studies, resilience requires a narrative that helps to integrate the fragments produced by trauma, and affection to contain the emotional needs of the traumatized ones. We believe that the same kind of exercise should be applied to their descendants, when the cause of trauma is a social traumatic event. Being a victim is a social stigma, which produces different (undesired) effects than those (positive ones) which may be produced when recognized as legitimate actors which were treated unfairly and violently. This recognition may give them back some identity and agency which may be healthy also for their families. It may encourage breaking up silence and social isolation, foster more dialogue and debate and less guilt. And also, it may help increase the weak levels of democratic depth which our democracy has been showing in the last decade. Nevertheless, research on Dictatorship long-term psychosocial consequences and its social effects is just beginning.

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Endnotes

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Forbidden until the second half of the 1980s.

ⁱⁱ "The Front" or "Popular Front", created in 1936, was a successful political coalition which joined the Socialist, Communist and Radical parties. It elected Pedro Aguirre Cerda as President 1938-1941. It had continuity through FRAP for two more elections (1941 and 1946), until "the treason" of President Gonzalez Videla (1946-1952) who proscribed

the Communist Party in 1948 as a result of the international alignments

of the beginning of the Cold War. *DC=Christian Democratic Party*, founded in 1957; Eduardo Frei Montalva became its first President for the period 1964-1970, just before Allende.

^{iv} "Milico"= popular expression for soldier.

 $^{\rm v}$ Famous Chilean band, originally connected to the Communist Party and part of the highly productive movement called "Chilean New Song".