



**University of
Nottingham**

UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA

**In the Name of the Father, Reason and the
Revolution:**

**A Reading of the Economy of Sexual Difference in the Chilean
Revolutionary *Telos*
(the Working-Class Press 1870-1930)**

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Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham
for the degree of PhD in Critical Theory and Cultural Studies

March 2021

For my father who will politically disagree with this thesis

Acknowledgements

This thesis is indebted to the critical inputs, support, company and friendship of Piotr Paszyński, Niall Docherty, Karolina Jesień, Magdalena Krysztoforska, Sofia Stutzin, Heshen Xie, Axel Burenus, Rivy Zhang, Nicole Duran, Mauricio Guerra, Antonieta Vega, Guillermo Guzman, Roberto Mansilla, Natalia Galaz, Camila Ramelli, Joe kearsey, Gabriella Cioce, Adeline Coignet, Fabian Maier, Felipe Bustos, Lucas Ortega, Vicente Cancino and Oliver Fairey. Also I want to thank my comrades of Notts Uni Workers, Periscope Magazine and ACORN for giving me a space to do politics in Nottingham and, of course, to express my gratitude towards my '*huaches*' from Sonido Precario for reminding me of the '*sabor, ritmo y rebeldía*' of our beloved Latin America.

I am also grateful for all the support I received from the SPLAS department and the Centre for Critical Theory and Cultural Studies of the University of Nottingham. I also want to thank the University for funding me with the 'International Vice Chancellor's Scholarship.' I am also enormously grateful of my supervisors Judith Still and Adam Sharman for providing me with the freedom to experiment and make mistakes, and for all the hard work they putted into my project, the value of their comments, jokes, critiques and readings is beyond calculation.

I also want to express my gratitude to all the precarious workers of the University of Nottingham: the cleaners that kept my working space tidy, the guards that opened and closed my office every day, the outsourced IT and library staff members that allowed me to research and write, and the gardeners that maintain those beautiful green spaces where I could walk and think. Without them there is no University.

Above all this thesis would have not been possible without the support and love of my parents Fernando and Virginia.

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INTRODUCTION

A) The Place of the Chilean Working Class and its Displacement

The following thesis consists of a close reading of the main working-class periodicals published in Santiago (Chile) between 1870s and 1920s. The aim of this work is to analyse and reconstruct the inner logic of the arguments that the Chilean urban workers developed for interpreting the origin of Capitalism, the state of exploitation, the effects of the labour routine on their bodies and minds, and the means for the revolution. In other words, I will perform an exercise of systematization of this material in order to explore the ways in which these workers re-wrote Marxist, Anarchist and Socialist theories according to their conditions and locality. I am interested in the way that through the adaptation of these traditions, they ‘made sense’ of their daily routines, anguish, suffering and hopes. However, I must reveal that the guiding thread of this work, or rather, the ‘male anxiety’ that runs throughout this thesis (as the fundamental core of the Chilean working-class ideas), is a complicity between early left-wing thought and patriarchy. This thesis is thus forged on the basis of a double movement. On the one hand, there is the aim of showing that there are other ways of doing radical philosophy from below and from the south. This entails taking into account the capacity of *self-taught* workers to elaborate – without the need for an intellectual vanguard – a systematic and thought-provoking corpus of radical theory: a theory of exploitation written from within a state of brutal exploitation. And, on the other hand, this thesis is also a feminist critique of the male fantasies and anxieties that were all over the Chilean working-class press. This work seeks to unveil the conservative ‘foundational core’ of the traditional Chilean Left, with the aim of providing a critical machinery that can be used to recognize and expose the structural points of complicity on which the traditional Latin American left and certain forms of Conservatism are aligned. In this regard, my purpose is to spot the ways in which the idealized portrayals of the ‘male Latin American revolutionary’ (and especially in its twentieth century form as the ‘*El hombre Nuevo*’) has been constituted on the basis of the exclusion, exploitation and murder of women; that is, as tributary of a rape culture.¹ These are the two axes of this

¹ The *Hombre Nuevo* is a utopian concept coined by Che Guevara to describe the ideal citizen that the socialist revolution was supposed to produce. With the expansion of guerrilla warfare throughout Latin America, this Guevarista concept became the paradigm of the guerrillero that many male revolutionaries tried to embody during the 70s and 80s. However, the inherited androcentrism, homophobia and machismo behind this masculine depiction of the revolutionary

work, which, from the perspective of classic alliances, might seem politically problematic for some people. However, I deemed it fundamental to deal with the repressed of our left-wing traditions to better understand them and thus to be better prepared for their compulsions to repeat itself. In a nutshell, I hope that this thesis will be ‘received’ as a feminist critique of the traditional *left from within the left*.

B) Southern Workers can be Philosophers as Well

To write about the Chilean working-class press or to use it as a means to study the formation of the Chilean working class has become one of the most canonical ways to approach the foundations of the Chilean left.² Since their inception in the second half of the nineteenth century, these periodicals have been considered the historical cornerstone of the working-class movement,³ and, consequently, a fundamental source for its study.⁴

By submerging myself in a reading of the Chilean working-class press, then, I also find myself immersed in a robust intellectual and political tradition that has previously saturated and delimited the uses of this material.⁵ Considering the events that

man has been highly criticized by many feminists and LGBTIQ activists. See: Portela, Ena Lucía, *El Sueño de la Revolución Produce Monstruos: Cuerpos Extra/ordinarios y Aparato Biopolítico en la Sombra del Caminante* (Mitologías hoy Jornal, Vol. 12, Winter 2015), 31-50; Fleites-Lear, Marisela, *¡Mi cielo, alcánzame las botas!: Feminismos, Mujeres y el ‘Hombre Nuevo’ dentro de la revolución cubana* (Journal of Iberian and Latin American Research, Vol. 14, No.1, 2008), 49-75; Serra, Ana, *The New Woman in Cuban Revolutionary Discourse: Manuel Cofiño’s The Last Woman and the Last Combat (1971)* (Journal of Gender Studies, Vol 14, No. 1, 2005), 33-43 and Lemebel, Pedro, *Adiós al Che (O las Mil Maneras de Despedir un Mito)*, In: *Poco Hombre. Crónicas Escogidas* (Santiago: Ediciones Universidad Diego Portales, 2013), 155-156.

² In this thesis I will use a broad definition of the left that not only includes the Chilean political parties, but also non-institutional organizations and individuals that had been part of a general critique of Capitalism and that promoted more egalitarian and communitarian forms of production and living.

³ At the beginning of the twentieth century, Luis Emilio Recabarren, one of the founders of the Chilean Communist Party, claimed: ‘[w]hen the press was not in the hands of workers, we were nobody. We lived in darkness, ignored. But the creation of the [working-class] press revealed that there has been a working-class thought. When they [the workers] said: “let’s have a printing workshop to refine our intelligence”, then things started to change’ (Luis Emilio Recabarren cited in: Arias, Osvaldo, *La Prensa Obrera en Chile 1900-1930* (Santiago: Lom, 2009), 15).

⁴ The historian Elizabeth Q. Hutchinson asserts that ‘[w]orking-class papers and periodicals were a fundamental channel for the development of local political expression, given the high literacy rate of the Chilean urban population (72% in 1895). This working-class press gives us access not only to the assemblies, meetings and groups that shaped the working-class movement, but it also is a testimony of the priority given to propaganda and education in unions and organizations of workers during this period’ (Hutchinson, Elizabeth, *Labores propias de su sexo: Género, política y trabajo en Chile urbano 1900-1930* (Santiago: LOM, 2014), 92).

⁵ Here I am mainly referring to two trends of Chilean Historians: the *Historiadores Marxistas* and *La Nueva Historia Social*. I will address both trends at length later in this introduction.

shocked the Chilean people during the twentieth century and the ongoing struggle for a more egalitarian society, it is hardly surprising that there is a general resistance to critically engage with the history of the working-class movement. Hence, in a manner that resembles Jacques Derrida's understanding of the *archive*,⁶ the treatment of working-class history in Chile has relied on the existence of a canon of reading that has been forged on the basis of a specific (motivated or unmotivated, conscious or unconscious) *archival law* that a priori has framed what constitutes an 'acceptable' reading of this theme. This *archival law* operates by excluding and repressing everything that does not fit its regulatory principle. And, as I will attempt to show in this work, when it comes to the traditional left-wing historical portrayals of Chilean male workers there is a clear omission of these workers' patriarchal understanding of the body and gender, and of the ways in which this informs their theoretical conceptualization and critique of Capitalism.

This *archival law* operates through the reproduction and preservation of a two-sided idealization that is present in most works about late-nineteenth century and early-twentieth century radical writings. This idealization is rooted in the assumption that when it comes to analysing revolutionary theories, it is necessary to prioritize texts⁷ of a given *intelligentsia* or international vanguard that 'holds' the monopoly over the realm of ideas, both at a class dimension and at an intercontinental level. The philosopher that has most sharply spotted this class-based distribution is Jacques Rancière; first in his critique of Althusser's Orthodox Marxism for reproducing the cartesian division between *res extensa* and *res cogitans* at a class level.⁷ And later, in his book on nineteenth-century French artisans' writings.⁸ In these two works, Rancière denounces a Marxist tendency to

⁶ When I use the word *archive* in this thesis, I am not referring to a physical place in which a set of documents are carefully gathered for their material preservation. But, following Jacques Derrida's notion of the archive, I understand it as part of a double movement that exceeds the material conservational aspect of itself by introducing and stating the foundational principle for its own constitution and conservation. In his words, the archive is both 'institutive and conservative. Revolutionary and traditional. An economic archive is this double sense: it keeps, it puts in reserve, it saves, but in an unnatural fashion, that is to say in making the law (nomos) or in making people respect the law' (Derrida, Jacques, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (Diacritics, Vol. 25, No. 2, Summer 1995), 12). Thus, Derrida's archive is organised by a topo-nomology; a distribution of positions that is mapped by a *foundational law* that provides meaning to a set of heterogeneous inscriptions under an ideal configuration that must be preserved. Therefore, the archive is established by the same token with its content and its classification principle that allow us to receive and reproduce that same content as a homogeneous arrangement of positions that attempts (and fails) to exclude and repress any 'foreign element.'

⁷ Rancière, Jacques, *Althusser's Lesson* (London: The Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd, 2011).

⁸ I would like to thank Piotr Paszyński for drawing my attention to the multiple points of connection between my work and Rancière's. See: Rancière, Jacques, *Proletarian Nights: The Worker's*

portray workers solely as exploited, virile and heroic voiceless *bodies* that forged the numbers and muscles for the material realization of mass revolt, but who are necessarily separated from a clearly delimited intellectual class that constitutes the *mind* of the revolutionary movement. Put in a Rancerean language, I could say that there is a clear cut between *mind* and *body* that perpetuates the position of the platonic ‘philosopher king’ that jealously guards the monopoly over ideas.⁹ By following this a priori, many left-wing intellectuals have historically dismissed and neglected workers’ intellectual and artistic production. Moreover, intellectuals, artists and scholars have tended to regard proletarians’, artisans’ and peasants’ creations and movements as ‘primitive’, or at best as non-productive eccentricities. This, in return, has secured and maintained an orthodox class-based distribution of positions that benefits the works of a given intellectual elite.¹⁰

In relation to the Chilean case (and to Latin America in general) this a priori also operates on a Neo-colonial level that reproduces this body/mind division at an intercontinental level by distinguishing between what is called the ‘Global North’ from a so-called ‘Global South.’ This distinction operates both on a material level; in the form of cheap raw materials that flow towards the North where they are turned into commodities. And on an intellectual level; in the form of *mute* southern exploited bodies that are perceived in the metropolitan centres of knowledge production as some kind of empirical experience (also in the form of ‘raw material’) that is needed for testing the theories produced in the universities of the North. Thus as Gayatri Spivak asserts in her famous essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, ‘[t]he banality of leftists intellectuals’ lists of self-knowing, politically canny subalterns stands revealed; representing them, the intellectuals represent themselves as transparent.’¹¹

Dreams in Nineteenth-Century France (New York: Verso, 2012).

⁹ Rancière, Jacques, *Proletarian Nights*, 32.

¹⁰ Ranajit Guha’s Gramscian critique of Eric Hobsbawm’s Leninist vanguardism is an example of this. Guha analyses the ways in which Hobsbawm deems peasants’ forms of resistance as pre-political actions that would not constitute fruitful historical revolutionary movements because of their inorganic character. This rejection of non-urban spontaneous movements from below is clearly manifested in the title of Hobsbawm’s book: *Primitive Rebels*. See: Guha, Ranajit, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (Delhi: Oxford University press, 1986).

¹¹ Morris, Rosalind & Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak?: Reflections on the History of an Idea* (New York, Columbia University Press, 2010), 243. This issue is also addressed in Spivak’s deconstruction of the figure of the ‘native informant.’ Spivak claims that the third world subject in the form of ‘native informant’ only enters the realm of western knowledge by being portrayed by it, which leaves her/his voice effaced in this process of becoming a mere otherness. Hence, for Spivak to write the history of the ‘native informant’ constitutes the impossible attempt at historicising a subject that is constantly displaced by the attempt at making a genealogy out of him/her. These approaches to the third world thus can only produce histories of what she

To pay attention to these workers' texts and thoughts, taking into account their misspellings, 'mistranslations' and 'misreadings' of the European tradition, and to consider them as valuable pieces of political theory in their own right can be understood as an *anti-elitist* (and *anti-colonial*) emancipatory gesture in the Rancierian sense.¹² Hence, the reader of this thesis will find many points of encounter with Rancière's work. The influence of his *La Nuit des prolétaires: Archives du rêve ouvrier* for this work is beyond calculation. I share his project of deconstructing the orthodox image of the worker (as mere labour force) through the reading of their artistic, philosophical and political production, and of showing the way in which working-class writings disturbs the a priori and teleological accounts of the revolutionary struggle that make the social sciences to disregard this material because of a seeming lack of historical importance.¹³ Thus, in contrast to this tendency, Rancière argues that the aim of French artisans of 1830's was to:

take back the time that was refused to them by educating their perceptions and their thought in order to free themselves in the very exercise of everyday work, or by winning from nightly rest the time to discuss, write, compose verses, or develop philosophies. These gains in time and freedom were not marginal phenomena or diversions in relation to the construction of the workers' movement and its great objectives. They were the revolution, both discreet and radical, that made this possible, the work by which men and women wrenched themselves out of an identity formed by domination and asserted themselves as inhabitants with full rights of a common world, capable of all the refinement or all the asceticism that had previously been reserved for those classes relieved of the daily cares of work and bread.¹⁴

This quote introduces Rancière's anti-classist, anti-elitist and anti-orthodox protocol of reading. He dismantles any fetishist obsession for the 'real experiences' of the 'working

calls 'vanishing subjects.' Since this thesis is written from within a British university, it cannot pretend to be more than a study of a 'vanishing subject' as well. See: Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (London: Harvard University Press, 1999).

¹² According to Rancière: '[t]he very same word, *emancipation*, is used to denote the advancement of the individual worker who sets up on his own and the deliverance of the oppressed proletariat' (Rancière, *Proletarian Nights*, 52).

¹³ In the words of Rancière: 'This is how the social sciences declared these accounts of workers' excursions lacking in historical importance, since they were far from the solid realities of the factory and organized struggle. By this token, they confirmed the social order that has always been constructed on the simple idea that the vocation of workers is to work— good progressive souls add: and to struggle—and that they have no time to waste playing at flâneurs, writers, or thinkers' (Rancière, *Proletarian Nights*, 6-7).

¹⁴ Rancière, *Proletarian Nights*, 8.

poor' as external or independent to the realm of ideas. Therefore, in order to contest the orthodox Marxist distribution of roles, he interrupts the historical privilege of the body by granting a special place to proletarian fiction and thought. All the above resonates quite clearly with this research, however beyond this methodological, philosophical and political aim, there are fundamental difference between this thesis and *La Nuit des prolétaires*. The critical potential of Rancière's work is constrained after proving that the artisans have dreams and thought. He just exposes those dreams and thoughts as proofs of an emancipatory action from below without deconstructing the content of those dreams and thoughts. In contrast, this thesis attempts to go all the way down with its deconstructive reading of the Chilean workers' writing. My aim is not to only deconstruct the separation between 'people that think' and 'people that work' in order to reveal the 'proletarian as a thinker', but to also display the way in which, through Chilean working-class writings, the figure of a self-present and self-identical worker only appears as a trace. As I will argue in more detail later in this introduction, my reading of workers' writing is based upon a deconstruction of the economy of sexual difference that interrupts the fictions of a 'true' way of writing, working and thinking as a (stable and self-equal) worker. Thus, my proximity to Rancière is not given by the application of a model to another geopolitical context, instead this 'transition' from the French artisan to the Chilean urban worker exceeds the optimism of a European thinker that celebrates the re-discovery of artisans' thought. In this thesis the emergence of working-class thought will be assessed with its paradoxes and contradictions. In this sense, I consider Rancière's work as a point of departure, but not as a horizon of critical possibilities. I will come back to this.

For now, I still need to clarify that when I refer to my project as an anti-elitist and anti-colonial critique, it does not mean that I will treat these writings as part of an exercise of 'Provincializing Europe' in the name of a plurality of histories,¹⁵ that is, as an operation of geographic and cultural decentralization done in the name of cultural difference. Although this gesture can be found in this work, I will rather operate on the level of a dislocation that is enhanced by subaltern practises of reading and writing. As I will argue, these workers' writings contest the intellectual centre/peripheral distinction by re-shaping metropolitan texts in ways that blur the differences between the original and its receptions. But also, my intention is not to dematerialize and decontextualize the cultural and local

¹⁵ Chakrabarty, Dipesh, *Provincialize Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (New York: Princeton University press, 2000).

specificities of the literary production of these workers. On the contrary, I intend to read this material as the western political philosophy tradition reads the texts of prominent thinkers in general. That is, by not saturating these works with historical references to over historicize the ideas of these writers, but to systematically read them as part of an intellectual corpus with its own theoretical and conceptual machinery. I repeat, I am not denying the need to contextualize these periodicals and to historically narrate these workers' struggles. I am just claiming that is also necessary to subvert the Eurocentric and class-based distinction that determines a priori the way researchers engage with 'peripheral' working-class texts.¹⁶ This will allow us to see that these workers were not passive readers that simply received a previously fixed set of information that they 'misunderstood.' I rather prefer to approach these texts in a way that allows me to depict these workers as people that desperately tried to make sense of their situation by writing down their own process of becoming an exchangeable exploited labour force; moreover, as people who through their periodicals documented and theorized their own process of commodification by blending some rudimentary Socialist, Marxist and Anarchist analysis with their own popular culture and folklore. This might reveal more about how the expansion of Capitalism is experienced in the bodies and minds of workers in different labour conditions around the world, than a 'scientific' or orthodox account of the way in which Marx's ideas, for example, were 'misinterpreted' in a far and 'isolated' country called Chile. Thus, as I will argue throughout this thesis, the Chilean workers developed original ways of doing political philosophy from below and from the South, and their thoughts provide theoretical inputs that can be put into discussion with the main traditions of radical political philosophy.

C) The Difficulties of Historicizing Chilean Working-Class Thought

The Chilean working-class press has been mainly used by historians as a quarry from which to extract historical evidence about dates, specific events, public disputes and information about prominent workers in order to shape the history of the Chilean working-class movement. From the mixture between this data and the one collected from other sources, such as judicial and governmental documents, personal correspondence and

¹⁶ Even though, this thesis is not a historical research, I added a small appendix at the end entitled '*Historical Context of the Chilean Working-Class Press*' meant at providing some general historical facts about the urban Chile of the time. This appendix is meant for the reader that is not acquainted with the material conditions that gave rise to the Chilean working-class movement.

memoirs, historians have been able to forge a very compact and convincing narrative about the experiences of the Chilean people of ‘flesh and blood.’ I do not deny the political and historical value of the collective work of these historians (which I will address in depth in the next section of this introduction). However, in order to lay the theoretical and methodological ground of this thesis, it becomes necessary to make some epistemological remarks regarding the relationship and differences between working-class historiography and a theoretical critique of working-class writings.

The left-wing historian’s obsessive quest for ‘real’ bodies that can be used to legitimize the historical accounts about the people ‘in itself’ have led them to the exclusion and omission of whole sections of the Chilean working-class periodicals (which in many cases constitute more than half of each issue). In these ‘other’ sections, workers published proto-scientific and philosophical articles, short stories about the revolution, radical poems, literary works about the experience of exploitation and political pieces about the means for the class struggle, among many other things. These texts form a vast corpus of ideas and concepts that has been mainly understood as a set of fragmentary and incoherent pieces that do not hold any historical value other than their idiosyncrasy.¹⁷ What could be the motives behind this omission? A response can be found in the fact that these writings are filled with human bodies that metamorphose into beast, with monsters that ‘consume’ women, with women that give birth to uncanny creatures, with ghosts that are clustered in a shapeless mass that inhabit factories and workshops and with endless cycles of bodily and mental degeneration triggered by ‘sodomy’, prostitution and sexual abstinence. Thus, these texts, with their metaphors and fantastic Frankenstein-like beings, shock and contest the common understanding of identity and body (even of ‘flesh and blood’) in a way that makes it very difficult for historians to incorporate them into the construction of historical narratives grounded in a vulgar understanding of reality, identity and presence. This becomes quite evident if the reader considers that these working-class writings depend on some kind of ‘bodily dynamism.’ Simply put, what enters the scene when the reader opens these periodicals is a realm of madness that cannot be assimilated and normalized in a linear history because the modes of appearance of its creatures are repetition and transfiguration. Hence a question remains: how could historians give time, in any serious chronological narrative, to characters and figures that are constantly changing and whose transfigurations operate as a process of de-

¹⁷ The only exception is the collaborative work of the sociologists Tomás Moulian and Isabel Torres whose limitations I will address at the beginning of Section I. *Writing and Reading as Workers do.*

identification that turns them into the repeated embodiment of a timeless collective being: a monstrous proletariat? There are only two possibilities here: either to neutralize this phantasmatic element of working-class writings by over-contextualizing these beings as mere literary characters that were part of the cultural history of the workers of ‘flesh and blood.’ This first approach, while fascinating and important for understanding the cultural dynamics of the working-class press, by not taking into account the philosophical aspect of these writings (for example, their dynamic understanding of the body and its relation to the dynamics of Capitalism) tends to dismiss their speculative potential and critical apparatuses.¹⁸ The other possibility, which is the route I will take, is to approach these writings, not only as cultural manifestations of a time, but primarily as works of political philosophy. This second approach implies addressing the symbolic, metaphoric, analytic and speculative dimensions of these works in order to assess them under the ‘laws’ of their own logic. Thus, when a worker writes that he feels himself being merged into a monstrous collective body with multiple heads, I do not solely see a dramatic and fantastic literary depiction of his own life experiences. But I also read it as an intellectual exercise of abstraction meant at grasping the dynamics of the market economy, of the Capitalist labour force and of the process of proletarianization. Consequently, this thesis is not a work of history, or at least not in a traditional way. It is not even a history of ideas in its strict sense, because, although it bears many similarities with a history of ideas (mainly the use of historical sources to reconstruct a historically situated set of ideas), this is not a chronological work; there is no historical development, no dates or temporal progression. It rather corresponds to an attempt at systematizing an intellectual tradition by means of a close textual analysis inspired by deconstruction.

¹⁸ As Paul Preciado so ingeniously spotted in what he calls the Pharmaconographic regime. The body, as it is currently understood, was carefully shaped, designed, measured, rectified and corrected by different techniques and technologies that since the nineteenth century began to approach sexuality as an object for knowledge (in a Foucaultian sense). Preciado argues that these techniques were refined by the introduction of two somato-political technologies of the body: 1) Contemporary Biology (biotechnology, surgery, endocrinology, genetic engineering, etc.). 2) Techniques of representation (photography, cinema, television, internet, video games, pornography, etc.). These two types of technologies provided the ‘testosterone’ needed to normalize the fluidity of the human body into two steady and uniform types of bodies: a *physically* and *hormonally* stable male body and a *physically* and *hormonally* stable female body. Hence, the references to a more dynamic ‘monstrous-like’ transsexual body in the working-class press could be read as an early reaction to this process. This, in the sense that these workers adopted the scientific notion of the ‘monstrous abnormal body’ of the time to depict the ways in which their bodies were resisting the capitalist bodily standardization carried by modern biology and industrial labour (Preciado, Sam (Beatriz), *Testo Junkie: Sex, Drugs, and Biopolitics, in the Pharmacopornographic Era* (New York: The Feminist Press, 2013), 77).

The never-ending debate surrounding the definition of deconstruction is beyond the scope of this thesis.¹⁹ However, concerning this work, I will understand deconstruction, according to Derrida's words, as a 'discourse which borrows from a heritage the resources necessary for the deconstruction of that heritage itself.'²⁰ Thus, I will approach deconstruction as a rigorous practise of reading meant at performing a textual displacement that operates with (and from within) an 'object' (represented by a tradition, author, book, essay, etc.) that provides the laws, concepts or logical mechanisms on which the deconstructive operation is grounded. Following these guidelines, my deconstructive reading relies only on concepts, metaphors and tropes provided by the Chilean working-class press. Even though, when it is needed, I provide historical information and introduce theoretical inputs from radical authors (such as Marx, Engels, Bakunin, Fourier and Proudhon), the theoretical core of this thesis is based exclusively on the Chilean working-class press. Therefore, when, for example, I resort to scholarly charged words such as metamorphosis, I am not referring to their uses by contemporary authors such as Rosi Braidotti or Catherine Malabou, just to name a couple, but to the way in which they are defined and used by the Chilean working-class writers themselves. This emphasis on employing a theoretical lexicon and a conceptual framework extracted from my 'object of study' (which makes it into the theoretical framework of the thesis in return) does not mean, I repeat, that I will not work with other authors. However, when I do, it is not to establish a subject/object distinction by means of using foreign theoretical concepts and ideas of prominent authors to explain and provide meaning to these workers' writings. No, my intention is not to turn these workers into a mere empirical 'object of study.' On the contrary, the works of these prominent thinkers will be regarded as part of *different* philosophical traditions that can be put in contact and discussion with a working-class corpus that stands in its own right. This does not mean either that I am naïve enough to believe that I can simply extract myself, as a reader, from other philosophical and critical traditions. I am merely attempting to establish a more balanced *dialogue* between these anonymous workers and what is known as the tradition of Critical Theory. This approach to reading understood as a negotiation is what will allow me to resist the tendency to either reduce the Chilean working-class press to a 'case study' that tests and proves the already proven ideas of

¹⁹ See, for example, Gasché, Rodolphe, *The Tain of the Mirror: Derrida and the Philosophy of Reflection* (London: Harvard University Press, 1986), 1-13.

²⁰ Derrida, Jacques, *Writing and Difference*, trans. Allan Bass (London: Routledge, 2005), 357.

some world-known thinkers. Or to approach it as a completely insular corpus that is isolated from general problems in the name of difference and cultural relativism.

In line with this approach, I will pick up a tradition; the so-called Chilean working-class press [*La prensa obrera chilena*], which is materially preserved and displayed (in microfilm format) under this same label in the Biblioteca Nacional de Chile, and I will read it against the grain of its canonical interpretations. However, the deconstruction of this canon does not imply a negation of the material horrors of capitalist exploitation.²¹ On the contrary, my approach to deconstruction entails taking the logical and literary manoeuvres of these working-class writers seriously. It implies respecting their train of thought in order to unveil the ways in which they wrote their experiences and contradictions with the aim of systematizing their thoughts according to their own logic. Also, throughout this thesis I will use the Derridian concept of ‘scene of writing’ to approach the reading and writing mechanism that constitutes the Chilean working-class press as a form of staging of presences and absences. Derrida introduces this concept in his essay *Freud and the Scene of Writing* to refer to the way in which Freud describes the experience of ‘presence’ in dreams, however he also resorts to it regularly in other works such as *The Post card*, *Glas* and *Dissemination* in order to posit problems related with writing and presence general. This concept refers to the *differance* of presence that occurs through the modulation of time (as delay) and space (as differ) in writing which makes ‘absolute presence’ impossible. Nevertheless, in this movement of giving time and space to the non-present ‘subject/object’, the experienced ‘subject/object’ still appears as it were in a stage which allows ‘us’ to perceive it at the price of forgetting (or be blind to) this

²¹ I want to stress the fact that, unlike the reception of deconstruction in departments of Area Studies in the U.S and the U.K, in Chile, deconstruction (and contemporary French theory in general) made its appearance in a context of dictatorship which gave it a different emphasis. In the 80’s authors such as Patricio Marchant, Pablo Oyarzún, Nelly Richard, Willy Thayer, Eugenia Brito, Germán Bravo and Diamela Eltit resorted to French theory to cope (artistically and theoretically) with Pinochet’s tyranny and to find a way to dwell in a traumatic landscape of political fragmentation and human annihilation. These receptions operated mostly outside, or at the margin of the academic institution, in some kind of antidisciplinarity that revolved around the ARCIS Institute (probably the only organization that managed to articulate a consistent resistance to the academic control of the Universities imposed by the dictatorship, mainly because it was not recognized as such). In this context, the patchy and sometimes flawed early reception of the work of the so-called ‘postmodernist thinkers’, was outweighed by a strong political involvement and a very thought-provoking critique of the experiences of the dictatorship and of the transition to democracy. This politically committed use of deconstruction (as opposed to a mere stylistic and literary use of it) has been preserved by a generation of younger authors such as Sergio Villalobos-Ruminott, Guadalupe Santa Cruz, Kemy Oyarzún, Alejandra Castillo and Miguel Valderrama. Thus, my approach to deconstruction carries the rubric and legacy of this peripheric and politically engaged critical tradition. See: Avilar, Idelber, *Alegorías de la derrota: Ficción postdictatorial y el trabajo de duelo* (Santiago: Cuarto Propio, 2000) and Valderrama, Miguel, *Prefacio a la postdictadura* (Santiago: Palinodia, 2018).

necessary 'displacement' which becomes the backstage of phenomenological experience. In this sense, this contraction of space and time that allows for the absent 'subject/object' to appear as it wear present operates as a 'staging' that frames a scene of writing that must repress its condition of (im)possibility in order to be able to perform its play of substitutions. Depending on each scene of writing, the return of the repressed takes different forms, however in this work, since what is repressed is the absence of the ideal worker as such, this scene of writing triggers the compulsive return of different figures that represent the degenerative form of the worker that occupies the space/time of the ideal revolutionary worker. Thus, in relation to this problem of compulsion of repetition (or *fort/da*), Derrida writes: 'the scene of writing does not recount something, the content of an event which would be called the *fort/da*. This remains unrepresentable, but produces, there producing itself, the scene of writing'²²

D) The Phantasmatic Materiality of the Workers' Flesh

Even though I will use deconstruction to critically engage with the Chilean working-class press, it is not my intention to foolishly claim, in an anachronistic way, that these workers were practising deconstructions before Derrida. On the contrary, they were clearly captives of metaphysical dreams (mainly of its closure) since essentialist depictions of the revolution and utopian notions were all over their press. Hence, when they introduce a more fluid understanding of the body it should not be interpreted as some kind of liberation from the metaphysical constraints of form and being towards a deconstruction of subjectivity. For these workers, what I have referred to with the name of deconstruction is understood in a negative sense and it clearly does not imply a form of emancipation or critique of the body, sex and gender. Quite the opposite, these mutations and metamorphoses are presented as degenerative effects of Capitalism which the revolution will end by re-joining form and being in full stable presence embodied by a virile self-equal male worker. Thus, this 'fluid' understanding of the body serves a different critical function that operates in a Marxist sense. As Elaine Scarry argues:

[f]or Marx, material making is a recreation of the body and the body is itself recreated in that activity [...] the material artifact is a surrogate or substitute for the human body, and the human body in turn becomes an artifact; in each, the object is a

²² Derrida, Jacques, *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 336.

displacement of sentient pain by a materialized clarification of creation, in each, the object is the locus of a reciprocal action.²³

This process of disembodiment and embodiment by means of the activity of creation goes in line with a more dynamic and unsteady understanding of the body that involves the functioning of the market. The assimilation of the body to the artifact, Scarry argues, opens the possibility for a principle of universal exchangeability that creates and recreates the conditions for a market economy. As a repercussion of this objectification of sentience (which hollows the subject from its private subjective experience), the body is made exchangeable, replaceable and expendable; in one expression: *it is for sale*.²⁴ In this sense, these displacements of the body in the Chilean working-class press should not be read only as metaphors for the material and physical horrors of exploitation. But, at the same time, the fact that these workers depicted their bodies being constantly changed, modified and deformed by 'laws' that are beyond their control, should be read as a way of mimicking the abstract mechanism of workers' exchangeability in a market economy. Playing with metaphors, I would like you to picture Adam Smith's invisible hand moulding bodies as if they were made of clay.²⁵ The hidden meanings behind these metaphoric bodily mutations are proletarianization and commodification. And, in a symbiotic way, there are both material and abstract phenomena alike.

Although, nowadays it is not difficult to examine and dissect fluid bodies and creatures with the tools that Critical Theory and its literary approaches to monsterology provide, I must recognize that if I decided to deconstruct these creatures it is not to contest the primacy of the body of 'flesh and blood' in the name of some kind of post-humanist reading of the proletariat. Against the tendency to dematerialization that characterises these approaches, my aim is to recuperate a Marxist impetus that the twentieth century has 'sanitized' in the name of scientificism. As David McNally²⁶ argues, one of the most striking and radical elements of Marx's critique is the way in which he resorts to narratives of the 'monstrous outrages' of Capitalism and its horrors in order to

²³ Scarry, Elaine, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 256-257.

²⁴ Scarry, 252.

²⁵ According to Scarry, '[t]hat sentient beings move around in an external space where their sentience is objectified means *their bodies themselves are changed*. That this is an actual physical alteration can be better grasped by turning for a moment to a more graphic instances of bodily recreation' (my emphasis) (Ibidem).

²⁶ After reading McNally's work it is easy to spot that he would not be happy to be quoted next to Derrida. However, after having taken a clear distance from some apolitical or overly literary uses of deconstruction, I believe that it is safe to say that this thesis has many points of encounter with McNally's *Monsters of the Market: Zombies, Vampires and Global Capitalism*.

denaturalize it (it is no secret that vampires, werewolves, beasts and monsters inhabit Marx's *Das Kapital*). However, this glossary of radical poetics in Marx has mainly been understood as rhetorical flourishes or mere stylistic ornamentation that does not hold any conceptual value. And, therefore, the bodily atrocities of Capitalism that Marx so vividly describes have become increasingly imperceptible and elusive under the gaze of institutionalized Social Sciences. Consequently, this forgetting of the horrific modernity that Marx insisted on naming, demonizing and dramatizing through fantastic creatures, has ended up in an acritical domestication and naturalization of the monstrosity of Capitalism.²⁷ This resembles what Nelly Richard, in relation to the rationalization of the monstrosity of Pinochet's dictatorship by the Chilean Social Scientists of the transitional period, defines as the 'tyranny of the simple.'²⁸ This tyranny, she claims, operates through the exclusion of any form of idiomatic rupture from the realm of academic knowledge in the name of transparent communication and 'reality.' This ends in an almost police-like attempt at cleansing language from its mythic and poetic resources, and, therefore, from its critical potential.²⁹ Hence, to recuperate this tradition of *radical poetics* (to which I could fairly add authors such as Fourier, Bakunin and Benjamin) serves a clear function when it comes to the critical exorcism or conjuration of Capitalism. In McNally's words, whom now I will cite at length:

[f]ar from textual adornment, Marx's literary stylistics and empirical analyses – the very places where we most often encounter monsters – are integral elements of his conceptual schema. Rather than marks of inconsistency or superfluous ornaments, Marx's persistent shifts in register and idiom, from complex theoretical mappings of the commodity to metaphorically charged descriptions of the crippling effects of

²⁷ McNally, David, *Monsters of the Market: Zombies, Vampires and Global Capitalism* (London: Historical Materialism book series, 2011), 114.

²⁸ Richard, Nelly, *Cultural Residues: Chile in Transition*, trans. Alan West-Durán and Theodor Quester (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 5.

²⁹ In the early years of the Chilean transition to democracy, Richard advocated the need to resort to deconstruction to confront the disciplinary restraints that repress the residual excesses of the dictatorship and its horrors. In her own words: '[p]ractical reason, direct language and useful knowledge are nowadays the leading partners in this campaign of transparency (denotative realism, referential explicitness) through which powerful bureaucracies and technocracies of meaning conspire daily to erase any critical-reflexive interval that seeks to complicate communicative transactions with any suspended or dilated mode of interpretation. To defend the artifices of meaning (theatricalities, stagings) not only challenges the supposed poverty and simplicity of language to which the politics of the object fact condemns us, which solely believes in a monoreferential concept of truth. It also opens up reality to a multidimensional and changing play of forms and stratifications of language through which the unfinished, the fluctuating, can slip' (Richard, 5).

capitalist production on workers' bodies, reflect deeply held views about his object of study, the capitalist mode of production, and about the adequate theoretical protocols for tracking and demystifying it. Because Capitalism constitutes an alienated, topsy-turvy world, one in which phenomena regularly appear upside-down, the theoretical discourse that maps it needs to mimic the wild movement of things so as to better expose it. This is especially important, given the way that capitalist inversions become normalised for everyday thought and action. As a result, like Brecht, Marx seeks to estrange us from the familiar so that we might actually see it for what it is.³⁰

In this sense, the monsterology at work in Marx's writings cannot be deemed merely stylistic or be detached from his theoretical analysis; instead it constitutes a dialectical mechanism that unveils the doubling phantasmatic dimension of the commodity, as well as a form of depicting what the rise of Capitalism did (and still does) to peoples' bodies at a time that its effects were still considered a novelty. In line with this recuperation of radical poetics, my approach to the horrors of Capitalism in Chile does not consist in praising the monster as the paradigmatic figure of resistance to the norm, or as the embodiment of the excluded ones; the 'freaks', as is so commonly done in Critical Theory. Without denying that this approach to the monstrous body provides interesting critical and political tools to dismantle some forms of conservatism, I believe, with McNally, that it also tends to overlook the fact that the rise of the monsters of modernity are not the exception, but the norm.³¹ Thus, treating these figures solely as sites of contestation, stops us from envisioning the ways in which Capitalism operates on the body politic in dramatic ways. In analysing how Chilean urban workers related to the ghastly features of the market-force; or in tracing the way in which they resorted to folklore and popular culture to depict Capitalism as a modern 'horror story' (a story where the plot is the reshaping of their own bodies to the point that they became unrecognizable to themselves), I do not see an operation of 'dematerialization.' Instead, what emerges is an enhancement of a Marxist tradition at the hands of Chilean urban workers. If I approach this material from this perspective, then, I could stop conceiving these workers solely as mere labour force that were not capable of abstraction, but as thinkers that found in their factories and workshops what Marx found in Goethe: the becoming monstrous of daily modern life. Therefore, when reading this radical poetics in working-class writings it becomes possible to realize how *phantasmatic Capitalism is in a material sense*.

³⁰ McNally, 116.

³¹ McNally, 10.

E) The Chilean Left-Wing Historiographical Tradition

Up to this point I have been referring to Chilean left-wing historians in very generic terms. However, in consideration to the reader that is not acquainted with this tradition, in this section I will map the Chilean left-wing historiographic production in order to address the logics of the *archive* that I mentioned at the beginning of this introduction.

According to the historian Julio Pinto, the Chilean left-wing historiographic production of the twentieth century can be grouped into two periods. A first generation characterized by an Orthodox Marxist approach and a second generation of historians that, driven by their own experiences of dictatorial repression, began to research non-institutional forms of popular resistance. The first ones, known as *Marxistas Clásicos* (1950s to 1973), were committed to writing the history of the Chilean working class, highlighting the fundamental role that it plays in the history of the Country. Before them, workers were absent from the historical narratives, written either by conservatives or liberals who focused their attention on party politics and the dynamics of the aristocracy.³² In contrast, this generation of historians resorted to Orthodox Marxism to methodologically and practically contest this historical canon. History, for them, was set in motion by the class struggle which was determined by the position of each class in the system of production.³³ This resulted in analyses highly centred on economics and on the development of working-class organizations.³⁴

In what concerns the history of the working class, these historians were the ones that laid the foundations for the collective memory of the Chilean proletariat. For them, (male) workers are the quintessential historical subject; history unfolds solely in their collective action. The classic books of this trend are *Historia del movimiento obrero. Antecedentes, siglo XIX* and *Origen y formación del Partido Comunista de Chile* both by

³² Pinto, Julio, *La historiografía chilena durante el siglo XX: Cien años de propuestas y combates* (Valparaíso: LOM, 2016), 37.

³³ Grez, Sergio, *Los Anarquistas y el movimiento obrero: Los “albores” de la Idea en Chile 1893 – 1915* (Santiago: LOM, 2012).

³⁴ Their commonly agreed hypothesis about the Chilean economy was the idea that the country has been historically affected by a ‘*desarrollo truncado*’ [‘truncated development’]. This hypothesis suggests that the ‘undeveloped character’ of Chile’s economy is an effect of the dynamics of international imperialism and of the irresponsibility of the ruling class that failed to undertake a ‘bourgeois revolution.’ This revolution was supposed to replace the landowner and plutocratic class that controlled the country from the Haciendas (interpreted as a form of feudalism) with a more modern urban ruling class that could set the basis for a modern class struggle (Pinto, Julio, *La historiografía chilena*, 43).

Hernán Ramírez Necochea; *El movimiento obrero en Chile. 1819-1919* by Jorge Barría, and *Historia del partido Socialista de Chile* by Julio César Jobet. What all these works have in common is the reproduction of a narrative that follows the teleological development of working-class consciousness through the creation of revolutionary forms of political organization.³⁵ In these writings there is a clear progression that takes us from the formation of working-class periodicals and trade unions to the foundation of the Chilean Communist and Socialist parties. Every subject that does not fit to explain this transition was deemed as non-historical, as was the case of peasants, indigenous people, anarchists, women, children, among many others.

Following this principle, the *Marxistas Clásicos* actively omitted the ideological diversity of the early Chilean working-class movement. Marxist historians such as Hernán Necochea, Fernando Ortiz, Marcelo Segall, Jorge Barría, Julio César Jobet and Luis Vitale inherited one from the other an omission of the heterogenous mixture between Marxism, Socialism, Anarchism and other trends of social redemption of the Chilean left in its origins. This by means of systematically ‘cleansing’ the working-class movement of everything that does not resemble the postulates of their ‘scientific’ Marxism. Hence, as Sergio Grez claims, ‘the [Chilean] historiography tackled this oblivion, distortion or silence. And consequently, until almost the end of the twentieth century, the bibliography about the Chilean anarchists was too brief.’³⁶ One of the most common misunderstandings disseminated by this tradition is the idea of the possibility of establishing a clear distinction between democrats, socialists and anarchists before the foundation of the Chilean Communist party in 1922. As Grez continues, ‘a meticulous examination shows a more complex scenario, characterized by a certain ideological laxity and lack of definition among left-wing groups.’³⁷ However, the multiplicity and mixture of tendencies that formed the early working-class movement was mainly reduced to mere ideological misinterpretations. These ‘other’ voices had to wait until after the Coup of 1973 to be inscribed into the tradition. Until then, the history of the people was mainly interpreted from the perspective of this Orthodox Marxism that from a ‘universal’ standpoint discerned who were the ones that in the Chilean political landscape embodied the historical subject previously theorized by the European Marxist tradition.³⁸ It is

³⁵ Pinto, 49.

³⁶ Grez, Sergio, *Los Anarquistas y el movimiento obrero*, 9

³⁷ Grez, 14.

³⁸ However, as the anarcho-tolstoian writer Fernando Santivan wrote in his memoirs: ‘[i]n Chile of the turn of the century, Communism did not exist. At least, their members were not organized under

unsurprising then to also note that in these books there is little treatment of Chilean working-class thought. According to this Eurocentric account of history, the Chilean workers were the *body* of the revolution, but the *minds*, the intellectuals, were always somewhere else. These historians considered the early Chilean working-class writings as a mean for tracing the development of the people's history, but never as a source of political theory. The only exception here is the treatment of Luis Emilio Recabarren, who is considered to be the father of the Chilean left.³⁹ Recabarren's personal history and writings functions as some kind of embodied paradigm for the transition from working-class organization (he founded and led multiple working-class unions and periodicals) to party politics (he became member of parliament in representation of the Partido Demócrata which he later abandoned to found the Partido Obrero Socialista that in 1922 became the Chilean Communist Party) that the Marxist historians needed for their historical narratives. In other words, Recabarren was for them the most prominent and clear example of the historical 'evolution' of the Chilean left, and, consequently, his biography became a model for the interpretation of the proletarian movement as a whole. But that is not all. He was also a very coherent and prolific writer. His political writings about the ethics of the working class, the role of women in the class struggle and of the means for organization anticipated so well the politics of the 1950s and 60s that his ideas became a synonym for Chilean proletarian thought. Even today, historians tend to circumscribe and explain the dynamics of the Chilean left at the beginning of the twentieth century by referring to Recabarren alone. This poses another huge limitation when trying to understand the diversity of tendencies and ideas of working-class thought before the 1920s. I am not trying to negate the colossal importance of Recabarren for the Chilean working-class movement and for the history of Chile in general. I am just contesting the omissions that derives from a teleological reading of his influence which posits him as a

a political party, nor did they have a defined programme or follow the mandates of an international organization. It might be that some of them formed groups worthy of respect; but their range of social action was circumscribed to dispersed *montonera* actions [inorganic and irregular political activities] that, sporadically, came together in order to obtain specific objectives. They were, yes, anarchist revolutionaries that were called communist, but in reality, they were not' (Santivan, Fernando, *Memorias de un Tolstoiano* (Santiago: Zig-Zag, 1955), 223).

³⁹ In relation to Recabarren's historical relevance, the site *Memoria Chilena* (the Centre of Digital Archives and Historical Resources of the Chilean National Library), states that: '[t]he Chilean working-class movement is hardly conceivable without the life and work of Luis Emilio Recabarren. The personal trajectory of this union, social and political leader is highly insightful to understand this important chapter in the history of Chile' (*Luis Emilio Recabarren (1876- 1924)*, Memoria Chilena (DIBAM). URL: <http://www.memoriachilena.gob.cl/602/w3-article-735.html>).

unique starting point for the later development of the Communist party, reducing in this way the diversity of Chilean working-class thought to his writings exclusively. I will return to the uses of Recabarren in contemporary historiography, but for that I must address the second generation of Chilean left-wing historians first.

The decline of this first generation was a direct consequence of Pinochet's civic-military Dictatorship. As part of a very effective attempt at dismantling the memory of the left, the Marxist Historians suffered repression, torture and exile.⁴⁰ The 1950s and 60s left-wing historical narratives were lost and destroyed, leaving only scattered traces and fragmentary residues. During this time, classic Marxism became unable to serve any longer as the organizational principle of reality.⁴¹ There was a disruption with the immediate past produced by the saturation of the collective imaginary with 'one' single event: the Coup and its doubles (military control, repression, detention, torture, rape, murder and the forced disappearance of thousands of people). This scenario provided an unprecedented 'fresh start' for the re-foundation of the left-wing historiographical canon.

From the mid-80s a group of exiled male historians, gathered in the UK under the name of *Nueva Historia Social*, began a project of re-writing the national narrative of the people from scratch.⁴² This movement was 'new' in a double sense: in relation to its novelty as a trend that introduced a new approach to the study of history, and as a radical re-constitution of the borders that defined what was considered to be political in general. Gabriel Salazar, the main representative of this trend,⁴³ refers to *La Historia Social* in his essay *Historiografía y dictadura en Chile* as a form of 'Total History' that addresses a variety of dimensions of human life by studying all the historical subjects from the lower classes that for centuries were gathered (politically and statistically) as a shapeless mass.⁴⁴ At the core of this trend there is a very clear attempt at tracing practises of resistance that emerged from within the popular sectors that have not been considered by Chilean Marxist historiography. This turn towards popular culture is inspired by these

⁴⁰ Chile was one of the few Latin American countries in which the soldiers burned books after carrying out a coup d'état.

⁴¹ Richard, Nelly, *The Insubordination of Signs: Political Change, Cultural Transformation and Poetics of the Crisis* (Durham: Duke University press, 2004), 1-2.

⁴² This group of historians is deeply influenced by the work of British Marxist Historians, especially by the work of E.P Thompson.

⁴³ The right-wing historian, Sofia Correa, has stated that 'the *señera* [banner] figure of the lefty historiography is, currently, Gabriel Salazar' (Correa, Sofia, *Historiografía chilena de fin de siglo* (Revista Chilena de humanidades. Universidad de Chile, No. 21, 2011), 48).

⁴⁴ Salazar, Gabriel, *Historiografía y Dictadura en Chile: Búsqueda, dispersión e identidad*, In: *La historia desde abajo y desde adentro* (Santiago: Universidad de Chile Press, 2003).

historians' personal experience during the Dictatorship. As Salazar claims, the dictatorial dismantling of political parties and the repression allowed them to experience different forms of popular solidarity and resistance which during the 1960s were concealed by the logics of party politics. They began to write about peasants, women, indigenous people and children of the lower classes, conceiving them, not only as historical subjects, but also as political ones. What started to appear with the studies made by the historians of the *Nueva Historia Social* such as Julio Pinto, Gabriel Salazar, Luis Ortega, Sergio Grez and many others, is a plurality of positions; a vast diversity of identities and strategies of popular resistance that recreated a multidimensional image of the Chilean people and their struggles.

Even though the work of these historians shaped a net of studies that complement each other (prove of this is the way in which they regularly quote each other's work), this trend does not lack differences between its members. One of the main debates among these historians is the question if the history of the people and the popular sectors should consider institutional politics or not.⁴⁵ This question was formulated by Sergio Grez based upon the contrast between his work and Salazar's. According to Grez, Salazar systematically and symptomatically avoids writings about politics in its classical sense, instead he enhances the importance of social, inorganic and spontaneous movements that could lead or not to an institutionalization of their actions. For Grez, this approach implies 'tearing the historical subject apart', it divorces a political and institutional dimension (absent in Salazar's work) from a social and cultural one, which leads to historical analyses 'without politics.' The most systematic and eloquent response to this critique did not come from Salazar himself. In his undergrad thesis, Miguel Fuentes (a thesis that was supervised by Sergio Grez) argues that Salazar attempts to overcome the traditional concept of politics by employing both an autonomist and a Foucauldian⁴⁶ approach that contests any form of systemic analysis. Thus, it is not that in Salazar there is no politics, but that the political is merged with the social and it appears through the quotidian actions of the popular subject that carries an autonomous political identity, memory and culture that shapes a counter-power that operates independently to any form of institution. But, there is also another aspect that exceeds this methodological use of a broad or all-

⁴⁵ Grez, Sergio. *Escribir la historia de los sectores populares. ¿Con o sin la política incluida? A propósito de dos miradas a la historia social (Chile, siglo XIX)*, In: *Política* vol 44, autumn 2005, pp. 17-31.

⁴⁶ Salazar analyses forms of disseminated power that not only involve ways of resisting the microphysics of power that emanates from institutions, but also forms of resistance that contest the logics of governability as framed in Foucault's late works.

encompassing notion of politics. As Salazar argues from a factual and historical perspective, all the Chilean intellectuals that conceptualize inorganic social movements as a political anomaly that destabilises institutions and makes democracy trembles; or as mere germs of a political change that must be channelled by institutions in order to succeed, omits the fact that the Chilean State has been characterised by a restricted democratic system throughout its history.⁴⁷ Therefore, the history of popular representative politics in Chile, as Salazar persuasively shows, is no more than a sequence of political failures, betrays and disillusionments, and its study is based in no more than in an a priori and teleological understanding of the theoretical importance of institutional politics than in facts.⁴⁸ Hence, any attempt at being faithful to the history of the Chilean lower and middle classes has to be very careful in not overstating the actual importance of institutions for the Chilean people. In what concerns to this thesis, even if I would want to impose the question of representative politics to the working-class press of the turn of the century, Grez himself recognizes that the early working-class press emerges in a period of vacuum of popular representation caused by the co-option of the *Partido Democrático* (the only party that had the pretension of representing the workers) by the logics of agreements and corruption of the oligarchic parties.⁴⁹ In this regard, I share Salazar's understanding of Chilean popular politics and therefore in this work I do not assess problems related to party politics, although the problem of political representation is at the core of all chapters.

When it comes to the study of the working-class movement, the historians of the *Nueva Historia* have critically assessed most of the assumptions, omissions and exaggerations carried out by the work of the *Marxistas Clásicos*. They forged a very robust and rigorous account of the gestational period of the Chilean working class. The main limitation of their work is that they have produced very few studies related to gender, masculinity and women's history. One of the few exceptions is Gabriel Salazar's and Julio Pinto's work on 'masculinity and femininity',⁵⁰ which they wrote as a critique against Sonia Montecino's uses of the allegory of the '*Culto Mariano*' ['Mary's Cult'] to

⁴⁷ Salazar, Gabriel, *Movimientos sociales en Chile. Trayectoria Histórica y proyección política* (Santiago: Uqbar editores, 2012).

⁴⁸ Salazar, Gabriel, *En el nombre del Poder Popular Constituyente: Chile, siglo XXI* (Santiago: LOM, 2011) & Salazar, *Movimientos sociales*.

⁴⁹ Grez, Sergio, *La izquierda chilena y las elecciones: una perspectiva histórica (1882-2013)*, In: Cuadernos de historia. Univesidad de Chile, vol. 40, june 2014, p. 68.

⁵⁰ Salazar, Gabriel & Pinto, Julio, *Historia Contemporánea de Chile IV: Hombría y Feminidad* (Santiago: LOM, 2014).

address the machismo of Chilean Society.⁵¹ These two historians posit women as a fundamental political actor in shaping strategies of resistance against the abuses of the Chilean elite. However, they openly reject conceptualizing the ‘history of the sexes’ in dichotomous terms. That is, by separating the people between what they refer to ironically as a ‘*macho triste/violento*’ [‘a sad/violent male’] and a ‘*hembra triunfadora/golpeada*’ [‘triumphant/beaten female’]. Instead they chose to frame the distribution of the sexes in terms of a highly problematic *heteronormative* concept of solidarity that focuses on the collective forms of resistance with which Chilean men and women as a *couple* have historically resisted the dynamics of the market and the repression of the state. In other words, they conceptualize ‘*the couple*’ as a historical figure that must be traced in order to comprehend the forms of solidarity that have united men and women of the people in their struggles against their common enemies. On a superficial reading, this might *seem* to be an appropriate and almost historical and political necessity when writing about the horrors of the Chilean twentieth century. But things are never that simple. This predilection for the form of solidarity at the expense of the analysis of the situations of gender violence is based on a clear androcentric regime of truthfulness. They assert that, in contrast to what they call the ‘battle of the sexes’ (framed in terms of Patriarchy and Machismo): ‘[t]he main objective of the[ir] book is to expose *credible* historical drafts that allow us to analyse the domestic issues of gender in a unified and solidary attitude in front, or against, the abuses and provocations of the global system’ (my emphasis).⁵² Thus, for these authors the accusations of harassment, physical and psychological violence, rape, unrecognized labour, political exclusion and feminicides that many women have voiced through generations, stop being credible as soon as we look at the ‘bigger picture.’⁵³ Accusations like the ones articulated by movements such as *Ni Una Menos*⁵⁴ are just completely omitted by these renowned authors, because for them, these

⁵¹ Montecino, Sonia, *Madres y huachos: Alegorías del mestizaje chileno* (Santiago: Catalonia, 2010).

⁵² Salazar & Pinto, 16.

⁵³ It is symptomatic that Salazar, in his book *En nombre del Poder Popular Constituyente*, refers to the rise of divorces, child abandonment and, what is even worse, of femicides (he does not use the word feminicides) as a direct consequence of the high level of indebtedness and the logics of consumerism that characterises Neoliberal Chile. Without denying the multiple hardships that derive from being a precarious worker in contemporary Chile, it is grotesquely reductionist to justify the machista violence by alluding to Neoliberalism alone, disengaging thus the perpetrator of machista violence from any guilt (Salazar, Gabriel, *En el nombre del Poder Popular Constituyente*, 8).

⁵⁴ *Ni una menos* (Not One Woman Less) it is an Argentine fourth-wave feminist movement, which has spread across several Latin American countries and Spain. It campaigns against gender-based violence and it regularly holds protests against feminicides, but it also challenges issues such as gender roles, sexual harassment, gender pay gap, objectification and commodification of women,

groups only undermine the ‘popular solidarity’ that unites men and women.⁵⁵ Consequently, to write about these ‘private matters’ can only imply an attack on the people’s interest.⁵⁶

According to this regime of truthfulness, men and women enter the realm of popular resistance and history only by means of heteronormative alliances that they establish with each other. However, it is no secret that in Latin America the figure of the father/partner/husband only appears on stage by constantly disappearing; that is, by abandoning the household.⁵⁷ Then I should ask: how is it that Salazar and Pinto manage to elude the well-known image of the Latin American absent father? They do it by reproducing one of the most classic exaggerations of the *Marxistas Clásicos*.

In the section *La hombría del movimiento proletario*, Salazar and Pinto examine what they call ‘proletarian masculinity.’ There they resort to Recabarren’s writings and biography to construct an image, but clearly not a representative one, of proletarian manhood. Basically, they just write about the way in which Recabarren advocated for a Socialist programme that should include women in its basis of popular redemption, and by means of a hyperbole they attribute those principles to all male urban workers. They

universal, free and legal access to abortion, sex workers' rights and transgender rights.

⁵⁵ In 2017 Salazar resorted to this same argument to criticize a group of feminist scholars that supported a group of students from the Universidad de Chile who were sexually harassed by the professor Leonardo Leon, a founder member of *La Nueva Historia Social*. Salazar wrote in a periodical: ‘[l]a *Historia Social* and the Popular Education are heirs of the feeling of solidarity that inflamed the revolutionary youth of the 60s and 70s, and the one that inflamed the “80s force” that confronted the military tyranny. And therefore, none of them are mere academic sciences, or mere steps in a university career, for they contain an ethical and essentially political DNA: the solidarity, the fraternal dialogue, the dedication to the cause, etc... all practises that are, as well, part of the inner mystic of the popular movement [...] Those who have joined the communicative practise of destroying the prestigious of those who disturb them, necessary collide with the DNA of the “solidary being”, and run the risk of feeding the typical double standard of “neoliberal solidarity”... We must all thus assume the long-standing values’ (‘La carta abierta de Gabriel Salazar donde responde a críticas tras defensa a historiador Leonardo León’, *El Desconcierto* (19 January 2017), retrieved from: <https://www.eldesconcierto.cl/2017/01/19/la-carta-abierta-de-gabriel-salazar-donde-responde-a-criticas-tras-defensa-a-historiador-leonardo-leon/>

⁵⁶ This implies not recognizing also that the Chilean feminist movement (and that of the Southern Cone more specifically) has become one of the strongest fronts of the left, proving to be one of the main sources of solidarity in the region. In contrast to reformist liberal feminism, the Latin American feminist movement has clearly addressed the common ground and complicity between Colonialism, Capitalism and Patriarchy. This has become especially relevant in a political context in which the new Latin American Right (with Bolsonaro as its clearest exponent) is aligned behind an agenda that blends Neoliberal policies with a clear conservatism which is openly antifeminist, homophobic, racist and nationalist. See: Zerán, Faride (Ed.), *El Mayo Feminista* (Santiago: LOM, 2018).

⁵⁷ Montecino, *Madres y Huachos*, 40-41.

assert:

Recabarren – *and many others like him* [who else?]- felt that since the 1900s the responsibility of a head of family included not only earning his family livelihood, but also fighting against those who were abusively stealing an important part of it. The worker was divided in two: one part was the wage labourer, the other was the revolutionary. One was the family provider, the other was the one that would lead the proletariat to universal happiness. ‘Socialist manhood’, as Recabarren understood it, was then, the traditional one, but made more complex by the inescapable ethical, political and historical commitment with everyone’s ‘liberation’ (my emphasis).⁵⁸

Based on this account of working-class men’s identity, embodied by Recabarren himself, Salazar and Pinto argue that the traditional notion of the ‘peasant couple’ was reshaped with the rise of a revolutionary proletariat in the following way:

[t]he struggle for justice and freedom – the revolutionary labour – inevitably transformed (and transforms) the ‘normative’ couple into a ‘historical’ relationship of camaraderie and companionship; into a relationship between two beings *of different sex* ‘united and merged’ in a single objective: everyone’s freedom and happiness (my emphasis).⁵⁹

According to this radically idealised depiction of ‘proletarian love’ based on the ideas of the ‘Father’ of the Chilean left, these authors seem to get away with ignoring any form of machismo in the working class. They even claim that working-class organizations were inclusive of women; that female workers participated in their ‘*veladas*’, mutual societies and periodicals as equal comrades.⁶⁰ Even though I would like to keep this image of the early political organization of the Chilean people seeing men and women working side by side in total class solidarity without gender distinction, that would imply ignoring multiple articles written by female worker who used that apparent ‘inclusion’ in the working-class press to denounce their own political exclusion and sexual exploitation. So, let us read the words of a worker woman that will serve as an anticipation of the tone and emphasis that characterise the type of texts that I will analyse in this thesis. On the pages of a periodical an anonymous woman asserted in 1908:

I write these humble lines with the certainty that with them I will contribute to the triumph of the ideals that Socialism defends with so much passion and success all over the world in order to prepare the future redemption that we, all the exploited

⁵⁸ Salazar & Pinto, *Historia de Chile IV*, 82.

⁵⁹ Salazar & Pinto, 83.

⁶⁰ Salazar & Pinto, 58.

of the globe, hope to reach. [However,] The fighters have never paid attention to us [women], nor have they tried to take us into the field in which they fight and perform their activities. Maybe because they have seen in our sex mere useless beings that are incapable of accompanying them in their campaigns. Mistake, grave mistake. I believe and think that we, women, the eternal slaves of the home and workshop, feel more than anyone else the indignation in our veins when we consider that although we are rational beings, we are considered a mere object of pleasure destined to satisfy the appetites of men, or just a piece of junk that performs a mechanical function in the home, or, finally, as prisoners in the workshop that are eternally bent over the piece of lace.⁶¹

Unsurprisingly, the supposed social and political equality that Salazar and Pinto praised is clearly not to be found in the words of this female worker. As might be expected, the testimonies that contest the semblance and simplicity of the history of the Chilean 'proletariat' come to the surface as soon as we give the floor to women. This has become increasingly clearer thanks to the work of historians who since the mid-1990s began to revisit the history of the Chilean working-class from gender and even feminist perspectives, as is the case of Thomas Klubock and his work on masculinity in the Chilean Copper Mines,⁶² the research of Asunción Lavrín about feminism and social change⁶³ and last but not least, Elizabeth Hutchinson's book *Labors Appropriate to Their Sex: Gender, Labor and Politics in Urban Chile, 1900 - 1930*,⁶⁴ which is probably the most important work on social history of Chilean women. Hutchinson elaborates a very convincing and well documented narrative of the experience of Chilean female workers: she addresses their labour struggles, the machismo they endured and their social and political campaigns, among many other dimensions of women's experience. My work is deeply indebted to her research. However, when it comes to the treatment of working-class thought, and more specifically, of male working-class thought, I disagree with some of her conclusions. In a chapter of her book, she examines how women's sexual and labour exploitation and commodification is represented in the working-class press as a patriarchal paradigm for the horrors of modern life. Although she identifies many machista tropes present in the periodicals and analyses them in interesting ways, she does

⁶¹ 'Un tesoro escondido: COLABORACIÓN FEMENINA', *José Arnero* (Santiago: 20 of July 1908), 3.

⁶² Kluboc, Thomas, *Contested Communities: Class, Gender, and Politics in Chile's El Teniente Copper Mine, 1904-1951* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998).

⁶³ Lavrin, Asunción, *Mujeres, feminismo y cambio social en Argentina, Chile y Uruguay 1890-1940* (Santiago: Centro de Investigaciones Barros Arana, 2003).

⁶⁴ Hutchinson, Elizabeth, *Labores propias de su sexo*.

not unpacks the logics and conceptual complexity of the male working-class thought, nor consider their patriarchal assumptions as part of their critique of Capitalism. Instead, Hutchison refers to these accounts of women's sexual and labour exploitation as no more than part of a propagandistic strategy that, by dramatizing women's situation, was meant at politicizing male workers.⁶⁵ Consequently, even though she recognizes that, on a symbolic level, prostitution was understood as a central metaphor for the demeaning and brutal logic of Capitalism, she does not engage with the conceptual repercussions that this issue had for the development of these workers' political theory (I analyse the workers' conception of prostitution in Chapters 3 and 4). One reason behind this omission could be that this book is a social history of women and not a history of ideas and even less of men's ideas. But there is also a second explanation for this. When Hutchinson refers to the emergence of a working-class feminist press, she mentions Recabarren as a key actor. Hutchinson follows many Chilean historians that had 'described Recabarren as a feminist, because of his writings about women's condition, as for his engagement in the formation of women's organizations in the North of Chile in 1913.'⁶⁶ And by doing so, she reduces the confrontation between male and female working-class writers. Beyond the limitations and complexities that derive from the depiction of Recabarren as a feminist,⁶⁷ the inclusion of the 'Father' of the Chilean left into the feminist tradition conceals the common ground where left-wing thought and machismo blend. Hence, although she resists overstating Recabarren's influence by explicitly recognizing that at the turn of the century working-class feminism was way stronger in the cities of Santiago and Valparaiso than in the mines of the north where Recabarren was based at the time,⁶⁸ she does not refer to important writers such as Rafael Allende, Luis Olea, Magno Espinoza, Juan B. Bustos, Alejandro Escobar y Carvallo, among many unknown others that were writing from urban spaces. She inherits and bequeaths this (Orthodox Marxist) silence regarding other working-class writers of the time, and therefore, the extent of these writers' patriarchal values that shaped the early urban working-class thought goes unnoticed. It is clearly more comfortable to carry on with the spectre of Recabarren's exaggeration when it comes to the analysis of urban workers' writings. His writings are

⁶⁵ Hutchinson, 109.

⁶⁶ Hutchinson, 135.

⁶⁷ To read Recabarren's *La educación de la mujer* is enough to contest this assumption. In that article he defends the need of educating working-class women on the basis of their 'role as mothers', so they can pass that knowledge to their sons, but not as an end in itself. See: Recabarren, Luis Emilio, *La educación de la mujer* (Punta Arenas: Imprenta de El Socialista, 1916).

⁶⁸ Hutchinson, 137.

more systematic, organized and clear; but especially because he was radically less misogynist than many of his contemporaries. However, before the 1920s he was not the most influential working-class writer in urban spaces, because at that time his political action was based in the mining areas of the north of Chile.

In this general overview of the main trends committed to the study of Chilean working-class history, I have attempted to show the dynamics of repression that lay the foundations of the working-class *archive*. These were traced from the *Historiadores Marxistas* to the *Social History of Women*, passing through the *Nueva Historia Social*; and I have shown the way in which different historians of these trends have systematically silenced and neglected the diversity of working-class thought, and with it, the possibility of addressing the forms of conservatism and machismo that had been present in the Chilean urban left since its inception. In this regard, I agree with the critique of the *Nueva Historia Social* and *Women's Social History* made by the Chilean feminist philosopher Alejandra Castillo, when she writes that:

[t]he '*Nueva Historia*' or '*Historia del Bajo Pueblo*' – currently in crisis – did not go beyond the unquestioned inversion of the categories of the dominant historiographic order that portrays the people almost always rendered in histories, great deeds and male bodies. It could be said, however, that social history of women is the polemical other side of this male configuration of the history of the people. What was silenced by the history of the *bajo pueblo* is staged by the history of women. Yes, it is true, but then again, the categories that arrange the knowledge of history remain untouched. The historiographic operation that the history of women performs do not seem to differ from the 'inversion of the inversion.' Let's not forget that feminism – which is an interruption and not an inversion – has been perceived as petty bourgeois by the histories of the *bajo pueblo*. Maybe this time of revolt [referring to the Chilean feminist protests of 2018] is also the time to (un)think history and its historiographies.⁶⁹

I consider this thesis a response to the challenge posited by Castillo.

F) The Politics of the Thesis

There is no doubt that to write a feminist critique of the early Chilean working-class movement might sound highly problematic for some people. And what are the reasons

⁶⁹ Castillo, Alejandra, *De la revuelta feminista, la historia y Julieta Kirkwood*, In: Zerán, Faride, *Mayo Feminista. La rebelión contra el patriarcado*, 37.

for this? At the core of this issue lies the commonly shared assumption that the history of the Chilean working class is already closed and that its narrative must be defended, not only for historical reasons, but for political ones.⁷⁰ The silences and omissions of this narrative are just the necessary ‘price to pay’ for preserving the people’s memory against the common enemy, and it makes sense, particularly considering that, as Derrida asserts, ‘[t]here is no political power without control of the archive, if not of memory.’⁷¹ Thus, I could ask, what is politically at stake in this thesis?

I am not revisiting the classic narratives of the working class in order to reverse the terms of its radical antagonism backwards, that is, to take the historical side of the common enemy (the ruling class) or to simply negate the canonical readings of the origins of the Chilean left. On the contrary, by revisiting this material my aim is to critically assess some of the historical blind spots that had been tackled by the traditional left. My intention is not to de-idealize the figure of the male proletarian in order to demonize him instead, but to understand the complexity of his anxieties, ideas and dreams alongside his misogyny and homophobia. The importance of tackling these conservative issues stems not only from the fact that they were a central element for the early Chilean working-class thought, as I will defend in this thesis, but also because they had been present in the traditional left until fairly recently. They can be traced from, for example, the way in which the communist party dealt with Pablo de Rokha’s love affairs, to the resistances of the left to the creation of the *Movimiento Pro-Emancipación de las Mujeres de Chile* (MEMCH) in the 1980s, to the patriarchal structure of the *Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionario* (MIR) where women were mostly considered as someone else’s partner,⁷² to Pedro Lemebel’s accusations of left-wing homophobia in *Manifiesto (Hablo por mi diferencia)*.⁷³ Thus, in a way that encompasses all these issues very clearly, the Chilean

⁷⁰ Valderrama, Miguel, *Posthistoria: Historiografía y comunidad* (Santiago: Palinodia, 2005), 37-38.

⁷¹ Derrida, Jacques, *Archive Fever*, 11.

⁷² Hinner, Hilary, ‘Memory Speaks from Today’: Analyzing Oral Histories of Female Members of the MIR in Chile Through the Work of Luisa Passerini (*Women’s History Review*, Vol. 25 No. 3, 2016), 382-407, and Mallon, Florencia, *Barbudos, Warriors, and Rotos: The MIR, Masculinity, and Power in the Chilean Agrarian Reform 1965–74*, In: Gutmann, Matthew (Ed.), *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 179-215.

⁷³ Lemebel was a Chilean queer activist, writer and performance artist. His *Manifiesto (Hablo por mi diferencia)* is probably one of the earliest and most well-articulated critiques of the culture of the left from within the left in times of the dictatorship. In this piece he anticipates many of the left-wing contradictions that emerged during the transitional period and vindicates a subversive queer approach to politics. He writes: ‘don’t speak to me of the proletariat/ Because to be poor and queer is worse/ One must be tough to withstand it [...] Won’t there be a fag on some street-corner

feminist Julieta Kirkwood spotted in the final years of the dictatorship that: '[d]EEP down it seems that what is in dispute between the right and the left... is who is better at preserving the patriarchal core of values that –in our opinion– constitutes the family.'⁷⁴

Yet still (I repeat), I find it necessary to explicitly recognize that I have read and heard (not without hope and profound admiration) about the multiple struggles, strikes, protests, riots, occupations and rallies that shape the history of the Chilean working-class movement. I have also listened to multiple stories about the expansion of inorganic and spontaneous solidarity networks that united the people in fields, workshops, neighbourhoods, factories and land occupations. That I have also heard and read (not without consternation, anger and horror) about the repression, criminalization, and massacres that the Chilean people endured in a bloody twentieth century (and that we still suffer). Books have been written, memorials have been erected, speeches have been pronounced and movies have been made which now stand as monuments to the brutality of Chilean history and constitute the documents of our national memory. This archive is at the core of a tradition that by framing Chilean history in a radical antagonism has managed to preserve the memory of the historical savagery of the Chilean ruling class. This way of dealing (and coping) with the past is still necessary to understand Chilean politics and its contemporary social struggles, especially in contrast to the politics of forgetfulness and 'national reconciliation' that the transition governments tried to impose during the 1990s.⁷⁵ It is thanks to these memory keepers that is easy to stop

destabilising the future of your new man? / Will you let us embroider birds onto the flag of the free fatherland? [...] If I speak to you of these things/ And look at your package/ I am not a hypocrite/ Don't a woman's tits make you lower your eyes?/ Don't you think that, all alone, up in the ranges, we might have gotten up to something?/ Although you would hate me later/ For corrupting your revolutionary morality/ Are you afraid of life becoming homosexual?/ And I'm not talking about putting in and taking it out/ And only taking it out and putting it back in/ I'm talking about tenderness, *compañero*/ You don't know/ How hard it is to find love /Under these conditions [...] My manhood wasn't given to me by the party/ Because they rejected me with laughter/ Many times/ I learnt my manhood by participating/ In the toughness of those times [...] Instead I present my ass, *compañero*/ And that is my vengeance/ My manhood waits patiently/ For the machos to get old/ Because at this stage of the game/ The left sells its flaccid ass/ In the parliament/ My manhood was difficult/ That's why I'm not getting onto this train/ Without knowing where it will go/ I will not change for Marxism/ That rejected me so many times/ I don't need to change/ I am more subversive than you/ I will not change/ Because of the rich and the poor/ Try that on somebody else' (Lemebel, Pedro, *Manifiesto (Hablo por mi diferencia)*, Trans. Sergio Holas-Véliz & Israel Holas Allimant, (Cordite Poetry Review) Retrieved from:<http://cordite.org.au/poetry/notheme4/manifiesto-i-speak-for-my-difference/>)

⁷⁴ Kirkwood, Julieta, *El feminismo como negociación del autoritarismo* (Santiago: FLACSO, 1983), 11.

⁷⁵ As Nelly Richard claims, '[t]he consensual model of a "democracy of agreements" formulated by the Chilean government of the Transition (1989) marked a passage from politics as antagonism

conceiving Pinochet's Dictatorship as an exception in Chilean politics (a break in our 'stable' democratic tradition, as some people like to say) and understand it as part of the reactionary politics of a particular class that has always been aporophobic and dictatorial to the core.⁷⁶ Because of their collective work we have been made aware of a clear timeline that contests the official narrative of reconciliation: it is a narrative that takes us from Diego Portales' dictatorial ideas in the 1830s, to the current brutality of Sebastian Piñera's administration, passing through the failed revolution of 1851, the civil war of 1891 that overthrew Balmaceda's government, to Ibañez's and Pinochet's dictatorships. It is also a timeline that takes us through a path of blood: starting with the persecution and imprisonment of the members of *La Sociedad de la Igualdad* (1851), *La Masacre del Mitín de la Carne* (1905), *La Matanza de Santa Maria* (1907), *La Masacre de San Gregorio* (1921), *La Matanza del Seguro Obrero* (1938), *La Matanza de la Plaza Bulnes* (1946), followed by the repression, torture and enforced disappearance of thousands of people at the hands of the military Dictatorship and concluding with Piñera's war against the people – to this list I should also add the ongoing massacres against the indigenous population: the Mapuches –. Hence, thanks to the arduous work of historians, activists, writers, film makers, among many others, we now know that the exception in Chilean politics is actually the one thousand days that Salvador Allende's Unidad Popular lasted. This is a macronarrative whose value and relevance I do not contest.

Having said this, I want to be very emphatic and even reiterative in asserting that it is with an immense admiration and respect for the Chilean workers of the turn of the century and their struggles that in this work I have resisted representing them as if they were perfect or ideal. Instead, I have decided to read early working-class writings

(the dramatization of conflict governed by a mechanism of confrontation under dictatorship) to a politics of transaction (the formula of a pact and its techniques of negotiation). The "democracy of agreements" made consensus its normative guarantee, its operational key, its de-ideologizing ideology, its institutional rite, and its discursive trophy' (Richard, Nelly, *Cultural Residues*, 15). See also Moulian, Tomás, *Chile Actual: Anatomía de un mito* (Santiago:LOM, 2017).

⁷⁶ Sergio Villalobos-Ruminott argues that violence in the form of repression and murder are for the Latin American nations more than accidents or excesses, but inherent disciplinary mechanism that allow for the constitution and preservation of the Capitalist mode of production. Thus, this violence has been a constant axis for the maintenance of the market and the State. Based on Benjamin's notion of 'Mythic Violence', Villalobos-Ruminott defines this type of Latin American violence as 'the one exerted over men with the aim of reproducing the conditions that allow for that same violence. This allows us to conceive war not as an exceptional event in the modern history of Latin America, but as a type of violence that, no matter how regrettable, is no less frequent' (Villalobos-Ruminott, Sergio, *Heterografías de la Violencia: Historia, Nihilismo, Destrucción* (Buenos Aires: La Cebra, 2016), 121).

knowing that this material might put *me* in an ‘uncomfortable position.’ But I prefer to approach these texts in a way that allows me to understand these workers as people that desperately tried to make sense of their situation resorting to their most obscure fears.

Therefore, I must face the fact that these texts introduce a male worker with whom I will politically connect in many ways, but who is also very problematic in many other respects, especially as concerns his machismo. Here I will read individuals who shock my ideals and alliances in ways that make impossible for me to conceive these workers as mere ideal martyrs. I am aware of the dangers of this move, particularly since I understand and share to a certain extent the need for reconstructing this historical male worker as an absolute victim when talking about a dictatorial country like Chile. But things are never that simple.

In the previous paragraphs I pay my respects to the classic history of the left; now I must recognize another voice. I have also read and heard (with resentment and anger) about the ways in which the Chilean feminist movement for the past 10 years has publicly shown that this tendency to idealize left-wing men can easily be turned into a blind justification for the actions of some prominent figures. One of the most representative examples of this is the machismo of Pablo Neruda; his poems are not only packed with references to the objectification of women, but he also confessed in his memoirs to having raped a woman.⁷⁷ It is easy to find people who circumvent this issue by appealing not only to Neruda’s literary work (as Mario Vargas Llosa did by assimilating the feminist accusations against him with a form of fascism committed to destroying Literature),⁷⁸ but also to all the things he did for the Communist party as a militant, and even calling upon the fact that it is very likely that he was murdered by the dictatorship. In these cases the formula works as follows: because of the difficulty of hiding or negating the issue, there is a first recognition of the crime followed by a movement of concealment marked by a ‘but’: yes, he did this or that, *but* he did so much (more) for the cause. I referred to this case as an example and not because I have any interest in talking about Neruda, but as many feminist scholars have shown, this ‘but’ is deeply rooted in some spheres of the left, and the field of history is no exception.

G) The Fragile Masculinity of the Chilean Working Class

⁷⁷ Neruda, Pablo, *Confieso que he vivido* (Santiago: Seix Barral, 1974), 45.

⁷⁸ ‘Mario Vargas Llosa afirma que el feminismo es actualmente "el más resuelto enemigo de la literatura"’, *El Diario* (Madrid: March 18 2018) Retrieved from: https://www.eldiario.es/rastreador/mario-vargas-llosa-feminismo-enemigoliteratura_6_751434856.html

As I have been arguing so far, the traditional left-wing historians have systematically ‘cleansed’ the history of the Chilean working class from its distressing conservative elements. These patriarchal features (machismo, homophobia and misogyny) constitute the excluded elements of the twentieth-century Chilean left-wing tradition and delimit the margins of its *archive*. However, the repressed works against the machinery of repression; as Derrida writes:

it resists and *returns*, as such, as the spectral truth of delusion or of hauntedness. It *returns*, it belongs, it comes down to spectral truth. Delusion or insanity, hauntedness is not only haunted by this or that ghost [...] but by the specter of the truth which has been thus repressed.⁷⁹

The constitution of any form of nostalgic idealization, which in this case is embodied by the image of the male Latin American revolutionary and his epic struggles, is always already ‘distorted’ by the return of the repressed that, as I will argue throughout this work, in the Chilean case takes the monstrous form of a feminized proletarian that cries in despair the constant displacement of his *ideal*, but *fragile* masculinity.

When reading the Chilean working-class periodicals of the turn of the century it is easy to spot how the urban Chilean working-class press announces over and over again the desire for a messianic return of a male subject who will redeem the ‘present worker’ from an on-going process of feminization generated by a ‘timeless state’ of exploitation. Hence, for early working-class thought the revolutionary promise seems to be structured upon a future-to-come that disturbs the past/future distinctions by operating as a return to a lost patriarchal past that is concomitant with a re-masculinization of an already feminized working class. They portray the state of exploitation as an eternal repetition of an immemorial labour routine that has reshaped, formed and deformed their bodies to the point of making them unrecognizable for themselves. However, as I already argued, this phenomenon exceeds the mere problem of bodily degeneration. It also triggers a mad principle of undifferentiation that makes the body politic into a homogeneous mass that flattens the ‘individual’ workers to a point of complete *exchangeability*, which allows for the functioning of a market economy whose main principle of exchangeability is sexual difference.

The motif of feminization derives from an understanding of the market economy as a *Lupanar (Brothel)* that hyperbolically makes everything for sale. In the world that

⁷⁹ Derrida, Jacques, *Archive Fever*, 55.

these workers inhabit, according to their terminology, '*todo esta prostituido*' ['everything is prostituted']. This expression declares more than it seems: prostitution constitutes, as I will argue, a paradigm for explaining the radical commodification of working-class bodies that these writers were facing. They resort to this word to express the uncanny lack of an 'essentialist and idealized' idea of *aneconomic love* that, according to them, should escape all economic transactions. However, the uses of this hyperbolization of prostitution to depict exploitative capitalist relations is not original to Chilean workers alone. Marx in his *Private Property and Communism* (1844) asserts that:

prostitution is only a specific expression of the general prostitution of the labourer, and since it is a relationship in which falls not the prostitute alone, but also the one who prostitutes – and the latter's abomination is still greater – the capitalist, etc., also comes under this head.⁸⁰

Following this understanding of prostitution as the hidden face of Capitalism, working-class writers constantly refer to a process of 'collective degeneration' or 'class feminization' that relies in some kind of 'transvestite writing' that represents the male worker as a best-like female prostitute. This principle of 'bodily fluidity' is introduced as a negative and unnatural effect of Capitalism that is based upon a mixture of conservative essentialism and radical theory. That said, it must be understood that the metamorphosis through feminization involved in these writings does not involve an eroticization of the body, instead it is a feminization that questions the becoming of Reason by the disarticulation of the masculine/feminine 'natural' binomial difference.

By tracing the uses of the metaphor of the male worker's prostituted body, this thesis is based upon the following hypothesis: *in the Chilean working-class press the (always already deferred) advent of the revolution is not constrained by the promise of the confiscation of the means of production. But it is outlined as the return of a patriarchal reason that regenerates the male working-class subject who sees his virility displaced by capitalist modernity and exploitation.* I will argue thus that the Chilean revolutionary *telos* is rooted in an irreducible economy of sexual difference that depicts the workers' revolution in terms of a return of a working-class male subject that 're-establishes' the natural distribution of the sexes by recuperating the bodies and love of working-class women who are understood in terms of communal property. For these working-class writers then, reason and enlightenment go hand in hand with an 'original masculine' locus

⁸⁰ Marx, Karl, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscript of 1844*, In: *Marx & Engels Collected Works Vol 3* (Digital Edition: Lawrence & Wishart 2010), 295.

of enunciation to which the workers return/arrive in order to fulfil the closure of a patriarchal revolution that posits women as men's property. Consequently, the aim of this thesis is to prove that according to the Chilean working-class thought, the condition of possibility for the revolution is based upon an original sexual exclusion that triggers a compulsive return of the repressed that operates as a 'feminization' of Chilean men that makes impossible the liberation of the working-class as a whole.

This thesis is divided into three parts: the first one, entitled *Writing and Reading as Workers do!* analyses the problems involved in writing and reading a working-class text as it is outlined in the periodicals. The main aim of this section is to understand the way in which these workers understood what working-class writing is. The second part, entitled *Dissecting the Reproductive System of the Labour Force*, treats the problem of sexual difference based on three topics: 1) I will analyse the way in which the periodicals posit the origin of Capitalism as an original expropriation of working-class women by the bourgeoisie, 2) I will trace the motif of prostitution and its uses for conceptualizing the dynamics of a market economy and 3) I will study the narratives about the degeneration of the male worker through the motif of the *huacho* (orphan) that is raised by the institutions of the state. This section addresses the workers' understanding of Capitalism and the problem of class degeneration. In the last section of the thesis, entitled *Women Squatting in the Working-class Scene of Writing*, I will problematize the male gaze that the previous section expose through the analysis of working-class texts written by women that contest this male-centred understanding of Capitalism and exploitation. There are also two appendixes at the end of this thesis: one that gathers all the original texts in Spanish that I translated throughout this thesis, and a second one that provides a general historical overview of the Chilean urban landscape by the 1900s.

All the material selected for this work corresponds to articles gathered from 2015 to 2017 in an extensive examination of the working-class press. I had privileged access to this material while working as an archivist for the National Archive of Chile (Division of Judicial Archives, DIBAM) during 2015, and later, as a research assistant for the project 'Clase y Género en la Cultura Popular: Santiago y Ciudad de México, 1880-1920. Modelos Cosmopolitas y Respuestas Locales' funded by The National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research of Chile (CONICYT).⁸¹ Consequently, this research was initially

⁸¹ 'Clase y Género en la Cultura Popular: Santiago y Ciudad de México, 1880-1920. Modelos Cosmopolitas y Respuestas Locales', FONDECYT Number 11150810 in charge of the Historian Tomás Cornejo.

conceived as a result of the experience of working with the material for purposes that are not directly related with this thesis. The ideas that originated this research steamed from a process of unsystematic reading of the periodicals *El Acrata*, *El Pueblo* and *José Arnero*. While reading these three periodicals I began to notice a shared tendency to relate problems of exploitation and capitalist production to sexual practices. At this preliminary stage I identified three very recurrent motifs which later became the core of chapters 3, 4 and 5: 1) narratives that describe the way in which working-class women were becoming sex workers, 2) accusations that claimed that the clergy were perpetuating acts of ‘sodomy’, sexual abuse and pederasty and 3) similar denunciations that also claimed that at different institutions of the army (barracks, war vessels, training facilities, etc.) male workers were being ‘degenerated’ by the institutionalized practice of ‘sodomy.’ Thus, in an attempt to systematize and unpack the uses and the importance of sexuality and the body for the early Chilean working-class press, I began to trace this three thematic threads in different periodicals.

First of all, I delimited my search to periodicals that were published between 1872 and 1922. The first date correspond to the year in which the Liberal Act of Free Press was passed. Scholars of the history of the Chilean press agree that this event constitutes the beginning of the modern press in the country because before then, the right to freedom of speech was not granted by the constitution.⁸² Hence, it is not surprising that the radical and left-wing press appeared only after this date. The second date corresponds to the foundation of the Chilean Communist Party. As the historian Santiago Arranguiz claims, this year marks a change of epoch in the working-class movement because of the establishment of a dogmatic, centralized and international press that was mainly produced (directly or indirectly) by the Communist Party, which at the time was strongly influenced by the Soviet government.⁸³ In this context, the figure of the self-taught working-class writer was slowly replaced by middle-class intellectuals that began to operate as a Leninist vanguard. This change also produced the disappearance of the independent press and with it, the topics related to sexuality and the body; local interpretations of Marxist, Anarchist and Socialist theories and almost all references to Chilean popular culture.⁸⁴ However, the analysis of the

⁸² Santa Cruz, Eduardo, *Análisis Histórico del periodismo Chileno* (Texas: Nuestra América ediciones, 1988); Silva, Raúl, *Prensa y periodismo en Chile (1812-1956)* (Santiago: Ediciones Universidad de Chile, 1958), and Soto, Ángel (ed), *Entre tintas y plumas: Historias de la prensa chilena del siglo XIX* (Santiago: Ediciones Universidad Andes, 2004).

⁸³ Arranguiz, Santiago, *Chile la Rusia de América. La Revolución Bolchevique y el mundo obrero Socialista-Comunista Chileno (1917-1927)* (Santiago: Centro de Estudios Bicentenario, 2019).

⁸⁴ The research done by the authors Tomás Moulian and Isabel Torres on working-class press uses

periodicals of the 1920s shows that this change did not occur immediately, but that instead it operated as a slow process that lasted around 7 years. This is why I decided to expand the time frame of the research to the year 1930.

Given the vast amount of working-class periodicals that were published in Chile between 1872 and 1930, I had to also limit my sample only to periodicals published in the city of Santiago which is the capital city of the country and was the most populated city at the time. At the turn of the century, Santiago was in a process of steady population growth triggered by mass migration from rural areas to urban spaces. This demographic phenomenon was part of an aggressive process of industrialization and proletarianization of the population, which turns this city into a representative sample of the cultural universe of the country as whole.⁸⁵ Although important or similar material can be found in cities like Concepción and Valparaíso, for reasons of space and time this material could not be included into this thesis.

I then consulted two classic works on Chilean working-class press: *La Prensa Obrera en Chile 1900-1930* by Osvaldo Arias and *Concepción política e ideal moral en la prensa obrera: 1919-1922* by Tomás Moulian and Isabel Torres. The first one consist of an early encyclopaedic attempt (it was written in 1952) to make a catalogue of all working-class periodicals. Thanks to this book I discovered the following periodicals:

- 1) Socialist press: *La Reforma*, *El Combate*, *El trabajo*, *La Unión Obrera*, *El Grito del Pueblo*, *La Tromba*, *El Martillo*, *El Trabajo*, *La Campaña*, *El Socialista*, *El Carrilano*, *La Voz Socialista* and *Acción Obrera*.
- 2) Anarchist press: *El Rebelde*, *El Ácrata*, *La Agitación*, *La Luz*, *El Faro*, *Germinal*, *El Oprimido*, *El Productor*, *La Batalla*, *El Proletario* and *El Obrero en Calzado*.

Next I consulted Moulian's and Torres' work in order to gain access to a more updated account of the working-class press. Thanks to their research, I was able to add the following periodicals to my sample: *El Despertar de los Trabajadores*, *El Surco* and *El Azote*. This book also helped me to further narrow down my search since these authors provide convincing arguments for the exclusion of the Social Democrat and Catholic press from the working-class press. They argue that even though some of these periodicals claim to be written for and by workers, they do not share the common thematic features and format of

this time frame for the same reasons. See: Moulian, Tomás & Torres, Isabel, *Concepción de la política e ideal moral en la Prensa Obrera: 1919-1922* (Santiago: FLACSO, 1987).

⁸⁵ For more information about this migratory wave see Appendix Two.

the rest of the working-class press, mainly their critique of Capitalism and the uses of local and popular culture to interpret their experience of exploitation. Instead, they share more similarities with the traditional liberal press, insofar they joined the latter in its attempt to discredit the working-class movement and to defend the capitalist system.⁸⁶ I personally confirmed this hypothesis at the archives. Consequently, the following periodicals were analysed and then excluded from this research: *El Libre Pensador*, *El Guía del Pueblo*, *El Obrero Ilustrado* and *La Luz por la humanidad libre*.

Thanks to Claudia Montero's work on periodicals written by women, I was able to include the periodicals *La Palanca* and *La Alborada* which I analyse in chapter 6.⁸⁷ However, I had to exclude from my sample the following periodicals that are part of her research: *Acción Femenina*, *La Aurora Feminista*, *La Voz Femenina*, *Acción Femenina*, *Unión Femenina* and *Evolución*. All these periodicals are invaluable historical pieces that document the struggle of women and the way in which they created a space from which to write about gender inequalities in a way that promoted the modernization of the country. However, although these periodicals contested men's monopoly over the public sphere in order to defend the rights of women, they also defended Capitalism.⁸⁸ A particularly interesting case is the periodical *La Voz del Empleado*, the official publication of the Union of workers of private houses which represented male and female workers, and, therefore, this was maybe the only periodical that was written by and for both genders. This periodical addresses problems related to gender equality, support of women's inclusion to the political sphere and discussions on gender-based forms of labour. However, for the purpose of this research, I had to dismiss it because it represents the ideas of the Liberal Party. This is particularly clear in all the articles in which they show support to Arturo Alessandri Palma (the liberal candidate who won the presidential election of 1920s against the working-class candidate Emilio Recabarren). Even though it claims to be a working-class periodical it was not recognized as such by the working-class movement of the time.⁸⁹ Also, none of the three topics related with the body and sexuality that are at the core of this thesis are treated or

⁸⁶ Moulian & Torres, 13-14.

⁸⁷ Montero, Claudia, *Y también hicieron periódicos. Cien años de prensa de mujeres en Chile 1850-1950* (Santiago: Hueders, 2019)

⁸⁸ Montero, 92

⁸⁹ The detrimental effects of the election of Alessandri for the working-class movement has been studied by the historian Sergio Grez. See: Grez, Sergio, *Historia del Comunismo en Chile: La era de Recabarren (1912-1924)* (Santiago: LOM ediciones, 2011), pp 133-136.

even mentioned in that periodical, this is probably because it did not oppose or criticize the capitalist system as the rest of the Socialist and Anarchist press did.⁹⁰

In the following stage of the research, I went to the archives of The Chilean National Library in order to read all the issues of the previously selected periodicals. While doing this, I discovered several periodicals that are part of the Library's catalogue, but that were not considered in the works that I had previously consulted. I added them to the sample. This is the definitive list of working-class periodicals that were studied in this research:

Acción Obrera (1916), *El Acrata* (1900), *El Ataque* (1916), *El Carrilano* (1913), *El Centinela* (1898), *El Combate* (1906), *El despertar de los trabajadores* (1912-1913), *El Despertar* (1897), *El Doctrinario* (1904), *El Esfuerzo* (1926), *El Faro* (1902-1903), *El Grito del Pueblo* (1896-1900), *El Martillo* (1989), *El Obrero en Calzado* (1919), *El Obrero* (1890, 1896 and 1918), *El Oprimido* (1906), *El panificador* (1918), *El Rebelde* (1898), *El Regenerador* (1906), *El Roto Chileno* (1893), *El Socialista* (1909), *El Trabajo* (1925-1927), *El Tranviario* (1920), *El Pueblo* (1927-1928), *Jerminal* (1904), *José Arnero* (1902-1912), *La Aurora* (1916), *La Alborada* (1905), *La Batalla* (1912-1913), *La Campaña* (1899), *La Comuna* (1895), *La Gran Federación Obrera de Chile* (1912), *La Palanca* (1908), *La Propaganda Obrera* (1909), *La Protesta* (1924), *La Reforma* (1906 and 1924), *La Rejeneración* (1893), *La Situación* (1914), *La Tromba* (1898), *La Unión Obrera* (1896), *La Voz Socialista* (1913), *Las Sociedades* (1898), *Mefistofeles* (1878), *Revolución* (1880) and *Spartacus* (1920).

The process of systematization of these sources consisted of three stages: Firstly, I extensively analysed and read these 45 periodicals in order to have a general understanding of the writing styles, the cultural references, motifs and other features that characterises this press. At this stage I did not select any particular article, my purpose was only to map the material in order to construct a provisory hypothesis (which became the definitive hypothesis of the thesis. See page 39) and to define the topics for each chapter. These are: a) articles about working-class writing and reading for chapters 1 and 2; b) articles about sex work for chapters 3 and 4; c) articles about sodomy and pederasty for chapter 5; and d)

⁹⁰ As the works of Elizabeth Quay Hutchison, Inés Pérez, Manuel Calcagni and Gabriela Barends shows, the domestic workers' movement only became an influential left-wing movement after the 1930s. Therefore, the study of their politics during the period of the Call War is fundamental for the understanding of the gender dynamics of the left. See: Hutchison, Elizabeth, *Identidades y Alianzas: El movimiento chileno de las Trabajadoras de Casa Particular durante la Guerra Fria (Nouveaux mondes mondes nouveau: Cuadernillo de antecedentes históricos de SINTRACAP, 1989)*; Pérez, Inés, *Historias del servicio doméstico: Trabajo doméstico remunerado en Argentina y Chile en la segunda mitad del siglo XX (Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos: Cuestiones del tiempo presente, 2013)*; Barends, Gabriela, *Within Four Walls: The Empowerment of Household Workers in Chile* (Unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Guelph, 2017) and Calcagni, Manuel, *Trabajadoras de casa particular: Conflictos, dependencias y encuentros, Santiago 1930-2010* (Unpublished Bachelor's thesis, Universidad de Chile, 2011).

articles about exploitation and misogyny written by women for chapter 6. Secondly, I identified articles that fitted the previously established thematic groups and then analysed the materials of each section in order to identify common motifs, styles and problems. And thirdly, I selected the most representative and complete articles in relation to the topics of each section in order to create a final sample which was later used in the process of writing each chapter of the thesis. A total of 63 articles were finally included into the body of the thesis which constitutes a small number of all the articles that were analysed, but which are the most representative of the language, themes and style that characterises the sample as a whole.

PART I: WRITING AND READING AS WORKERS DO!

When one distinguishes between intellectuals and non-intellectuals, one is referring in reality only to the immediate social function of the professional category of the intellectuals, that is, one has in mind the direction in which their specific professional activity is weighted, whether towards intellectual elaboration or towards muscular-nervous effort. This means that, although one can speak of intellectuals, one cannot speak of non-intellectuals, because non-intellectuals do not exist [...] There is no human activity from which every form of intellectual participation can be excluded: *homo Faber* cannot be separated from *homo sapiens* (Antonio Gramsci).¹

I will begin by introducing the material. The Chilean working-class press is constituted by publications that claim to be published bimonthly or monthly, but that in practise appeared on an irregular basis.² This lack of periodicity is due to different obstacles that these periodicals had to face given their militant tone and their connections with anarchists and socialists working-class organizations.³ According to Eduardo SantaCruz, the periodicals were:

small and shamefully printed on bad quality paper. They lasted for a small number of issues and then they disappeared suffocated either because of financial reasons or because [their writers were constantly] pursued by the police. Who would usually confiscate or destroy their typographic workshops and arrest their editors. But this was useless: after a few months, these publications would reappear under a different name and the story would begin all over again.⁴

¹ Gramsci, Antonio, *Selection from the Prison Notebook* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 226.

² Arias, Osvaldo, *La Prensa Obrera en Chile*, 165.

³ Santa Cruz, Eduardo, *Análisis Histórico del periodismo Chileno* (Texas: Nuestra América ediciones, 1988), 55

⁴ Santa Cruz, 54-55.

Their financial problems were also related to the fact that these periodicals were either free or extremely cheap and that they rarely have any form of advertising in their pages.⁵ Their content is predominantly analytical articles, commentaries, narrations and news, doctrinaire texts, polemics, accusations and articles in defence of workers' organizations.⁶ Regarding their role, Tomás Moulian and Isabel Torres assert that:

the press had a central role in the educative-agitative process. Its duties went beyond its mere informative role. It was a channel for the formation of working-class consciousness [...] In short, the press was the spine of the politico-cultural field of the working-class world; through its pages the most rational and structured expressions of thought were expressed [...] [but also,] in their publications appears another dimension; the field of the collective imaginary, or the dark and hidden side of discourse. This press, because of its complex nature as a means of information, education and propaganda is a privileged place for the appearance of what is said without saying, of sub-texts, secondary discourses, of those aspects that are not explicitly mentioned.⁷

For these authors there is a clear distinction between a rational and structured side, separated from what they refer as the 'field of the collective imaginary.' This alleged separation is the same one that historians established in order to neutralize and exclude what is deemed as 'irrational' (for instance the intrinsic machismo of the press) by contrasting it to what is considered to be rational, and therefore, proper to the revolutionary telos. However, this division must also be 'properly justified' in a rational manner. For Moulian and Torres this feature of the press is given by the fact that, as they claim, the workers':

mental universe was very heterogeneous, incoherent and still incomplete. The perceptions of the conditions of the struggle for power from within the existent political regime, the theories about the revolution, the images of the future, the description of the means of struggle, correspond to an epoch in transition, in which the contemporary working-class movement has not yet been formed, though it is already in gestation.⁸

What these authors see when reading the working-class press of the time is a set of political ideas that are packed with 'contradictions', 'confusions' and 'misinterpretations' of/between

⁵ Santa Cruz, 56-57.

⁶ Santa Cruz, 56.

⁷ Moulian, Tomás & Torres, Isabel, *Concepción de la política e ideal moral en la Prensa Obrera: 1919-1922* (Santiago: FLACSO, 1987), 12.

⁸ Moulian & Torres, 15.

Anarchism and Socialism. These ‘irregularities’ would turn this press into a mere announcement or anticipation (in the form of a gestation) of a *proper* working-class movement to come. For these authors, then, the importance of these texts would be given and measured by a teleological understanding of it: they would only serve as a testimony of the transition between the gestation and the ‘proper.’ In this regard, the label working-class press would signify no more than a ‘not yet’, it will denote a mere point of ‘origin’ and transition towards the ‘real thing.’ For them, paradoxically, this press remains both ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ the working-class movement. But how does this inclusion by exclusion operate? Mouliau and Torres argue that there are two main reasons that would explain the inconsistencies of this press. Firstly, they expose the fact that the Anarchist and Socialist traditions originated and developed in Europe, which, in their own words, ‘is a continent with a cultural tradition and, especially, with a philosophical tradition, much more important [than Latin America].’⁹ Secondly, they mention that the founders and diffusers of the Chilean left-wing tradition were self-taught workers without any formal education. In relation to the latter Mouliau and Torres writes ‘[t]hese “enlightened men” were not academics or specialists, instead they were workers that by being driven by a love for knowledge were capable of learning and teaching their “proletarian brothers.”’¹⁰ Even though, when reading the misspellings and the conceptual and ideological laxity of the working-class press these two elements become evident, I disagree with these authors’ negative assessment. The fact that these workers did not wait for the trained philosopher or political vanguard, acquainted with the European tradition, to come and teach them how to ‘properly’ read and interpret the premises of Anarchism and Socialism; the fact that they did it by themselves, that they are *self-taught workers* is not necessarily a limit for the development of an original, systematic and ‘rational’ critique of Capitalism, and it is surely not a reason for excluding their writings from what is considered a ‘mature’ working-class thought. Clearly for *trained intellectuals* like Mouliau and Torres, this lack of formal preparation and fragmentary access to the Tradition must necessarily amount to a lack of consistency that made these writers depart from the proper (European) path. Yes, there is a degree of truth in their assessment. If I compare the types of texts these workers produced with the work of Marx or Bakunin I will

⁹ Ibidem.

¹⁰ Mouliau & Torres, 29.

inevitably have to say that they did not read them ‘correctly’; that their interpretations were mistaken, and by taking this path, I will be just a step from dismissing this material because of its ‘lack of rigour.’ But there is another possibility. What happens if I take the working-class press of the period as a seemingly coherent corpus with its own premises; that is, as a tradition that diverted from the European traditional left? What would I find if I apply Rancière’s critique of Althusserian Marxism to the Chilean case? Is it just too crazy to even consider the possibility that these workers could be ‘experts’ in the field in which they work every day for the entirety of their lives? Could these workers have something to say about Capitalist exploitation? The *gravity* of these rhetorical questions should make them fall because of their own weight.

To finish with this introductory discussion about the devaluation of this material, I would like to recall the words of the Chilean philosopher Patricio Marchant. At the very end of the Dictatorship and of his life, Marchant wrote an essay entitled *Desolación. Cuestión del nombre de Salvador Allende* [*Desolation. Issue of the Name of Salvador Allende*] where he puts into words the despair and emptiness that the name ‘Chile’, as the signifier of a Catastrophe, stands for. It is a ‘Negative Totality’ that, as he puts it, encompasses everything with its horrors and paralyzes all political and intellectual endeavours rooted in the recent past. Marchant tells us that this ‘Catastrophe called Chile’, this ‘Negative Totality’ that paralyzes every traditional form of critique, exposes the need for a different intellectual. In the aftermath of the annihilation of the Chilean left-wing macro-narrative and its telos (along with its mechanisms of repression), he advocated the need to articulate *simultaneous multi-sectorial vindications* to achieve a multivocal and all-encompassing revolutionary movement (it is *as if* his words were describing the inorganic and non-hierarchical movement of the Chilean upheaval of October 2019). He writes:

[we need] multiple sector-based struggles – everyone, not only the so-called ‘professionals of writing’ can and must become ‘intellectuals’ –, total disorganization of society by means of sectorial disorganizations, [this is the] method to be followed by a New Chilean left – the[re is the] need of creating it. Thus, from there, but only from

there, from the negativity of their gaze, the 'negative Intellectual' can acquire what some would like to call 'positivity.'¹¹

By reading the writings of late nineteenth-century workers it is possible to realize that there is not only this necessity of creating a non-hierarchical 'New Chilean Left', but that it was always already there, silenced and hidden beneath the shadows of orthodox narratives shaped by a left-wing intellectual 'vanguard.' Let us now read what these Chilean workers, as 'Negative Intellectuals', wrote in their 'free time'; let us see how they became philosophers as well. Let us open the working-class text in order to *read* what the workers wrote about the working-class movement.

¹¹ Marchant, Patricio, Thayer, Willy & Oyarzún, Pablo (Ed.), *Escritura y Temblor* (Santiago: Editorial Cuarto Propio, 2000), 224-225.

CHAPTER I: I WORK, THEREFORE WE ARE

The place of the intellectual in the class struggle can only be determined, or better still chosen, on the basis of his position within the production process (Walter Benjamin).¹

The coded, policed discourse of the class struggle, if it forecloses the question of *glas* (everything forged there, all that on which it reverberates, in particular the expropriation of the name everywhere that the questions carries), lacks at the least a revolution. And what is a revolution that does not attack the proper name? (Jacques Derrida).²

A) The Great Poem: Truth/Untruth at the Limit of the Working-Class Frame

Any attempt to understand the multiple layers of the Chilean working-class press would be in vain without asking what principles and features define a Chilean working-class text in general. Hence, it becomes necessary to begin by seeking what is *proper* to any publication that tries to claim a clear and distinctive place within the proletarian discourse. Even though it may seem obvious *to us* (as readers) what a working-class text is, I will argue that it was not obvious at all for the workers themselves. Contemporary techniques of reading strongly depend on an understanding of text as oeuvre that differs from the notion of writing present in the Chilean working-class press. One of the main differences is that we have been taught to read relying on the possibility of identifying an author or a specific group of people that socially, judicially and fictionally operates as the presumed origin of a work.³ Then, if

¹ Benjamin, Walter, *The author as producer* in: *Understanding Brecht* (London: Verso, 1998), 90.

² Derrida, Jacques, *Glas*, John Leavey & Richard Rand (Trans.) (London: Nebraska University Press, 1986), 207.

³ According to Roland Barthes, the modern notion of the author understood as individual and absolute creator of a work, came into being during the renaissance along with the rise of the figure of the genius. This historically situated event triggered the demise of other ways of understanding the process of intellectual production, such as, for instance, the Christian idea of 'divine inspiration' (Barthes, Roland, *The Death of the Author* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1977). As I will defend later in this Chapter the notion of authorship that is used in the Chilean working class press is likely to be inspired in a mixture between an older tradition that derives from the Judeo-Christian heritage and an anarchist understanding of collective production.

someone would ask me what constitutes a working-class text, I would normally tend to uncritically define it from a ‘biographical perspective’ by referring to who wrote it and under what social and material conditions. However, this *a priori* is based on a correlation between writing and (intellectual) *property*, which, as I will argue in this chapter, is both criticized by important anarchist writers, such as Proudhon and Bakunin, and completely rejected, dismissed or collectivised by the Chilean working-class writers. Therefore, relying on these epochal techniques and practises of reading, with its assumed institution of ‘the author’, can only lead me astray when approaching the Chilean working-class press.

Then, how can I recognize the origin of a text without resorting to the figure of the author? The answer is simple: I cannot. However, this lack of certainty should not be understood in a negative sense, but as a condition for writing a ‘working-class text.’ Furthermore, this ‘not-knowing,’ this irreducible danger of writing a text that may no longer belong to the working class, a text that might not be (re)appropriated by the ‘proletariat’, is the only certainty that every Chilean worker that wrote and read a text had. And, as I will claim throughout this chapter, this is not a trivial issue: working-class writing is defined by this risk. Thus, the objective of this first chapter is to read this material in contrast to the ‘reassuring certainty’ that I already know what a working-class text is by resisting an understanding of it that always already finds comfort in the legacy of a certain presumed ‘Materialism.’ I will begin by focusing my attention on the conditions of possibility for writing a working-class text as they are introduced from within the working-class press itself. Hence, the constant (de)constitution of the *margins* of a working-class frame from within that same frame is what is at stake here.

An entrance to this issue is given by an article published in the periodical *La Voz Socialista* [*The Socialist Voice*]. In the context of a debate about the need for a Presidential Referendum, an anonymous article raises issues related to representation of public opinion in the press. Its ‘author’ criticizes the *publicistas*⁴ that work for what he/she refers to as the bourgeois press, asserting that:

[t]he writers of periodicals that earn from 300 to 500 pesos monthly, which allows them to live comfortably, cannot be the exact or faithful spokesmen of public opinion,

⁴ In this period the word *publicistas* was used to refer to those who nowadays we would refer to as *periodistas* (journalists).

because, since they rub shoulders with the aristocracy, they do not descend to the masses formed by the middle class and proletariat, and, therefore, they cannot reflect the needs of these vast majorities, making the opinions they proffer almost personal.⁵

This quote reveals a strong rejection of the professionalization of writings based upon the delimitation of what appears as a form of bourgeois representation. The professional writer, who here is characterized as contaminated by aristocratic manners and comforts, cannot be a spokesperson of the lower classes because his/her words do not go beyond the realm of mere opinions that reflect the experiences of the upper classes. Thus, the text then asserts that, in a world of letters dominated by the people's enemies, there is an increasing need for another type of writer: a truly working-class writer. This problem of working-class representation also resonates with a phrase that appears, as some kind of motto, on the front page of every issue of this same periodical. Just underneath its title and next to the issue date, stands Marx's famous maxim that became the first rule of the First International: 'the emancipation of the working classes must be brought about by the workers themselves.'⁶ This class-based distinction is fundamental to understand the ideas behind the creation of a working-class press because the identity of the working-class writer was conscientiously forged in radical opposition to the idea of the professional writer (of their salaries, style, individualism and political filiations).⁷ Accordingly, in what follows, my aim is to unravel the notion of working-class writing in contrast to what these writers consider as 'bourgeois writing.'

To face the problem of the *margins* of what a *proper* people's writing may be, the working-class papers constantly establish a clear and distinctive locus of enunciation meant at controlling the uncertainty of not-knowing if the articles they are publishing constitute working-class texts or if their authors are facing a process of professionalization/embourgeoisement. This gesture is based upon one single criterion: whether their words are (or not) a pure manifestation of the collective voice of the proletariat in itself. That is to say, they compulsively try to prove that their writers are 'the exact or faithful spokesmen of public opinion', which in this context can only represent the

⁵ 'Plebiscito al Pais. El deber de la prensa ante la hora presente' *La Voz Socialista* (Santiago: Second week of November 1913), 2.

⁶ 'La Voz Socialista' *La Voz Socialista* (Santiago: second week of November 1913), 1.

⁷ Arias, 18-19.

experiences of workers.⁸ Henceforth, the conditions of possibility for the distribution of an economy of genuine/fake and true/untrue discourse within the working-class frame is concomitant with a sense of belonging to the working class.

A paradigmatic example of this class distribution of truth/untruth and its relationship with an exposure to labour, can be found in ‘El Gran Poema’ [‘The Great Poem’], anonymously published in the paper *La Federación Obrera* [*The Working-class Federation*].⁹ In this text, the borderline between bourgeois and working-class writing is constituted by a fundamental impossibility for the ‘Mentidos Trovadores’ ([‘False Troubadours’] as the bourgeois writers were called in this text) to narrate the experiences of workers. The text begins by introducing the figure of the False Troubadour by emphasizing the ability of these professional writers to portray and fake the achievements of powerful members of high society. However, ‘El Gran Poema’ also refers to another type of experience that cannot be sung by these artists. It is ‘a different song of unique grandeur: / the song that consecrates the poor in/to their poverty.’¹⁰ This unique song, as the text continues, seems to lack its own Troubadour, for the writer complains: ‘[w]ho, despising the anathema¹¹ of the rich man / will gather up the songs of the immortal poem / that in harmonic rhythms of infinite sadness / silently consecrates the poor in/to their poverty?’¹² This quote introduces a first distinction between what differentiates bourgeois writing from working-class writing. For bourgeois writing, the agency of the writer is defined by the act of faking the triumphs of rich men. Thus writing, for the professional artist/writer, involves an active intervention in the

⁸ ‘Plesbicito al País. El deber de la prensa chilena ante la hora presente’, 2.

⁹ ‘El Gran Poema (Fragmentos)’ *La Federación Obrera* (Santiago: May 1 1912), 2.

¹⁰ ‘El Gran Poema (Fragmentos)’, 2.

¹¹ The word Anathema belongs to the Judaeo-Christian heritage. In its Jewish use (that can also be found in the Old Testament) it stands for a tribute to God that, since it serves a divine purpose, must be destroyed. However, it also signifies God’s displeasure towards someone who must be destroyed in His name. The latter was then taken by the Catholic Ecclesiastical Institution to refer to both excommunicated people and the act of excommunication or conjuration. In a secular context it can also stand for someone that is despicable and hateful, but it is rarely used in this way. This usage of religious language in the press should not come as a surprise, since these periodicals, even though they are strongly anti-Catholic, usually resort to biblical tropes and concepts to *demonize* the upper class. This could be a residual lexicon from the Catholic upbringing that was common to Chilean workers of the time. However, this type of religious language can also be found in the writings of French nineteenth-century Socialists such as Charles Fourier and the Saint Simonians. See: ‘Anathema’. In *oxforddictionaries.com*. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/anathema>.

¹² ‘El Gran Poema (Fragmentos)’, 2.

creation of the work of art. On the contrary, for working-class writing, the writer's agency is confined to only 'picking up the song of poverty.' The range of action of the working-class writer is restricted thus to reproducing what 'the poor' have already created. The troubadour who attempts to sing the 'song of poverty' can only repeat what has been sung before and after him/her. Accordingly, the immortality of 'El Gran Poema' seems to rely on the fact that it transgresses the notion of authorship by maintaining a necessary independence from the writer's body and signature. The first distinction between 'El Gran Poema' that is spontaneously produced by the collective sorrow of workers, and its other, that praises the rich with lies, is given by its origin. The poem that workers sing is always already prefigured by a rhythm given by labour, and its purity derives from the fact that it cannot be translated or modified in any way. Consequently, in a manner that resembles the Judeo-Christian notion of 'Revealed Word', the interpreter must let the workers sing through him/her, as the author will never be able to sing it alone.¹³

But how could the poet/writer channel the worker's experience and put his/her voice/pen at the disposal of a collective voice? The only clue that the text provides is that the writer performs the operation by 'despising the anathema of the rich men', as if hating, rejecting/conjuring or expelling/excluding the upper-class demons would constitute a precondition for the possibility of receiving these words.¹⁴ Some kind of proximity between the writer and the 'feelings' of the working class must be established; the writer cannot be completely alien to the class struggle. Thus, by demarcating a line that separates the inside from the outside of the working-class frame, the figure of the writer has been inscribed into the border: it is not-yet a worker but not is it a bourgeois. However, as the writer remains

¹³ Although this understanding of truthful writing as a form of 'Revealed Knowledge' that displaces the primacy of the author can be read as a recognition of the collective nature of thought. It can also be read as a secular remnant of the Judeo-Christian tradition. The bible relies on a similar notion of authorship, the difference here is that in the working-class press God is embodied by the collective voice of workers and the prophet is personified by the revolutionary writer. A Biblical example that resembles this working class' notion of authorship is *Peter 1:20-21*, where it says: '[n]o prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.' Thus, as Timothy 3:16 says: '[a]ll Scripture is God-breathed.'

¹⁴ In its Judeo-Christian usage, the word Anathema blends both meanings: the action and the subject that suffers it. In this case it stands for excommunication, but also refers to the excommunicated person. A biblical example that uses these two meanings is *Deuteronomy 7:26* '[n]either shalt thou bring any thing of the idol into thy house, lest thou become an anathema, like it. Thou shalt detest it as dung, and shalt utterly abhor it as uncleanness and filth, because it is an anathema.'

external to the working class, this (re)positioning is not enough and the writer of 'El Gran Poema' goes a step further by asking:

[a]nd how to find the magnificent and simple rhythm / that incarnates the terrible accents
of the hammer? / and how to provide shape to the strong bond between the hammer
joined to the rigid arm? / And of the heavy atmosphere of the sad factory / would there
be anyone / able to describe it with the single movement of a pen?¹⁵

By repeatedly asking the same rhetorical question (and slightly altering it each time) the author illuminates a limit to any possible representation. A limit that (at the same time) establishes the frame that circumscribes the proper experience of workers by shaping its condition of untranslatability into a 'foreign language', in this case into upper-class Spanish. Thus, by indicating what an 'outsider' cannot represent, the text leaves the reader facing the impossible: how could anyone reproduce the sounds that emanate from the factory? How could someone, even by repetition, sing this eternal song of exploitation?¹⁶ It seems as if the text has reached an ultimate moment in which our system of signs, our words, and expressions can only (silently) demarcate the edge. From now on, the writer faces the unspeakable. But then, the impossible happens: by a single movement of a pen, the writer

¹⁵ 'El Gran Poema (Fragmentos)', 2.

¹⁶ The anarchist intellectual Piotr Kropotkin could be a source of inspiration here, but also a point of diversion. Kropotkin discusses the limits of modern art by means of positing an idealized and fetishized understanding of labour based on the relationship between peasants and nature that, for him, demarcates a limit for the artist's capacity of representation. However, instead of focusing on the problem of the brutality of exploitation, he does it by praising the 'beauty of labour.' Kropotkin asserts: '[b]ut how can the painter express the poetry of work in the fields if he has only contemplated it, imagined it, if he has never delighted in it himself? [...] This is why all that the best painters have produced in this direction is still so imperfect, not true to life, nearly always merely sentimental. There is no strength in it. You must have seen a sunset when returning from work. You must have been a peasant among peasants to keep the splendour of it in your eye. You must have been at sea with fishermen at all hours of the day and night, have fished yourself, struggled with the waves, faced the storm and after rough work experienced the joy of hauling a heavy net, or the disappointment of seeing it empty, to understand the poetry of fishing. You must have spent time in a factory, known the fatigues and the joys of creative work, forged metals by the vivid light of a blast furnace, have felt the life in a machine, to understand the power of man and to express it in a work of art. You must, in fact, be permeated with popular feelings, to describe them' (Kropotkin, Peter, *The Conquest of Bread and Other Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 104-105). This idealized depiction, that drastically contrasts with the tone and emphasis that Chilean workers put on the horrors of exploitation (as I will show later in this Chapter) could be symptomatically interpreted as a limit for bourgeois representation itself. Let us not forget that Kropotkin belonged to the Russian upper class and that, although he was an important intellectual for the radical tradition, he was also a 'professional writer.'

(after having introduced a constitutive impossibility) trespasses this same limit by describing the workers' experience as follows:

[t]he infernal noises of wheels and pulleys / repel life and ideas from the brain / in the middle of that horrible night, that frightens us / the poor worker is disturbed like infernal ghost: / their bodies become gigantic [...] / They are the leftovers / who insatiably seek the furnaces with their eyes, / until the light of the day is gone, / and the cavern is left empty, silent and shadowy.¹⁷

By introducing a gloomy scenario, the writer starts to speak. But how? In which logos is he/she sustaining a discourse about the impossibility of narrating the experience of workers by describing it at the same time? These questions are not answered in this text, so they will remain unsolved for a little longer.

For now, I am going to focus my analysis on the description that the text provides. It is interesting to notice that this 'working scene' is depicted as a process of depersonalization in which workers get merged into a homogenous whole that blends them with their surroundings and makes everything indistinguishable. As a result of the unsettling rumblings of the factory, the workers lose their ideas and even their life to become ghost-like figures. Thus, the experience of exploitation is represented in an extreme proximity to death to the point of making it increasingly hard to distinguish between the living subject and the inanimate objects that he/she manipulates: in the factory it is no longer possible to differentiate the arm from the hammer, the living from the dead, worker from ghost and, ultimately, ghosts from the vapours of the chimneys, as each element appears in the scene by melting with the others in front of the furnace. Meanwhile, the threat of falling into an absolute undifferentiability is contained by a movement of temporalization that is marked by the working hours; the routine recreates a rhythm of presences and absences that maintains a certain constant return to figural representation that allows the depersonalization to be repeated. Hence, this representation of the factory and its regime of exploitation seems to also be operating, using Marx's vocabulary, at the limit of the 'reproduction of labour power', everything happens – I repeat – in an extreme proximity to death. The workers never fully disappear, they always (barely) go back to life, to then return to the factory the next day and repeat the process all over again. It is also important to bear in mind that this minimum 'free

¹⁷ 'El Gran Poema (Fragmentos)', 2.

time' meant to reproduce the labour power, is the only moment in which a worker can write, but again in order to write they must always return to the factory. It is at the factory where the writer learns that the scene of labour, as 'El Gran Poema' claims, can only be described by resorting to a principle of temporal undifferentiation and spectrality. It is as if the 'Poema' would only speak to workers in a forbidden language intended to dismantle all the premises of bourgeois reason. Moreover, classical certainties (that are mainly based on a common understanding of identity and presence) seem to lose all value in the factory, as bourgeois reason with all its categories and conceptual currencies appears to be melting in front of the furnace too, leaving only an impenetrable core of undifferentiated sameness until the whistle announces the end of the workday.

It could be argued that this writer is resorting to literature only to express himself, and that this poem bears no other value than being a literary expression of his/her life. However, this poem shares fundamental features with Marx's radical poetics that exceeds the realm of 'pure' aesthetics. David McNally addresses the use of descriptions like the factory depicted in 'El Gran Poema', in Marx's *Das Kapital*. He refers to the way in which Marx depicts what capital does to workers' bodies by resorting to Gothic tropes and literature that rely on the use of urban closed spaces. In these places, he writes, 'horror and death announce themselves. After all, what makes these claustrophobia-inducing spaces terrifying is that they are sealed off from life.'¹⁸ This 'Marxist Gothic', as he calls it, shares with the factory described in 'El Gran Poema' a given proximity to death that workers experience while being there. But that is not all. McNally also argues that Marx's obsession in penetrating this 'capitalist underworld' in order to render visible the vulnerable bodies that the walls of the factory conceal, introduces another Gothic obsession. In *Das Kapital*, '[b]odies are always imperilled in Gothic tales, threatened by invasion and dismemberment.'¹⁹ These abuses and excesses of the body that find inspiration in a Victorian universe are used by Marx not only to reveal the monstrous character of industrial exploitation. Alongside the attempt at denaturalizing Capitalism by exposing its horrors, Marx's poetics serves the conceptual function of reproducing the dynamics of economics that links exploitation to value-making processes. McNally asserts that Marx's tendency to describe dismembered, mutilated and stitched body

¹⁸ McNally, David, *Monsters of the Market*, 138.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

parts ‘underlines the corporeal realities of fetishization. For, if one aspect of fetishism is the substitution of a part for a whole, this is precisely what capital accomplishes, fragmenting workers and reducing them to mere parts of themselves.’²⁰ This tendency to exchange and substitute ‘body parts’ by means of dismembering and stitching, takes on a deeper meaning when we consider the Marxist understanding of value, McNally writes, as ‘a spectral entity whose objectivity is “phantom-like”, [that] can only express itself through the material bodies of commodities – including [...] the bodies of those who bear the commodity labour-power.’²¹ But then again, this is not all. This process triggers a second transformation that is ruled by a phantasmal principle (also present in ‘El Gran Poema’) that makes material bodies (understood as goods that bear use value) into abstract bearers of disembodied exchange value. In a sinister way, when attempting to describe the processes involved in industrial exploitation, it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish life/materiality from death/abstraction. In the factory ‘material goods metamorphose into bearers of something ghostly. Since the capitalist form of wealth (value) is disembodied [...] “individuals are now ruled by abstractions”, says Marx.’²² Henceforth, by comparing McNally’s reading of *Das Kapital* with ‘El Gran Poema’ we can spot three elements in common: 1) A process of de-individualization of workers represented by bodily mutation and dismembering; 2) Followed by a process of reassembling of the worker’s parts into an exchangeable whole; 3) And finally the workers’ bodies are blended into an industrial universe that is portrayed with ghostly and spectral features. Here it gets increasingly difficult to distinguish, once again, things from workers, life from death and materiality from abstraction, allowing for the exchange value to take the place of the worker’s use value.

What the discussion surrounding the poetics of *Das Kapital* shows is that the use of a highly changeable metaphorical language in the late nineteenth-century radical tradition exceeds the boundaries of mere aesthetics. This language operates at a schematic level to convey the bodily horrors of exploitation, the fluidity of the disembodied commodity and the problematic relationship between use and exchange value that writers who resort to fixed concept fails to grasp, because in trying to signify these fluid processes, they use still words

²⁰ McNally, 138 -139.

²¹ McNally, 126.

²² *Ibidem*.

that only denote stagnation.²³ Unsurprising then as soon as Chilean bourgeois writers reach the state of exploitation, they are left deprived of any literary resource with which to sustain their discourse. This always changing universe of the factory, where the abstract and the material are inextricably intertwined, triggers what could be call a ‘free play of signifiers’ and leaves the literary expert speechless. But this is not because this expert faces some kind of sublime horror that exceeds linguistic and semantic representation. I am not dealing with the problem of the unspeakable. Instead, what the writing down of capitalist exploitation demands from the writer is the ability to portray spaces where, using Marx’s phrase, ‘[a]ll that is solid melts into air.’ Therefore, capitalist modernity can only be represented by what Marshall Berman, in his reading of *The Communist Manifesto*, calls ‘Marx’s melting vision,’ which dialectically exposes the solid core of capitalist modernity in order to then enact the frenetic and destructive tendency of the market. This becomes clear after reading a few pages of the Manifesto, where ‘we find that the solid social formations around us have melted away,’²⁴ Berman continues:

[b]y the time Marx’s proletarians finally appear, the world stage on which they were supposed to play their part has disintegrated and metamorphosed into something unrecognizable, surreal, a mobile construction that shifts and changes shape under the players’ feet.²⁵

I took this detour through Marxist poetics to show the role it plays in late nineteenth-century radical writings. However, I want to stress that the Chilean workers were not

²³ In an article entitled *How Not to Translate Marx*, Friedrich Engels writes that: ‘Marx uses freely expressions of everyday life and idioms of provincial dialects; he coins new words, he takes his illustrations from every branch of science, his allusions [come] from the literatures of a dozen languages’ (Engels, Frederick, *How Not to Translate Marx*, in: *Marx and Engels. Collected Works vol. 26* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 335). Based on this article, Keston Sutherland asserts that Marx resorts to a shifting lexicon that it steams violence, pain and discomfort, because its object of study is unsettling, turbulent and painful. However, this ‘pain’ *Das Kapital* conveys is not produced by the mere use of brutal and graphic expressions, instead its unsettling character is triggered and expanded by the constant motion and exchange of concepts and lexicons that make it very hard for the reader to neutralize its potential to hurt. Each brutal word and metaphor that the reader normalize after reading it a couple of times is then substituted by another one. In a nutshell, the poetics of *Das Kapital* operates as a critical deadlock that allows readers to resist the tendency to fall into the logic of categories that, with its fixed language, makes reality tolerable and paralyses the movement of constant critique. See: Sutherland, Keston, *The Poetics of Capital*, in: Osborne, P, Alliez, E & Russel, E (ed.), *Capitalism: Concept, Idea, Image. Aspects of Marx’s Capital Today* (London: CRMEP Books: London, 2019), 203-218.

²⁴ Berman, Marshall, *All That is Solid Melts Into Air* (London: Penguin Books, 1988), 91.

²⁵ Berman, 92.

passively repeating Marx. Although Marx's depiction of industrial exploitation shares many tropes and topics with the scene of exploitation depicted in 'El Gran Poema', the latter poses a question that Marx does not address. It is a question that was announced at the beginning of the 'Poema' and that will follow me throughout this entire work: how is it possible to enunciate a 'truly' working-class discourse?

B) Writing and/as Working: the Death of the Writer and the Rise of the Worker

According to the Chilean working-class press there is no possible access to the experiences of the working class, since the only one that can name poverty is the worker who suffers it. Therefore, the problem these writings raise is not that workers cannot speak, rather that workers seem to be the only ones with a proper voice insofar as they claim that to truly speak is to repeat their own (collective) suffering.²⁶ This kind of 'anti-Leninism before Lenin' that vindicates an unmediated appropriation of the written word by workers themselves can be read as a reaction to the lack of Chilean middleclass intellectuals at the time. The historian Sergio Grez asserts that, at the turn of the century 'almost all the members of Chilean political groups and radical writers/spokespeople [*difusores*] came from the popular world. The artists and intellectuals that became activists or campaigners alongside workers and artisans were very scarce in the first decade of the century.'²⁷ When analysing the social landscape of late-nineteenth century Chile (and of many other Latin American countries) it is very hard to find social groups that could be labelled as middle class.²⁸ It is only from the mid-1910s onwards

²⁶ If I apply Gayatri Spivak's famous question 'can the subaltern speak?' to the Chilean working-class press I face a bizarre turn of this paradox. Up to this point I have read that the bourgeoisie cannot speak, because 'truthful words' are the monopoly of workers. However, as I have also seen in these periodicals, to publish is considered a bourgeois activity, so it seems that the worker (as a subaltern) by speaking/writing loses his/her condition of worker/subaltern. The worker has the monopoly of words, but to publish them raises issues related to the legitimacy of his/her belonging to the working class. The ways in which, Chilean workers deal with this paradox and its effects will be subject of further analysis in this Chapter and the next (Morris, Rosalind & Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty, *Can the Subaltern Speak?*).

²⁷ Grez, Sergio, *Los Anarquistas y el movimiento obrero*, 182.

²⁸ Marianne Gonzales has refuted the historiographical hypothesis that claims that from the late-nineteenth century a Chilean middle class began to emerge because of the expansion of public education and estate bureaucracy. As she compellingly argues, this idea is mostly based on a teleological and ideologically driven argumentation rather than a 'factual' one. According to Gonzales, the historiographical origins of the Chilean middle class would constitute a liberal myth insofar the expansion of public education did not integrate the lower classes into its apparatus and did

that a growing number of proto middle-class intellectuals and activists began to appear on the radical side of the political arena. A notorious case is the Anarchist-Tolstoian collective *El grupo los Diez* founded in 1914.²⁹ However, as Fernando Santivan (a renowned member of *Los Diez*) acknowledges, they never really managed to relate to workers' organizations, and their attempts at creating an artistic anarchist community were mostly ruled by bourgeois principles. In his memoirs Santivan narrates the embarrassment he felt when the Tolstonian colony where they lived, was visited by a delegation of workers from an anarcho-communist colony. Faced with politically engaged workers, he recognises having to shamefully hide the group's artistic futility, lack of political activism and discipline.³⁰ Santivan's anecdote reveals that deep down he knew that in Chile, as he writes, '[t]he anarchist did not accept the division between manual and intellectual labour.'³¹ It was only after the first political actions taken by the FECH (Student Federation of the Universidad de Chile) in the 1920s, that it is possible to talk about political alliances between intellectuals and workers.³² However, before the so-called '20's generation' and the foundation of the Chilean Communist party in 1922, the representatives and writers of the left were mainly self-taught workers. Hence, it is important to bear in mind that these workers were living in a Manichean universe where you were either a worker or a bourgeois, there was no middle point. This clear-cut distribution made it necessary to legitimate the 'origin' of any written text that pretended to reproduce the sorrows of the exploited class. As I will argue next, these working-class writers were

not produce any form of social mobility. See: Gonzales, Marianne, *De empresarios a empleados: Clase media y Estado Docente en Chile, 1810-1920* (Santiago: LOM, 2011).

²⁹ *El Grupo Los Diez* was a multidisciplinary collective of artists (some of which gained great notoriety in the Chilean cultural scene) that from 1916 started publishing a magazine to disseminate their members' work. Although, their political activities were at most limited, they were the first artistic vanguard group that openly claimed to be anarchists.

³⁰ Santivan, Fernando, *Memorias de un Tolstoiano*, 213-214.

³¹ Santivan, 224.

³² The FECH got radicalized after its leaders, alongside workers, were detained and imprisoned under an irregular legal prosecution process called *el proceso de los subversivos*. The systematic torture and murder of the student and anarchist poet José Domingo Gómez Rojas while being imprisoned in the Casa de Orates (Santiago's Public Mental Asylum) was a turning point in the politization process of the Chilean student community ('Domingo Rojas Gomez ante la Justicia Chilena', *Revista Claridad* (Santiago: 12 October 1920), 3). On the pages of *Revista Claridad* (the official publication of the Student's Federation) prominent left-wing intellectuals such as Pablo de Rokha, Pablo Neruda, Manuel Rojas, Rosamel del Valle and José Santos González Vera published their early works alongside articles and news in support of the working-class movement.

greatly aware of this necessity and faced it by constantly establishing a sharp and distinctive distribution between inside/outside and legitimate/illegitimate. Their articles tend to be preceded by a performative movement in which ‘the author’ disappears by instituting his/her locus of enunciation in relation to his/her state of exploitation. That is to say, by highlighting a certain filiation to the working-class, these writers repeatedly try to prove that they are suffering in their ‘own flesh’ what they are putting into words. What emerges here is an understanding of writing as a secondary and derivative expression of a previous and more enduring state. In a way, they claimed that the act of ‘truthful writing’ must always be sustained by physical and material conditions of labour.

The clearest manifestation of this literary operation can be found in almost every first issue of each periodical. As some kind of initiation, each new periodical attempts to legitimate itself in front of the public by presenting their programme and characteristics (political/class filiations of its editorial committee and writers) from the moment they emerge into the public sphere. In relation to the background of their writers, in the first issue of the periodical *La Tromba* [*The Waterspout*] they introduce themselves as follows: ‘[l]eaving, just for a moment, the tool to take up the pen, we think what – among many issues – to tell our people. We want to speak to you with frankness and modesty, with the truth in the syllables.’³³ These writers claim their place as workers by relegating their condition of writers to a secondary level. They assert that before and after becoming writers, they are only workers who grab the pen in their free time. For them, the act of writing can only occur ‘just for a moment’ because to remain a worker, the writer must always return to the workplace.³⁴

³³ ‘La Tromba’, *La Tromba* (Santiago: March 6 1898), 1.

³⁴ This idea resembles Kropotkin’s utopian understanding of the anarchist labour regime meant at dismantling the distinctions between manual/intellectual labour and individual/collective creator. He postulates the need for establishing a labour regime of 4 to 5 hours a day in which every individual will be committed to produce what is essential for guaranteeing the comfort of the entire society. This would leave other 5 to 6 hours for workers to satisfy their intellectual, artistic, or scientific needs (Kropotkin, Piotr, *The Conquest of Bread*, 165-169). According to Kropotkin, since men and women will gather in multiple societies committed to different disciplines of artistic or intellectual work, the prejudices against ‘manual labour’ will disappear (Kropotkin, 97-98). Interestingly enough, he argues that the germ of the collectivization of intellectual production can be found in the Socialist press. In these publications, as he claims, the individuals that have something useful to say, instead of looking for an editor, they look for collaborators with whom to publish their collective (manual and intellectual) work. Thus, in a way that resembles the ideas behind the Chilean working-class press, he asserts that by following the model of the Socialists press, ‘[l]etters and science will only take their

This performative operation can also be found in the periodical *La Campaña* [*The Campaign*], as they refer to their writers by asserting: '[w]e come from below. It is true. We are soldiers of the workshop. There, at the bottom of our industrial presidiums, an echo has reached us. It is the mute echo of a great collapse. The collapse that announces the moment of catastrophe!'³⁵ The class filiations here are fairly explicit, but there is more to analyse in this quote. In these lines, just as in 'El Gram Poema', the writers-workers receive a previously articulated speech; a sound that can only be perceived from within the workshops. It is only after these writers-workers have been exposed to the mute sounds of the factory, that they become able to reproduce it. Additionally, the act of 'listening to the mute echo of the factories' operates in a strange temporal modality that relies on the lapse of a delay. The sound that these workers perceive is the sonic reflection of a previous sound: the echo of a great collapse. It relates to an event that already took place; it is a repetition that these workers only hear in present time and that they repeat once more by writing it down. Then, what the reader is made aware of after *reading* this 'mute echo' is that it takes the form of an announcement; of a prophecy that anticipates a *catastrophe*. Hence, the passage blends past, present and future by reproducing the mute sounds of a catastrophic exploitative labour routine that repeats the repetition of a teleological ending that always already began but has not arrived (yet). It is *as if* the temporal dimension of this *catastrophe* would not allow for a temporal break. Instead, it seems to operate as a continuum; as an ongoing state of historical catastrophe that breaks down any temporal progression or difference in a way that resembles Walter Benjamin's 'Angel of History'.³⁶ I will come back to this motif of the catastrophe as a continuum that displaces the structure of the event in the eternal repetition of the labour

proper place in the work of human development when, freed from all mercenary bondage' (Kropotkin, 100).

³⁵ 'Nuestra Labor' *La Campaña* (Santiago: Second half of August 1899), 1.

³⁶ To illustrate his concept of history, Benjamin writes: '[a] Klee painting named "Angelus Novus" shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress' (Benjamin, Walter, *Theses on the Philosophy of History*, in: Arendt, Hannah (ed), *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections* (New York: Schockenbooks, 2017), 253-64, Aphorism IX, 257-258).

routine, but first I must address a second element that allows workers to deal with the dangers involved in writing.

C) Worker's Proper Writing and Truth

So far, I have established that writing is conceived as an operation external to the working class. Workers cannot write without endangering their own condition as workers, and this is a problem that they face regardless of their attempts at presenting themselves as such. To write 'we come from below' is not enough to be recognized as a working-class writer. The worker's approach to writing must itself differ from what is conceived as professional writing. I have shown how the use of highly metaphorical language, based upon notions of undifferentiation and substitutability, plays a fundamental role in the representation of workers' experiences. But when it comes to the relationship between addressing the writer's locus of enunciation and the condition of possibility of enunciating a working-class discourse, the stylistic and formal aspects of working-class writing serve a second function.

According to the press, writing is conceived as a bourgeois profession because with the professionalization and acquiring of technical skills, the author becomes able to sell his/her words. That is, to put a text at the disposal of the market and profit from it. Thus, any written manifestation of working-class discourse, by the simple fact of being a written text, runs the risk of becoming a bourgeois commodity, a mere marketable good.³⁷ In this regard, the act of writing implies the danger of trespassing, or even dismantling the boundaries that separate working-class from bourgeois speech. And the only way to mitigate the risk of external contamination is to ensure that the worker (as ultimate remedy) never becomes a professional writer; a 'False Troubadour.'

Since these writers are self-taught workers, they rarely master the skill of writing. Their social background is manifested by a lack of technical resources that could be used to 'embellish' any written text. As a trained writer, I could say that they do not know how to 'write properly', however the *proper writing* of workers must differ from any possible

³⁷ This does not mean that working-class writers could not earn any money with their writings. Rather than that, this problem is related to the possibility that a working-class writer could be able to sell his/her writings to bourgeois periodicals. That is to say, to become able to transgress the border that separates working-class from bourgeois writing and to never return to the factory.

bourgeois appropriation of the text. Hence, the working-class periodicals tend to be ‘badly written’: these texts are saturated with spelling and punctuation errors, with mixed verbal tenses and semantic mistakes. Also, it is common to find typographical errors: dates that do not correspond to the issue, printing mistakes and problems related to the alignment of pages. However, these writing ‘limitations’ did not stop them from printing, and for that same reason, they managed to establish an alternative literary canon that became a characteristic trait of their writings. With each (badly) written word that the workers published, they challenged the norm by breaking the grammatical rules, and by doing so, they forged a notion of writing that diverged from what was conceived as ‘bourgeois writing.’³⁸ Someone could argue that those characteristics of the periodicals correspond to technical aspects and only represent marginal features of these writings and, furthermore, that these ‘errors’ do not affect in any way the content of the working-class discourse. Nevertheless, the workers-writers themselves are greatly aware of this limitation/possibility and not only do they tend to accept it, but they vindicate it as a necessity for truthful discourses. This is manifested very directly in the presentation of the periodical *Spartacus*, in which the writers-workers claim that:

[o]ur enemies will criticise us. They will say that our spokesman is rough and grotesque, that it is going to be badly written, but rude and grotesque is the foundation stone of the big buildings that rise in the opulent cities. It is true that our beloved *Spartacus* is badly written, but it is nonetheless true, that it is written in a way that cannot be imitated by those who sell their thoughts for a certain price per column. Our *Atalaya* [watchtower] that will act as a shroud to the tears, in the absence of grammatical rules and literature, is going to be embellished with words written from the heart.³⁹

As this paragraph shows, these ‘writing problems’ cannot be understood as a technical limitation, because they are inextricably related to the possibility of truly writing as a worker. Furthermore, this ‘formal’ necessity implies some kind of honesty that defends truth from any contamination perpetrated by the use of literary ornament, especially as the experience of exploitation can only be expressed harshly and in the most grotesque ways that language

³⁸ This is one of the clearest difficulties/impossibilities of translating these texts without constantly losing something, in this case, what can be read as a question to the norm. How could it be possible to translate a text that challenges the norm by *transferring* it into another language, another *norm*?

³⁹ ‘Nuestro Saludo’ *Spartacus* (Santiago: November 1920), 1.

can provide: by a *grammatical upheaval*.⁴⁰ At the same time, this feature of working-class writing entails a neutralization of the threat of bourgeois reason, as by questioning the norm, these writings cannot be purchased or even transferred to an outside of the working-class frame. This is clearly expressed in the following description of working-class writers taken from the periodical *La Union Obrera* [*The Workers' Union*]:

[a]ll those good workers do not have any other aspiration than that of being of help to their equals. They do not want to occupy the most important positions of the nation as little gentlemen [...] with high salaries. The worker that commits himself to write is not like those children of wealthy families [...] since the worker writes [...] with seriousness and energy as any man that fears nothing because he speaks with his hand on his heart.⁴¹

The way in which 'real' workers expressed themselves makes it possible to recognize a certain 'purity' in writing, and at the same time makes it impossible for these workers to betray their companions by selling their works to the bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind that writing (like any skill) can be learned and perfected, so these workers are always threatened by the bourgeois improvement/contamination of their writings, and therefore, they must constantly legitimize themselves.

D) The Death of the Author/Worker and the Rise of the Workers

The performative operation in which the writer is presented as a worker does not constitute the entire movement. The condition of possibility for expressing a working-class discourse has a more radical implication: it is not only necessary for the writer to disappear; also, the identity of the worker must vanish into the multiplicity of the working class. As writing is

⁴⁰ This approximation to writing should not be confused with Domingo Sarmiento's idea of the 'poor American writer' who reclaims a knowledge (*saber*) distinct and at times opposed to the European concept of discipline, because as Julio Ramos asserts, '[t]o write [for Sarmientos] would entail an act of mediation between civilization and barbarism; the restoration of the city, of a rationalized public sphere' (Ramos, Julio, *Divergent Modernities: Culture and Politics in Nineteenth Century Latin America* (London: Duke University press, 2001), 11). Nor with Andres Bello's '*Saber decir*' [knowledge-(as)-Said], which also according to Ramos relates 'knowledge with an exacting form of writing and speech based on eloquence' (Ramos, 30). These both cases relate to a particular form of Latin American writing that are part of a project of national modernization. In contrast, the notion of worker's writing present in the working-class press relates to the idea of accentuating the differences between the classes instead of bridging them.

⁴¹ 'La Prensa Obrera' *La Union Obrera* (Santiago: May 23 1892), 1.

conceived as a practise external to the working class, it becomes necessary to limit, as much as possible, the textual mechanisms that constitute any ‘bourgeois text’, and one of those mechanisms is the signature of the author that can be used to establish, regularize and claim intellectual/private property. However, since the working-class discourse is presented as a *collective speech*, it resists the linearity of a single and indivisible origin that the notion of signature conveys, along with all its juridical and fictional mechanisms that allow for an individual to ‘own’ a text and be held responsible for a rubric.

A strong critique of intellectual property and authorship can be traced back to the mid-nineteenth century radical left tradition. As early as 1840, the Anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon was already contesting the possibility of distinguishing what is usually called ‘intellectual property’ from any other form of property. In his famous book entitled *Qu'est-ce que la propriété? Recherche sur le principe du droit et du gouvernement*, he claims that ‘all capital, whether material or mental, being the result of collective labor, is, in consequence, collective property.’⁴² Proudhon sustains this assertion with two main arguments. Firstly, he claims that it is impossible to conceive of a completely isolated specialized producer who does not depend on the existence of a multiplicity of other industries and producers that provides him/her with the means of production and the basis for labour reproduction. When it comes to intellectual property, Proudhon criticises it posing a very simple question: ‘[w]here would be the *savant* without the publisher; the printer without the typesetter and the machinist; and these, in their turn, without a multitude of other industries?’⁴³

Secondly, he addresses a more abstract aspect of intellectual labour. Proudhon states that in the production process, along with the constant social provision of material inputs, there is also another stable form of collective support that makes intellectual production possible. This support is crystalized in the form of education, for which the producer is forever indebted to society. He asserts:

[j]ust as the creation of every instrument of production is the result of collective force, so also are a man’s talent and knowledge the product of universal intelligence and of

⁴² Proudhon, Pierre-Joseph, *What is Property. An Inquiry Into the Principle of Right and Government* (Cambridge: Press of John Wilson & Son, 1876), 147.

⁴³ Proudhon, 149.

general knowledge slowly accumulated by a number of masters, and through the aid of many inferior industries.⁴⁴

Therefore, the intellectual, writer, poet, artist or scientists that is committed to the development of a particular discipline is always already indebted not only for the collective efforts that supply him/her with the material goods that he/she consumes and uses, but also for the training that he/she has received. Following this train of thought to its logical conclusions Proudhon even argues that the so-called talented individual has only contributed to the production of herself/himself as a useful instrument of which he is no more than a co-possessor, and not a proprietor, since even before a talented individual arises as such, he/she is always already indebted to the extent that his/her 'own' talent is shaped by a collective effort that anticipates a productive outcome.⁴⁵ Then, in a paradoxical way the notion of authorship (in the form of intellectual property) would necessarily emerge as *disseminated* before it even appears as such. That is, even before the author can claim any authorial property, his/her position as author has been scattered into the multiplicity. What western bourgeois thought usually presupposes as the origin of a text thus emerges not only as textually, but also 'materially' disseminated, since as Proudhon writes, '[t]he laborer is not even possessor of his product; scarcely has he finished it, when society claims it.'⁴⁶ In a blink of an eye, at the exact moment the producer finishes his/her creation, he/she already loses it because his/her talent and skills were never his/her to begin with.⁴⁷ The producer only relates

⁴⁴ Proudhon, 143.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶ Proudhon, 149.

⁴⁷ Following and radicalizing Proudhon's ideas, Michael Bakunin rejects any form of individual creation. In his essay *Federalism, Socialism, Anti-Theologism*, Bakunin argues that is impossible to accept the idea of individual and final creation because he understands creation as the product of countless causes that in a given moment and without individual premeditation compound an event (Bakunin, Michael, *Federalismo, Socialismo y Antiteologismo: Cartas sobre el Patriotismo* (Valencia: F. Sempere y Compañía Editores), 62-63). Thus, for him it is only when we emancipate our thought from the presupposition of divine or human premeditation that we can begin to appreciate the rationale behind the causality of the organic, physic and social world. He thus advocates for a democratic approach to science that is organized from bottom-up and that posits life experience as its basis (Bakunin, 57). His notion of science is grounded on an understanding of a plural understanding of rationality that derives from a multiplicity of disseminated experiences and causes. In this line, he claims that contemporary sciences (understood as unitary and unified forms of knowledge) only leads to partial constructions of the experience of an elite of 'corrupted savants' whose knowledge is affected by their class interests and conditions. Thus, against all intellectual authority, Bakunin asserts that the only way to overcome this 'intellectual degeneration' is by 'the liquidation of science as a moral authority apart from the life of the people, and represented by a body of accredited "savants"'.

to the product for the fragment of time that the process of production lasts. The product just passes through his/her hands before and after returning to the past, present and future community. Henceforth, following Proudhon's reasoning, I should conclude that every producer that claims to be an author (as anyone that claims any other property right) is no more than a *thief*, as he famously asserts: '- la propriété, c'est le vol !' [property is theft!].

Paradoxically enough, Derrida arrived at a similar conclusion by the exact opposite route. In his essay *La parole soufflée*, he analyses what he calls the structure of the theft and its relationship with the problem of authorship from the viewpoint of the artist embodied by Antonin Artaud. In a way that seems like a reversing of Proudhon's famous statement, Derrida asserts that:

Artaud knew that all speech fallen from the body, offering itself to understanding or reception, offering itself as a spectacle, immediately becomes stolen speech. Becomes a signification which I do not possess because it is a signification. Theft is always the theft of speech or text, of a trace.⁴⁸

At first glance *it seems* that for Derrida/Artaud the 'thief' is not the author who attempts to retain the product, but instead what triggers the theft is its social reception. According to this logic, the artist/author *would* appear as the victim of a felony. In response, as Derrida argues, Artaud attempted to prevent the theft taking place by developing what he called the 'Theatre of Cruelty': an artistic exercise of performing a scenic oeuvre that is not indebted to a more ancient writing than itself, that is, to be able to perform a play that could only appear as a language without a trace; as pure inspiration.⁴⁹ Thus, by resorting to Proudhon's understanding of intellectual production, I could read Artaud's gesture as the pretension of the bourgeois artist to create an oeuvre that erases all debts with society and therefore cannot be claimed by it. However, Derrida in line with Proudhon, asserts that '[t]he theft of a possession does not become a theft unless the thing stolen is a possession, unless it has acquired meaning and value through, at least, the consecration of a vow made in discourse.'⁵⁰

It must spread among the masses. Science, being called upon henceforth to represent society's collective consciousness, must really become the property of everybody' (Bakunin, Michael, *On Anarchism* (Canada: Black Rose Books, 2002), 232–233).

⁴⁸ Derrida, Jacques, *La parole soufflée* In: *Writing and Difference* (London: Routledge Classics, 2001), 220.

⁴⁹ Derrida, 2001, 221.

⁵⁰ Derrida, 2001, 220.

The idea of theft can only be understood after a community had discursively agreed that there is something called property, triggering thus a logic of an always already that presupposes a theft before the theft. Hence, even though Artaud's project is aimed at positioning him a step ahead of the theft to elude the *furtiveness* of the thief, he is not able to fully grasp that, as Derrida asserts, 'the theft of speech is not a theft among others; it is confused with the very possibility of theft, defining the fundamental structure of theft.'⁵¹ Thus, even at the exact moment that the subject 'finds' the words to speak (which includes the words of any vow) another theft has taken place. In Derrida's words, '[t]hat speech and writing are always unavowably taken from a reading is the form of the original theft, the most archaic elusion, which simultaneously hides me and *purloins* my powers of inauguration. The mind *purloins*.'⁵² There is no loophole: to become an author, the writer must expropriate and privatize the words he/she uses, and, consequently, his/her condition of 'individual proprietor' that allows for denouncing any theft, is shaped in return by the same logic of property violation. Derrida asserts:

[t]he structure of theft already lodges (itself in) the relation of speech to language. Speech is stolen: since it is stolen from language it is, thus, stolen from itself, that is, from the thief who has always already lost speech as property and initiative. Because its forethought cannot be predicted, the act of reading perforates the act of speaking or writing. And through this perforation, this hole, I escape myself.⁵³

Using a Derridian terminology I could claim that there is no outside the structure of the theft: there is no work of art (or otherwise), nor author/subject left to claim a property right. The theft is conceivable only on the basis there is always a previous thief who discursively attempts to appropriate language. Therefore, no matter whether I refer to the bourgeois foundational vow of private property that denies the communal and always derivative aspect of language, or if I analyse Artaud's attempts to develop a form of art that attempts to resist the return to the collective; the bourgeois author, by trying to secure his/her name can only confirm the structure of theft in its most classical form: '- *La propriété, c'est le vol!*'⁵⁴

⁵¹ Ibidem.

⁵² Derrida, 2001, 224.

⁵³ Derrida, 2001, 223-224.

⁵⁴ By this, I am not implying that Derrida advocates for the collectivization of all property. Especially, since this would imply to take an active decision on the issue. And, if I want to be faithful to his train of thought, I must recognize that that kind of decision is not up to him to make (or to any individual

If one of the most influential books on Anarchism of the time so openly rejected the notion of authorship, it should not be a surprise that Chilean working-class writers did it as well. However, it is noteworthy that these workers went a step further than Proudhon by actively turning this rejection of individual property into a form of praxis that informed their understanding of truthfulness. The Chilean working-class periodicals are performatively written in a way that mimics a neutral medium that channels a plural speech. As I have been arguing, these workers write with the awareness that because of legitimacy issues they cannot claim a *proper name*, so they express themselves by means of a metonymic operation in which the entire working class appears as the creator of their words. Their condition of workers only allows them to reproduce a common voice that must dictate every written word. This can be observed in the text ‘Nuestra primera palabra’ [‘Our First Word’] published by the periodical *La Situación* [*The Situation*], where it says: ‘[w]e are born into the life of journalism as an abortion of the deepest popular needs. We are the expression of the complaints and tears that escape from the homes where misery nestles.’⁵⁵ The words of this periodical are presented as the reproduction of a spontaneous manifestation of the working class that is revealed by the residues (the tears) that emanate from the private spaces of the working-class family. Accordingly, the agency of the writer is confined to receiving and reproducing these remnants as a single speech. They assert:

[t]hought visits us and with its strong vibrations tells us that we cannot remain in silence and that we must pave the way for truth and for the triumph of the right of all social classes that suffer in silence the grievous consequences of present times.⁵⁶

The author only intervenes in the scene as a messiah that has written down what an ‘other’ has commanded him/her. Nevertheless, the problem is not that simple as, paradoxically, to hear this popular clamour without infecting it with any foreign elements, the author himself/herself must be part of the working class. Thus, as I have observed in other texts, the

for that matter). For Derrida, the dissemination of the author’s rubric always already happens regardless of the ‘author’s intention.’ Moreover, it is because of the author’s constitutive impossibility to reclaim his/her text that others can conceive him/her as an author in the first place. However, it is worth giving him the floor: ‘the coded, policed discourse of the class struggle, if it forecloses the question of *glas* (everything forged there, all that on which it reverberates, in particular the expropriation of the name everywhere that the questions carries), lacks at the least a revolution. And what is a revolution that does not attack the proper name?’ (Derrida, Jacques, *Glas*, 207).

⁵⁵ ‘Nuestra Primera Palabra’, *La Situación* (Santiago: September 18 1914), 1.

⁵⁶ ‘Nuestra Primera Palabra’, 1.

writer articulates a performative movement by claiming: ‘we belong to the people, and thus, we feel and hate as they do, or we die next to them without making heinous abdications, humiliations or base actions of any genre.’⁵⁷ What is interesting about this last sentence is not only that it reveals the writer’s locus of enunciation, but also, this performative movement is written in the *first person plural*. As I will argue, this constitution of plural subjects is not a coincidence, but a manifestation of a need for the author to lose his/her proper name in order to be able to speak the truth without *mediation*, for truth manifests itself in the multiplicity of a working-class discourse founded upon a *collective voice*. The writer continues, ‘[w]e will dip our pen, forged in the heat of tough sacrifices, in the tears of our brothers in misery and in the innocent blood that tyrants have sacrificed.’⁵⁸ By using the metaphor of an ink made by tears and blood, the writer refers to a gathering of a multiplicity that guides his/her pen in the reproduction of a discourse that overlaps several voices in each written word.

A similar gesture can be found in the first editorial section of the periodical *La Tromba* [*The Whirlwind*], in which the paper is introduced as follows: ‘[w]e are social vapours, formed in the heat of injustice and raised according to Newton’s law.’⁵⁹ This reference to gaseous substance is related to the title of the periodical *La Tromba* which stands for whirlwind, and therefore the text is referring to the junction of multiple wind flows that generate a devastating effect. Thus, what in the last paragraph was represented by an ink formed by the mixture of blood and tears, and before that was characterized by the echo of the factory that reaches the individual worker at the exact moment that he/she is producing some of the noises that he/she is hearing as a whole, is now portrayed as a disseminated vapour that is joined in a single text to communicate the multiplicity.

Now, focusing my analysis on the choice of words, the use of metaphors such as echo, vapour, ink and whirlwind are not just stylistic artifices that are used to embellish the text. Instead, all these words manifest the idea of a speech whose mode of appearance is by repetition; a discourse that can only propagate itself as an echo that combines the multiples sorrows of workers and that reminds the reader that a collective voice cannot emanate from

⁵⁷ ‘Nuestra Primera Palabra’, 1.

⁵⁸ ‘Nuestra Primera Palabra’, 1.

⁵⁹ ‘La Tromba’, *La Tromba* (Santiago: March 6 1898), 1.

a single origin. The working-class discourse constitutes a manifestation of a shared experience that is (always already) generated/replicated by several bodies at once. The ‘first word’ of the workers is always an echo. Thus, by articulating the fictional effect of a unified speech, the writer only repeats an *original repetition*.⁶⁰

In this regard, it is no coincidence either that this text, as well as others that I have been analysing here, has no signature.⁶¹ It seems as if there is a constitutive impossibility of claiming ownership over these writings. The reference to a plural subject and the absence of signatures should be understood as strategies that, along with the performative movement that I referred before, are used by the workers-writers to neutralize any bourgeois appropriation of ‘their’ texts. Someone could say that the lack of proper names could be read as an altruistic gesture, and that each anonymous worker had a choice and has actively decided to become a spokesman for others. Nevertheless, if I consider the problem of legitimacy and originality in relation to what constitutes any worker (after and before any text is written), the problem of the *proper name* (and of any *property* in general) takes a more profound sense.

As I have shown so far, at the exact moment that the interlocutor communicates a collective speech, he/she must lose his/her name. But there is nothing original in the

⁶⁰ In a conference paper entitled *The Author as Producer*, Walter Benjamin defends that the *bourgeois press* is turning the figure of the professional writer obsolete. In their open columns, Benjamin expresses, the editorial offices had exploited the modern readers’ impatience by allowing them to indiscriminately intervene in the periodicals as writers. Thus, the modern press has re-shaped the dynamics of literary production and opened the doors for the publishing and assimilation of all sorts of unselective material. However, Benjamin introduces an antithesis to this ‘bourgeois degeneration’ of the press by asserting: ‘[t]here is however a dialectical factor hidden in this situation: the decline of literature in the bourgeois press is proving to be the formula for its regeneration in the Soviet press. For as literature gains in breadth what it loses in depth, so the distinction between author and public, which the bourgeois press maintains by artificial means, is beginning to disappear in the Soviet press (Benjamin, Walter, *The Author as Producer*, 90).’ As he argues, since the content of the Soviet press is the workers’ material reality, the ‘authority’ to write on a subject is gained not because of any literary expertise, but by the labour the writer performs. It is ‘[w]ork itself puts in a word. And writing about work makes up part of the skill necessary to perform it. Authority to write is no longer founded in a specialist training but in a polytechnical one, and so becomes *common property*’ (my emphasis) (ibidem). Of course this diagnosis of the freedom to write in the Soviet press clashes with the common knowledge about Soviet censorship, however, it is interesting to note the way in which Benjamin spotted the same correlation between writing, labour and ‘common property’ that the writers from the Chilean working-class press were defending as the only form of truthful modern writing.

⁶¹ This tendency to anonymity is practised by the absence of signatures or by the use of pseudonyms such as *Un trabajador* [A Worker], *Juan de la Verdad* [John of the Truth], *El Diablo* [The Devil], Marat, *El Ají* [Chilli-pepper], Mesías [Messiah], among many others.

performative movement in which the author becomes a collective worker, since this fictional operation just repeats a depersonalization that is always already taking place. A worker does not need to write to lose his/her name, as from the moment that the state of exploitation begins, he/she has already lost his/her individuality by becoming a worker. There is a principle of substitutability that affects the entire working class at the same time, the same principle of exchange that characterises the factory in 'El Gran Poema.' Several depictions of workers published by the working-class press resort to an idea of infinity triggered by the repetition of 'labour' that produces an effect of individual de-identification. Even in narratives of personal experiences, it is common to find a motif of non-uniqueness that is implicit from the beginning of each text.

This problem is clearly represented in the text 'Desgraciada' ['Wretched Woman'], which relates the tragic life of a female worker. Even before the protagonist of the story is introduced, the narration abandons any particularity or originality by the following opening sentences: '[t]he eternal story! Always the same story!'⁶² From the very first word, the idea of an event that could break or even suspend the monotony of the state of exploitation is dismissed. The beginning of the text drives the reader to a constitutive repetition. And only then, after the reader 'realizes without effort the development of the drama and its logical epilogue. Simple and frequently used',⁶³ the main character is introduced: '[s]he, an honest and laborious young woman, from humble origins, deprived of every basic resource [...] condemned to work in order to earn a living, loses her identity among other companions that share with her the inequalities of the current law of work.'⁶⁴ In this paragraph the story begins but, by doing so, it reaffirms the first sentence of the text. At the exact moment that the narrator is describing the features of the protagonist, she enters the factory where she loses her *identity*. Thus, paradoxically, the description of this woman is articulated as a de-identification and her story begins with her own disappearance into multiplicity. However, only by means of this movement of disappearance and melting-away of the individual, does she become part of 'her own' story.⁶⁵ This example shows that by working, the subject has

⁶² 'Desgraciada', *La Campaña* (Santiago: January, 1900), 2.

⁶³ 'Desgraciada', 2.

⁶⁴ 'Desgraciada', 2.

⁶⁵ I will return to this text in Chapter 4 to analyse the plot of the story in relation of the problem of (sexual) exploitation of women workers.

always already constituted his/her identity as worker by losing his/her individuality, which produces a scene of substitutability that operates from within the structure of exploitation. Therefore, the use of a performative movement in which the author is subsumed into a common worker is only a *supplement* that mimics the constitution of workers in general.

Conclusion: the Worker that We Are

The problem that I have been trying to illuminate here is not merely reducible to a stylistic or rhetorical issue since it brings about very complex political, logical and theoretical repercussions, especially regarding the constitution of the worker from within the working-class *scene of writing*. At this stage, if I ask who enunciates the working-class discourse, I will face a scene of writing that erases the differences between the messenger and the message. This, as the condition of possibility of a working-class text, is constituted by the following chiasm: the worker, as the fundamental recourse that sustains the narrative of the working class, always enunciates himself/herself as a worker in order to be able to communicate the worker's experience, that is (at the same time) his/her own experience. In other words, the writer-worker constitutes a *medium* from which the worker's experience is communicated 'in itself', but in order to become this *medium* the writer him/herself must be a worker first, and to be a worker implies the disappearance of the writer. Therefore, the *medium* becomes the 'in itself' by erasing the boundaries between messenger and message. In a way, I could say that the *scene of writing* of the Chilean working-class is founded upon a movement of eternal self-referentiality, and the most profound implication of any attempt to legitimize the 'purity' of working-class writing is that sender, message and, ultimately, the recipient (as I will show in Chapter 2) become undifferentiated. Writing here operates as a form of auto-affection in which, by a hyperbolic movement of writing/reading, the entire working class is expressing and receiving each word at the same time. Nevertheless, as the worker speaks to himself/herself about his/her own experience, it seems that there is not outside of the scene, and that all differences are subsumed into an aporetic sameness. But, as a form of anticipation, I could say that the working-class *frame* is always threatened by its other that constantly makes the margins fade. The complexity of this *scene of writing* is given by its own fragility, for it can only be sustained in a very delicate equilibrium between

coherence and legitimacy. Then, in order to understand all the possibilities and dangers that arise from within the working-class frame, first I must ask about the *content* of the periodicals and its effects on *readers*.

CHAPTER 2: DEGENERATION AND REGENERATION

The Revolutionary Promise as a Collective Auto-Affection

These human machines are neither for nor against what they are building. They work like beasts to earn their measure of pay without critically examining their task: ready to demolish what they have so solidly built; ready to forge iron collars for all at the risk of injuring themselves; and amenable to any odious work that ensures them a wage. They pile stone on stone, pump air into the lungs of the prisoners, repudiate justice by perfecting the impossibilities of escape, cut off outside space from view, and complicate the inquisition that comes to life in the stone, the iron, and the wood that conceal and watch over the torments of the prisoners. They complete this prison and its blind cavities of a burning court without singeing their souls in this work of the damned (Jacques Rancière).¹

A) Three Definitions of the Working-Class Press

In the last chapter I devoted my attention to the conditions that sustain any ‘legitimate’ working-class writing by limiting my analysis to the problem of authorship and its relationship with Truth. This approach led me to a scene of auto-affection that can either generate an effect of self-sanitization or auto-infection. By following this problem, in this chapter I will focus on a different aspect of the ‘same’ issue by problematizing the constitution of the worker by its relation to reading instead of writing, which as I already anticipated are ultimately undifferentiated. Nevertheless, I will maintain this ‘distinction’ between writing and reading a little longer, as a pivotal difference to unravel the problem of collective degeneration/regeneration.

A possible entrance to this problem consists in asking: what constitutes a working-class periodical? The article entitled ‘La Prensa Obrera’ [‘The Working-Class Press’] provides an answer.² By using the same introductory principle that I analysed in the previous

¹ Rancière, Jacques, *Proletarian Nights*, 103.

² ‘La Prensa Obrera’, *La Palanca* (Santiago: 1 May, 1908), 5. Another article that presents a similar narrative regarding the effects of the working-class press on their readers and its necessity for the

chapter (but resorting to a different metaphor), this text begins by acknowledging that the working-class press can only represent the direct experiences of workers. It asserts that ‘[t]he working-class press is the escape valve of the people’s feelings.’³ By relegating the role of the periodicals to channelling a collective voice, this definition maintains the idea of legitimacy and purity that I discussed before. However, along with this characterization, the text provides *two* more definitions of the working-class press that displace this linearity between working-class experience and truthful writing.

A *second definition* posits that these periodicals are ‘the lighthouse that guides workers in the conquest of all their demands.’⁴ The order of the factors is beginning to change. Now the working-class press is presented as some kind of guiding light that workers must follow. These two initial definitions form an odd couple. On the one hand, there is an irreducible need to reproduce the experiences of workers without any mediation. And, on the other hand, there is also an aim to actively affect this same experience by guiding workers. Thus, from this ‘other’ side of the same issue, it becomes clearer that not only do writers need the people to legitimate their work. Also, the working-class press is conceptualized as a necessary driving force on which the people depend to defend their interests. Moreover, the text continues by expressing that ‘a people without a press that stands for their rights are an enslaved and wretched people that will constitute the fuel for despotism of tyrants.’⁵ It is interesting that the rise of tyrants is not related to economic or material conditions of production, instead it is closely related to the absence of a working-class press that can manifest the voice of the people. In this regard, the act of reading is not one among others, for ‘[t]he worker that protects a worker’s periodical, by subscribing to, or buying it, fulfils one of his/her biggest duties.’⁶ Consequently, the article continues, ‘[t]he workers that do not read the press that fights for their wellbeing, are unworthy of calling themselves free and they deserve the contempt of their companions.’⁷

enlightenment of workers is: ‘Es Indispensable a los Obreros Mantener un Periódico’, *Las Sociedades* (Santiago: 12 April 1888), 2-3.

³ ‘La Prensa Obrera’, 5.

⁴ ‘La Prensa Obrera’, 5.

⁵ ‘La Prensa Obrera’, 5.

⁶ ‘La Prensa Obrera’, 5.

⁷ ‘La Prensa Obrera’, 5.

In these lines the problem of the frame that defines what is *proper* to the working-class is reframed. Now the ultimate danger of betrayal is on the side of the reader. Workers must always read and support the ‘real working-class press’, because if they fail to do so they will lose the respect of the other workers and, ultimately, their freedom. Accordingly, any type of interaction with a working-class text is not unidirectional, for there is always a bourgeois threat which haunts working-class *writing and reading*. Both operations run the risk of violating the border regime at any time. Hence, what in Chapter 1 appeared to be a radical subjugation of the writer to the mastery of the people (as a source of legitimacy), now is inverted as the fragility of workers needs to be offset with the constant reading of the working-class press. Thus, on the one hand, the periodicals need the legitimacy of workers as readers and their *protección*⁸ to gather enough (economic and symbolic) resources to keep publishing. On the other hand, these same workers depend on the periodicals to resist the multiple threats of tyrants that may arise.

But this is not all, the working-class press not only defends workers from contingent dangers, but it also aims to produce a deeper change among them. This issue is introduced with a *third definition*, which states that ‘the working-class press is the sun that enlightens the mind of the crowds, it chases away the shadows of ignorance and lights up the path of progress and science.’⁹ Just as in the second definition, the text refers to light and darkness as metaphors of the relationship between reason/unreason and truth/untruth, but this time there is a subtle difference regarding the nature of this illumination. In the *second definition*, the light only works to illuminate a contingent path of conquest and vindications. That is to say, it is an external light that only guides workers by showing them the way, but without modifying them in any way. On the contrary, in this *third definition* the metaphor of light corresponds to an inner enlightenment of the workers’ minds that dispels the shadows of ignorance. Consequently, these periodicals not only pretend to communicate the experiences of exploitation, but by doing so they aim at transforming the workers at the same time. Thus, the movement of auto-affection produced by what could be referred to as a *reading-yourself-*

⁸ The word *protección* [protection] was commonly used in Chilean independent periodicals to ask for the loyalty of readers in order to gather enough economic resources to keep printing.

⁹ La Prensa Obrera’, 5.

writing operation is finally complete: the writer-worker by reading his/her own experience is enlightened.

Another interesting element of this *third definition* is that by positioning science and progress alongside the working-class press, this article also confirms that there is a form of complicity between reason, truth and working-class writing-reading.¹⁰ Thus, in contrast to ‘bourgeois reason’, the current state of exploitation is interpreted as a stage of obfuscation that must be overcome by a synchronization between writing and reading that supersedes the differences between sender, message and recipient. What emerges in this text is an impossible, but necessary, equilibrium between the pure reproduction of a common experience and the intention to influence the individuals that are suffering this common ‘experience’ in the ‘first place.’ But how is it possible to establish a simultaneity between these two features of the working-class discourse? What principle, logic or reason can sustain this irreducible contradiction from within the same text? The only thing that is certain is that in-between these three definitions of the working-class press, two different temporalities with two different ways of conceptualizing the workers collide with each other. It is as if the text is based in an aporetic relationship between synchronicity/diachronicity and equality/difference. As I have shown so far, there is a ‘first moment’ in which there is an ‘original’ instant in which the working class, characterized by certain heroism and martyrdom, manifests (through a collective speech) a pure and truthful discourse about the experience of exploitation. Nevertheless, there is a ‘second moment’, in which the act of writing/reading modifies – by enlightenment – the minds of these same workers that appear as defenceless and ignorant subjects. Thus, the question that remains is: what has changed in this movement of a pen, in this instant, in this in-between the foundation of a text and its reception? Why must the *source* of Truth and Reason, which are the workers themselves, be enlightened by Truth and Reason?

¹⁰ A clear example of this correlation between reason, progress and working-class experience can also be found in the periodical *El Pueblo* [*The People*]. There, an untitled short paragraph published under the pseudonym Prole expresses: ‘intellectuals firmly state that the press is the world’s tongue; the shining light that illuminates consciences; the great school where the people learn; – all of this might be true, but I believe, and as I believe it I can say it, that the press is the world’s dynamo that makes things and men evolve uniting them in a gigantic hope: *The Truth, Progress*. For me, an individual of the world, the press is light for the spirit and a crucible for intelligence in the relentless labour of writing for the good of the people. *And the people are the brain of the universe*’ (my emphasis) (‘El Pueblo’, *El Pueblo* (Santiago: January 21 1906), 4).

B) The Beast and/as the Worker that You Are

In the 'transition' from writing to reading, the worker appears as internally dislocated. He/she emerges as an always already unfolded subject, and therefore, it is no longer possible to establish a simple and linear connection between the workers' experience and the origin of any working-class text. This internal self-difference becomes more evident in an article published in the periodical *El Faro* [*The Lighthouse*] entitled 'Lo que eres obrero' ['Worker, This is What You Are'].¹¹ By doing justice to the name of the periodical, this article (in a very paradoxical movement) attempts to illuminate workers by telling them what they 'actually' are, and by doing so, it provides some clues that could be used to interpret this duality of the worker that I have been encountering on the side of the reader.

The article begins as a eulogy that praises the fundamental influence of workers in the material constitution of the contemporary world. In relation to their labour, workers are introduced as follows:

[y]ou move everything: from the countryside to the mines and from the mines to the great conquest of industry and science, your hand crops, pulls and creates everything [...] You master the boisterous waves of the ocean, you dig tunnels in mountains and you conquer the deserts. Your callous hands write *great poems* on the anvil of work, where are forged the great advances of the century. Your arms move everything and your shoulders hold up the social building, kneading with your blood and bones. And from centuries to centuries, it is your effort, your breath and your work that falls into the ground as holy mist of an eternal germinal (my emphasis).¹²

In a manner that resembles 'El Gran Poema', this article vindicates workers by placing them at the core of a teleological movement of progress and civilization. It is a narrative of conquests that, once again, is manifested as an eternal poem that has been written down on 'the anvil of work.' According to this narrative, the material conditions for the constitution and preservation of 'the social building' are erected on the worker's shoulders.¹³ The worker

¹¹ 'Lo que eres obrero', *El Faro* (Santiago: September 1902), 2-3.

¹² 'Lo que eres obrero' 2.

¹³ In a similar manner the periodical of the workers of the State Railway is presented as follows: '[d]o you know who I am? I will tell you: I am the *Carrilano*, the man who makes the iron of my hammer kowtow. In face of my irrefutable strength, there is no human power that dares to challenge the movement of my arm, because everything has been created under my absolute dominion' ('¿Quién soi yo?', *El Carrilano* (Santiago: October 15 1913), 3). This motif is also present in the following

is presented thus as a figure of vital importance for the contemporary world and its civilisation.

But that is not all, the text goes a little further by paying tribute not only to the influence of the workers in the production of material goods. The article continues by claiming that History in general is set in motion by the ongoing martyrdoms that they had suffered in heroic silence to defend the advances of Reason. In the words of this working-class writer-reader:

[o]n the dark pages of History, where you [the worker] have one single chapter: Forgetfulness! There are *Titanic struggles*, *cyclopean works*, *endless sufferings*, that recite your painful and *great eternal odyssey*! When the seed of freedom, withered on the field of fraud and despotism, demanded the fruitful rain, you irrigated the fields with your generous blood. When ideas needed martyrs to defend them, even in the jaws of the guillotine your body was decapitated in the name of what is good. You were the one who ended up swinging on the glorious gibbet. And when mistake, crime and human infamy demanded atonement and purification, you, oh people! You purged with your great abnegation the human soul, tainted by the wicked sons of life (my emphasis).¹⁴

This quotation shows the disclosure of a workers' hidden epic. An odyssey that has been forgotten, as a secret that is beyond our time, but in which the chronology of world History itself is anchored.¹⁵ Henceforth, in a close reading of these lines, it is possible to trace an

example: '[t]he titan who shares his glory, that sustains Monarchs, who maintains the Founding Fathers and that creates miracles of art is not the rich-man of high history which uses his power to subjugates, but the *chusma*, the scum... - *The scoundrels!*' ('La Canalla', *El Pueblo* (Santiago: January 14 1906), 3).

¹⁴ 'Lo que eres obrero', 2-3.

¹⁵ According to Derrida, when writing historical pieces, it is only possible to write about one or another of its historically determined figures. But it is impossible to write the history of the origin that allows for every determined figure to appear as such, without repressing the metonymical effect of the constant return of the foundational moment. That is to say, by attempting to narrate the history of *historicity* we unavoidably reproduce the forgetfulness in which the teleological patterns of the narration are founded upon. In this regard, to think of a hyperbolic point (in this case the creation of the contemporary world) as the absolute foundation of a historical temporalization implies the necessity of embracing the fact that *historicity* in general is constituted on the transit between trans-historic foundational points and finite structures. In the case of the Chilean working-class press, the hyperbolic point is embodied by the trans-historical moment on which the worker creates and re-creates the world we live in, however, since they write from this already constituted world, this mythical reference to labour as a foundation without any fundament, cannot be grasped with the historical structures that it produces. In a nutshell, the mythical worker as the absolute producer of everything necessarily exceeds the working-class scene of writing in order for it to constitute a scene in the first place. Here the notion of *historicity* and its relation to history is forged on the basis of a

operation of temporalization. But to do so, I need to take my time here and now, for I am approaching the problem of the constitution of (*revolutionary*) time.

By means of literary figures taken from *Greek Epics*, the text refers to a heroic time that is far gone. An irreducible past that it cannot be reached because it only appears after been forgotten, but that is still manifested through the movement of History. All these titanic struggles and anonymous sacrifices that the article refers to, are written in the past tense. The (material and ideal) constitution of the contemporary world by the hands of those heroic men without a name is an event that has always already taken place. And this is because these ideal workers cannot be apprehended or subsumed into a chronological distribution, for they can never be fully present in the temporality that they inaugurated and made possible. However, this non-presence, this necessary temporal anonymity, enables – by a metonymical operation – this mythical character to return in the future.

The two last sentences refer to a general state of human degeneration produced by ignorance, crime and infamy. Faced with this situation, the text preaches that the worker has always returned to cleanse what is left of humanity with his/her sufferings (it is quite telling that the word used in the article is atonement). Consequently, the reference to *Greek Epics* is far more profound than a merely rhetorical gesture. The general motif of this paragraph is based upon the constant messianic return to an original splendour that, by means of purgation, enables the closure of the *epic cycle* and of the worker's *odyssey*.¹⁶ Everything happens in-between an original departure that occurs in an irreducible past and the promise of concluding the odyssey by returning *home*. The most radical implications of this teleology are (always) yet to come, but its effects are constantly appearing in the working-class press by providing rhythm, content and time to the concept of *Revolution*.¹⁷

rhythm of disappearances based upon the eternal promise of the return of the mythical worker, as I will show later in this Chapter. See: Derrida, Jacques, *Heidegger: The Question of Being and History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), 93-94, or Derrida, Jacques, *Cogito and the History of Madness*, in: *Writing and Difference*, trans. Allan Bass (London: Routledge, 2005), 51, 66, 68, 73 and 74.

¹⁶ The *epic cycle* is a classic Greek genre based on hero cults. Each narration consists in a journey or odyssey that is composed by an original departure, a subsequent initiation and a return to home. Even though, most of the narrations relate actual trips, these journeys (as psychoanalysis have taught us) are also symbolic and metaphorical journeys.

¹⁷ I will analyse the content of this revolutionary narrative in Chapter 3.

So far, even as I have been problematizing the figure of the worker, I have only referred to its mythical mode of appearance, which takes place in an irreducible and undifferentiated past time that is conceptualized as a *departure/return*. But, the *actual* worker, the one that lives and works in the *present*, the ‘proletarian as such’, is missing from this narrative. In this depiction of Historical development based in the sporadic return of the ideal worker, the *present* worker remains *absent*. But once again, this absence is not a coincidence or a mistake, it operates as a teleological necessity that constitutes the condition of possibility for the return. The writer-reader, after having referred to this messianic purification, addresses this issue by asking: ‘[y]ou are the motor that everything moves, it is true; But, what do you represent in society? What do you collect from the great harvest, oh people? What part do you play in the human concert, oh proletarian?’¹⁸ To these fundamental questions (that anticipate a change in tone and emphasis), the worker-reader opposes a crude response, which I will extensively reproduce next:

[y]ou are the *beast*. Yes, the beast that sweats to exhaustion to fatten the masters. The beast that wallows in the mud of its den, in *physical and intellectual* misery, laughing stupidly at the banquet of its tormentors, where the fruits of its labour are squandered [...] where the appetite of the crapulent man and the gentleman are satiated by the innocent meat of the sons of the people. You are the *tamed beast* that waits for the leftovers of the banquet; licking the hand that whips it and that answers to insults with groans and hypocrisy; and that responds with tears and pleas to all kind of brutalities. This is because its only weapon is servility. You are not a man, no, you are not; you lost your dignity as such; the whips of the lord, fattened on your basely hunched back, have written the infamous name of slave, a name that is being preserved because with your cowardice you reinforced the cage of servitude. And during the dark night of your existence you marched through the sludge, trampling your dignity and conscience in front of the spectacle of your repulsive nastiness. Does *the spectre of your martyrdoms*, of your tears and sufferings no longer rise up to ask for redress? (my emphasis).¹⁹

In this harsh tone, what is left of the worker is portrayed. This subject that ‘once’ was the greatest human being, ‘now’ is presented as no more than a *beast*. What emerges in this quote is a degenerate being whose (deformed) body stays as a trace, as a reminiscence of who is

¹⁸ ‘Lo que eres obrero’, 3.

¹⁹ ‘Lo que eres obrero’, 3.

far gone. The proletarian who at first was presented as the motor force of History and Reason ‘now’ has become a servile creature that is *intellectually* and *physically* degraded. This subjugation to the mastery of the lord has turned the day into night and the epic figure of the worker into a *spectre*. Paradoxically, this worker-reader does not blame the bourgeoisie for the current state of exploitation. Instead he/she argues that the beast is responsible for its own misery, but at the same time he is also the only one who can change the world (once more). At the end of the text, the promise of redemption returns, for the writer-reader concludes the article by addressing the beast as follows: ‘[r]ise up! All shadows preserve an aurora. Behind your servitude there is an aurora that announces Freedom. It is necessary to climb Golgotha to be dignified, for you to be free, you must irrigate it with your blood and ideals in order to become a man!’²⁰

**C) ‘The Thing Is To Clap And Whistle, It Does Not Matter Whether You Know
What Is Being Shouted, The Thing Is To Make A Crowd’:
Substitutability and the Degenerate Present Where They Reside**

The entire *scene of writing* that I have been describing here moves between two extremes: from degeneration to regeneration and the opposite way around. It is as if the constitutive fundament of each text is an original lost: the worker that legitimates any written text is no longer a ‘man’, and therefore the teleology of the revolutionary promise begins by the disappearance of the worker into a degenerate present. Nevertheless, this original absence shapes the conceptual framework that allows to posit the *Revolution* as a return of the worker, that is, as a regeneration. Thus, this mythical foundation cannot be understood as a chronological beginning, for it operates as a regulatory principle, a trans-historical point that leads to an irreducible past/future time. Hence, in this transition from writing to reading this vanishing movement of the worker is repeated. And therefore, the revolutionary promise is conceptualised in the working-class press as an economic distribution between degeneration and regeneration that is constantly reproduced by a movement of auto-affection generated by what I have described as an act of *reading-yourself-writing*. The repetition of this process of

²⁰ ‘Lo que eres obrero’, 3.

erosion leaves the workers facing a degenerate present inhabited by *beasts*. They are standing in a grim scenario, surrounded by creatures and monsters that disarticulate all the categories and pragmatism of bourgeois reason. It is a space where the experience of exploitation is presented as an historical inertia, which is based on an eternal movement of de-personalization of themselves that erodes the working class from within. There it is not possible to find the comfort that the syntax of the propositions ‘this means *this*’ or ‘this is *it*’ provide. Especially because the figure of the worker cannot be grasped in an ontological deductive line of thought, for its mode of appearance is that of disappearing. At this point, I can only work with residues, remainders and traces. Thus, from now on I should not ask for the worker *as such*, instead I can only problematize the manifestation of its absence. I must deal only with *beasts*. But how does the beast appear on the scene?

The article ‘La masa al desnudo’ [‘The Naked/Unveiled Masses’], published in the periodical *La Batalla* [*The Battle*] addresses the figure of the beasts to ‘*undress/unveil*’ the present state of exploitation. The writer-reader begins by regretting that most of the exploited ones are constrained to work, suffer and ‘*remain quiet*.’²¹ This apathy and resignation to action is presented as a direct consequence of a general lack of *proper* ideas, or more specifically, as the absence of a *proper* working-class voice. According to the writer-reader:

[t]he modern slave is the pariah of each epoch, the Helots of all times, the one that does not care about his/her situation, the one that *wants to remain being a beast of burden*; that is what the ones who are responsible for looking after him/her has taught him/her. *Something had to be given in return* for the delights that he/she [the worker] provides [to the master] (my emphasis).²²

As the text suggests, the worker actively takes part in a transaction in which he/she becomes a passive body (a beast) by means of producing goods in exchange for meaning.²³ And, by doing so, the worker becomes an outcast of History. Thus, what is paradigmatic about this text is that this lack of original thoughts is presented as the outcome of a socioeconomic

²¹ ‘La masa al desnudo’ *La Batalla* (Santiago: Second week of October 1913), 4.

²² ‘La masa al desnudo’, 4.

²³ What I been deliberately delaying here is that this transaction operates as a patriarchal sexual operation. As I will argue in the following chapters, the relation between (female) passivity and (male) activity is presented in the press as a form of control over the workers. Through a conceptualization of the body as a territory of conquest, the workers posit the idea of recuperating the body of women in order to dismantle the current state of exploitation and reestablish a male-based distribution of sexual difference.

exchange in which the workers are merged into a collective body by allowing the ruling class to become a collective mind. In the article this process is described as follows:

[t]hey [the beasts of burden] are fervent believers, they are incapable of thinking for themselves, someone else must do it for them, because of many years of servility, they are *physically and morally degenerate* and they succumbed to atavistic prejudices and worries, they cannot break with the path on which they have been raised, because if they do, they would no longer be good ‘citizens’, and they would not be welcome by their master, and what is even worse, God would be mad at them, and He would send them to a hell that is even worse than the one that they suffer every day.²⁴

With an ironic tone this quote shows the way in which the state of exploitation entails, not only control over workers’ bodies, but also, the development of a different relationship between body and mind. It reveals a state of total control in which the ideas of the workers are determined by two external institutions: the State and the Church. Any possible form of popular resistance is neutralized by an external agent (the bourgeois man or the priest) who by providing meaning to the experience of exploitation blurs the limits between the working class and its ‘other.’ The monstrous figures of this process of intellectual contamination are the working-class Catholic and the good citizen. The madness of this situation, as the writer-reader adds, is not ‘that the bourgeoisie defend themselves, they have the right to do so; but that you [beasts] defend and guard them is base, vile and absurd.’²⁵ I have reached a point of indifference in which it is no longer possible to claim an absolute purity of the working class, for it is always already affected by an external source of meaning. According to this article the workers have no name, no body, no will; they become *beasts* by turning into an automaton that is driven by an external consciousness. This *bestialization* of the working class thus takes place in a realm of non-sense and absurdity in general, for the state of exploitation is presented as a space of free exchange of bodies and thoughts that turns the working class against itself.

One of the most radical implications of the rise of *the beast*, is that the process of de-personalization by working/writing/reading that (as I showed in Chapter 1) engenders the possibility of enunciating a truthful working-class discourse, constitutes a truth whose only certainty is that it is also open to *substitution*. Thus, the madness, horror and monstrosity of

²⁴ ‘La masa al desnudo’, 4.

²⁵ ‘La masa al desnudo’, 4.

the state of exploitation is that it produces a general state of free and eternal exchangeability. The writer-reader presents this paradox at the end of the article by claiming, not without remorse, that he/she has provided:

[t]he reflection of the anonymous masses who laugh, sings and cries, that claps equally to a libertarian orator as to a Catholic one, to a demonstration as to a bullfight. The thing is to clap and whistle, it does not matter whether you know what is being shouted, the thing is to make a crowd.²⁶

The Truth of the working class has been demeaned to nothing more than a constant movement of de-personalization that operates as a suspension of time in an eternal state of exploitation which is based upon a *content-less* Truth. The thing is just ‘to clap and whistle.’ The content is always provisional and secondary, for the libertarian orator constantly takes the place of the priest, the priest takes the place of the bull and the bull takes the place of the libertarian orator. But that does not matter as ultimately ‘the thing is to make a crowd.’ The despair, horror and absurdity of the state of exploitation is represented thus as pure madness and demagoguery; as an unintelligible space where bodies, meaning and time disseminate, leaving only traces behind. Everything takes place in an eternal play of substitutions of workers that are lost in the middle of the crowd.

Conclusion: Three’s a Crowd

In this Chapter I have shown that, in the passage from writing to reading through working, the closed circuit of working-class discourse has always already been *opened* by the intromission of the bourgeoisie through the beast. This, as the circumscription of this seemingly indivisible multiplicity, that is supposed to allow workers to differentiate between bourgeois reason and working-class Truth, is been disrupted by the rise of a third figure: *the Beast*. Even as I have been compulsively attempting to establish and maintain a clear borderline between the workers’ text and its ‘other’, what has never stopped returning to the scene is the monstrosity, the bestiality and the madness of an in-between. A third term that dismantles all binominal differences and, with them, all the categories that workers could use

²⁶ ‘La masa al desnudo’, 4.

to resist this contamination. Hence, as the state of exploitation is represented as a space of free substitutability that makes it impossible to claim any degree of purity, the class struggle emerges as the necessity to restructure the reassuring system of differences from any sort of contamination. And one of the fundamental systems of difference in which this issue relies on is *sexual difference*. As I will show in the following chapters, the mythic figure of the worker is a *male* subject and the madness of the state of exploitation is sustained by the constant feminization of the working-class *scene of writing*.

PART II: DISSECTING THE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM OF THE LABOUR FORCE

[M]estizo peoples [...] the Latin American peoples. Nations invaded and destroyed by Europe and, because of that, for the descendants of these nations, Europe became a part of themselves, especially their language; but, because of their other essential component, there are also nations that racially and culturally differ from Europe. Thus, the 'raza mestiza latinoamericana', as Gabriela Mistral writes, has taken four centuries in constituting itself, into a 'race', because of that, their way-of-residing [estancia] – or dwelling – and, therefore, their culture, cannot be a way-of-residing nor be European (Patricio Marchant).¹

The Chilean working-class scene of writing has led *me* (as a reader) by the hand down an uncanny path of madness and despair. I have been repeatedly trying to discern what distinguishes the worker's text from its 'other' without being able to avoid a compulsive return of an 'otherness' that does not respond to the common notion of difference as opposition. For it is an 'otherness' that emerges from within the same by disarticulating and dismantling the border regime. Nevertheless, as I have been defending, this constitutive internal self-difference of the working-class text cannot be grasped by the notion of falseness, for it carries an irreducible excess that sets the tone, emphasis and rhythm for the idea of *revolution* understood as a *collective regeneration*. I have persistently claim the importance of considering the vocabulary at work in these periodicals in order to properly grasp the symbolic dimensions of these workers' revolutionary writings. It is a peculiar lexicon that blends political, mystic and messianic terms with biological analogies and metaphors. Regarding this biological dimension, it is common to find portrayals of the state of exploitation resorting to words such as contamination, disease and infection, on the one hand; and lines that refer to the revolution in terms of regeneration, cleansing and purification, on the other. This language implies a metaphorical understanding of the class struggle as an *immunological process* that operates on a social organism.

¹ Marchant, Patricio, *Escritura y Temblor*, 219.

In the previous chapters I identified a foreign body that is represented as the beast and the bourgeois writer, whose writings, as a form of parasitism, blur the margins that separate the internal from the external and the domestic from the foreign. In this section, I will delve deeper into the immunological system of this already threatened body politic by treating another dimension on which the ‘foreign’ threat operates: *sexual difference* (which up to this point I have virtually isolated and neutralized for procedural purposes). The main object of study of this section is the process of inception and conception of the working class and its constant degeneration. Here the foreigner will be impersonated by the symbolic figure of the European Capitalist (whether of real origin, direct heritage or just cultural heredity) that is presented in the periodicals not only as someone that steals and expropriates the workers’ lands and labour, but, as I will carefully analyse in the next three chapters, as a man (it is always a man) who is compulsively portrayed as a rapist of working-class women. This brutal motif, a common reality in too many distressing testimonies of women working under exploitative labour regimes around the world, in Latin America bears a resonance with the colonial past that I should unpack before opening the periodicals once more.

At the core of the Latin American identity lies, as its foundational myth, a violent and brutal gestation that has shaped, in multiple ways, the historical narratives of the continent and marked its people’s bodies. As Roberto Fernández Retamar affirms, in his now classic *Caliban and Other Essays*, Latin America is ‘a case unique to *the entire planet*: a vast zone for which mestizaje is not an accident but rather the essence, the central line.’² The Latin American people embody a complex racial alchemy that, in the absence of any basis for claiming the fiction of ‘racial purity’ (although attempts were made³), turns the Latinx into a constant reminder of the violent encounters between Europeans, Africans and the indigenous population that took place before the constitution of the Nation States. Simply put, using a racialized nomenclature I could say that at the very ‘origin’ there have always already been *mestizos*. Until today, the *mestizo* (forged either by transculturation, appropriation, hybridism or syncretism) stands as a monument and provides testimony of the sexual violence of the

² Fernández, Roberto, cited in: Miller, Grace, *Rise and Fall of the Cosmic Race: the Cult of Mestizaje in Latin America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004), 7.

³ Two examples are Palacios, Nicolás, *Raza Chilena: Libro escrito por un chileno y para los chilenos* (Santiago: Editorial Chilena, 1918) and Vasconcelos, José, *La Raza Cósmica* (Mexico D.F: Espasa Calpe, 1948).

conquest of the region. He/she remains next to the *indio/a* as a constant reminder that the only common trait of all Latinxs is their racial, ethnic and cultural difference and mixture. Henceforth, to grasp the semiotic value of the uses of the anatomic metaphor in the Chilean working-class press, in contrast to its European heritage, I must first examine the paradoxes that could derive from the translation of the European radical tradition by and to the *mestizo* body so I can show how some European motifs resonate in and with the Latin American tradition.

During the first century that followed the Latin American revolutions of independence, the political debates around the *mestizo* and indigenous population were posited in the form of a problem to be solved: the so-called ‘Indian Problem.’ The main approaches taken by the white elites to deal with this issue were either rejection or partial integration. It is true that there were some seemingly positive local responses towards the (ethnic and racial) *mestizo* character of the Latin American population. Some nation builders, such as Simón Bolívar or Benito Juárez for example, deemed it ‘positive’ and celebrated it in order to spawn ideas around national unity. However, this same generation of Nation Builders tended to conceal these ethnic and racial differences by then introducing a seemingly ‘undifferentiated’ abstract notion of citizen that could provide meaning to the American Revolution, in contrast to the race-based structures of the colonial period.⁴ Nevertheless, despite these early nominal attempts to partially vindicate or accept (by means of negation) the *mestizo* character of the Latin American people, it was mostly conceived as a negative, and even degenerative, racial feature.⁵

⁴ The Mexican poet Octavio Paz puts it very clearly: ‘Juárez and his generation founded a state whose ideals are distinct from those who animated New Spain or the pre-Courtesan cultures. The Mexican state proclaimed an abstract and universal conception of man: The Republic is not composed of *criollos*, Indians and *mestizos* (as the Laws of the Indies, with a great love for distinctions and a great respect for the heterogeneous nature of the colonial world, had specified) but simply of men alone. All alone’ (Paz, Octavio, *The Labyrinth of Solitude: Life and Thought in Mexico*, Lysander Kemp (Trans.) (New York: Grove Press, 1961), 88).

⁵ It is telling that in 1888 the Chilean Government founded the *Agencia General de Colonización* [General Agency for Colonization]. A governmental institution depending on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs meant at promoting and encouraging European migration from France, Holland, Germany and Switzerland to Chile. The work of this agency has usually been interpreted as a racist biopolitical attempt at improving the ‘Chilean race.’ See: Collier, Simon & Sater, William, *Historia de Chile 1808-1994* (Madrid: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 158.

At the turn of the century, intellectuals from the white elites resorted to different trends of Positivism and Social Darwinism to argue that *mestizaje* would explain what they considered to be the ‘natural’ economic and cultural inferiority of the region.⁶ In contrast to other contemporary uses of these theories, the political dimension of *mestizaje* drastically diverged from the discourses about racial homogeneity, unity, sameness and purity that characterised European countries at the time. In Modern Latin American politics and culture the figure of the *mestizo* operated as ‘a site of rupture, contradiction and opposition.’⁷ Instead of serving as the basis for more egalitarian and non-racist societies, this rare experience of multi-racial and multi-ethnic nation building operated as a catalyst for a brutal racism that, as a direct continuation of the colonial experience, blended race and class into synonyms.⁸

These historically charged conditions of institutional racism also forged a popular culture of resentment and, in many cases, shame and mistrust towards the people’s own *mestizaje*. These feelings permeated literature, as Grace Miller points out: ‘[t]he Latin American literary canon is rich with cases in which the mestizo is the embodiment of betrayal, deception, craftiness, opportunism and moral degradation.’⁹ This racial self-portrayal stems from an ambivalent attitude which can be traced back to multiple sources. However, there is one story that has become almost unavoidable when it comes to addressing and analysing the patriarchal roots of the *mestizo*, especially regarding its *machismo*. Like many patriarchal myths, this one focuses its narrative on a ‘treacherous woman’, who, after a sequence of harsh events, became the mother of a corrupted, treasonous and shameful race. This traditional androcentric motif is personified, renamed and re-signified in Latin American culture by the tale of *La Malinche*.¹⁰

Regardless of the fact that many feminist scholars have recently vindicated *La Malinche* as a victim who did what she could to survive (she was taken from her community

⁶ Miller, Grace, *Rise and Fall of the Cosmic Race*, 16.

⁷ Miller, 23.

⁸ This is clearly present in the writings of the early-twentieth century Chilean liberal historian Francisco Encina and the conservative writer Jaime Eyzaguirre. See: Montecino, Sonia, *Madres y Huachos*, 117.

⁹ Miller, 23.

¹⁰ La Malinche (or Doña Marina, according to her Spanish name) was a Nahuatl woman, who became known as the lover and interpreter of the infamous Conquistador Hernando Cortés.

as a spoil of war by the Spaniards),¹¹ she is still mainly portrayed as the paradigm of the treacherous indigenous woman. According to this male gaze, La Malinche is credited with betraying her people by giving up the secrets of the indigenous population of Mexico and playing a fundamental strategic role in the conquest of the region.¹² As the story goes, La Malinche and the conqueror Hernán Cortés were lovers as long as the Conquest of Mexico lasted. He left her shortly before she gave birth to Martín Cortés Malintzin; their only son, who is known as the first recognized *mestizo*.¹³ This *mestizo* carried the family name of both of his parents; which was unusual considering his parents never married and his multi-ethnic origin. However, this ‘recognition’ came with the price of a total uprooting from his maternal heritage. Cortés sent Martín to Spain at an early age to be raised as a Spaniard and La Malinche never saw him again.¹⁴

This sequence of betrayals has been preserved in traditional folk storytelling and has become one of the main mythical narratives about the origins of Latin American identity. In the 1950’s, Octavio Paz resorted to the symbolism of this sixteenth-century story in his *The Sons of La Malinche* to unpack Mexican identity. According to Paz, La Malinche embodies the mark of ‘*La Chingada*’, a slang Mexican expression that can be literally translated as ‘the Screwed Woman.’ He writes:

[t]he *Chingada* is the Mother forcibly opened, violated or deceived. The *hijo de la Chingada* is the offspring of violation, abduction and deceit. If we compare this expression with the Spanish *hijo de puta* (son of a whore), the difference is immediately obvious. To the Spaniard, dishonor consists in being the son of a woman who voluntarily

¹¹ Birmingham-Pokorny, Elba, *La Malinche: A Feminist Perspective on Otherness in Mexican and Chicano Literature* (*Confluencia* Vol. 11, No. 2, 1996), 120-136. Candelaria, Cordelia, *La Malinche, Feminist Prototype* (*Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* Vol. 5, No. 2, 1980), 1-6. Romero, Rolando & Nolacea, Amanda (ed), *Feminism, Nation and Myth: La Malinche* (Houston: Arte Publico Press, 2005).

¹² A classic example of one of the Malinche’s betrayals is the part she played in the Massacre of Cholula. According to the story, la Malinche was approached by a Cholulan noblewoman who was willing to marry her to her son if she were to switch sides. La Malinche, while pretending to go along with the agreement learned from the woman about a plot organised by the Cholulans and reported it back to Cortés who massacred them (Miller, 23).

¹³ Martín Cortés was recognized legitimate son of Hernando Cortés by the pope Clement VII in 1528.

¹⁴ In one of the few portraits of Martín Cortés done in his lifetime, he is depicted as a white Spaniard. There is no trace of his indigenous heritage or racial features. The painting is for display in the Naval Museum of Madrid.

surrenders herself: a prostitute. To the Mexican it consists in being the fruit of a violation.¹⁵

It goes without saying that Paz is resorting to an extremely simplistic understanding of consent and freedom on the part of sex workers. However, these lines are of interest to my research precisely because of the crude machismo they reveal. These words are filled with male anxieties that stem from a mythical betrayal that is symbolically repeated as a ‘mark’ that every *latinx* carries on their skin. It is part of a male fantasy that comes with a stable distribution of sexual difference that has been preserved regardless of the different forms that this myth has taken in each of its repetitions. This symbolic origin of the *Latinx* people depicts them as the offspring of an Indian mother and a Spanish father. Irrespective of the multiple known historical cases of white women who had children with indigenous men, this possibility is simply rejected from the identity construction as an anomaly; the ‘Malinche complex’ only operates with the characters of an oedipal scene.¹⁶ However, it is as if this androcentric scene of conception were screwing with the Oedipus complex, it ‘perverts’ it: you have a *mestizo* son that hates his white father, but this hate does not derive from jealousy, it originates from the fact that he tricked and raped his indigenous mother. In return, the son does not idealize and love his mother (or any women that resembles her), he does not desire her and instead he inherits, by means of transference, her shame and hatred. The *mestizo*, according to Paz, feels resentment towards both of his parents. He mistrusts his mother and blames her for her ‘passivity’, while hating his father for his colonial brutality. The Mexican manifests this in the form of a double-edged rejection, in Paz’s words:

[t]he Mexican does not want to be either an Indian or a Spaniard. Nor does he want to be descended from them. He denies them. And he does not affirm himself as a mixture, but rather as an abstraction: he is man. He becomes the son of Nothingness. His beginnings are in his own self.¹⁷

Increasingly from the nineteenth century onwards, this negation of the Latin American ‘origin’ appears by means of a culture of rupture, denial and separation that was strengthened by the American Revolutions. The liberal notion of the citizen, understood as an abstract man without race, is for Paz what provided a strong institutional narrative for what he refers to as

¹⁵ Paz, 79-80.

¹⁶ Montecino, 126.

¹⁷ Paz, 87.

the ‘great rupture with the Mother’ that gave birth to Mexico and its people’s sense of ‘orphanhood.’ Likewise, Sonia Montecino writes about this issue referring to the Chilean case as follows: ‘[t]he Mestizo has no history, he does not possess a genealogy, his history is the myth and the rite, and his escape is heroism.’¹⁸

The compulsive repetition of the ‘origin of the *mestizo*’ operates as a collective trauma that, after being transferred through various generations, has become (by means of repression) an identity trait of a people. The hidden reality and ‘mythic violence’ behind this nineteenth-century liberal attempt at ‘*Blanqueamiento*’ [whitening], as Sergio Villalobos Ruminott asserts, allowed the elites to insert the region into the modern and contemporary dynamics of Capitalism. Villalobos-Ruminott argues that the genocidal wars of (the so called) ‘*pacificación*’ [pacification] and forced integration of the indigenous population (who were understood as an obstacle for pushing a process of European-like industrialization) made primitive accumulation and exploitation possible.¹⁹ Thus, these (physical and discursive) attempts at erasing the cultural and ethnic differences of these countries by homogenizing the Latin American people (indios, mestizos, Africans, etc.) constitutes the condition of possibility for the creation of an undifferentiated race-less working class.²⁰ However complex and intricate this negation of the Latinx’s race on behalf of the elites might be, it is far more paradigmatic that this race negation is also present in the Chilean working-class press. Regardless of the fact that there is a clear correlation between race and class that has historically characterised the Chilean working class, there is no mention of race in these periodicals. Moreover, it is strikingly evident that this *blanqueamiento* is part of these urban workers’ thought; they only talk in terms of an abstract worker and conceal the specificities of their local context. However, this repression of their *mestizaje* triggers in return a classic Latin American ‘compulsion of repetition.’ As I will discuss in the next chapter, although they completely omitted the issue of race, it constantly returns by means of the repetition of what it could be call a *Malinchean* family scene. As I will show, the periodicals are filled with stories of working-class women that are tricked by bourgeois men (many times presented as foreigners), with whom they have a son that is later abandoned by both of his

¹⁸ Montecino, 128.

¹⁹ Villalobos-Ruminott, Sergio, *Heterografías de la Violencia*, 116-118.

²⁰ Villalobos-Ruminott, 119.

parents. This uprooted son is presented as the archetype of the male worker that has not only lost his labour and land, but also ‘his’ women. Hence, according to the periodicals, he is the one that fights against his father/bourgeois to recuperate the love of the working-class mother/woman that is assimilated as male property. The specificities and the patriarchal resonances of this narrative and the ways in which it frames the class struggle in terms of a treason of the mother/lover that let herself be ‘expropriated’ by the bourgeoisie, is a common narrative in the working-class press that I will extensively analyse throughout this section.

Persisting then with the bodily metaphor and its uses for an early critique of Capitalism, I will show that there is another form of constitutive parasitism at work in the working-class press. It is a ‘sexual contamination’ that introduces an ‘external (bourgeois) element’ that not only triggers the need for purifying the people in light of the promise for emancipation, but that is symbolically always already there in the form of *mestizaje*. Hence, by moving from degeneration/contamination to regeneration/cleansing, I have shown the way in which the proper and the improper are always intertwined, as what is proper for the working-class text is the promise of a revolution that can only emerge from an improper or ‘infested’ writer/reader/son. Consequently, in order ‘to do justice’ to these periodicals and try as best as I can to be a ‘faithful reader’, I will follow (once more) this process of contagion to analyse another of its symptoms.

To deal with the economy of sexual difference in this section, I will shift my method of examination from the emphasis put on analysing a collective immunological system that is forged and attacked by what appeared as a ‘disease transmitted by writing’ (DTW), to a case of collective STD. Even though I am taking a different approach now, one that is marked by the difference between DTW and STD, I will unavoidably come back to the same problem; that is, to the paradox of inter-class infection. Therefore, as happened when I dissected and studied the problem of writing in the previous chapters, I will anticipate that by cutting open and examining the so-called reproductive system of the Chilean body politic, I will realize that its organs are always already foreign.

CHAPTER 3: WHEN WE USED TO (BE) LOVE(D)

The Mythical Origins of the Working Class and the (Constant) Emergence of the Bourgeois Threat

As a general proposition: social progress and changes of period are brought about by virtue of the progress of women toward liberty, and social retrogression occurs as a result of a diminution in the liberty of women. Other events influence these political changes; but there is no cause which produces social progress or decline as rapidly as a change in the condition of women. I have already said that the simple adoption of closed harems would speedily turn us into barbarians, and the mere opening of the harems would enable the barbarians to advance to civilization (Charles Fourier).¹

A) Reminders of What Have Not Been Seen

In this chapter I will focus my reading on the motif of the mythical foundation of the state of exploitation as it is represented in the periodicals in order to trace the problem of sexual difference in relation to, using a Marxist term elaborated by Silvia Federici, ‘primitive accumulation.’² However, since these texts were written from an always already established state of exploitation, the return to the ‘origin’ can only operate as a fictional movement of projection that constantly recreates a presumed anteriority that is written retrospectively from

¹ Fourier, Charles, *Théorie des quatre mouvements et des destinées générales*, in *Oeuvres complètes de Charles Fourier*, 12 vols (Paris: Anthropos, 1966–8), 130–133.

² In Federici’s words, primitive accumulation ‘is treated by Marx as a foundational process, revealing the structural conditions for the existence of capitalist society. This enables us to read the past as something which survives into the present [...] However, my analysis departs from Marx’s in two ways. Whereas Marx examines primitive accumulation from the viewpoint of the waged male proletariat and the development of commodity production, I examine it from the viewpoint of the changes it introduced in the social position of women and the production of labor-power. Thus, my description of primitive accumulation includes a set of historical phenomena that are absent in Marx, and yet have been extremely important for capitalist accumulation. They include (i) the development of a new sexual division of labor subjugating women’s labor and women’s reproductive function to the reproduction of the work-force; (ii) the construction of a new patriarchal order, based upon the exclusion of women from waged-work and their subordination to men; (iii) the mechanization of the proletarian body and its transformation, in the case of women, into a machine for the production of new workers’ (Federici, Silvia, *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation* (New York: Autonomedia, 2009), 13).

a ‘present’ that, by resorting to a teleological operation, attempts (and always fails) to recover its own essential ‘inception.’

B) ‘Our’ Goddesses, Undines and Chaste Maidens

I will begin analysing a text that narrates the constitution of the state of exploitation. This text will function as a guideline to trace the relationship between sexual difference and the origin of Capitalism as it is presented in the Chilean working-class press. With this methodological decision, I am not claiming that this piece of writing bears any privilege or thematic originality. On the contrary, I will read it as a strategic entry point – among many possible others – to an ‘origin’ that is repeated and rearticulated in many other writings that I am going to analyse further.

By resorting to a foundational fiction (the event of a catastrophe that comes to destroy *the state of nature*), the text ‘El Hombre-pulpo’ [‘The Octopus-Man’],³ published in the periodical *El Proletario* [*The Proletarian*], posits an ideal origin of human society alongside a long tradition of foundational myths in which, as a necessary passage from nature to civilization, an equilibrium between humankind and its environment is irrevocably disjointed. The myth begins as follows:

[t]hat valley was an Eden. Its inhabitants were sovereigns. Their existence an endless idyll. The clouds of its horizons – if there were any – were white as the conscience of the sovereign inhabitants of that valley [...] Black storm clouds or tempests were unknown because evil was equally unknown.⁴

In this version of the *state of nature* there is an inner connection between nature and an essentially good humankind which resembles the Judeo-Christian idea of Eden.⁵ This bond

³ ‘El Hombre-Pulpo’, *El Proletario* (Santiago: October 10 1897), 2.

⁴ ‘El Hombre-Pulpo’, 2.

⁵ This biblical-like motif of humankind as originally good has been preserved and even expanded by narratives that revolve around colonial ideas of the ‘good savage’ who served as inspiration for many nineteenth-century left-wing trends (the Saint Simonians being the clearest example). However, this Chilean working-class interpretation of the ‘state of nature’ might have been inspired by the anarchist writer Mijaíl Bakunin and his critique/misreading of Rousseau. Bakunin – an author regularly quoted in the Chilean working-class press (Arias, Osvaldo, *La Prensa Obrera en Chile*, 46) – posits society as the natural mode of existence for humanity and not as an artificial form of human organization. He argues that the association between men is governed by ‘natural laws’ that precede the development of the ‘reflexive will’, therefore, to any notion of the self as individual. Bakunin deems the idea of a

manifests itself in an atmospheric and meteorological serenity, which is concomitant with an absolute lack of evil. It is *as if* there were *almost* no differences between humans and their environment, for the distinction between nature and civilization does not exist yet. Nevertheless, there is one subtle exclusion that *dominates* the entire paragraph.

The principle of equality in the community (with its lack of evil) is sustained by the fact that every individual is presented as *sovereign*. This raises several problems. Sovereignty in general is always exerted over someone or something; any kind of sovereign relation must rely on the dominion/exclusion over/of an otherness.⁶ Thus, paradoxically in order to claim that everyone is *equally sovereign*, it is necessary to reject a non-equal someone or something first, otherwise there is no sovereignty possible. However, in this idyllic valley where there

‘naturally isolated human’ as a mere bourgeois fiction that does not have any basis on the ‘state of nature.’ To defend this claim, he simplifies Rousseau’s understanding of the origin of men and makes him into an archetypical ‘bourgeois thinker.’ Bakunin argues that the theories of the ‘Social Contract’ would be grounded on a ‘bourgeois notion’ of ‘individual liberty’, which presupposes that everyone’s freedom is individual and, therefore, must conflict with everyone else’s. According to him, the supposedly ‘original isolated and egotistic individual’ is founded upon a ‘noxious and artificial anachronic projection: The notion of ‘self-interest’. Thus, according to Bakunin, Rousseau’s ‘Social Contract’ only describes (and conceals) the foundations of what he considers to be the current illegal and unnatural state of inequalities. Moreover, he asserts that this theoretical fiction is not only erroneous, but that also denies the ‘natural’ tendency to organization, collaboration and mutualism among men (Bakunin, Michael, *On Anarchism*, 112).

⁶ I am excluding from my analysis the concept of self-sovereignty because as I already claimed by referring to Bakunin, the notion of individual does not apply to the Chilean working-class press. An early resistance to this notion can be found in the work of the Chilean liberal thinker and clear precursor of the working-class movement, Francisco Bilbao. In *Carta a Santiago Arcos* (1853), Bilbao criticises the European philosophical tradition for its emphasis on the Cartesian *cogito* which, according to him, assumes the self-affirmation of the subject as a precondition for knowledge. It is important to note that this rejection omits the theological aspect of Descartes’ system that posits the ‘I’ as a part of the substratum of being determined by God. However, against this presumed ‘Cartesian Individualism’, Bilbao argues that the act of thinking necessarily supersedes the individual, insofar the thinking subject becomes an intermediate for the expression of the generality. Beyond the fact that this is a grotesque simplification of the European philosophical tradition, this critique is of interest to this research because of its political repercussions. Following, this rejection of the Cartesian *cogito*, Bilbao introduces a ‘Latin American *Cogito*’: ‘*Pienso luego somos*’ [‘I think therefore *we* are’]. This ideal, according to Bilbao, constitutes the *inalienable natural sovereignty of men*. In Bilbao’s words: ‘[t]here is a Being, an idea that dominates. It is the Idea-Law-Duty. *I am not a solitary, individual, island of creation*. It is the “we are social.” It is not the absolute I; it is the “we are” the distribution of the proportion of equal goods for everyone. From this first step anarchy, speculation, usury, *despotism of capital*, which is the *voice of the individual*: solitary sovereign; all privilege, all usurpation, all despotism) are abolish. From this moment, I metaphysically claim the duty to say the “we are” the humanity, the duty, the ideal, the association and the solidarity’ (my emphasis) (Bilbao, Francisco, *Carta a Santiago Arcos*, in: *Revolución en Chile y los Mensajes del Proscrito* (Lima: Imprenta el Comercio, 1853), 13).

is no evil or inequality, who or what could be *suffering* this pre-political domination? The question remains.

The paragraph continues:

[t]he clear and crystalline water of their/its [the inhabitant's] lake, *like* the big and beautiful eyes of their goddesses, sheltered in its breast undines who with tender chants intoxicates the chaste maidens [*púdicas doncellas*] and gentle-young-men [*mancebos*] that went to that sky-like lake to refresh their bodies (my emphasis).⁷

In these lines, the non-conflictive difference between nature and humankind is reinforced. The text presents a peaceful relationship of coexistence and mutual care that seems not to depend on (or even allow for) any form of dominion. Nevertheless, this bond is far from being simple; especially because another binominal difference is subtly introduced through the water.

In the first sentence, by means of the adjective *like*, the lake becomes feminized through an analogy. Of course, there are no innocent analogies, and in this case, this anthropomorphic depiction of the lake has two fundamental repercussions for the understanding of the notion of sovereignty that I am trying to unravel here. On the one hand, as the lake is presented with human features, it becomes harder to establish and maintain a clear-cut distinction between humanity and nature. On the other hand, which is the most radical consequence, this humanization is not sexually neutral. It operates through a feminization of the lake. The lake is depicted through its resemblance to a group of goddesses, who are unknown to the reader, but that alongside the water, are mutually described by their common beauty, purity and clearness. However, this is not all. Beyond the description of the visual characteristics of the lake, the analogy produces a deeper textual effect, for it also engenders a metaphorical excess. The lake acquires maternal competencies which relate to the ability to shelter others in its/her *breast*.⁸ The metaphor of the breast exceeds the analogy, and by doing so, shocks the whole system of differences. It blurs the margin that separates humanity from nature while introducing a 'pre-originary' economy of sexual difference into the valley.

⁷ 'El Hombre-Pulpo', 2.

⁸ This resembles different maternal conceptualizations of homely environments, as, for example, the metaphors of 'mother nature', 'mother country' and 'mother tongue.'

If I carefully read the quote again, it is possible to trace the embodiment of femininity through three figures. The first one is their/its goddesses, which opens a relationship of resemblance between femininity and nature. To do this, the text resorts to classic literary clichés that portray women and water as ideal symbols of purity and motherhood. However, even though on a first reading the resemblance between the lake and the goddesses might seem like a reference to a transcendental and idealized maternal nature, it is at the same time rooted in an earthly community. The reference to the goddesses is preceded by the possessive adjective *sus* [their/its] instead of *las* [the], which places their existence in the valley. They *belong* to the people's lake and not the other way around; their presence is irreversibly linked to the experiences of the sovereign community. This is not a trivial issue, since I am working with the concepts of dominion and sovereignty.⁹

The second set of female figures are the undines, which relate to the tradition of nymphs, who are beautiful young women-like beings. Undines are usually mistaken for sirens, especially because both are aquatic beings that enchant men with their singing. Nevertheless, unlike sirens, they do not represent any danger to men.¹⁰ On the contrary, they are usually portrayed as victims that suffer from a deep and passionate romanticism for true love. In this way, their compulsive 'pursuit of men' is usually understood in terms of a quest for a pure and honest relationship which will save them from their eternal despair by turning them into humans. Hence, the reference to undines in this passage could be interpreted as the introduction of other ideal 'female qualities' into the picture, this time related to a pure, naïve, honest, free and passionate true love instead of motherhood.

Finally, there is the third figure: the *púdicas doncellas* [chaste women] of the valley. With the introduction of humans into the scene, the simulacrum of a passage (the role of the possessive adjective 'their' must not be forgotten) from goddesses/nature to humans through the intervention of undines is complete. The relation of difference between humanity and nature fades in this transition, since the undines, as a third term, allow the symbolic passage

⁹ Octavio Paz refers to the patriarchal uses of the goddess in Latin American culture as follows: '[i]n a world made in man's image, woman is only a reflection of masculine will and desire. When passive, she becomes a goddess, a beloved one, a being who embodies the ancient, stable elements of the universe: the earth, motherhood, virginity. When active, she is always function and means, a receptacle and a channel. Womanhood, unlike manhood, is never an end in itself' (Paz, 35-36).

¹⁰ Although, it is important to point out that these mythological figures can attack men. However, they resort to violence only in the form of revenge if they are betrayed or abandoned by their partners.

between both. In contrast to the other two figures, the ‘chaste women’ enter the scene alongside masculinity embodied by gentle-young men (*mancebos*). In the text, both sexes seem to relate in the same way to the undines: their laments and chants equally intoxicate women and men. It is *as if* sexual difference were virtually suspended when the text reaches the human community. However, even though men and women are equally affected by these idyllic chants, the picture becomes less simple if I consider how these figures are introduced. The Spanish word used to refer to men is *mancebos*, which stands for men who are no longer children but not yet adults, and this in-between relies on the fact that they are un-married men. Paradoxically, this word also has its feminine conjugation; but the word is highly value laden. In Latin American and Spanish popular culture, the word *manceba* refers to mistresses, prostitutes or women who live in concubinage with men. Thus, it is nonetheless interesting that the text avoids this word by referring to women as *púdicas doncellas*. Therefore, by presenting them as ‘modest’ and ‘decent’ women, the text excludes them from any guilt related to sexual pleasure or informal love. In contrast, the condition of bachelor of the *mancebos* does not preclude them in any way from sexual pleasure. Quite the opposite, since everything takes place in a world without evil (understood in a conservative sense), this feature of young non-married men might constitute the condition of possibility for free and ‘sinless’ enjoyment of detached sexual pleasure and love. Consequently, the distribution of sexual difference remains. But how does this relate to sovereignty?

After the reference to the lake, the text continues by praising the valley by saying that:

[i]n there everything was great, sublime, humanity merged in one single and *close embrace*. Free, without bosses, without private property, without borders. Everything was collective. Everyone was a bee, nobody was a drone. That looked like the immortality of justice, equality and fraternity, but (my emphasis).¹¹

Once again it seems that there is no difference; humans in general cohabitated in an extreme proximity with each other. They were all harmoniously bonded in an almost absolute closeness that maintains the independence of each subject in a non-conflictive relationship between community and individual, for everything was collective. Moreover, the text tacitly expresses the idea that there were no property or borders. Also, by the introduction of two out of the three kinds of bees, the metaphor signifies a colony in which there are no drones

¹¹ ‘El Hombre-pulpo’, 2.

to be fed by the worker bees. It seems to be a community of equally sovereign workers without class distinctions. But as I already said, there is sovereignty, therefore, someone or something must remain 'alien' to this ideal community. But, who/what is being excluded from the scene?

I have been arguing that this *immortal* state of justice, equality and fraternity continuously draws the reader towards a pre-originary difference that, with its sovereign economy, makes any absolute state of justice, equality and fraternity impossible. In this close reading of the ideal origin of society, I have seen how this peaceful scenario, where 'everyone' lived in harmonious communion with each other, relies on a pre-originary relation of alterity. And the only distinction that has been implied in the text so far is sexual difference, thus it seems that in this text sovereignty and equality are being understood in patriarchal terms. In this ideal valley, men seem to be the only ones that fully enjoy the richness and pleasures of what is depicted as a natural environment with feminine features. This interpretation may seem superfluous and exaggerated, even more so if I consider that the text resorts to various clichés and reproduces some common motifs of western culture, especially regarding the imaginary of idyllic spaces. Nevertheless, as I have repetitively claimed in this thesis, nothing in these periodicals can be interpreted as mere coincidence or be labelled as irrelevant without losing something along the way. And this is going to become increasingly clear with the rise of the bourgeoisie.

C) The Unclassifiable Monster that Devours 'Our' Women

The reference to justice, equality and fraternity is followed by a 'but' that announces the beginning of the end for the state of nature: 'but... One day – a day of sadness for the inhabitants of the valley! – the undines of the lake lost their voice; they refrained from singing their love laments. Simultaneously, the clarity of the water faded away. That was *supernatural*' (my emphasis).¹² As an anticipation of the advent of Capitalism (before any event has taken place), an alien and unidentified phenomenon (a *supernatural* manifestation) dismantled in a synchronic movement the inner bond between mankind and their

¹² 'El Hombre-pulpo', 2.

goddesses/environment. 'Now' the undines stopped singing and the water became murky. But the worst is about to come:

[o]n another [day] the most beautiful and beloved of *their* women vanished. And the lake turned a darker colour. And the happy inhabitants experienced pain and the bitter tears of misfortune for the first time! The transformation was beginning to take place, but it was a cruel, unjust and brutal transformation... How and why this was happening *nobody knew (to be concluded)* (my emphasis).¹³

As the quotation shows, what puts in motion the transfiguration to a new state is the disappearance of *their* most beautiful and beloved woman. The first thing that the sovereign inhabitants of the valley lose is not their labour, freedom or properties as from a Marxist perspective could be expected. But, the original expropriation, which is the source of the workers' despair, is the loss of *their* most *precious* woman. In this regard, it is nonetheless paradigmatic the use of the possessive adjective 'their' to refer to two beautiful and beloved feminine figures: their women and their goddesses. It is *as if* this initial loss of sovereignty over these 'real women' is concomitant with the darkening of what used to be *their* pure and beautiful lake. It is also important to notice that everything takes place in a state of total lack of reason that is produced by the anguish of *not knowing* the source of this supernatural phenomenon. This uncanny uncertainty that affects both the inhabitant of the valley and me (as a reader) generates a suspense that is amplified by the promise of to be continued that closes the story. This gesture of serializing the text in more than one issue plays with the hope that at the end it will reveal *what this is*. Nevertheless, it is important to consider that this state of ignorance, this constitutive lack of certainty, is outlined in the working-class press as a precondition for the state of exploitation.¹⁴

In the following issue, the story is resumed. The text continues by introducing several examples that show how nature has become increasingly frightening and treacherous to *mankind* while introducing a new character: the monster. Confronted with this scenario, the *uncertainty* and anguish of *not knowing* grew among the inhabitants of the valley. They 'were shocked, *speechless* with surprise. Where had that *unclassifiable monster* come from? To what species did he belong? Why did *he devour their women*? Why did he spread horror

¹³ 'El Hombre-pulpo', 2.

¹⁴ See Chapters 1 and 2.

among them?’ (my emphasis).¹⁵ This quote reproduces and confirms some of the problems that I have been treating here. Firstly, the inhabitants of the valley are presented with a lack of voice that, as I showed before, is one of the concrete effects of exploitation. Secondly, the experience of exploitation is presented again as a state of madness that overthrows any ‘logical’ attempt at denomination. This is especially revealing when considering the resemblance between the *beast* (the voiceless worker) and the monster that the text just introduced. Both figures symbolize a limit to logos: they are *unclassifiable* beings. Thirdly, by asking ‘[w]hy did he devour their women?’ the drive of the monster is presented as a compulsive consumption of one single good: the inhabitants’ women. Thus, the disappearance of women has become a fundamental problem; it is not just a onetime expropriation of a single good (the most beautiful woman). Instead, the monster does not stop consuming women in general.¹⁶ Therefore, this constant repetition of the original

¹⁵ ‘El Hombre-pulpo’, *El Proletario* (Santiago: October 17 1897), 2.

¹⁶ It is important to bear in mind that the motif of the appropriation of the other’s women (*el rapto*) has a long tradition in Chile’s colonial history. In contrast to the rest of Latin America, Chile remained as a war frontier that divided the indigenous population in resistance from the Spaniard’s settlements. In this war context, women became ‘spoils of war.’ The Conquerors referred as *Maloca* (a word from the Mapuches’ native tongue) to the raids in which they abducted indigenous women. In the XVI century the war chronicler Pedro de Lobera wrote: ‘and (what is even worse) they [took] the women for other even worse things. [The situation was such] that in just one settlement of the recently arrived soldiers from Spain that were in charge of the Maestre de Campo, in one week sixty indigenous women who were in their service and not in God’s service, gave birth’ (Lobera, Pedro De, *Crónica del Reino de Chile* (Santiago: Colección de Historiadores de Chile y Documentos Relativos a la Historia Nacional. Vol VI, Imprenta El Ferrocarril, 1856), 396). In a similar manner, Fray Antonio Sors wrote: ‘[a]lso they [the Spanish soldiers] have taken their [the Mapuches’] sons and daughters... And even some not satisfied with having sex with every *China* [in Chile the word *China* is use as a derogative term for indigenous women] that their rampant appetite demanded, they took for their own use two and three women to have them in their home’ (Fray Antonio Sors cited in: Montecino, Sonia, *Sangres Cruzadas: Mujeres Chilenas y Mestizaje* (Santiago: SERNAM, 1999), 22). The opposite of this practise was called *Malon* (also a word in Mapudungun). This term refers to the appropriation of *chiñuras* (white women) by the Mapuches. According to the exorbitant and exaggerated words of the war chronicler Gerónimo de Quiroga: ‘[t]here were numerous lost cities of captive white women and women of standing who were victims of the lust of the barbarians, who initially with violence, and later with will, became owners of every woman. **And their sons are the Spaniards’ most implacable enemies.** [And] since familiarity alters customs, these captive women got used to their faith, and started to perceive as beautiful what is ugly, so [after being rescued] some escaped from the Spaniards to go back to the indigenous people’ (Gerónimo de Quiroga cited in: Montecino, Sonia, *Sangres Cruzadas*, 50). What makes these chronicles interesting for my research, is that even though they were written during the XVI and XVII centuries, they were only published during the mid-XIX century as an attempt to establish a national narrative about the colonial period and the historical necessity of independence. In this way, the idea of captive women became the core of the ‘racial’ narrative of the Chilean People. For example, at the beginning of the XX century the eugenicist doctor

expropriation confirms that what is at stake here is a sovereign reign of equal men that is exerted over what is conceived as feminine (the lake/undines/goddesses and women in general). Moreover, considering that femininity constitutes the condition of possibility for a pre-capitalist sovereignty among the inhabitants of the valley, consequently the initial expropriation can only operate through the consumption of their only good: by devouring their women. Then, if I (re)read these four questions all together, it becomes clear that at the core of this myth there is a relation of complicity between a distribution of reason/unreason and an idea of sovereignty grounded on sexual difference and a patriarchal rape culture. Let us observe how these two binominal differences intertwine with each other in what is (always) left of this story.

After posing these questions, the problem of the unclassifiable is reinforced. For:

[r]eality unveiled itself. They [the inhabitants of the valley] contemplated the monster, and they were impotent to destroy it. And that *formless mass*, without exterior members of any kind, multiplied itself, multiplying terror and despair among the inhabitants of the valley as well. And the monster took advantage of their despair and revealing step by step its flexible joints began its work (my emphasis).¹⁷

The madness and monstrosity of this *formless mass* is amplified by a hyperbolic effect of constant *dissemination*. It performs a multiplication that is shaped by the flexibility of the monster's constitutive absence of shape, which allows it to extend its joints to an extreme proximity to everything, by mixing with all and nothing at the same time. The power of the monster relies on its ability to escape the constraints of a fixed form: the concept. But, finally, the text *seems* to fulfil the promise of resolution, for the monster is given a name: '[i]t is the **octopus**, the horrible monster portrayed by Victor Hugo.'¹⁸ Paradoxically, as Victor Hugo¹⁹

Nicolas Palacios wrote a very influential book in which he resorts to several of these colonial chronicles to vindicate the particularity and superiority of a 'Chilean Race', by claiming that the Chilean *mestizo* was a direct product of the interbreeding between captive Mapuches and Spaniards during the colonial period (Subercaseaux, Bernardo, *Historia de las ideas y de la cultura en Chile: Tomo IV, Nacionalismo y cultura* (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria, 2007), 86-87). Therefore, it is not uncommon that this idea of the 'captive women' was also present in the working-class press, since it was a very popular motif during that time (Subercaseaux, 77-84).

¹⁷ 'El Hombre-pulpo', *El proletario* (Santiago: October 21 1897), 2.

¹⁸ 'El Hombre-pulpo', 2.

¹⁹ Victor Hugo's description of the octopus referred in this text corresponds to the chapter 'The Monster' of *Toilers of the Sea*. This book was originally translated into Spanish in 1866 by Recaredo Tornero under the title *Los trabajadores del mar* and distributed in Chile by *Imprenta y Librería del*

claims, this name by echoing many others (*poulp*, devil-fish, *Cephalopterae*, kraken, Bloodsuckers and, of course, Monster) only signifies a chimera, a limit to reason. In his own words:

[t]hese animals are indeed phantoms as much as monsters. They are proved and yet improbable. Their fate is to exist in spite of *a priori* reasonings. They are the amphibia of the shore which separates life from death. Their unreality makes their existence puzzling. They touch the frontier of man's domain and the region of chimeras. We deny the possibility of the vampire, and the *cephaloptera* appears. Their swarming is a certainty which disconcerts our confidence. Optimism, which is nevertheless in the right, becomes silenced in their presence. They form the visible extremity of the dark circles. They mark the transition of our reality into another. They seem to belong to that commencement of terrible life which the dreamer sees confusedly through the loophole of the night.²⁰

The octopus – as a synonym of phantom/monster – shocks by its appearance the distribution of presence/absence, on the one hand, and reason/unreason, on the other. Its name continuously marks the limits of what can and cannot be named and, therefore, contaminates everything with its uncertainty. But even though it cannot be grasped in a fixed form, there is the certainty that it is always presented as a masculine figure (*el monstruo*, *el fantasma* and *el pulpo* that devours women). The monster, as the figure of the *logos*' limit, does not dissolve

Mercurio (Medina, José Toribio, *Biblioteca Chilena de traductores* (Santiago: Soc. Imprenta y Litografía Universo, 1925), 82). What is paradigmatic about Victor Hugo's octopus, is the fact that it confirms everything I have just claimed about the figure of the monster and its ability to disseminate itself by exceeding any nomination. Firstly, the monster is only depicted by its lack of resemblance with other animals as follows: '[t]he devil-fish has no muscular organisation, no menacing cry, no breastplate, no horn, no dart, no claw, no tail with which to hold or bruise; no cutting fins, or wings with nails, no prickles, no sword, no electric discharge, no poison, no talons, no beak, no teeth. Yet he is of all creatures the most formidably armed. What, then, is the devil-fish? It is the sea vampire.' Secondly, the author describes the octopus by its similarity to other beings, but without referring to any proper features: '[I]ts form is spider-like, but its tints are like those of the chameleon. When irritated it becomes violet. Its most horrible characteristic is its softness. Its folds strangle, its contact paralyses. It has an aspect like gangrened or scabrous flesh. It is a *monstrous embodiment of disease*' (my emphasis). Finally, Hugo refers to its monstrous ability of mixing itself with humans: 'the hydra incorporates itself with the man; the man becomes one with the hydra. The spectre lies upon you: the tiger can only devour you; the devil-fish, horrible, sucks your life-blood away. He draws you to him, and into himself; while bound down, glued to the ground, powerless, you feel yourself gradually emptied into this horrible pouch, which is the monster itself' (Hugo, Victor, *Toilers of the Sea* (Hauteville House, 1866), 556-563).

²⁰ Hugo, 564-565.

the distribution of sexual difference, and thus femininity and masculinity are not exempted from its multiple disseminations and, to be more precise, inseminations.

After having introduced the octopus, the text goes back to the lake. The same maternal lake that used to shelter undines in its breast, now turned into the colour of blood, ‘overflowed and threw octopuses in their thousands across the fertile plains of that Eden, turning it into a hell.’²¹ In this way, femininity, which since the arrival of the octopus had disappeared from the valley, returns once more through the lake, but this time as the *mother* that has given birth to a legion of octopuses.²² Then, the octopuses ‘transformed themselves into absolute *lords*. They slapped their *subjects*, robbed their homes and after expelling their dwellers proclaimed themselves *owners*!’²³ This is the ‘origin’ of private property with its subsequent distribution of social classes. However, it is interesting to notice that this transformation only happens after the inhabitants’ lake is turned into the mother of the bourgeoisie, into the mother of every male exploiter except for one: the first octopus, the father, whose origin will remain a mystery. The most radical repercussion of this turn of events is that symbolically the text is not only showing the final point of divergence that dismantles the inner bond between *mankind* and nature. But also, this ‘supernatural event’ (the birth of an exploiter class) is presented as a disarticulation of the natural bond between masculinity and femininity.

Finally, the octopuses ‘invented **gods** made of tinsel and gave themselves titles of ministers, hypocrites and, breathing lustfulness through every pore, *raped their women* turning them into a lupanar [brothel] where the bestial appetites of their passions could be satiated (*to be concluded*)’ (my emphasis).²⁴ These final lines, which complete the transition to a new stage marked by the rise of the main capitalist institutions, turns (once more) the

²¹ ‘El Hombre-pulpo’, 2.

²² It is interesting to note that, according to Sonia Montecino, in the Mapuche oral tradition the *mestizo*, or *Shene Huinca* (the son of an indigenous woman and a white man) is represented as a monster (Montecino, Sonia, *Madres y Huachos*, 131). And it is also interesting that this indigenous tradition of the monstrous *mestizo* survived its own *mestizaje*, Montecino asserts, ‘the peasant culture of the Chilean Midlands (*Zona central*) and south is filled with legends about these syncretic beings. From our perspective, what they reveal is a negative image of the *mestizo*, of those who have been engendered by species – regardless they come from the water, the sky, or the earth – that get together and produce something abominable’ (Montecino, 136). To read the reference to the octopus in the working-class press taking into account the intertextualities with the idea of the ‘Monstrous *mestizo*’ in indigenous and *criolla* culture, especially when this tradition refers to the *mestizaje* between aquatic and earthy beings, provides food for thought.

²³ ‘El Hombre-pulpo’, 2.

²⁴ ‘El Hombre-pulpo’, 2.

reader's attention towards sexual difference. After the octopuses have metamorphosed into priests, politicians and owners, the text returns to their women, but this time, to the women that already 'belong' to the bourgeoisie and not to the inhabitants of the valley. Even though the octopuses have achieved a complete concentration of power, they remain driven by a bestial sexual desire that leads them to cause the last transformation. The valley that first was turned into a hell, by the *constant* rape of women, is now transformed into a 'hyperbolic brothel'²⁵ in which the monsters attempt to satisfy their desires. However, as it is impossible to fully satiate a desire, the monotony of the eternal repetition of the expropriation of women driven by an endless consumerism is finally shaped. Capitalism has reached its highest form and the revolutionary promise emerges as the only possibility to stop this madness. Paradoxically, the text ends with the promise of *to be concluded*. Hence, by giving its readers the hope that they will reach a final resolution in a subsequent issue. But the next issue of the periodical *El Proletario* [*The Proletarian*] was never published, so they remain waiting for resolution, for the revolution.

As I have been arguing, this myth constitutes an entry to a deeper historical narrative that is sustained by an irreducible complicity between working-class discourse and patriarchy. It introduces a sequence of events that by means of a distribution of sexual difference, allows proletarians to conceptualize a pre-originary notion of sovereignty that provides meaning to their experience of becoming workers in the first place. I am aware that as this argument is based upon a single example it is fragile and provisional for it lacks general validity. However, since myths are structurally timeless symbolic tales, their narratives cannot stop being repeated and resonating in 'other' tales. Their condition of mythology relies on their metonymical iterability, which also makes them structurally provisional and open to change in each repetition. With this, I am not trying to release myself

²⁵ Once more I come across a phrase that shows that language is not 'innocent'. The Spanish word used in the text is the Latin word *Lupanar*. According to Thomas A. McGinn, this word 'signifies in a literal sense 'den of wolves,' specifically she-wolves, since the word for female wolf, *lupa*, is often used for prostitutes. Such terminology emphasises the rapacious, predatory, and greedy nature of the prostitute as a type, and, at the same time, denies her humanity.' (McGinn, Thomas cited in Still, Judith, *Derrida and Other Animals: The Boundaries of the Human* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 116). I will trace the ways in which these demeaning ideas regarding sex workers (and women in general) are reproduced in the working-class press throughout this Chapter. However, I will directly address the repercussions of the 'hyperbolic brothel' or *Lupanar*, including the sub-human, or even animal/monster-like, depiction of women in the working-class press in Chapter 4.

from providing a justification for choosing this text. Nor am I claiming that this myth holds any historical or factual primacy. I am just stating that the mythological origin of a world must always bear a resemblance to the constant reconstitution of that same world; otherwise, it becomes unable to provide meaning and time, that is, to be a myth. Therefore, I have just presented an example, one among many others possible, whose validity and metaphorical capacity lies in the resonance that will generate (or not) among other texts that I will analyse next.

D) The Loss of the Mother

The myth is to be repeated. The text ‘El...’ [‘The...’], published in the periodical *El Roto Chileno*, delves deeper into one of the dimensions of ‘El Hombre-pulpo’, and by doing so, it contaminates everything. This text addresses the problem of being born in a context in which the exploiters have always already taken control over women’s bodies, therefore, over mothers in general.

The text commences with the abduction of a young woman:

[a]lien to any mishap, a beautiful Jewess lived in the world, but her evil and tyrannical fortune dictated that, after she became an adolescent and left the paternal home, her beauty awakened *the appetite of a sultan*, who, to satisfy a certain passion, pounced on her, finding himself afterwards under the obligation to condemn her to be cloistered forever more in a horrible fortress. That *Jewess* was pregnant (my emphasis).²⁶

By substituting the figure of the octopus with a sultan and the chaste women with a Jewess, the story provides an orientalist version of the ‘original’ expropriation of women. However, the core of the tale is practically the same: an evil male foreigner (the sultan) has an appetite for ‘devouring’ a beautiful woman who is no longer under the father’s law. Both stories are analogous: abduction and rape go hand in hand with a subsequent state of collective misery and despair.

As the story goes on, she gave birth to a boy in captivity. This boy was born in total deprivation of goods and freedom: ‘[p]oor boy! The disgusting and malodorous tiles of a sewer were his cradle, the first food for his lungs was vicious and repulsive. Anyone born in

²⁶ ‘El...’, *El Roto Chileno* (Santiago: November 16 1893), 4.

those conditions was doomed to a certain and premature death.’²⁷ This boy’s fate provides an image of the other possible consequence of a total state of sovereignty over (the other’s) women. The abducted woman can be either the mother of the ‘legion of octopuses’ or of the expropriated class. Thus, since everything takes place in a class society in which the upper class has always already taken dominion over women in general, any new birth implies the irrevocable danger that every working-class boy could be the son of an exploiter himself.²⁸ And, the other way around, an exploiter can always be the son of a working-class woman. The limits between one and the other vanish from the start and the class struggle begins with *mestizaje*.²⁹ In this case, since the boy inherited his mother’s imprisonment and not his father’s power, he is condemned to experiencing the loss of everything he has, including his mother: ‘[t]hat boy seemed to be the copy of Hercules; from the moment that he loosened the ties that bound him to his mother, whose caresses he was never able to enjoy, because it was written that his existence would extinguish hers.’³⁰ In contrast to ‘El Hombre-pulpo’, this narrative provides an insight into what happens to the lost woman at the hands of the monster. But, paradoxically, the outcome is the same; the disappearance of the mother is repeated. This new-born boy begins his life by losing *his* mother. And this is an absolute necessity for it was written: poverty and despair must commence with the absence of the mother.³¹ It is *as*

²⁷ ‘El...’, 4.

²⁸ I will delve deeper into the narrative of the ‘*guacho or huacho*’ (illegitimate son) in Chapter 5.

²⁹ As I have been arguing, the motif of *mestizaje* in Chilean popular culture is fundamental for the understanding of the liaison of race and class in the Chilean working-class narrative. Even though in all Latin America there is a direct link between class and race (to the point that they can operate as synonyms in some cases) in the Chilean working-class press there is a general silence regarding any ethnic or racial features. Thus, following the motif of the *Malon* and the *Maloca* as the core-narrative of the constitution of a ‘Chilean race’ in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, it is not strange that there is a general omission of race sustained by the fact that the bourgeoisie and proletariat are virtually portrayed as brothers. This would explain why Chilean working-class writers-readers frame the problem of class struggle without dealing with eugenics and with the discussions of the time about the disposition of certain races to be exploited. From this derives a second issue. One of the main male anxieties present in the working-class press has to do with the treatment of rape perpetrated by men from the ruling class and inter class breeding, both understood as female treason and as the source of the degeneration of the proletariat (I will treat this issue in Chapters 4 and 5). Henceforth, these conscious or unconscious efforts to circumvent the problem of race difference lead the working-class scene of writing to compulsively fall back into the problems of sexual difference that ends up dominating their social and economic critique as I will argue throughout this Section of the thesis.

³⁰ ‘El...’, 4.

³¹ These male anxieties can also be found in Francisco Bilbao’s writings. He asserts: ‘[m]isery is... permanent flood, eternal plague, wreck of most of humankind that is meant for life into the depths of diseases and vices produced by the infernal egotism [...] Let us enter that cavern made of endless

if this original loss constitutes the condition for poverty in general and the mother's death the breaking point that inaugurates the class struggle. Thus, from that day the uprooted son, as an archetype of the working class:

yearned for light and freedom [...] His first steps inside the walls that confined him were a protest against his fate and the cause of great concern for his executioner. Those movements of a prisoner at the beginning of his life produced a huge wrench and incalculable sufferings in the tyrant's existence.³²

In this way, the text ends by positing the class struggle as a potential encounter between the 'illegitimate son' and his father. It is a struggle that follows the disappearance of the mother and leaves the reader waiting for resolution. It is telling that these workers conceptualized the class struggle in terms of the absence of the mother, especially considering that it is no secret that one of the main male delusions of an early (and sometimes contemporary) left-wing tradition is the omission of women's reproductive labour and the way in which it constitutes a form of primitive accumulation.³³

Another case of this patriarchal myopia can be found in the text 'El Gigante i el Nene' ['The Giant and the Little Boy'], also published in the periodical *El Roto Chileno*. This text resorts also to the motif of the loss of 'the mother' to conceptualize the workers' despair and struggle. The resemblance between this tale and the previous ones is undeniably established from the first paragraph:

[L]ess than a century ago, a horrible *monster with multiple heads*, which bore the traces of lust and licentious behaviour [*crápula*] on its face, was almost *sovereign on earth*. His constant attention was always focused on a solidly built castle; he kept locked behind its walls a beautiful and brave woman whom time had not withered, since the world had not given her its passions (my emphasis).³⁴

sufferings that the proletariat is; *prole* of pain and death. Misery is not having time to be a man [...] Misery is to condemn man, who is divine light to the rank of machines and animals [...] it is the dispersion of the family, [the source] of fake marriages, concubinage, prostitution. It is also the brutalization of the soul, the depravation of the heart, the variety of monsters and crimes, the deformity of the body, the impoverishment of the blood, the degeneration of races [...] Sublime revolution, *holy revolution, when are you going to come*' (Bilbao, Francisco, *Revolución en Chile*, 89-91).

³² 'El...', 4.

³³ This omission rests upon an etymological omission. As McNally claims, '[t]he word proletarian in its original English meaning refers to whose only function is to produce children' (McNally, David, *Monsters of the Market*, 105).

³⁴ 'El Gigante i el Nene', *El Roto Chileno* (Santiago: November 10 1893), 4.

The narration begins with the introduction of a sovereign lustful monster with multiple heads. A monster that is almost the absolute sovereign on earth, but that jealously keeps one single good in a castle: a beautiful and brave woman. Until this point, all the features of the story correspond to the last two narratives. However, the next paragraph introduces a subtle, albeit fundamental, difference:

[n]ever before did a criminal see his/her own body more enchained than this poor and nonetheless fearsome woman, *caring mother*, who daily heard the heart-breaking ai! of her children, abused by their executioners a few steps from the place of her captivity (my emphasis).³⁵

In this story the woman is introduced as a mother from the beginning; and one who has always already been separated from her children. In this case, the loss of the mother is a consequence of her presidium and not of her death, and this subtle difference hinder the mother from fully disappearing from the scene. She remains as a ‘caring mother’ who has been condemned to be eternally exposed to an auditory regime in which she is able to hear her sons’ laments, but without being able to communicate hers to them in return.³⁶ This ‘auditory regime’ maintains the workers in a state of *unawareness* regarding their mother’s fate, for they ‘did not know that close to them, the heart of the one who had delivered them into the world was beating in a state of terrible torture. And this ignorance hid from them part of the bitter reality of their painful situation.’³⁷ Thus, concomitant with the uncanny feeling of a general lack of knowledge that characterizes the state of exploitation, the ‘bastard sons’ keeps suffering for the loss of their mother without being able to perceive what has happened. However, since the revolutionary promise is conceptualized as an enlightening of the workers’ minds by the dissipation of the shadows of ignorance,³⁸ the text continues:

[o]ne day, those who were already men meditated upon that secret, and that blindfold fell from their eyes and their pupils, *enlightened by a magic lantern*, by an invisible light, passed through the iron walls as if they were made of diaphanous glass, they were able to see, what horror!, the enchained body of their mother with her breasts filled with milk eager to provide them with her abundance (my emphasis).³⁹

³⁵ ‘El Jigante i el Nene’, 4.

³⁶ ‘El Jigante i el Nene’, 4.

³⁷ ‘El Jigante i el Nene’, 4.

³⁸ See Chapters 1 and 2.

³⁹ ‘El Jigante i el Nene’, 4.

As the quotation shows, the promise of enlightenment, which, as I have discussed in previous chapters, is intrinsically linked to the possibility of writing a proper working-class text, is also concomitant with knowing what happened to the mother. That is, for the workers to be able to unveil themselves and reach the light that allows them to see the truth without mediation, without any veil or walls in between, to see their mother. Only then did the workers realize what they had lost, which is not primarily their land and labour, but the abundance of the *maternal breast* (there is a clear intertextuality here with the breast of the goddesses in ‘El Hombre-pulpo’). Hence, using a Marxist term, I could say that it is only after seeing their mother that the workers gain class consciousness and get rid of ‘ideology.’ Accordingly, the text ends by anticipating the revolution as follows:

these timid fawns that for so long tamely endured a heinous bondage, felt their souls encouraged by an unknown fire and a word until then also unknown to their slaved souls, the word revenge, merged with iron bonds those beings who were already united by the double chain of misfortune and blood. One day a race of men shot their arrows at the sky and assaulted the owner of Olympus, the truth is that the titans did not defeat them.⁴⁰

E) The Lost Lover

As I have shown so far, the revolutionary promise is represented as a repossession of the mother. But the mother is not the only female figure over whom sovereignty is exercised. The ‘idealized’ conception of femininity that I introduced with the myth of the ‘El Hombre-pulpo’ showed that alongside the Goddesses there are also undines. Romantic love and sex are on the other side of the relation between male workers and what is conceived as feminine in general. And, in a context in which women are always already expropriated, the bitter experience of losing a lover can only be repeated. Here what delays the revolutionary closure (and more specifically, what keeps workers from re-appropriating *their* mother) is the perpetuation of a general state of unrequited love that is conceived by male workers as the ultimate women’s betrayal. As I am going to show next, one of its most radical effects is an

⁴⁰ ‘El Gigante i el Nene’, 4.

enhancement of a state of irrationality and madness that preclude workers from rebelling against the bourgeoisie.

Moving from what is considered as natural/rational to unnatural/irrational through an analysis of ‘sex/love’, the text ‘¡Oh, mujer divina!’ [‘Oh, divine woman!’], published in the periodical *El Acrata* [*The Anarchists*], provides clear insight into the way in which male workers conceive the role of working-class women in the class struggle. This text is written from the perspective of a male subject who addresses an abstract woman with the intention of showing her the real meaning of love in the current state of exploitation. He begins by confessing: ‘I feel the need to love (if it is possible to call love the desire to placate a need as compelling as hunger, etc, etc.), and as much as I think of all the women who have made me feel this need, I do not want to approach them.’⁴¹ From the start, this male subject admits that he needs ‘to love’ and by paralleling that desire with a need as basic as the urge to eat, he posits the whole issue as a fundamental problem of human subsistence. This peculiar parallel between sex and food can be traced back to the writings of the French Socialist Charles Fourier, who following this analogy advocated the need for equal sexual gratification of each member of society.⁴² However, even though our Chilean interlocutor confesses that he is currently ‘suffering’ from this need, he (like the undines that ceased their chants after the octopus’s arrival) refrains from speaking to women. It is *as if* I were dealing with the other side of the broken dialogue between the sexes.

Up to this point it seems that every interaction is affected by an interference that breaks the harmony between the sexes. As the narrator confesses: ‘[I do not speak to them] because I find it repulsive to lie in order to make people love me, making an intermediary of (*self-*)*interest*, almost the only and exclusive agent of love known up to this point’ (my emphasis).⁴³ Thus, this self-proclaimed honest man (as a truthful working-class writer-reader) resists lying. He refuses to articulate an unfaithful discourse delivered with the aim

⁴¹ ‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’, 3.

⁴² It is telling that Fourier used this analogy to justify the actions of a man who was found guilty of rape. He wrote: ‘[i]t is evidence that this young phoenix acted out of need, and that need of this genre both in men and women can be pushed to the point of urgent necessity quite as much as that for food’ (Charles Fourier cited in: Goldstein, Leslie, *Early Feminist Themes in French Utopian Socialism: The St.-Simonians and Fourier* (Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol. 43, No.1, 1982), 106). I would like to thank Karolina Jesień for drawing my attention to this essay.

⁴³ ‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’, 4.

of awakening '(self-)interest', which he posits as the only means of arousing love under the current state. But what does he mean by (self-)interest? What is this foreign element that operates as the intermediary for love?

Regarding his understanding of love, he claims that the idea of pure love does not exist and that everything related to it is no more than a matter of exchanging lies, money and goods for sex. To prove his point, he addresses her as follows:

[o]h, woman: those who do not cheat you offering what I indicated, you reject them; when you feel love for a man, who is willing to make you blissful in specific moments, you demand he give you presents before and after you have been with him, to be a slave of your whims and to satisfy all your irrational demands: is this love?⁴⁴

In this quotation a form of irrationality (re)appears in the state of exploitation: a 'female irrationality' that contaminates every possible affection with a compulsive desire for material things. Sex and love are thus turned into no more than a female commodity that is exchanged for other goods. He asserts:

[t]he man who approaches you for love, either because he wants it or because *you attract him with your trickeries*, after making you happy has *to pay for what you enjoyed*. Is this love? I do not understand it and I do not find any basis for you to despise and feel superior to the *prostitute*. *You are just like her*. And if that is not so, why do you lend yourself to the one that gives you jewels and superfluous adornments, who pays you for servants and houses in which an entire family could comfortably live, and why do you reject the one who cannot give you those things? (my emphasis).⁴⁵

This is the final repercussion of the octopus's influence: society is transformed into a hyperbolic brothel. Every single woman is already contaminated with greed and every working-class man is left alone. Hence, after losing everything, those non-sovereign working-class men are turned into slaves, not only of the bourgeoisie, but also of these 'deceitful women.' This highly inaccurate imaginary of sex workers depicted as rich and powerful women who subjugate men by means of manipulation, owes a great deal to Adolphe Granier de Cassagnac's *History of the Working and Burgher Classes*.⁴⁶ A book that, even if

⁴⁴ '¡Oh, mujer divina...!', 4.

⁴⁵ '¡Oh, mujer divina...!', 4.

⁴⁶ Granier's study of the working class, originally published in French in 1838, was accessible for the Chilean reader not only because of Marx's engagement with it. But also, because Granier was commonly referenced by influential authors of the region such as Domingo Faustino Sarmiento and Domingo Arteaga Alemparte. Likewise, his writings in the *Revue de Paris* were translated and

it was written against the working classes, shares with Chilean working-class writers-readers a common mistrust of prostitutes and working-class women in general. In relation to the purposes of this research, it is interesting to note that, as Walter Benjamin points out, Granier claims that proletarians ‘form a class of subhumans which has come into being by crossing robbers with prostitutes.’⁴⁷ By means of a grotesque and simplistic use of eugenics to make aporophobic claims, Granier asserts that working-class mothers (especially the ones that gave birth to the class as a whole) are prostitutes. I will return to the motif in Chapter 4. For now, I will just point out that Granier resorts to the writings of Ancient poets to narrate the history of these prostitutes. He asserts that ‘[t]he courtesans [...] were the freedwomen; women, whose beauty made them free, and who subjected the rich and powerful by their graces.’⁴⁸ Given this historically acquired power, Granier argues that prostitutes became able to persuade wealthy men to pay for their luxurious life expenses to the point that ‘[t]he richer ones had sumptuous houses, numerous servants and a costly retinue.’⁴⁹ However, without explaining how these same rich women then became the mothers of the poor. The similarities between both descriptions are quite clear, working-class women are poor and rich at the same time and, in this hyperbolic brothel, they are all prostitutes.

However, in contrast to Granier, for this Chilean working-class writer-reader, the prostitutes’ power relies on a paradoxical form of counter-subjugation. What this ‘female domination’ conceals is the fact that, as he explains to his abstract female addressee, is that: ‘[t]he one who pays you looks at you as an object that he bought, as an object that he can use as he wants.’⁵⁰ Given the transactional nature of this relationship, sovereignty is thus still being exerted over women; they are still considered property. Nothing has changed in that regard. The only difference is that now the relation of sovereignty operates through a capitalist commodification of women’s bodies. Nonetheless, that does not stop the narrator

published in the Chilean periodical *El Progreso*. See: Stiven, Ana, *Social Consensus in Chilean Political Culture: Disputation and Dissent, 1841-1851* (Stanford University Press, 1991), 250.

⁴⁷ Walter, Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1983), 22.

⁴⁸ Granier de Cassagnac, Adolphe, *The History of the Working and Burgher Classes*, trans. Ben Green (Philadelphia: CLAXTON, REMSEN & HAFELFINGER, 1871), 260.

⁴⁹ Granier de Cassagnac, 263.

⁵⁰ ‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’, 4.

from continuing to blame women for his own misery. It is *as if* he were portraying them as ‘free enough’ to become guilty, for he addresses her and says:

[t]o lend yourself to this *prostitution* you do not pass through any ceremony, you do not even consult anyone but your own will [...] And I agree with that, you are the owner of your actions, so long as you do not harm others (my emphasis).⁵¹

As it is clearly expressed in this quote, he posits women as individuals with the ‘free will’ to potentially do whatever they want. Nevertheless, there is a conditional limit that frames the margins of their freedom: women can do whatever they want, so long as they do not harm others. What might be the implications of this conditional freedom in a text that begins by assimilating the ‘need for love’ to hunger?

Following the idea that it is no longer possible to conceive any form of pure love, because it has been contaminated with commodified sex, our narrator continues by claiming that the idyllic love described by novelists and poets is a false invention designed to conceal this truth.⁵² Then, as long as women keep perpetuating and profiting from these illusions, they would appear in front of his eyes as deceitful, treacherous and dreadful individuals. The narrator thus explicitly shows the limit of every woman’s freedom in general by asserting: ‘[a]nd if you have realized this: why do you keep feeding these stupid illusions and why do you have not abandoned all these ceremonies that only lead the majority of mankind in their fountain of youth to acquire bad habits, corruption and death?’⁵³ Women then are free to do everything they want but one thing (which paradoxically seems to be the only thing they actively do): to have sex with bourgeois men or to demand too much of working-class men. Because if they do, they condemn male workers in general (who are presented as the majority of humanity) to degeneration and premature death. As a result, this reference to the constant treason of women awakens all the misogyny of the narrator who now posits them as the enemy of the working class, by adding:

[o]h, *bourgeois woman!*... I hate you; in the name of all the insignificant ones like me, I curse you: even though you are a victim of the current social organization as well, I do not forgive you for what you are guilty of. Your education allows you to know the natural

⁵¹ ‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’ , 4.

⁵² This idea that bourgeois poets and artist are liars is very similar to the figure of the false troubadour that I referred in the first Chapter of this thesis when I analysed ‘El Gran Poema.’

⁵³ ‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’ , 4.

background of things and to remove *the artificial veil* that has been used to distort it and, still, you let yourself be carried by the tide of tradition and by doing so, you let the daughters of the people go mad with desires for luxury; you influence them to sell their body to the highest bidder, and, in consequence, they condemn themselves to acquire the most repulsive habits and lead us [working-class men] to prostitutes to fulfil, deficiently, a natural function that no one can escape or resist; you force men to replace women, and then you feel horrified when you hear about it (my emphasis).⁵⁴

Like the beast, women embody the limit. They seem to belong to the bourgeoisie and therefore they ‘deserve’ all the hate of the working class, but, at the same time, they suffer from the current state of exploitation as well, so they ‘deserve’ compassion too. Love and hate blend with each other. It is no longer possible to differentiate the female enemy from the female lover. Thus, women constantly betray workers, not only by resisting the light of reason, but by casting the shadows of ignorance and madness among young working-class women by their example. As a consequence of this ‘female degeneration’, men then are forced to resort to supplements for (‘real’) women in order to satisfy their sexual drive, which can only produce the horror that comes with unnatural phenomena.⁵⁵ For him then prostitutes are not considered women, at least not real women. However, he also claims this while implying that all women *are* prostitutes. Is this another effect of the madness that the *Octopus-man* introduced into the valley? I do not know. For now, I will limit myself to examining the way in which this ‘female degeneration’ operates.

For the rest of the text, the narrator exposes the detrimental and noxious consequences of this class treason. Regarding women, its symptoms can appear as a direct consequence, either of the ‘unnatural’ absence of sexual interactions or of the enactment of ‘abnormal’ sexual practises. For example, he refers to what seems to be lesbian sexual acts, as follows:

[a]nd you, *working-class woman*, [because] you have found it necessary to resort to methods harmful to your health in order to deceive nature to resist joining in union with the man you fancy, because he cannot afford the prerequisites of your practises, you have found yourself mourning your sisters and female friends, at an early age, witnessing the

⁵⁴ ‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’, 4.

⁵⁵ As I will defend in Chapter 4, prostitutes are no longer considered to be ‘real’ women by the working-class writer-readers. According to the press, because of their profession and trade their bodies suffer from monstrous metamorphosis that dismantles the differences between the sexes.

palpable results of the vices that you have acquired, because *you have practised it with them* (my emphasis).⁵⁶

Then he refers to masturbation:

[y]ou, who impatiently desire the coming of the night. Then when everyone is resting, you resist your tiredness and you get grumpy, nervous and startled while you wait for the snores of the people sleeping in your own room, because that can assure you that you are not going to be caught performing an exercise that momentarily appeases you, but the next day you are betrayed by the large bags underneath your eyes that harm your health: why don't you *naturally perform* what is right and can be done? (my emphasis).⁵⁷

To treat these symptoms, the narrator demands that women rise and get rid of these unnatural practises. He asks them to resist what their parents, priests and society have taught them and to 'freely' enjoy their sexuality. The fact that women's desire and pleasure are recognized in this text should not come as a surprise considering that they were core ideas in Charles Fourier's writings.⁵⁸ However, both male interlocutors, Fourier and our working-class writer-reader, claim that, since in modern societies women are deprived of economic-industrial and amorous fulfilment, they necessarily 'fall into' prostitution. And also, both believe that as a consequence of this state of affairs, women have developed all sorts of vices that turn them against their class (male) companions.⁵⁹ Then, even though both writers recognize women's sexuality, they mistrust and reject working-class women because of their 'degenerative tendency' to prostitution. Therefore, the fact that this Chilean writer-reader encourages women to get rid of the prejudices that restrict their sexuality, should not be mistaken for advocacy of women's emancipation. But, as he asserts: '[i]f you proceed in this way you will prevent two or more men from tearing themselves apart for you, because you will be free, and nobody would consider himself your owner.'⁶⁰ Moreover, '[y]ou will make the envy of those who are lucky in love disappear (because they will no longer exist), as well as the gossip, the lies, the jealousy and today's crimes that are a direct consequence of what I have shown you.'⁶¹ The source of evil among the working class is presented as a consequence of this 'original' treason perpetrated by working-class/bourgeois women. Therefore, the return

⁵⁶ '¡Oh, mujer divina...!', 4.

⁵⁷ '¡Oh, mujer divina...!', 4.

⁵⁸ Goldstein, 102.

⁵⁹ Goldstein, 134.

⁶⁰ '¡Oh, mujer divina...!', 4.

⁶¹ '¡Oh, mujer divina...!', 4.

to the idyllic valley (where there are no borders, property and evil) is only possible, according to this working-class narrative, by means of the restitution of the original communal sovereignty over women's bodies. This since:

[a]s each man will have his own woman, no one will have the need to use promises and tricks; no one will have to court someone else's woman; and nobody would be able to restrict you [woman] from doing what you want. Thus, we shan't have to lament as many tragedies, maybe not even one, as we regret today.⁶²

As a result, this reconstitution of the 'natural' economy of sexual difference, does not necessarily imply a subsequent liberation of women. Rather than that, he advocates for the reconstitution of a sovereign relation over women in order to equally satisfy every man. Once again, the intertextuality with Fourier is quite clear. Fourier's ideas about the detrimental consequences that derive from 'sexual frustration', lead him to develop a very peculiar idea of utopia. Fourier's utopia is called Harmony, a state in which among other principles associated with the creation of a more egalitarian society, he refers to 'amorous corporation' as a system which guarantees a social minimum of work, food, clothing, shelter and sex for each member of society.⁶³ However, as Leslie F. Goldstein points out, Marx criticised this approach to sexual gratification on the basis that it 'ends up making women into "a piece of communal and common property [...] women passes from exclusive, private marriage to general prostitution."'”⁶⁴ In these terms Marx rejects this principle of Fourier's utopia on the basis that putting an end to the bourgeois institution of marriage in order to replace it by a system based on centralized sexual gratification based on the free disposition of women by the community, does not substantially modify the social oppression of women. They are still considered property and therefore commodified. Given the resemblances between Fourier's ideas and the ones present in this Chilean working-class article, especially the fact that the ideal pre-capitalist origin as it is described in 'El Hombre-pulpo' is conceived as a state where men have communal possession over women in general, I could claim that Marx's critique of Fourier's 'amorous corporation' applies in the same way to the Chilean working-class press.

⁶² '¡Oh, mujer divina...!', 4.

⁶³ Goldstein, 102.

⁶⁴ Goldstein, 105-106.

It is clear that Chilean working-class women are never included in the revolutionary promise. Instead of that, their exclusion constitutes the condition of possibility for the revolution understood as a recuperation and redistribution of female bodies. Thus, it is not surprising that the narrator concludes the text by assimilating women to a *monster* that produces a lethal and repulsive widespread disease that infects the body politic. In a way, everything that is conceived as feminine in these periodicals is portrayed as the source of an alien contamination that operates from within the working class. This inside/outside lack of differentiation derives from working-class women's tendency to manifest bourgeois inclinations. Women, in the form of the prostitute, that is, in-between the monster and the beast, compromise the border regime that separates the proper from the improper. They blur the limit that separates the working class from the bourgeoisie and, by doing so, they open the possibility for a general contamination that operates from within the working class (as an inner infection) that perpetuates a state of eternal degeneration. In the narrator's words:

[b]ut you [working-class/bourgeois woman] do not recognize that you are guilty to a certain degree, because you deprive men of what they need, you compel them to commit the atrocities that scare you. You produce all the things that you find repulsive and all the secret diseases that decimate us regardless of the measures used to prevent them from spreading, *this, because many of them have their origin in the bad habits that we develop due to the abstinence that your aspirations of social concealment produce.* Many of the diseases that are known to be of 'the ladies', have their origin in the abstinence that you impose... and suppress in others. Get rid of the worries that turn you into a *monster of nature* and into a humanicidal being (my emphasis).⁶⁵

Conclusion: 'As Each Man Will Have His Own Woman'

In the mythical 'origin' – as outlined in the working-class press – the distinctions between mankind and nature, good and evil, reason and unreason were unknown, because humanity lived in a sovereign patriarchal community of equals. There was then a Father's law operating from the beginning as the transcendental signifier of an irreducible state of absolute equality and mythical communion 'without difference.' Nevertheless, the fiction of this undifferentiated community is based upon a pre-originary exclusion of everything conceived

⁶⁵ '¡Oh, mujer divina...!', 4.

as feminine. Sexual difference has always already been at work in the working-class scene of writing. It undermines the possibility of achieving absolute equality and, by the same token, makes possible a state of structural plenitude on which the revolutionary promise is grounded. In this eternal transition from romantic love to misogyny, these workers' masculine sovereignty is their biggest privilege and their biggest danger, for '*their*' women (as their only good) can always be expropriated. Thus, the worker's power, law, reason, happiness and freedom rely on the commodification and possession of everything that resembles femininity. Nonetheless, since the working-class narrative is always already shaped by this exclusionary distribution between the sexes, it runs the risk of turning the system of differences backwards by making the excluder into the excluded, the (male) sovereign inhabitants [*los habitantes soberanos*] into the (female) beasts of burden [*las bestias de carga*]. It is important to bear in mind that I am working with terms such as contamination, infection and degeneration. Therefore, as I will show in the next Chapter, one of the most radical effects of workers' sexual deprivation is the arrival of women's *supplements*. They will contaminate the border regime of sexual difference by opening a universe of metamorphosed bodies that are constantly mutating between the (bourgeois) monster and the (proletarian) beast, the unnatural and the natural and ultimately, between man and woman.

CHAPTER 4: THE (SEX) TRADERS

Dandies and Priests Meet/Make the Prostitute

Metaphysics is what makes being a first offer – is something irreducible older than self-exposure in prostitution, self-(ex)change in alienation, disguise, mendacity, or imposture. [...] whoever announces himself by declaring ‘I am’ has always in reality been saying I am, (ex)changed in advance (Catherine Malabou).¹

The society we know, our own culture, is based upon the exchange of women. Without the exchange of women, we are told, we would fall back into the anarchy of the natural world, the randomness of the animal kingdom. The passage into the social order, into the symbolic order, into order as such, is assured by the fact that men, or groups of men, circulate women among themselves (Luce Irigaray).²

Only being twenty years old, subject to all sorts of illusions, can someone love like that, with such innocence, letting yourself go in such an absolute way [...] love is later turned into vice or commerce (Augusto Thomson (D’Halmar)).³

A) The Market Economy of the Hyperbolic Brothel

With the advent of the hyperbolic brothel, I have found an intimate and complicit relation, a bonding unity, between expropriation, exchange and metamorphosis. Everything seems to happen by means of an abyssal structure of substitutions that is ‘originated’ and perpetuated by the constant expropriation of women. Which, by the same token, triggers a movement of bodily and identity modification that turns everything (including those same bodies and

¹ Malabou, Catherine, *The Heidegger Change: On the Fantastic in Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2011), 76.

² Irigaray, Luce, *This Sex Which Is Not One* (New York: Cornell University press, 1985), 170.

³ Thomson (D’Halmar), Augusto, *Juana Lucero: Los Vicios de Chile* (Santiago: Imp. y Lit. Turín, 1902), 260.

identities) into (ex)changeable goods in general.⁴ The verdict is irrevocable: everything is now prostituted.⁵

Now I will focus my attention in the functioning of this (market) economy (have I not been talking about political economy all along?). In this chapter I will trace the way in which the working-class scene of writing emerges as always already assimilated by a hyperbolic notion of the market understood in terms of a brothel that secures and holds every (ex)change by introducing a principle of conversion/prostitution that enables an erratic flow of currencies and values. Therefore, I will be dealing with the way in which these workers gave meaning to their own process of becoming open to (but also shaped by) the laws of Capitalism. I must clarify that since the aim of this chapter is to unravel the ways in which workers (as commodified bodies) interpreted the principles of the market from the perspective of the commodity, their understanding of the market is highly focused on the principles of (ex)change, conversion and commodification without addressing concepts such as supply and demand, investment, surplus value and speculation. This because probably they were less driven to ask questions about how capital and wealth are made (which can seem pretty obvious when working under highly exploitative conditions), than to provide meaning to their own process of proletarianization and commodification.

In a similar manner as when I analysed the substitution of the worker by the beast, I will argue that the only general law of the brothel is that there is a constitutive lack of essential values. At the brothel there is no gold standard, hard currency or original *property* that could suspend the (ex)change. Nothing can be taken out of circulation since any essential principle of identification (like any other value) is shaped and reshaped by the (ex)change itself. The

⁴ The Spanish word *cambio* carries the polysemy of the English change and exchange.

⁵ An example of the hyperbolic uses of the expression '*está prostituida*' and its correlation with reason and revolution can be found in an article entitled 'Fin del Mundo' ['End of the World']. This text narrates the demise of the working-class periodical *La Voz*, resorting to the metaphor of a woman's 'fall into prostitution.' After having narrated the foundation and first years of this periodical, the text then describes its downfall as follows: 'then the time of great dangers came. Puberty! There she [referring to the periodical as a woman] found herself closely besieged by Little-gentlemen of high lineage [...] [who] made her divert from the path of loyalty and commitment and drove her to lustful brothels [lupanares] where she surrendered herself to corrupt bacchanals. *She was prostituted!*' (my emphasis). But this is not all. The text ends celebrating that the periodical *La Aurora* (the one that publishes this article) has being born as the 'bastard' daughter of *La Voz*. As I will show in this chapter, revolution and regeneration are bonded to prostitution. See: 'Fin del Mundo', *La Aurora* (Taltal: June 16 1916), 4.

verdict re-sounds: everything is now contaminated with (self-)interest. Hence, by tracing a set of (ex)changes of identity I will defend that for these workers, expropriation and (ex)change are one and the same. They are part of an ‘inaugural operation’ that produces the appearance of the worker who only comes to be by metamorphosing into the beast that he is not. It is the same mad logic that triggers (and is triggered by) the loss of the mother/lover who, as the ideal figure of the working-class woman, only appears on the scene through her residues, as the monstrous figure of the bourgeois prostitute. Thus, due to this principle of general displacement of the concept of identity, everything and everyone becomes what they are (not) by being constantly (ex)changed in the market. Consequently, the ultimate madness of this hyperbolic principle of (ex)changeability is that it shapes the concept of identity itself. Hence, I will be working with what I could refer to as *Ontological Capitalism*,⁶ a concept that signifies a/an (ex)change that precedes the establishment of the idea of exchangeability in general and therefore sets a new regime of truthfulness. As I will argue, it is only after a ‘first transaction’ has taken place that the notions of essence, presence and identity can be conceived as what does not change; that is, as unique and immutable forms. In other words, it is only in contrast to economic exchange that the idea of an *aneconomic*, unchangeable and self-equal being is conceived and valued. Hence, since the Chilean revolutionary narrative is meant at contesting the capitalist commodification of sex based upon an essentialist understanding of (true) love, its stories exceed the realm of ‘romantic’ storytelling. This is because these workers’ androcentric principle of true and essential love is conceived in terms of an *aneconomic* principle that promises to stop the movement of speculation and disrupt the fluidity of equivalences on which the market rests. Let’s not forget that I am talking of political economy in terms of the currencies of identity and essence here. Thus, by blending patriarchal ideas about love with political economy, these workers posit their metaphysical dream of an outside the market in terms of the return of a proper and virile man who comes

⁶ I borrowed this concept from Catherine Malabou’s work. By means of economic metaphors and principles, Malabou aims at unveiling the originary mutability of being, which she describes in terms of ‘Ontological Capitalism.’ This concept, Malabou writes, ‘designates the economic system opened by the originary exchange of presence with itself: beings for being via the money of essence’ (Malabou, Catherine, *The Heidegger Change*, 73). The ways in which she addresses the tendency to (ex)change of being using economic principles is of great use for my understanding of the correlation between market economy, identity, essence and body. However, since the aim of this thesis is to analyse Chilean working-class thought I do not engage with her assessment of metaphysics.

into being by saving a pure, honest and virginal woman from being part of her ‘first’ transaction. Hence, this ideal aneconomic working-class woman can only operate under the paradoxical logic of the gift.⁷ That is, as an *aneconomized* female self-present and self-equal body that, since it is not contaminated with economic gain, promises to secure the margins of sexual difference. However, as I argued in the previous chapter, in this patriarchal universe women are always subjected to male (ex)changes, and therefore even in its utopian form, love is always already commodified. Thus, considering that everyone comes to be what they are (not), ruled by the principles of the hyperbolic brothel, how could the *beast* recognize undines and goddesses in the prostitute? Moreover, is it even possible to establish a relation of self-identification between the already exploited worker and the *mancebo*? I will leave these questions unanswered while I pick up the remains (of the story) where I left them: in the brothel.

B) Dandies, Priests and the Brothel Keeper Trading Workers, Prostitutes and Beatas

In the paper *El Productor* [*The Producer*], a worker regrets that:

[Chile] is currently going through a calamitous state. Defamation and corruption are evident everywhere. Thievery, dandyism of gloves, frock coat, of sable and cloak are the source of the social malaise, these are the cause of the working people’s misery, because they [the dandy and the priest] exploit them, because they steal the people’s labour to satiate their vices, to perpetuate the corruption, to maintain their orgies in golden brothels with gleaming draperies made of gold and satin; where corrupt concubines from the highest lineage display their qualities, beauty and extravagant caprices, like modern Lucrezias,⁸ they display their gifts in the art of depravation in front of a crowd of

⁷ To explain Derrida’s understanding of the gift, Geoffrey Bennington writes: ‘[i]f the essence of the gift is not to be an object of exchange, then we see that strictly speaking the gift annuls itself as such. For your gratitude toward a gift I give you functions as a payment in return or in exchange, and then the gift is no longer strictly speaking a gift [...] What is commonly called a gift or present is therefore only the trace of a pre-archaic event of donation which can never have taken place as such. The gift has always already compromised itself with exchange, which, however, never manages to measure up to the gift which “precedes” it’ (Bennington, Geoffrey, *Jacques Derrida* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 188-189).

⁸ In the Chilean anti-Catholic press (which includes the liberal, satirical and working-class press of the time) the name Lucrezia is used to refer to Catholic women as sexually corrupt and vicious people. This reference derives from the stories and tales that surround the figure of Lucrezia Borgia (and the

atrophied magnates who, as a consequence of bourgeois social concubinage, are physically and morally degenerate.⁹

In a similar fashion, another worker writes in the periodical *El Martillo* [*The Hammer*]:

[i]t is painful to say it, but the survival instinct requires it. The Chilean people, that strong and *virile people*, portrayed in countless pages by national and foreign writers, is today a despised toy which, after being used for entertainment by the spoiled kid who bought it, is kicked into the toilet [...] The banker's speculation and usury, the robbery perpetrated by the Church, the *quixotism* of war, the golden bed of the whore and the sodomy of the representatives of the people: these are the causes of the *economic cataclysm* (my emphasis).¹⁰

And, finally, in the paper *El Proletario* [*The Proletarian*] yet another worker asserts:

[o]n the mountain of life, the honest working man – tied to the rock of misery – sees how the eagle-man who lives without working gnaws at his bowels. It is the sacrifice of Prometheus.¹¹ In the garden of the house, the woman, blinded by ignorance and defeated by hunger, sacrifices her body and soul for a dish of beans. It is the abuse of marriage. In the dirty social scenario, they [the eagle-men] produce the depravation of humanity: sodomy, onanism, drunkenness, religion, property, exploitation, glory, prostitution and the vow of chastity. These are the viruses of the social wound.¹²

There is no doubt that these three paragraphs, by binding together sexual practises with a critique of Capitalism, constitutes what seems like an odd couple. In an unfashionable manner, these three quotations intertwine causes with their effects; they disjoint the common

Borgia family in general). What is interesting about this historical intertextuality is that it serves the purpose of exposing the double moral and perversion of the Church that the anti-Catholic press was trying to unveil. Being the illegitimate daughter of Pope Alexander VI (a pope who was known to have had many mistresses and be the father of 10 children), Lucrezia Borgia symbolizes the sexual depravation (incest, orgies, sodomy and prostitution) of the Church that, as I will show in the last section of this chapter, the working-class press attributed to the Church. It is likely that this modern use of this historical figure is influenced by Victor Hugo's *Lucrezia Borgia*.

⁹ 'Malestar Social', *El Productor* (Santiago: May 1913), 3.

¹⁰ 'Lazaro...!' *El Martillo* (Santiago: July 24 1898), 1.

¹¹ This reference to Prometheus is likely to be inspired by the following passage of Marx's *Capital*: '[t]he law, finally, that always equilibrates the relative surplus population, or industrial reserve army, to the extent and energy of accumulation, this law rivets the labourer to capital more firmly than *the wedges of Vulcan did Prometheus to the rock*. It establishes an accumulation of misery, corresponding with accumulation of capital. Accumulation of wealth at one pole is, therefore, at the same time accumulation of misery, agony of toil slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation, at the opposite pole' (my emphasis) (Marx, Karl, *Capital: A critique of Political Economy* (New York: Random House, 1906), 701.

¹² 'Nuestra Respuesta', *El Proletario* (Santiago: October 10 1897), 2.

notion of causality and shock the basis of traditional political economy. Since I should ask: what do virility, ‘sodomy’, ‘onanism’ and ‘concubinage’ have to do with exploitation, property and speculation? Do I have to take this seriously and treat these words as concepts? I am clearly not in a position to respond since I cannot stop the economic flow of values and say: this is this. The only thing I can do is to follow this list of figures and reproduce the ways in which they intermingle victims with perpetrators, diseases with sick individuals and causes with consequences, just to see where it takes me. I will work with the figures of the dandy, the priest, the brothel keeper, on the one hand,¹³ and, on the other, with the female proletarian, the prostitute and the *beata* (a derogative term used in Chilean slang to refer to women that are fanatic Catholics). All of these are figures that are put into motion/conversion by means of concubinage, prostitution and exploitation, that is to say, by (sexual) exchange.

C) From Work to (Sex) Work

Let’s begin with the female worker. There is a very common motif in the working-class press that narrates the way in which ‘young women from the age of 12 must work in factories or workshops to help their parents or family with living expenses, and it is there that their exploitation begins, concluding with them being prostituted.’¹⁴ How does this transition from labour to prostitution take place? The text continues, ‘[t]he environment infects them, makes them like decency and luxury, makes them want to imitate aristocratic ladies, but their wage is miserable.’¹⁵ According to this male narrative, the woman that goes to work sooner or later

¹³ According to Moulian and Torres the triad ‘clergy-capitalists-soldiers’ names the most common figures used by the working-class press to represent the ruling class. This triad is always characterised by their common parasitism, frivolity and lustful behaviour (Moulian & Torres, *Concepción de la política*, 23-24). The capitalist is represented by the dandy (they use the English word), who is presented as a libertine who is usually depicted as the most frivolous, vain, idle and lustful figure of the three (ibidem). As I will defend in this chapter and the next, the figure of the priest is related to all sorts of sexual perversion and manipulation. And, as I will argue in chapter 5, the soldiers are mainly described as ‘sodomites.’ According to Moulian and Torres, these figures were used to criticise the ruling class in moral terms, which diverted the attention of working-class writers from criticising ‘the functioning of the system of appropriation’ (Moulian & Torres, 26). However, as I argue, these figures signify more than mere wicked and morally corrupt characters. In order to fully grasp the critical dimension of the sexual practises of these figures, they must be interpreted as practises that are used by the working-class press to metaphorically represent and conceptualize the capitalist notions of appropriation, commodification and exchange.

¹⁴ ‘La explotación de la mujer’, *El Productor* (Santiago: November 11 1912), 2.

¹⁵ ‘La explotación de la mujer’, 2.

gets ‘infected’ with a bourgeois desire for luxury items which she cannot afford with her wages. Faced with this inner struggle, she finds a possible solution, one that could supplement her lack of resources:

[t]heir *patrón* [employer] becomes a tempter, he offers them a good wage, beautiful presents, endless kindnesses and the young woman who finds herself besieged by the routine that traps her in an iron cage, prostitutes herself, accepting without love and only because of lucre a being she should hate.¹⁶

Thus, in order to live a life of luxury, the working-class woman prostitutes herself and falls into the flows of the market. To buy commodities, she becomes a living commodity. She betrays her class by having sex with ‘a being she should hate’ and becomes a prostitute. It is the price to pay, the ‘first’ (ex)change.¹⁷ However, as the historian Elizabeth Q. Hutchinson argues, other sources such as the studies, periodicals and pamphlets written by the doctors that were part of the Liga Chilena de Higiene Social suggest a more complex historical scenario that could have been of inspiration for these worker’s machista ideas.¹⁸ By referencing the work of the doctor Luis Prunes on sex work (1926), Hutchinson argues that the transition from what were considered to be ‘honourable occupations’ to sex work was not a unidirectional movement, and that the distinction between female proletarians and sex workers was not a clear-cut one. In early twentieth-century urban Chile, ‘women frequently changed jobs looking for better wages: from seamstress to prostitute, from maid to factory worker, from laundress to employee.’¹⁹ The precarious and sporadic nature of female labour at the time forced women into becoming a fluid and versatile labour force. This situation turned occupations and jobs into an ineffective, or at best imprecise, form of filiation and identification for Chilean working-class women. This is a problem that the doctor Carlos

¹⁶ ‘La explotación de la mujer’, 2.

¹⁷ According to Marx, the first metamorphosis of the commodity always implies a second one: ‘[t]he first metamorphosis of one commodity; its transformation from a commodity into money, is therefore also invariably the second metamorphosis of some other commodity, the re-transformation of the latter from money into a commodity’ (Marx, Karl, *Capital*, 123).

¹⁸ The Liga Chilena de Higiene Social was an organization formed mainly by doctors who during the 1920s considered it their duty to improve the health of the Chilean people by eradicating the ‘social diseases’ of prostitution and alcoholism through the promotion of abolitionist public policies. They gained great notoriety for becoming staunch advocates of the abolition of regulated sex work. See: ‘Declaración de principios y estatutos’, *Liga Chilena de Higiende Social* (Santiago: Ed. Zig-Zag, 1920).

¹⁹ Hutchinson, 61.

Westphal (also a member of the Liga) found when trying to classify sex workers (or white slaves as he calls them). In his thesis entitled *Concepto Científico Moderno de la Esclavitud de Blancas* (1919), Westphal asserts that ‘not all white slaves are professionals exclusively committed to exploiting vice [...] many of them never disengage themselves from honourable occupations [...] We call those women occasional white slaves.’²⁰ The high number of these ‘occasional white slaves’ was used by the members of the Liga to argue that the regulation of prostitution only served to stigmatise women who resorted to sex work only when they were unemployed, because being identified by the authorities as a sex worker could make it harder for them to change to other occupations in the future.²¹ Beyond the specifics of this political debate between abolition and regulation of sex work, I find these doctors’ studies of interest because they can be of help to better understand the reasons why prostitution obsessed male working-class writers so much. As Westphal asserts, whom now I will cite at length:

[g]iven the precarious economic situation of women (harder today than ever before), and given the atmosphere of immorality that surrounds them either at the *conventillo* [slum] or the factory, or due to the constant attention and persecution by means of which men victimise them and because of their absolute ignorance about social diseases, there is always disseminated in our cities a truly diffuse brothel [...] that has its main place in the breast itself of the working class [...] women of the diffuse brothel as we call it, are victims of ignorance [...] or of their misery because of the insignificant wages they receive as laundresses or as workers in any of our factories.²²

²⁰ Westphal, Carlos, *Concepto Científico Moderno de la Esclavitud de Blancas* (Santiago: La Economía, 1919), 13.

²¹ Since 1896 sex work was regulated by the ‘*Reglamento de Casas de Tolerancia*’ [‘Regulation of Houses of Tolerance (Brothels)’]. From a highly biopolitical perspective, sex work was severely controlled, measured and treated as an issue of public hygiene. According to the regulation, in order to work as a sex worker, it was mandatory for women (male sex work was illegal) to be inscribed in the registers of the *Consejo Sanitario* [*Sanitary Council*] and to always carry with them a ‘sanitary passport’ with all their periodical medical examinations up to date. The level of control was such that it was forbidden for sex workers to stand in windows or doors, they could only live in specific neighbourhoods and they could only move houses or be away from their residence for more than two days with the authorization of the *Sanitary Council*. Also the council used to retain their identification documents as long as they were sex workers (Maira, Octavio, *La Reglamentación de la Prostitución desde el punto de vista de la Higiene Pública* (Santiago: Imprenta nacional, 1887), 29-30).

²² Westphal, 5-6.

These working-class ‘occasional white slaves’ disseminate through the city a diffuse brothel that expands beyond the walls of the official brothel. These women, who, because of their financial hardship, must sporadically come and go between the factory and the diffuse brothel, permeate working-class identity limits, making them increasingly porous and fluid. In the diffuse brothel, which is just another term for what I have referred to as hyperbolic brothel, the worker/lover/mother and the prostitute/beast/commodity become indistinguishable. Westphal’s findings about the labour fluidity of women and the working-class press diagnosis that ‘everything is prostituted’ share a common concern for an expansion of ‘prostitution’ beyond the realms of the physical brothel. But in a paradoxical manner, this conservative doctor seems to be more concerned with the material and labour conditions that might force women into becoming occasional sex workers than working-class writers-readers who tend to blame women for being class traitors. In what follows, I will analyse the way in which the transition from industrial labour to prostitution is represented in the working-class press as class treason perpetrated by female workers who are tricked by the figures of the dandy and the *patrón*.

This movement constitutes the plot of the short story ‘Un Acrata’ [‘An Anarchist’] published in the paper *La Campaña*.²³ The first act takes place in a park where two workers are enjoying their day off in a romantic setting. The characters are Gaston, a worker from a nearby factory, and Sara, a corset-maker [*corcetera*]. The story begins with Gaston proposing marriage to Sara and telling her about the happy and simple life that they would have if she accepts. But she replies: ‘don’t be in such a rush. It is so sad to be married and poor; wait until you have more.’²⁴ This happy moment thus is abruptly disrupted by what seems to be a pretty ‘reasonable and realistic’ response, but, as I have shown so far, money is never on the side of reason. In that exact moment, Gaston’s dreams are again interrupted by the intromission of the bourgeois threat (this time) personified by his *patrón* who, after looking at Sara with lust, asks Gaston if that beautiful woman is his sister. Gaston replies that she is his fiancée. Then the *patrón* asks Sara a few questions related to her job: her wages, work hours and the conditions in the workshop – nothing that could raise a single suspicion,

²³ ‘Un Acrata’, *La Campaña* (Santiago: November 1899), 1-2.

²⁴ ‘Un Acrata’, 1.

nothing more than a banal and even polite exchange of words. Then as if nothing had happened, he says goodbye and goes away. The first act is over.

The narrator introduces the second act as follows:

[t]here comes, from far away, a dashing *mancebo*: it is Gaston. Suddenly, he stops. He has heard a voice, it belongs to Sara; he is about to call her, but another voice can also be heard, it is the gentleman with the *lustful look* who says: –come with me, pretty Sarita. I will put at your disposal everything you want. You will have the richest dresses, most beautiful carriages and most magnificent horses. With your beauty and elegance you will be the queen of women. It is not possible for your beauty to be hidden any longer and for you to continue living in misery (my emphasis).²⁵

It is interesting to note that even though the story takes place in an already formed state of exploitation, Gaston is (still) introduced as a dashing *mancebo* and this could be because he has not yet experienced the inexorable ‘female betrayal.’²⁶ However, he is there, witnessing and suffering a conversion that is about to commence. At first, Sara doubts the honesty of the man of lustful gaze, so she asks him: ‘how can I believe you?’ And, as the ultimate proof of ‘love’, he offers the first transaction: ‘take this purse full of money, for now... But come to my arms..... [Suddenly] a weapon flashed in the space, two horrifying screams were heard and two bodies fell to the ground.’²⁷ Even though this scene might seem simple, it implies a series of redistributions of values and (ex)changes that I should carefully unpack. In an initial reading I see a transaction between Sara and the bourgeois man in which in exchange for money she will go to his arms. Nevertheless, this transaction seems to be interrupted by an external action that suspends the economic distribution of values. I could say that murder took the place of dishonour and therefore the (ex)change did not happen. However, revenge is also ruled by an economic distribution of harms; it is the price to pay for an offence. Therefore, the story does not end here (does it even have an ending?).

The last act takes place in prison (punishment is also ruled by the same economic logic), where the narrator finds an old man of sweet and sympathetic appearance, to whom he gives the floor:

²⁵ ‘Un Acrata’, 1.

²⁶ When depicting the pre-capitalist world, the working-class press refers to the originary sovereign men of the ideal community as *mancebos*. See my analysis of the story ‘El Hombre-pulpo’ in chapter 3.

²⁷ ‘Un Acrata’, 2.

[I]et us listen to him: –a long time ago I was imprisoned and instead of being something bad for me it has been a good thing. Even though I have been withdrawn from society, I can see everything that happens in it: the strongest oppress the weak; justice is sold to powerful men; men of money exploit, prostitute and corrupt [the people].²⁸

In the previous chapter I showed that the loss of ‘the woman you love’ (either as mother or lover) is related to some kind of knowledge that manifests itself through a photonic metaphor. It is a form of enlightenment that is usually depicted as an unveiling of the male worker’s eyes which allows him to see the truth through walls.²⁹ Interestingly enough, what this old Gaston sees is nothing more than the correlation between prostitution, degeneration, exploitation and Capitalism. Following this connexion, he then portrays several common experiences that are repeated daily under the state of exploitation. He substitutes one example for the other, until he reaches the factory where he used to work. There he sees: ‘-[a]lways the same movement; new machines, lower wages and plenty of *chiquillos* [young boys] working to help their fathers to earn what is necessary’ (my emphasis).³⁰ Once again, the reader is reminded that this is not the first or the last time, that there is nothing unique or special in Gaston’s story. It is just a repetition that will be eternally repeated again and again. Others have taken and will take his place in the factory, and this applies to his exploiter as well. Nobody is exempt from this principle of substitution and iterability. Thus, in a distressing way, it is as if by killing someone he did not kill anyone at all, nothing has happened. But this is not the whole extent of this repetition. He continues:

[i]n a rich bedroom, on top of snow-coloured sheets, you can make out the marble-like body of a woman. Next to her, a pale young man takes from his bag the banknotes that he stole from his father’s box and gives them to her. She stands...Oh! It is Sara...!!!
Sara!³¹

At the end, no matter what, the (ex)change was inescapable all along. Sara reappears in the story but now as a prostitute. The conversion has taken place. Nevertheless, as a counter

²⁸ ‘Un Acrata’, 2.

²⁹ See Chapter 3 Section D) *The loss of the Mother*.

³⁰ ‘Un Acrata’, 2.

³¹ ‘Un Acrata’, 2.

effect, Gaston himself has also been changing this whole time, and his transformation is completed by the time he gets out of prison:

[t]he door is slowly opened [the narrator says]. On the doorstep appears the magnificent figure of an old man with white beard and hair, with the gaze of an eagle and a lion's heart... He contemplates the space for a moment and.... an *Acrata* goes into the world.³²

Paradoxically enough, opposites emerge from the same origin. By the same token, the *patrón's* lust triggers the transformation of the female worker into the prostitute and turns the dashing *mancebo* into his biggest threat: an anarchist. Even though from the beginning of the story there was a clear distinction between exploited and exploiter, the class struggle only commences when the *one you love* falls into the process of dis-identification and substitutions; when that single female individual, by means of a 'first' (sexual) transaction, enters the movement of conversion of currencies and goods: when she is prostituted. It is only then that the male worker can really see the truth through walls. Hence, according to this mad logic, the irrevocable dis-identification of the *one you love* constitutes *the price to pay* for becoming an anarchist in the first place. I will return to this problem.

There is also another route that can take the female worker from labour to prostitution. What if the protagonist of the story is an honest and hard-working young woman, what if she does not manifest any bourgeois inclinations or desire for luxury? This is the case of an anonymous female worker whose story is narrated in the article 'Desgraciada' ['Wretched Woman'], published in the paper *La Campaña*.³³ Even though this text differs from the examples that I have analysed so far, it introduces a sense of repetition from the beginning. It says: '[t]he eternal story! Always the same story!'³⁴ But, how could it be the same story, the eternal story, if it differs from the others? Let's read.

After introducing a young, honest and humble working-class woman, the narrator presents a second character as follows:

[h]e, a *shopping arcade dandy* [in English in the original],³⁵ who, like others of his class, enjoys stealing the honour of any humble working-class woman who crosses his path.

³² 'Un Acrata', 2.

³³ 'Desgraciada', *La Campaña* (Santiago: January, 1900), 2). I already cited a part of this article in chapter 2.

³⁴ 'Desgraciada', 2.

³⁵ This reference to shopping galleries alludes to the arcades known as *Portales* that surround the main square of Santiago. The popular press (satirical and working-class press alike) constantly

Besides being a good bourgeois, he is a shameless skull who holds a superior position in relation to his victims (my emphasis).³⁶

The characters have appeared on the scene: an honest poor girl and a good bourgeois (that is to say, a shameless man). It is a classic manichean distribution between good and evil; there is an absolute female victim and an absolute male victimizer, a relation between employee and employer. The strategy is known: he, taking advantage of his position of power, will put all his efforts into:

turning her into his prey [...] Maybe, if she resists his intentions, he will even threaten her with dismissing her from the workshop, laying before her a life of suffering and misery. And if she does not, he will promise her in return, a world of joy. On the one hand, if she does not respond to his demand, she is looking at an endless dark horizon of bitter existence, with all types of deprivations and sufferings. On the other, prostitution with its repugnant procession of moral decline and vice.³⁷

It seems that she has a choice, a very harsh one of course, but still the text seems to open the possibility of resistance. Nonetheless, the price to pay for that resistance is absolute, for it implies the suspension of the flow of currencies. In other words, for a woman to resist bourgeois lust implies losing her job, to become unemployable and to end up living in extreme poverty just to secure her identity from being (ex)changed. In other words: to *become a proper aneconomic individual*.³⁸ The repercussions of this turn of events are in principle

describes these places as populated by idle upper-class men who spend their time chasing girls. One example of this can be found in the way in which the satirical periodical *José Arnero* describes the unjust detention of a working-class journalist at the square: '[o]nce again the capital city of Chile has been shaken because of the discovery of an anarchist ring, represented in this city by the brave popular journalist comrade Abraham Méndez Plaza. As always, last Wednesday comrade Méndez offered his periodical in Plaza de Armas, which *deeply irritated the ears of the little lords [señoritos] or shopping arcade idlers*, who ordered the detention of our friend Méndez, alleging that this man is a terrorist who could be carrying a bomb hidden in his periodicals to blow up the hideouts inside that place, which are: the Council Palace [...] and the Police headquarters [...] As we see, the idlers of Plaza de Armas know very well the places and hideouts that deserve to be turned into dust because of the harm that they cause the people' (my emphasis) ('El Anarquismo en Santiago. Aprehesión de Abraham Mendez Plaza. La gran pesquisa pacuna', *José Arnero* (Santiago: April 18 1910), 1).

³⁶ 'Desgraciada', 2.

³⁷ 'Desgraciada', 2.

³⁸ This is the case for Luisa, another character who is used in a different article to represent the ideal mother who condemned herself and her children to live in extreme poverty because she resisted the sexual assaults of her *Patrón*. Although at the end of her story she is unable to feed her children, her resilience, purity, conviction and modesty are praised as follows: '[w]hat a beautiful example this humble daughter of the people is, ignorant, without any other education than the values that her mother taught her. But seduction, promises and misery itself, were powerless to uproot from that

incalculable. But once more, the text reminds the reader of the unavoidability of the ‘eternal story’, and, in the blink of an eye, she:

succumbed..... [Then] after the *bourgeois wolf* has satisfied his bestial appetite for meat, he becomes disgusted by his old lover, and resolves to do the exact opposite of what motivated his hunt: to get rid of her. No sooner said than done. *He unpitched his tent* and went to another field seeking new adventures to satiate his pleasures [...] Cases of this nature are *repeated daily*; the purity and honour of the proletarian woman being violated *a thousand and one times* by any insolent aristocrat or suitably polished scoundrel [*canalla barnizado*] (my emphasis).³⁹

Now it is too late; moreover, it has always been, and it will always be, too late. There was/is/will not (be) a *loophole* in these repetitions. The bourgeois-wolf, this lustful monster (half animal and half human with a bestial appetite) has always already unpitched his tent. I read (again and again) that these cases are repeated daily throughout the workshops and factories, but how then is there an addition at the end of the quotation? Is it not just a onetime experience that is repeated? How is the honour and purity of an individual female worker part of this calculation that gathers one and a thousand times in the same equation? The answer is in the principle of eternity by substitution that the text introduces. Yes, I claim, this can only happen once to each particular individual, but to reach that conclusion I must first resort to a vulgar notion of identity. And, as I have shown, the market economy of the brothel inaugurates and perpetuates a logic of (ex)changes that dismantle any possible relation between a proper identity and a particular body. Luce Irigaray’s critique of the exchange of women in patriarchal societies can be of help here.⁴⁰ By extrapolating Marx’s analysis of the commodity, Irigaray asserts that:

[w]oman’s price on the market [as a commodity] is not determined by the ‘properties’ of her body—although her body constitutes the *material* support of that price. But when women are exchanged, woman’s body must be treated as an *abstraction* [...] It is thus not as ‘women’ that they are exchanged, but as women reduced to some common feature [...] *woman has value on the market by virtue of one single quality: that of being a*

virtuous heart those principles of dignity, delicacy, inherent in every woman, who must maintain them intact in her heart, that heart which must beat only at the magnetic impulse of pure and noble love’ (‘Lectura Instructiva. Desgracia i Felicidad’, *La Union Obrera* (Santiago: June 25 1892), 4).

³⁹ ‘Desgraciada’, 2.

⁴⁰ Irigaray, Luce, *This Sex which is Not One*, 170-191.

product of man's 'labour.' On this basis, each one looks exactly like every other. They all have the same phantom-like reality. Metamorphosed in identical *sublimations*, samples of the same indistinguishable work, all these objects now manifest just one thing, namely, that in their production a force of human labour has been expended, that labour has accumulated in them.⁴¹

Thus, as a bearer of exchange value, the prostitute/commodity, in Marx's words, 'do[es] not contain an atom of use value.'⁴² Moreover, to become 'equivalent,' Irigaray continues, 'a commodity changes bodies. A super-natural, metaphysical origin is substituted for its material origin. Thus its body becomes a transparent body, *pure phenomenality of value*.'⁴³ These women's bodies and identities change in order to become suitable for the (ex)change. Their proper shape as Sara or Luisa metamorphoses into the abstract form of the (ex)changeable prostitute in general. However, I should not be naïve enough to believe that when they are called by their given name in the Chilean working-class press, they have any property right over these names. Even before the first (ex)change takes place, women only carry their proper name insofar as they embody the promise of becoming a man's partner. Their identity only appears in the form of pure potentiality, as the future wife of someone else, as the partner of a man who will give them *his* family name if they remain 'pure.' Hence, in this patriarchal universe, women are (ex)changed in advance. These working-class tales that I have been analysing here, not only document the phenomenon of de-identification of working-class women, but also announce (always in a patriarchal way) the possibility of imagining a world where working-class women carry the family name of male workers. The ideal figure of the 'pre-prostituted' proletarian woman (called Sara, Luisa, or any other proper name) while preceding her 'first' capitalist (ex)change, represents the utopian possibility of disarticulating this market economy and of re-establishing an older society. A society that, since it is based on the preservation of the essentially aneconomic principle of love, is less capitalist, but equally patriarchal. These women, by ideally corresponding (for a moment) with their identity as lovers and mothers, represent (as some kind of transcendental signifier) the hope of being able to stop the movement of speculation and the fluidity of equivalences on which the market is based. At the right (revolutionary) time I will return to this patriarchal

⁴¹ Irigaray, 179.

⁴² Marx, Karl, *Capital*, 44.

⁴³ Irigaray, 179.

utopia. For now, I must deal with the problem of trying to trace this unreachable ideal female figure in a context in which the bourgeois has always already unpitched his tent.⁴⁴

There is a last twist in the transition from labour to prostitution that affects the whole distribution of sexual difference. In an article called ‘El brazo de la mujer en competencia con el brazo del marido’ [‘The Wife’s Arm Competing Against the Husband’s Arm’], published in the periodical *La luz por la humanidad libre*,⁴⁵ a worker complains that a principle of hostility is currently undermining the harmonious and ‘natural’ relationship between husband and wife. According to the text, in workshops and factories male workers are being replaced by female workers as a means of maximising profits in contexts of strikes and, more permanently, because female labour is cheaper than male labour.⁴⁶ Hence, the problem is introduced solely as an issue of economizing resources. Yet this worker claims that a derivative cost is *paid* by the working-class family. This substitution – in this case not just between particular individuals from the same sex, but between ‘the sexes’ – puts spouses in direct conflict and displaces the distribution of sexual difference. The result is a new social disorder (*‘nuevo trastorno social’*, as the author calls it) under which the unemployed man finds himself obliged to supplant the mother in the domestic chores to secure the household while she goes to work. It is ‘logical’, the family demands immediate satisfaction:

[d]omestic needs demand instant satisfaction, the family needs feeding, from the big ones to the little ones, and the rent needs paying, an unexplained delay of a single day means fasting that same day. The only thing that can be done is to make an *extreme sacrifice or change the order of the family*, for the woman to wear the trousers and go

⁴⁴ Considering that I am interpreting the passage from labour to prostitution in terms of a way of conceptualizing the functioning of the market economy, this idea of the capitalist constantly moving to other fields could also be read in light of the modern mobility of capital. It is the prevalence of financial/speculative capital over manufacturing/industrial capital that allows the owners to shut down their factories and move somewhere else (‘unpitched their tents and move to other fields’), always leaving the impoverished workers behind.

⁴⁵ ‘El brazo de la mujer en competencia con el brazo del marido’, *La luz por la humanidad libre* (Santiago: January 6 1904), 4).

⁴⁶ This idea is based on Marx’s concept of the Industrial Reserve Army, which he refers to as a monstrosity. Marx writes: ‘[w]e have seen, too, how this antagonism vents its rage in the creation of that monstrosity, an industrial reserve army, kept in misery in order to be always at the disposal of capital; in the incessant human sacrifices from among the working-class, in the most reckless squandering of labour-power and in the devastation caused by a social anarchy which turns every economic progress into a social calamity’ (Marx, Karl, *Capital*, 530).

out to earn the daily bread and the man to stay indoors to cook the meal, *breast-feed the little one, and clean everyone else's ass* (my emphasis).⁴⁷

The 'price to pay' for not starving to death (as what seems to be an ultimate sacrifice) is to commit an 'atrocious': to change the 'natural' order of the family and, by the same token, to disrupt the biological distribution of the sexes. It is nonetheless paradigmatic that, against any biologisms, the father can breast-feed the children; it is complete madness at the core of the family. This worker also claims that this change of regime comes with all the difficulties of a social and political reorganization. It is interesting how in a paradoxical manner this worker, from an anti-feminist perspective, claims that the household is political. He suggests that the man performs the mother's duty badly, that his callous hands are not fit for domestic labour, that he burns the food and does not know how to treat the children tenderly. On her part, according to the narrator, the woman feels the fatigue of an exhausting routine that her body cannot bear and when she comes home, 'with her temper, previously gentle and compliant, now embittered, yells at her husband. She gets exasperated by the damage and the waste made in the house.'⁴⁸ In this way, this worker shows the origin of a 'social and political disorder' and exposes its general effects by means of an abstract family that suffers its symptoms. But then, when the homely space of this abstract family becomes saturated with hostility, in what seems to be a transition from a general description narrated in the third person to a personal narration that can only be fully understood considering the principle of exchangeability by exploitation, she begins to speak in the first person and says to her husband:

if everything continues like this, I will leave you with all the cubs [*cachorros*], because you make my life unbearable. You lazy scoundrel, instead of going to work you make me spend my life working from dawn to dusk [...] In the factory I have to work like a donkey and please the *patrón* when he demands it, and even if I do not like it, you will have to take care of those sons made by force [...] look husband, if this continues, I will leave you with all these *children of my sins* (my emphasis).⁴⁹

After everything got 'too personal' it seems that the abstract description of the family does not suffice any longer to represent what it is happening, so it became necessary for the

⁴⁷ 'El brazo de la mujer en competencia con el brazo del marido', 4.

⁴⁸ 'El brazo de la mujer en competencia con el brazo del marido', 4.

⁴⁹ 'El brazo de la mujer en competencia con el brazo del marido', 4.

abstract woman to take the floor to threaten her husband. But by doing so, she also reveals interesting details about the composition of the family. In a first instance, she complains about what seems to be a classic form of demanding and exploitative work. But then, she adds that she must also please the *patrón* and, taking into account what I have said about the way in which exploiters treat female workers, this statement could be interpreted as an insinuation of sexual abuse. Consequently, if I follow this hypothesis, it is interesting to note that in the quotation the children of the family are never introduced as the husband's children. Firstly, she refers to them as all those cubs made by force and later as all these children of my sins. Why does she call them a product of her sins that were made by force? And if she were forced to commit a sin of which she is guilty, why is the husband excluded from that guilt? I should not rush to answer.

After she addresses him, he also becomes able to speak and says:

I swear I'll kill you, woman! I can't bear this any longer, since you've been going to the workshop you make my blood boil. You know that if I am not working it is because there is only work for women and not for men, you wear the trousers because of the imposition of the bourgeoisie, not because of my laziness, for God's sake [*me cago en Dios*]!⁵⁰

After threatening to kill her,⁵¹ he instead decides to seek revenge as Gaston did. He continues: 'stay in the house and look after the children, because seeing as the *patron* sucks your blood and stains my honour, I shall go to the factory and settle things and I will kill that *patrón*, or else things'll continue working back to front.'⁵² After saying these words, he 'went into the street wearing his wretched *breeches*, where he kept a sharp knife, no sooner said than done, he settled accounts [*arregla cuentas*] and signed the receipt with the criminal blood of the one who baptized him *cornudo* [a cuckold] (my emphasis).'⁵³ By presenting the worker as a *cornudo* (a Spanish slang word that stands for a man whose partner has been unfaithful), the text confirms that the children of the family were actually the *patrón*'s illegitimate sons.⁵⁴ It is also important to note that the resemblance between Gaston's story and this one is very

⁵⁰ 'El brazo de la mujer en competencia con el brazo del marido', 4.

⁵¹ I will address the misogynistic problem of feminicides in the working-class press in chapter 6. 'They love us so much that they kill us.'

⁵² 'El brazo de la mujer en competencia con el brazo del marido', 4.

⁵³ 'El brazo de la mujer en competencia con el brazo del marido', 4.

⁵⁴ In the next chapter I will address the issue of the illegitimate sons.

clear. Murder once again takes the place of dishonour and, by means of a redistribution of injuries, the (ex)change of bodies and identities is set in motion. However, even though the working-class husband has avenged ‘his’ family, the narrator regrets that:

[h]uman justice, unable to prevent the felony by stopping the attacks against the ordinary life of nations, *will allow men to be turned into nannies and women into whores*; but the one who, because of his suffering, punishes the author of his wretchedness, will be judged a murderer. Ah, the criminality of those who dress up in wig and robe [*criminalidad togada*!] Ah the collusion for hire of the traitor bourgeoisie! (my emphasis).⁵⁵

D) Prostitution Begins with Repetition

Murder seems to be a primary response to the loss of the one you love, but since revenge is also run by an economy of injuries it does not prevent women from ending up in the brothel. A first transaction has always taken place and it seems that nothing can stop the female worker from mutating into the prostitute. Now it is too late for them and the factories and workshops seem like ‘another life’ from which the working-class woman has been exiled. Is there any possible redemption for the prostitute? Is there a way back to the workshop? Can she be re-appropriated by the revolutionary narrative? These are the questions that run throughout the text ‘Redención’ [‘Redemption’], published in the paper *El Trabajo*.⁵⁶

Like others texts I have analysed before, ‘Redención’ resorts to a personal story to reveal a common and shared experience of exploitation. The main character is a worker called Ernesto, who after dismissing a friend’s advice has remorsefully returned to him. Ernesto holds his friend’s hand and says:

-[d]ear friend, I have come to ask your forgiveness. I have never listened to your words of advice, or even understood them. You called vices what I called supreme happiness; you called brothel [*lupanar*] what I considered a temple; you called social scum [*escoria social*] those whom I considered priestesses of pleasure [...] You can see that I could not understand your morality and that I did not make any effort to hear the whole strain

⁵⁵ ‘El brazo de la mujer en competencia con el brazo del marido’, 4.

⁵⁶ ‘Redención’, *El Trabajo* (Santiago: third week of June 1925), 3.

of your reasonings. Today, my dear friend, everything has changed; today I could advise you, because I have learned in a few hours what the years have taught you.⁵⁷

In this exchange between the decent friend and a repentant subject, there is a male morality at play that condemns men who visit brothels. Ernesto tells the reader that women who have become prostitutes are no more than social scum, and that they spread vice and corruption, so they should be avoided by men. Following his apology, Ernesto begins to recount his experience:

-[y]ou know that in theatres, salons, clubs and in general, everywhere, I have suffered the nostalgia of that erotic environment that is breathed in those places that you invariably called *centres of perdition*; and that I have always considered the prelude to joy [...] As a pearl found in the mud, not long ago, I found there a lovely and gifted woman who, in contrast to those of her kind, managed to awaken in me, not only material sensuality, but also a certain particular interest that, *without being love*, I could label as friendship (my emphasis).⁵⁸

As an anomaly, Ernesto claims that in those centres of perdition it is still possible to find a rare, but still conceivable, woman who can evoke feelings of friendship. It is as if in these same places where everyone suffers physical and moral decay, not everything is lost and not everything is for sale. But of course, since a first transaction has taken place, love is excluded from the picture and friendship is the only 'pure feeling' left. Ernesto goes into describing the relationship he had with this woman, which, as he claims, was not only about sex. They also talked about things as friends do, but never about her. He recalls the countless times that after asking for her story, she replied: 'all of us, we have the same story whose prologue is the brothel and epilogue, the hospital.'⁵⁹ By compulsively repeating these words, she brings back the principle of non-originality, exchangeability and repetition that frames the female worker's narrative. But even though there is nothing 'new' in her story, Ernesto remained *ignorant* of the principles that determine the passage from the workshop to the brothel and from the brothel to the hospital, so he kept asking. However, as he already told his friend, everything has changed. Last night, after Ernesto entered her room, as he commonly used to do, he found a heart-breaking scene, he says:

⁵⁷ 'Redención', 3.

⁵⁸ 'Redención', 3.

⁵⁹ 'Redención', *El Trabajo* (Santiago: first week of July 1925), 4.

-[t]he room or hovel of that cheerful, beautiful woman was transformed into a mortuary chapel. *Rosalía*'s bed was now a burial mound on which the dead body of a beautiful 5-year-old lay; next to him four candles; and embracing the body, that spiritual, beautiful girl that I was looking to amuse me, was crying as *mothers do* (my emphasis).⁶⁰

When Ernesto saw this, he realized that *Rosalía* (he calls her by her name only after seeing her as a mother) was even more beautiful than he thought. This grieving mother was for Ernesto a 'composition that could have inspired Rafael's best painting.'⁶¹ For a moment thus the figure of the prostitute is supplanted by the caring mother that bears a proper name. Touched by this scene, Ernesto approaches *Rosalía* and puts his hand on her shoulder. When she felt it, she looked at him and said:

-[a]h! Is it you? Even though I cannot amuse you today, I am glad you came [...] You have wished to hear the story of this crazy, obliging girl many times; well then, today I will tell it to you, and if I do this, it is because I need to speak with someone and to have a confidant of my mishaps.⁶²

By what seems to be an unexpected (ex)change of identity, *Rosalía* the mother becomes willing or able to tell the story of the prostitute. It is as if the prostitute (as the figure that it is in between the working-class and the bourgeoisie) were not able to articulate a truthful narrative about her 'own' experience and, therefore, she can only speak from the perspective of the mother. But I should not forget that alongside the writer-speaker, there also stands the reader-listener.⁶³ Therefore, if I am approaching a truthful narration about the state of exploitation, how can I know if Ernesto is in a position to receive it without contaminating it? Is he not a client of the brothel? The little I know about this character is that, even though he was wisely advised by a friend not to, he has taken an active part in the process of collective degeneration that the brothel inaugurates. Consequently, if I am to place him at this point, he would be standing on the side of the enemy. However, he was able to suspend the economy of the brothel by finding a non-exchangeable good in it: the gift of friendship. But how is this possible? According to *Rosalía*: '[a]mong all the men that I have met during

⁶⁰ 'Redención', first week of July 1925, 4.

⁶¹ 'Redención', first week of July 1925, 4.

⁶² 'Redención', *El Trabajo* (Santiago: second week of July 1925), 3.

⁶³ I treat this issue in Chapter 2. '*Degeneration and Regeneration.*'

my demeaning career you [Ernesto] have been the only one whom I have not found with a perverted heart, and, because of that I have considered you a friend.’⁶⁴ Ernesto is not (yet) completely lost, he still has a good heart. Hence, I could say that this dialogue is possible only on the basis that Ernesto is not completely perverted and that Rosalia’s locus of enunciation depends on her condition as a mother. Only because of this can this customer and this sex worker exceed the realm of economic exchange to give rise to a seemingly aneconomic relationship of friendship. But they are still in the dominions of the brothel and nothing can resist its mastery for too long before being (ex)changed again.

She begins her/the story by repeating (once more), ‘[y]ou are about to hear the story of my life which does not have any novelty, but that might interest you or, at least, make you know the human heart a bit more.’⁶⁵ The plot is known: a beloved girl is taken from her family by a man who, taking advantage of her innocence, promises to marry her, but, instead he turns her into his mistress. Afterwards, the girl is rejected by her family and she is left alone with an illegitimate child in her arms. Misery then forces her to work from dawn to dusk in order to provide everything that was needed for the boy. As the story goes, this single, but not unique, mother was devoted solely to her son. She remained as an honest and proud woman who endured any hard work for her child. Rosalia recalls: ‘I worked day and night, and even when I barely earned enough not to starve, I always resisted the dazzling promises and infinite temptations that a woman of my age finds in her way.’⁶⁶ Analogous to the tale of *La Desgraciada*, she was an honest and hard-working woman who resisted all dishonest propositions. However, she worked and worked for the next two years until:

[o]ne day, a fatal and wretched day, Luis [her son] fell ill. And my caresses and efforts were insufficient to cure him. He needed to see doctors, I had to buy expensive medication and to give him food that I could not afford with the price of my labour.⁶⁷

No matter how hard she tried, the transition from the workshop to the brothel was unavoidable all along; and, in Rosalia’s case, the conversion is triggered by a personal tragedy. Then the owner of the brothel appears on the scene and a transaction takes place. As

⁶⁴ ‘Redención’, second week of July 1925, 3.

⁶⁵ ‘Redención’, second week of July 1925, 3.

⁶⁶ ‘Redención’, *El Pueblo* (Santiago: third week of July 1925), 4. The story is resumed in the periodical *El Pueblo*.

⁶⁷ ‘Redención’, third week of July 1925, 4.

Rosalía tells him: '[s]he gave me the money I needed to treat my Luis in (ex)change for my body; I would have given her my soul if she had demanded it just to save my son.'⁶⁸ Even though this transaction represents another path to prostitution, the outcome is the same. After the boy was healthy again, the mother left him in the care of a woman, meanwhile the prostitute began her 'demeaning career' to pay her debts.

Then, she suddenly stops her narration and looks at Ernesto and asks him: 'do you know [...] what kind of woman is the owner of this house?'⁶⁹ And without waiting for a response, she continues: '[y]ou [men] only see her on stage, friendly and thoughtful, without suspecting that that body that bows before you hides a Shylock soul,⁷⁰ a slave trader heart and the feelings of a hyena.'⁷¹ She then adds:

[t]he brothel keeper [*la dueña de un lupanar*] is the trader in human flesh that gives pleasure to the public auction of the vice, of that same vice *that reduces the woman born to be mother, wife and sister to the wretched condition of vile commodity* (my emphasis).⁷²

This woman with a Shylock's soul, alongside the lustful male bourgeois, invigorates the market economy by achieving what the dandy's charms could not: to finally turn the pure, honest and hard-working mother/wife/sister into an (ex)changeable commodity.

After introducing the figure of the brothel keeper, Rosalía narrates the painful way in which she lost a part of herself with each sexual transaction. But she had medicine that helped her reduce the effects of the vice, she continues:

I pictured how my Luis, with his arms outstretched, waited for me in front of the little white house; I used to see him full of life, then I would wipe my tears in his blond hair and regret my weakness. *His innocent caresses were a sweet balm spilled on me that regenerate my soul and helped me return to my sacrifice determined not to have any more hesitations* (my emphasis).⁷³

⁶⁸ 'Redención', third week of July 1925, 4.

⁶⁹ 'Redención', third week of July 1925, 4.

⁷⁰ This is an anti-Semitic reference that stems from the villain of Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. Shylock is a Jewish moneylender depicted as a vile, evil and greedy character in that play. This name was commonly used in the Chilean satiric and working-class press to refer, in a derogatory way, to capitalists and bourgeois men. See: Shakespeare, William, *The Merchant of Venice* (London: Methuen & co. Ltd., 1917).

⁷¹ 'Redención', third week of July 1925, 4.

⁷² 'Redención', third week of July 1925, 4.

⁷³ 'Redención' *El Pueblo* (Santiago: fourth week of July 1925), 3.

The constant return to the son's arms operates as a form of regeneration that precludes the total decay of the mother into the prostitute. In this transition from prostitution to motherhood and back, degeneration and regeneration constantly switch places, keeping her in between the working-class telos and its other. But what about male clients? How does the brothel affect and transform them? Rosalia provides an insight into this problem. She claims that:

men that come here to buy pleasure and hire love [...] wait for the storms to hit the sea of life so they can pick up the leftovers of honour's wreck. Alcohol and brutal sensuality completely erase the varnish of education leaving only matter in its most repugnant nudity. They see women as nothing more than a means to satisfy their satyr's lust.⁷⁴

These coldblooded satyr-like men⁷⁵ become bare matter that lures women into suffering. They take advantage of women's misery just to hire love and, by doing so, they lose all culture and education, they bestialize themselves by trading at the brothel. Ignorance and degeneration are once more on the side of the commodification of sex, affecting both male consumers and female commodities.⁷⁶ After describing this process of degeneration, she addresses Ernesto and says:

[y]ou are still young and must stop while you can, before you fall into the endless abyss of vice. Believe me; you still can, do not let yourself roll down the rough slope where the remains of honour, fragments of the soul and pieces of the heart are left behind. In this house, young men like you lose bit by bit their health, honour and shame until they become despicable beings.⁷⁷

After these words were said, the impossible happened. In this seemingly 'base and vicious' place, a piece of truth surfaced through the interaction of these two characters on their way to degeneration. When Rosalia stopped speaking, Ernesto (taking the floor) said to his friend: 'I felt my being transformed; an irresistible force drew me to her, while I was admiring her

⁷⁴ 'Redención', *El Pueblo* (Santiago: first week of August 1925), 4.

⁷⁵ The figure of the satyr corresponds to Greek mythology. They are male spirits depicted with a horse-like tail, a beast face and a prominent erection. Satyrs tend to be lovers of wine and music and they also suffer from an unbridled sexual appetite.

⁷⁶ It is worth quoting Marx's words about prostitution a second time here. He writes: 'prostitution is only a specific expression of the general prostitution of the labourer, and since it is a relationship in which falls not the prostitute alone, but also the one who prostitutes – and the latter's abomination is still greater – the capitalist, etc., also comes under this head' (Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscript*, 295).

⁷⁷ 'Redención', first week of August 1925, 4.

as if she were the most sublime female creation.⁷⁸ Ernesto then resolved to put an end to Rosalia's misery by asking her to marry him with the promise that he would give her all the care that she had lacked in her wretched life. But as much as he tried to convince her, it was useless. She kept repeating that she should not pay with dishonour his generous feelings, since '[y]ou cannot, Ernesto, descend to me and I will never be able to rise to you. My dishonour is a stigma that society marks on the forehead of the impure woman and it is as indelible as her own remorse.'⁷⁹ Even though the brothel affects both men and women, there is still a hierarchy in its sexual degeneration. The male client always remains above the sex worker and, no matter how much they try to bridge this gap, society has always already marked the prostitute's face. There is no turning back or alternative endings. Thus, after both realized the inevitability of the situation, Ernesto walked her to a convent where she asked for asylum.

Finally, the text (by returning to the first setting of the story) reminds the reader that all this narration took place between two male friends. And that Rosalia only spoke through Ernesto's voice. This becomes even clearer when at the very end of the story, the friend takes the floor (as if he would always have been the narrator) and says: '[s]obs and tears put an end to Ernesto's relationship. While he was crying remembering that female martyr of destiny, I was contemplating my friend and I realized that he was completely regenerated.'⁸⁰ At the end it becomes clear that Rosalia's 'sacrifice' in this story of 'Redención' and Sara's transition to prostitution in the text 'Un Acrata' are not only analogous experiences to the process of women becoming (ex)changeable goods, but that these same experiences also constitute, as a counter effect, the condition of possibility for a *male* revolutionary regeneration. Ernesto, like Gastón, after suffering and witnessing the process of commodification of women, gained the necessary knowledge about the state of exploitation that allows him to become a 'proper' worker. In this patriarchal universe, redemption and regeneration seem to be only on the side of men and, according to this narrative, women are no more than the leftovers of a male operation. After the worker is either regenerated or degenerate, the prostitute, as Rosalia told Ernesto, is thrown to the asylum or to the convent.

⁷⁸ 'Redención', first week of August 1925, 4.

⁷⁹ 'Redención', first week of August 1925, 4.

⁸⁰ 'Redención', first week of August 1925, 4.

In 1902 the common stories of Rosalia, Sara and Luisa (and many other women) were gathered and expanded in the form of a novel written by Augusto Thomson (later known as Augusto D'Halmar).⁸¹ In his novel *Juana Lucero: Los Vicios de Chile* [*Juana Lucero: The Vices of Chile*],⁸² D'Halmar narrates the story of Juana Lucero, a woman who, he asserts, brings back to life a woman whom we all have met, but whom nobody has had the impulse to study, maybe because – as a pleasure machine – she was believed to be a heartless and insensitive woman, without anything that could remind us of a caring mother.⁸³

With these words, D'Halmar introduces his novel as a social study of a common woman who bears the proper name of Juana, but who represents multiple other women that the world forgot that they once were caring mothers. This novel is of interest for this research because it gathers all the motifs that I have found scattered in various periodical extracts: Juana is the illegitimate daughter of a rich member of congress in the Conservative Party and her mother is a poor seamstress.⁸⁴ As the story goes, Juana's mother dies, and her aunt sends her to work as a seamstress for a rich family that lives in the Yungay neighbourhood. There, this 14-year-old orphan (like her mother before her) is brutally raped several times by her *patrón* Don Absalón and then by Daniel, his son.⁸⁵ Juana falls pregnant and out of desperation decides to run away with a lustful dandy called Arturo Velásquez, who promises to help her, but instead turns her into his mistress. When Velásquez tires of Juana, he abandons her in an exclusive brothel which only men from the elite (mainly conservatives) visit. There she is sexually exploited and becomes increasingly perverted and evil.⁸⁶ However, according to this version of the common story, since she is pregnant her conversion only occurs when the brothel keeper convinces her to undergo an abortion.⁸⁷ After having lost all hope and faith of a better

⁸¹ Augusto Thomson, better known as Augusto D'Halmar (1882-1950), was one of the most influential writers in early-twentieth century Chile. He was a founding member of the vanguard group Los Diez and of the Chilean Tolstonian Colony (see footnote 29 Chapter 1). His work was published in several magazines and periodicals. He was also a diplomat and worked at the National Library of Chile. In 1942 D'Halmar was awarded the Premio Nacional de Literatura. See: Arriagada, Julio Fernando, *Augusto D'Halmar: tres ensayos esenciales y una antología* (Santiago: Ministerio de Educación Pública, 1963).

⁸² Thomson (D'Halmar), Augusto, *Juana Lucero*.

⁸³ Thomson (D'Halmar), 7.

⁸⁴ Thomson (D'Halmar), 10-11.

⁸⁵ Thomson (D'Halmar), 114-120.

⁸⁶ Thomson (D'Halmar), 126 -128.

⁸⁷ Thomson (D'Halmar), 232.

life, Juana gets rid of the only being that could prevent her from fully becoming an (ex)changeable good. Interestingly enough, this patriarchal and conservative depiction of motherhood serves the purpose of being a critique of the elite. D'Halmar constantly refers to the ruling class as the ones responsible for introducing and practising the *Vicios de Chile* (as the subtitle of the book announces, these are prostitution, rape, sodomy, abortion, concubinage, alcoholism, etc.) that made and destroyed Juana's life. Although Juana is the main character of the story, she only serves the moralistic purpose of showing the reader, through her interactions with the elite, the vices and moral decay of the ruling class. In a way, Juana is just a means for this class critique and the narration of her story is not an end in itself. In several passages, the book exposes the male Chilean aristocrats not only for brutally exploiting the people, but mainly for being frenetic rapists; while it also condemns the hypocrisy of the seemingly *beata* women from the elite for regularly practising abortions in order to keep enjoying their 'sins'.⁸⁸ Yet still, as the leftover, the prostitute is the one who is more radically affected by these social vices. These women, once again, are said to be (ex)changed to the point of becoming unrecognizable. D'Halmar writes:

behaviour changes people a lot, there is no better disguise than vice, its mask, although the contours are preserved, it erases the character, the gestures, the complexion, that is to say, what the face borrows from the soul, and it disfigures it until every resemblance between the good girl and the prostitute is suppressed.⁸⁹

In the case of Juana Lucero this process of de-identification reaches its climax, once again, with the loss of her proper name. After her abortion she took the stage name of Nana, a name that one of her colleagues known as Bibelot gave to her.⁹⁰ It is quite telling that the name of

⁸⁸ D'Halmar describes the fate of the Chilean ruling class and the role of the prostitute in this process as follows: '[w]ith a body and soul tainted by vice, her [the prostitute's] duty is to train them [the young members of the elite] in sexual monstrosities. Do not be afraid! As a versed master, she will train her disciples and out of that sport [in English in the original] the children of adultery or spurious relationships will be born and will carry their parent's germ of vice, marked from their birth with a vile stigma; embryos of alcoholics, of aphrodisiacs who will reach the sodomite degeneration or the criminal rape. It is the Zolanian fly, that driven by what is rotten rises to sit on the palaces, on the ladies, the lords and the children to poison them with base death' (Thomson (d'Halmar), 257- 258).

⁸⁹ Thomson (D'Halmar), 256.

⁹⁰ The fact that this sexual worker chooses the name Bibelot for herself is no coincidence either. It is a reference to the relationship between prostitution and the uses of (ex)changeable common names in the Chilean scene of writing, this time taken from French literature and culture. According to Janell Watson, 'by the 1880s, the medieval French word *bibelot* (knick-knack), which in the fifteenth century designated miscellaneous household items of little value, is revived by the most elite among

Nana is taken from fiction. As Bibelot told Juana, it is a foreign name that appears in a novel (referring to Emile Zola's *Nana*)⁹¹ that narrates the story of, as Bibelot says, 'a girl that does all sorts of crazy things.'⁹² At first Juana does not take this name as hers, but after the abortion she changes in a way that makes it impossible for her to keep recognizing herself as Juana. With the abortion, Juana dies, and Nana takes control over the body, the conversion has taken place. Nana says: 'the other [referring to Juana] has died ... It is better to be called by this name.'⁹³ Nana becomes apathetic and completely wicked while she continues working at the brothel until she is driven mad by the ghosts of Juana's mother, Juana's unborn child and, more interestingly, by Juana's ghost. With the rise of the prostitute Juana dies, she becomes nothing more than a spectre whose body is now inhabited by a common woman who carries the nickname (Nana) of someone else's nickname (Ana Copeau). It is a name that is a proper (ex)changeable name. But then again this is just another repetition. It is interesting to note that, throughout the book, D'Halmar, while narrating the story of Juana, also tells the stories of other prostitutes that repeat and anticipate Juana's fate. This narrative gesture resonates with the words of the introduction of the book that says that Juana Lucero 'brings back to life a woman that we all have met.'

It is time to leave the brothel behind, there is no way out. There is no regeneration for Sara, Rosalia and Juana. However, there is still a last hope. At the end of the text 'Redención',

Parisian collectors to designate the objects most precious to them, even though the term is also used to refer to the cheapest industrial kitsch. The term is not only revived and reinvented during the nineteenth century, it is also associated with the century. In Proust this association manifests itself as a break with the twentieth century since, in implicit contrast to the narrator's modernist sensibility, it is only among those characters who reach adulthood before the 1880s that one finds bibeloteurs: Swann, Odette, Charlus and Madame Verdurin. The term's uses, connotations and associations, as well as the goods that it designates, evolve along with "the nineteenth century," as conceptualized by those writers who speak in its name. If this culture embraces the bibelot with enthusiasm, it is because it creates the bibelot in its own image. The objects designated by the term bibelot, along with the practises designated by its variants, bibeloter [to collect], bibeloteur and bibeloteuse [masculine and feminine forms for both the noun "collector" and the adjective "bibelot-like"], are invested with a variety of often contradictory significations – not only "meanings" but also "significance" in the sense of perceived importance or value (aesthetic, monetary, sentimental, psychic, or other' (Watson, Janell, *Literature and Material Culture from Balzac to Proust: The Collection and Consumption of Curiosities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 5.

⁹¹ In Zola's book *Nana* is a nickname given to Ana Copeau, a prostitute who is depicted by Zola as genetically predisposed (because of her illegitimate origin) to become a greedy, wicked, selfish and manipulative woman.

⁹² Thomson (D'Halmar), 231.

⁹³ *Ibidem*.

Ernesto, after realising that he could not get married to Rosalia, walked her to the convent. Rosalia, this caring mother and former prostitute who triggered Ernesto's redemption, as the leftover of his male operation of regeneration is thrown to the convent. Is this the end of the transaction, the last (ex)change? Is this old commodity finally out of circulation? Am I finally reaching the limits of the market economy to find an *aneconomic* figure or place?

E) The Convent/Brothel Where She Dwells

She is at the gates of the convent asking for shelter and forgiveness with the hope of putting an end to the process of moral and physical degeneration she found in the brothel. But the effects of the hyperbolic brothel and its market economy do not stop here. The official brothel, the one that is openly run by the brothel keeper, is also (ex)changeable. I showed how it can take the place of workshops and factories where working-class women are prostituted as well, and now I will analyse the way in which the setting of the convent is also ruled by the laws of the brothel. In other words, I have showed the way in which the brothel keeper substitutes the *patrón*, now it is the priest who is going to embody this bourgeois threat.

In a manner that strongly resonates with the transition from labour to (sexual) labour, the article 'El asunto de los frailes en Chillan' ['The issue of the priests in Chillan'], published in the paper *José Arnero*,⁹⁴ outlines the way in which the clergy takes control of working-class women's bodies by means of the confessional scene. In the context of the scandal of the kidnapping of a group of young women by a priest in the south of Chile, the writer-reader asserts that:

[a]s it is natural, the fanatical girls believing the vile humbugs of these miserable individuals do everything they are told and with great clandestineness they enter the 'cavern of their perdition', that is to say, the convent, where lustful confessors kill their innocence, virginity and purity (my emphasis).⁹⁵

As if nothing had changed, at the convent the movement is repeated once again. A pure, honest and innocent girl is attracted through lies and tricks into a life of 'dishonour.' The

⁹⁴ 'El asunto de los frailes en Chillan. El cura Las Casas estimulando los crímenes frailunos. Pasan de treinta las niñas secuestradas', *José Arnero* (Santiago: July 4 1910), 2.

⁹⁵ 'El asunto de los frailes en Chillan', 2.

only difference here is that the transition is triggered by the clergy who, according to the article, take advantage of their influence in the confessional scene to manipulate working-class women into having sexual intercourse with them.

This idea is at the core of another article addressed to members of the Church entitled 'A los Frailes' ['To the Priests'], published in the paper *La Campaña*.⁹⁶ In this piece, the writer-reader claims that Catholicism is facing a state of turmoil. He expresses, '[y]ou [priests] must understand that your religion is heading towards ruin with such levity as the progress of humanity advances.'⁹⁷ Based upon a teleological understanding of progress that will lead humanity to unveil the lies, hypocrisy and perversion of the Church, he posits that the advancement of Reason is inversely proportional to the decadence of religion and fanaticism. However, this writer-reader's understanding of fanaticism is inextricably linked to sexual perversion; he asserts:

[y]ou [priests] have preached about chastity and you have corrupted the world with your lust. The Church is not well represented by Pope Borgia, wicked wretch, whose crimes, like all yours, soil the darkest pages of history, that Borgia who besides seducing his daughter Lucrezia, helped her himself to deliver their son, that father and daughter who led by example the disgusting bacchanals in which, alongside the most holy saints of the Church and the most honest female Christians, they sought new ways [of enjoying] their pleasures until vice exhausted them.⁹⁸

As a disease that can be traced back to tales about the perversions of the Borgias,⁹⁹ this writer-reader claims that the Church has spread an ongoing process of general decay all over the world. The clergy, alongside honest Christian women, have pushed forward the boundaries of wickedness and perversion by discovering new techniques for satiating their desires. All of this, according to him, finds its 'origin' in the confessional:

⁹⁶ 'A los Frailes', *La Campaña* (Santiago: December 9 1902), 3.

⁹⁷ 'A los Frailes', 3.

⁹⁸ 'A los Frailes', 3.

⁹⁹ In addition to what I already explained about the uses of Lucrezia Borgia in the Chilean press (see footnote 8 Chapter 4), there is also the common use of the motif of incest. The rumours of the incestuous character of the Borgia family originated after the Pope arranged Lucrezia's divorce from her first husband (Giovanni Sforza) for political reasons. Sforza openly rejected this decision claiming that 'the Pope only wanted Lucrezia for himself. This rumour then grew in popular culture with the addition of stories that also involved Lucrezia's brothers: Alexande and Cesar. See: Gregorovius, Ferdinand, *Lucrezia Borgia: Daughter of Pope Alexander VI* (Las Vegas: Histria Books, 2020), 8.

[h]ow much you have enjoyed and how much benefit you have gained by means of the confessional, how immoral and dirty has been the method you have chosen to know what the world thinks and to corrupt innocent virgins [...] How much you have enjoyed seeing a poor man whom you have subjected to slavery and whose wife and children you have corrupted.¹⁰⁰

Here the confession operates as a mechanism of knowledge and control in an almost panoptical way. The priest, by perverting women, not only satisfies his lust but, at the same time, extracts the thoughts and secrets of the people. Hence, by the same token, the priest corrupts the honest female Catholic and amplifies his gaze by turning these women's eyes into an extension of his.¹⁰¹ Finally, in the last sentence of the quotation, the writer-reader accuses the clergy of being sadists who relish seeing the misery of the men that they have depleted and enslaved with their greed and lust. These deprived working-class men who are always already left alone, here display a tragic image in front of the priest, while their wives and daughters do not stop 'falling' into the hands of the bourgeoisie. However, the text ends by announcing the downfall of the clergy as follows:

[y]ou, *filthy germs* that have infested humanity; your history is going to be closed, bow your tainted foreheads before the pure sun of Anarchy. You shall march to the precipice: there is no space for you, walk to the chaos, to the abyss. Light does not tolerate darkness! (my emphasis).¹⁰²

As the ultimate remedy against these filthy germs that the clergy are, the light of reason began to drive the shadows of ignorance away, and by doing so, it anticipates a world in which there is no space for depravity and fanaticism. But how long the beast will have to wait until humanity is finally enlightened?

This issue is addressed in the article '¿La mujer es esclava?' ['Is the woman a slave?'].¹⁰³ As I have been showing, there is a delay in the working-class press, a constitutive impossibility of fulfilling the revolutionary promise at the right time, and this is always

¹⁰⁰ A los Frailes', 3.

¹⁰¹ In relation to this class treason, Recabarren reclaims (as the father of the Chilean left) the reconstitution of the father's law by writing: 'the Catholic Christian Church made of women a repulsive being, unfaithful to her husband, to her father, to her family. The Catholic Church introduced the most horrible of adulteries: spiritual adultery, by which the woman trusts the priest with all her feelings, sorrows, weaknesses; in a nutshell, all her intimacy as a woman, that she does not trust to her husband, father or her family, she trusts to the priest' (Recabarren, 3-4).

¹⁰² 'A los Frailes', 3.

¹⁰³ '¿La mujer es esclava?', *José Arneró* (Santiago: November 29 1909), 2-3.

caused by some kind of ‘female ignorance’ spread by vice and sex. The writer-reader introduces this misogynistic principle by asserting: ‘[w]e are convinced that while women remain in the most abject ignorance, liberal culture and freedom itself will have to march at a snail’s pace.’¹⁰⁴ But, why do women produce this general effect in humanity as a whole? He continues, ‘[the] woman, who is the mother of humankind, constitutes its spring. If she is a mouldy mechanism, almost inert, it is logical to vitalize and enhance it with enlightenment and instruction when the functions of the social organism commence.’¹⁰⁵ By resorting to the metaphor of organic machinery, he posits mothers as the fundamental axis for human progress. With their example they can either raise decadent or vigorous individuals, but, they are no more than a piece of a productive machine. Interestingly enough, when it comes to addressing this ‘female issue’, the writer-reader does not distinguish between social classes, ‘since [he asserts] the woman of fortune, like the female proletarian and female worker, lack the spirit of enlightenment needed to drive modern civilization.’¹⁰⁶ The madness of this alleged ‘female intellectual inferiority’ is that once again it becomes impossible to differentiate between female allies and female enemies. All women in general, regardless of their class, spread the shadows of ignorance among the sons of humanity.¹⁰⁷ Motherhood combines opposites. If women are ‘bad mothers’ they will infinitely delay the revolution, but if they are ‘good’, they will educate *male* workers who can be raised to Reason. The possibility of the revolution depends on their maternal competences and, according to this morality, the father plays no part in the education of his children and women are the only ones to blame if everything remains the same. Nevertheless, I could ask what is foreclosing women from being ‘good mothers’? What is the source of this domestic displacement of Reason? Once again, the text refers to the confessional:

[a] woman bonded to the confessional’s grilles where the priest directs her brain, like a compass that shows the way to a ship, *as the bridle leads a beast*, must be a wretched slave of that man full of passions who has no other title than to preach a divine mission,

¹⁰⁴ ‘¿La mujer es esclava?’, 2.

¹⁰⁵ ‘¿La mujer es esclava?’, 2.

¹⁰⁶ ‘¿La mujer es esclava?’, 3.

¹⁰⁷ Once again, Recabarren can be of help here. He wrote: ‘thus the woman has lived in history: courtesan of the Church, her ally in all their crimes against humanity, against her own children. Kept ignorant after savagery and barbarism, for twenty centuries, the *woman, the mother of humanity*, has been the murderer of her own children, due to the ignorance and error that the Church imposed on her’ (my emphasis) (Recabarren, 6).

that nowadays is challenged because of its farce and false human origin (my emphasis).¹⁰⁸

The confessional re-appears on the scene as the weapon that allows priests to take control of women in general and to disseminate, through the mother, their deceptive and false knowledge among each family. Accordingly, women turned into *confesadas* [confessed women] constitute the priest's unconditional slave and beast. Unsurprisingly thus she will, as he asserts, 'abdicate at the hands of her spiritual leader, her resources if she has any and the honour of her sex, that is a precious jewel when it is kept without stains and with dignity.'¹⁰⁹ This writer-reader posits adultery as a logical, and almost natural, consequence of the state of female submission to the priest. However, he does not blame women. Instead, in a patriarchal way, he addresses the husbands of the *confesadas* to demand them to retake control of 'their' women and prevent them from going to Church. And he asks them:

[c]an society, if it is catholic, if it is under the dominion of the priest-confessor, lead a normal life with its *bastard members* who emerge from the confidences of the confessional? Logically, we must believe that the so-called aristocracy, who listen to the confessor, are no more than the aristocracy of adulterers, never of honour, that is to say, of the well born sons. Honour and pride for working women who know how to flee from the miasmas that emanate from the confessional (my emphasis).¹¹⁰

As has been happening since the arrival of the Octopus-man and the constitution of the hyperbolic brothel, one of the conditions of exploitation is the impossibility of recognizing 'your' own children. Since every sexual interaction is always already contaminated with (self-)interest and every individual is open to an ongoing process of (ex)change and substitution, it is impossible to trace a proper lineage and secure an identity. The only hope that remains is for the honest female proletarian to resist the toxins and vapours of the confessional. They must become, as the writer-reader asserts, 'the aristocracy of honour and dignity', formed by those women who live in extreme poverty but without any stain on their forehead. What is at stake here is the defence of the mother's love; he asserts: 'the young woman that falls into the confessional is materially and morally corrupt, she loses her shame and throws the spurious fruit of her bowels to a nuns' shelter where the wretched boy

¹⁰⁸ ¿La mujer es esclava?', 3.

¹⁰⁹ '¿La mujer es esclava?', 3.

¹¹⁰ '¿La mujer es esclava?', 3.

becomes a thief or an idiot.’¹¹¹ The sequence of events is harsh and inexorable. The loss of the mother triggers the class struggle and her re-appropriation, the revolution. What is left of this narrative is the bestiality of being constitutively surrounded by thieves and idiots who, because of their mother’s fate, are excluded from the revolutionary telos.¹¹² Let us finish by unravelling the material and moral effects that confession produces on women.

In the text ‘La Beata Política’ [‘The Political Beata’], published in the paper *La Regeneración*,¹¹³ a writer-reader asks: what is a political woman? To which he replies: ‘[f]or me she is an incomprehensible thing, an unsolvable problem, a monstrous anachronism.’¹¹⁴ By paradoxically defining the political woman as what he finds impossible to define, this writer-reader posits his object of study as a problem that shocks Reason. He continues:

[i]t is true that women, that more than something of man, is a closed book to those who try to read it. Their manifestations are multiple, enigmatic and easily escape *our penetration*. Because they have a more focused power of observation, subtler, than men, frequently they *circumvent our experience and laugh* at the theories with which we have attempted to make them into a code (my emphasis).¹¹⁵

The writer makes a cut and erects a distribution between object and subject, where he posits women as the object of knowledge and men as the subjects who attempt to grasp that knowledge. However, this state of affairs seems to be provisional and insufficient, since the object is capable of eluding the male ‘savant’s’ *penetration* at every turn.¹¹⁶ Women laugh in the face of male knowledge, they play with reason and in return they contaminate everything

¹¹¹ ‘¿La mujer es esclava?’, 3.

¹¹² In the next Chapter I will treat the story of the illegitimate son (*Huacho*) in his path to become a thief and an idiot.

¹¹³ ‘La Beata Política’, *La Regeneración* (Santiago: April 18 1893), 1.

¹¹⁴ ‘La Beata Política’, 1.

¹¹⁵ ‘La Beata Política’, 1.

¹¹⁶ The androcentric idea that women frame the limit of (male) knowledge finds one of its most famous formulas in Freud’s expression that women are ‘[t]he “Dark Continent” of Psychoanalysis’ (Irigaray, 48), but it is also present in Latin American literature thanks to the writings of Rubén Darío, one of the most influential writers of the turn of the century. Analysing one of Darío’s 1905 poems, Octavio Paz wrote: ‘despite woman’s full, rounded nakedness, there is always something on guard in her [, according to Darío]: “*Eve and Aphrodite concentrate the mystery of the world’s heart.*” Rubén Darío, like all the other great poets, considered woman to be not only an instrument of knowledge but also knowledge itself. It is a knowledge we will never possess, the sum of our definitive ignorance: the supreme mystery’ (Paz, Octavio, *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, 66). Thus Freud’s ‘dark continent’ echoes in Paz’s and Darío’s ‘closed book.’

with the uncertainty of their multiple, diverse and changeable manifestations.¹¹⁷ Their laughter operates through an uncanny metamorphosis that can be traced in the words of our male researcher. He claims, ‘I do not pretend, therefore, to make a study of our lovely male tyrants [*tiranos*] because that would be pretentious and stupid, but I do intend to find something of that tomboy [*marimacho*], called Political *beata*.’¹¹⁸ Our ‘male connoisseur’ recognizes his limits. He cannot go further in trying to unravel the mystery that the political woman in general is because, according to him, that would be a stupid thing to do. So, he decides to focus his attention on a particular manifestation of the political women: the *beata política*. But, by doing so he loses the only premise that he had when he started discussing the issue: that he is writing about women. Moreover, that no matter what shape this unsolvable problem might embody, he knew that it was a female one. Now he cannot know, since the *marimacho* (tomboy) and the male tyrant are part of his/her movements as well. Is this another effect of the political (wo)man? Is she/he laughing at him behind his backs? Is he part of her/his games?¹¹⁹ I do not know. The writer-reader then states that since some mysteries of nature are unreachable for human knowledge, they can only be known through their manifestations. And the only thing that is clear about the *beata política* is that she constantly betrays her ‘natural’ companion:

[f]or her every weapon is good, [he asserts] even denouncement, treason, felony, because her creed is well known ‘the end justifies the means.’ She has a spiritual director, a kind

¹¹⁷ To criticise the patriarchal core of psychoanalysis, Hélène Cixous resorts to the idea of the *Laugh* of the Medusa; a female mythological figure depicted as a deadly beautiful woman who was turned into a monster-like being after being raped by Poseidon, and who was later decapitated by Perseus. Hence, she is a woman and then a female being who was victim of the brutality of male violence, but she still laughs at them. Cixous, against Freud’s uses of this myth as the symbol for the castration complex, vindicates this figure in order to represent female writing and its way of disrupting the patriarchal economy of sexual opposition. The Medusa writes against men’s fear of castration with *laughter*, as a woman who does not lack a phallus because, as Cixous asserts, ‘[y]ou only have to look at the Medusa straight on to see her. And she’s not deadly. She’s beautiful and she’s laughing. Men say that there are two unrepresentable things: death and the feminine sex. That’s because they need femininity to be associated with death; it’s the jitters that gives them a hard-on! for themselves! They need to be afraid of us’ (Cixous, Hélène, *The Laugh of the Medusa*, Trans. Cohen, Keith & Cohen, Paula (Signs, Vol. 1, No. 4, Summer 1976), 887).

¹¹⁸ ‘La Beata Política’, 1.

¹¹⁹ Cixous’ words resound with laughter: ‘[a] feminine text cannot fail to be more than subversive. It is volcanic; as it is written it brings about an upheaval of the old property crust, carrier of masculine investments; there’s no other way. There’s no room for her if she’s not a he. If she’s a her-she, it’s in order to smash everything, to shatter the framework of institutions, to blow up the law, to break up the “truth” with laughter’ (Cixous, 888).

of inquisitor of her conscience, if she has one, he is the only one she obeys, the only one she believes in and the only one for whom she would give up the faith that she swore at the feet of the altars to her natural companion.¹²⁰

The antinatural condition of the *beata política* is produced by the fact that she is under the influence of an external will that commands her to betray her partner, and thus to disrupt all the natural order of reason with all its categories.¹²¹ One of the multiple effects of this phenomenon is that it unsettles the distribution of sexual difference, and therefore, the object/subject distinction. Thus, our savant has no choice but to put an end to his reasonings by claiming:

I do not want to digress. I just want to say that the *Veata Política (sic)* has a heart formed in a way that differs from *real women*, however, this will be the issue of another article and with this preamble the rest will fall under its own weight (my emphasis).¹²²

By announcing a future article that was never published, the writer puts an end to his meditations by claiming that the *beata política* is not a real woman. Once more, by means of a supranatural contamination the male worker's partner begins her/his (ex)change through multiple forms and shapes, taking different values, but without ultimately being the woman/wife/mother that she/he is supposed to be.

Conclusion: The (Ex)Change Always Already Took Place

By means of reading stories about the transition of working-class women from the factory to the convent via the brothel, I have repeatedly found the same movement of (ex)change and commodification of bodies at play. It does not matter how or where this happens, since everything and everyone can always take the place of the other. The only certainty in this hyperbolic brothel is that the transaction with all that implies is inexorable. Therefore, by

¹²⁰ 'La Beata Política', 1.

¹²¹ The narrative of the *beata*'s lustfulness and desire for priests was preserved and immortalized by the Chilean Communist folk singer Victor Jara, who in the 70s wrote a song entitled *La Beata*. The song goes: '[o]ne day the beata was sick / sick of a sea / of love, the one to blame / was the priest confessor // *Chiribiribiribiri, chiribiribiribón* / The beata liked / the thing with the priest // She did not want anyone to put her his shoe nor a big-shoe / only the old sandals of the priest confessor / She did not want anyone to put her a blanket nor a big-blanket/ only the old robe/ of the priest confessor' (La beata (Jara, Victor in: Canto por Traversura, Santiago: Dicap, 1973).

¹²² 'La Beata Política', 1.

unpacking the ways in which this substitution is performed by the traders embodied by the dandy, the priest and the brothel keeper; and how the female proletarian is (ex)changed for the prostitute and the *beata*, I showed how these figures maintain the flow of currencies and identities. According to this male narrative, the transmutation or metamorphosis that shapes these female bodies is constituted on the basis of a ‘first’ transaction that has always already taken place. Afterwards, these women lose their proper identity by becoming nothing more than their exchange value. Thus, it is important to consider that these patriarchal moralistic critiques of the state of exploitation not only reveal the morally conservative values of these male workers, but also their own ways of grasping, conceptualizing and representing the dynamics and principles of a market economy. The uses of these macho tropes taken from popular culture to depict a social universe where women are commodified to the point of losing their proper name and identity, operates in an analogous way when the male orphan (*huacho*) is represented by the Chilean working-class press. In the following chapter I will analyse the story of the prostitute’s son who is raised by ‘unnatural’ institutional supplements of the mother. In other words, I will trace the story of the Chilean male orphan (*huacho*) that the prostitute ‘left’ to his fate.

CHAPTER 5: ONLY *HUACHOS* REMAIN

He grew up as a *huacho* without a name or origin... he also had filthy and malnourished children that scattered the blood of the Azcoitía all over the region (José Donoso).¹

What was I thinking? Did I have the right to mess with mom's life? Where was the obligation she had to take care of me? Didn't I realize what she was sacrificing for a *huacho* like me? (Alfredo Gómez Morel).²

A) Tracing the *Huacho's* Lineage

I left the working-class woman trapped in workshops, brothels and convents. However, the story does not end there. In her process of commodification sometimes she gives birth to the illegitimate child of the *patrón*/priest/bourgeois. I briefly addressed the figure of the working-class son in Chapter 3, and analysed how in some stories of the working-class press he appears as the archetype of the uprooted male proletarian whose revolutionary task it is to learn the truth about his origins in order to recuperate his mother's abundance.³ I also addressed the paradox that while he remains ignorant of this truth, he will be no more than a residue of his mother's process of commodification, and he will be doomed to take the bestial form of the slave, drunk, criminal or sodomite. In this chapter I will delve deeper into this motif through the figure known in Chilean popular culture as the *huacho*.⁴

In his now classic *Ser niño Huacho en la Historia de Chile*,⁵ Gabriel Salazar claims that the *huacho's* camaraderie constitutes the historical origin of Chilean proletarian

¹ Donoso, José, *El Obsceno pájaro de la noche* (Barcelona: Editorial Seix Barral, 1970), 360).

² Gómez, Alfredo, *El río* (Santiago: Tajamar Editores, 2014), 31).

³ I treated this issue in Chapter 3, Section D) *The Loss of the Mother*.

⁴ It is believed that the etymological origin of the word *huacho* comes from both the Mapuche word *huachu* and the Aimara *huajcha*. These two words derive from the Quéchua word *huak'cho* that stands for an individual without goods, for any object that has lost its pair, for an animal or human that has been sold or tamed, for a plant that has grown without being planted on the ground and, of course, for illegitimate sons. All these meanings are still present in the uses of the word *huacho* in Chilean slang. See: Gonzales, Diego, *Vocabulario general de todo el Peru llamada lengua o Quichua o del Inca* (Lima: Real Audiencia, 1608), 161.

⁵ Salazar, Gabriel, *Ser niño huacho en la historia de Chile (siglo XIX)* (LOM: Santiago, 2009).

consciousness and national popular identity.⁶ The *huachos* were at the inception of the urban working class and this should not come as a surprise considering that, as the historian claims, by 1885 the Chilean population of under 15 years-olds represented 42.9% of the registered national population. And, by the beginning of the twentieth century, he estimates that 66% of registered children in urban districts were illegitimate.⁷ Hence, it is not strange that the Chilean working-class press is packed with references, tales and articles about orphans that, in line with the tradition of the *mestizo*,⁸ forged an imaginary of shared ‘orphanhood’ that is at the core of the Chilean popular identity. The stories of countless children that grow up bearing their maternal surname alone, and who became the most precarious and rebellious sector of the working class, are the basis of the history of a people that cannot be identified, and whose narrative always commences from scratch. This kind of ‘*huacho* way of being Chilean’ that paradoxically identifies the people by their shared lack of identified origin can even be traced back to the ‘foundations’ of the Nation. As an ironic metaphor, Bernardo O’Higgins Riquelme, the man that is considered to be the ‘Father of the Nation’ was a *huacho* himself⁹ and his detractors used to call him ‘*Huacho* O’Higgins’ or ‘Roto Riquelme’, as the Poet Pablo de Rokha writes while vindicating this illegitimate origin in his poem *Caballos de acero*.¹⁰

⁶ By identifying himself as a historian and a *huacho*, Salazar asserts that ‘our camaraderie of “huachos” constitutes the historical origin of proletarian consciousness in Chile! A primary “class instinct” that – for good or bad – was for us more important than family instinct. We were, because of that, the first and strongest foundation of popular identity in this country’ (Salazar, 47).

⁷ Salazar, 2009, 77-79.

⁸ I address the importance of the *mestizo* and the problem of orphanhood for Latin American culture and literature in the Introduction of Part II entitled *Dissecting the Reproductive system of the Labour Force*.

⁹ The national historiography considered colonel Bernardo O’Higgins Riquelme to be the Father of the Nation due to his role during the revolution of independence and because he became the first and only Supreme Director of the nation. He was the illegitimate son of an Irish trader who, in the words of the Liberal politician and historian Luis Miguel Amunátegui, ‘gave to his son science and goods; but there was one thing that the young man reclaimed with justice, but that he refused him out of pride. It was the noble surname of O’Higgins that the renowned marquis tenaciously denied to the son of his love. In the same clause of his will where he left him a *hacienda*, he clearly expressed the prohibition for his son to carry his surname, calling him Bernardo Riquelme. However, the ennobled silly merchant [*mercanchifle enoblecido*], the recently named Baron, the entitled of Castilla by gold and intrigue, did not believe that his bastard son was worthy of inheriting a name as bestowed as his. In that regard, the Viceroy was hugely mistaken and, forgetting the modesty of his origins assumed the vanity of a rancid aristocrat’ (Amunátegui, Luis Miguel, *La Dictadura de O’Higgins* (Santiago: Imprenta Litografía i Encuadernación Barcelona, 1853), 38).

¹⁰ Rokha, Pablo De, *Caballos de Acero*, In: *Antología. 1916- 1953* (Santiago: Multitud, 1954), 421).

In contemporary Chile, the word *huacho* is still used in Chilean slang with all its Quechua homonyms.¹¹ However, this word is also used as a way to refer to close friends or partners in a positive manner.¹² Therefore, by means of the resignification of this former derogatory term, every Chilean can be someone else's *huacho* or *huacha*. The term was also reclaimed by the anti-poet Nicanor Parra when he labelled as Jazz Huachaca or Guachaca a genre of Chilean music inspired by *Jazz Manouche*. As a consequence, nowadays almost every artistic or cultural artefact or production of Chilean popular culture is labelled as part of the *Huachaca Culture*.¹³ I took this small detour as an attempt to illuminate the textual references that emerge when dealing with the figure of the *huacho* in Chilean popular culture. There is a lot to be said, but because of the lack of space and the indeterminacy of the problem itself, I must be brief. Regarding this particular work, I will limit myself to anticipating that the Chilean working-class scene of writing seems to be forged on the basis of a '*huacho writing*' [*escritura huacha*] that depends on a constant process of identification that operates through the de-identification and erasure of the worker's origins. I will try now (and fail) to recover this thread in the working-class press.

B) The Motif of the *Huacho* in the Working-Class Press

In a periodical article entitled 'Un error profundo. LA REVOLUCIÓN SOCIAL' ['A Profound Error. THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION']¹⁴ a writer-reader denounces the fact that many workers share the mistaken belief that the education of children (as future revolutionaries) should be the responsibility of social organizations, parties and trade unions. He argues that the best way to cultivate the hate and rage that are the catalysts of any violent

¹¹ Lenz, Rodolfo, *Diccionario etimológico de las voces chilenas derivadas de lenguas indígenas americanas* (Santiago: Imprenta Cervantes, 1910), 359-362.

¹² The movements of re-signification of this word are very similar to the way in which some words that are originally understood as derogatory terms, such as faggot/marica, queer or black/negro have become expressions that vindicate counter-hegemonic identities. In the case of the word *huacho* it could be said that it has displaced the figure of the *Huaso* (the Chilean equivalent of the Argentinian Gaucho) and the figure of the *Roto* as forms of popular identification.

¹³ To know more about the uses of the word huachaca in Chilean popular culture see: Hunneus, Pablo, *La cultura huachaca, o, El aporte de la televisión* (Santiago: Editora Nueva Generación, 1981).

¹⁴ 'Un error profundo. LA REVOLUCIÓN SOCIAL', *José Arneró* (Santiago: April 22 1909), 2- 3.

revolutionary rebellion is to leave this task to mothers. To prove his point, he uses an exemplary story that relates the leitmotif of the *huacho*. He writes:

[L]et us imagine that behind the black curtains of misery, one of those disinherited of all fortune that we called pariahs is born into public light; the mother gives birth to him in the most horrendous pain and not even counting on a sympathetic hand to prepare the concoction that should serve as food and tonic, without even the presence of the father of that being whom with so much pain she is giving birth to, since he [the father] is a golden aristocrat who does not care that his offspring will inhabit asylums or cemeteries (my emphasis).¹⁵

There is nothing new here. The protagonist of this exemplary story is born in total deprivation as a direct effect of the indifference of his aristocratic father. Nevertheless, the quotation introduces two new possible outcomes for the *huacho*: his death or his confinement in an asylum. One of the main characteristics that the working-class press attributes to the *huacho*'s life is his tendency to become institutionalized. By way of anticipation, I should add that institutions such as schools, the army, asylums and prisons serve an analogous role for male workers as factories, brothels and convents serve for female workers. But let us not get ahead of ourselves.

The writer-reader then continues to narrate how poverty and hunger drives the mother of this child to become a sex worker. Until one day, after she offers one last time her:

body now withered as a consequence of the [constant] friction [with other bodies], she will be rejected by men, [then,] she will go home and alongside her son, will curse everything that surrounds her, she will teach him to hate his own father and this will awaken in his heart the rage for or the love of vengeance.¹⁶

The fundamental revolutionary teachings that the writer-reader is making a case for are set in motion by the 'taking out of circulation' of the prostitute. It is at that exact moment that the real education begins, she goes back home and talks to her son. Only then, in a context of extreme poverty and anger, will the prostitute/mother/commodity be able to teach her own flesh and blood how to hate his father. This is a type of education that no institution will ever be able to convey. The *huacho*, this exemplary child that repeats the stories of many other illegitimate sons of 'aristocrats', can become the strongest opponent of the bourgeoisie only

¹⁵ 'Un error profundo', 2-3.

¹⁶ 'Un error profundo', 2-3.

if he is raised by his mother, who will teach him the principles of revolutionary insurrection framed in terms of avenging his family. However, it is important to remember that once again the role of women is constrained to display their fate in front of men so they can become revolutionaries, but not to take part in the revolution themselves.

Here is where the ideal path of the *huacho* commences, but how much will he have to endure before being able to truly hate his father? Will he ever hate his father? Especially considering that many *huachos* never even get to meet their mothers or are separated from them at an early age. This version of the story is introduced in the text ‘Remember’ (in English in the original), published in the paper *La Batalla* [*The Battle*].¹⁷ This text introduces a man who is rambling and reflecting on his life while being on a ship that is departing from the shore. Nobody knows where the ship is heading or where is coming from. The only thing that matters is that in between the departure and the arrival, there is a space of suspension that allows this man to distance himself from his *motherland* in order to meditate on his past. He recalls his impoverished childhood, his endless famished state of vagrancy and his barefoot wanderings. He strolls through his memories without arriving at a final destiny until ‘his face becomes gloomy and, on his eyelids a tear [falls], and he says to himself: my mother! Who could be my mother?’¹⁸ This man did not meet his mother. The only thing he knows about her is what a barkeeper told him once. And repeating the barkeeper’s words out loud he says:

I met your parents; your mother was called Rafaela, she was a beautiful girl with big eyes and blond and messy hair; she was extremely poor and worked as a maid in the house of the Letona family (pointing to a stately house of modern architecture). One night the little master [*señorito*] Enrique, son of Don Marcial, went out to play baccarat at the Club of the night owls, there the spirituous champagne awoke in him a lustful desire, he saw how your poor mother, that modest and demure Rafaela, was preparing her stiff bed to devote herself to rest, [then] he tainted by force the purity of that wretched girl, who not long after was shamed and dismissed for obscenity and for corrupting the little master Enrique. She could not survive that dishonour and passed away on a

¹⁷ ‘Remember’, *La Batalla* (Santiago: Second week of November 1913), 1.

¹⁸ ‘Remember’, 1.

miserable hospital pallet when giving birth to you; your father died at the age of 26 suffering from severe venereal diseases.¹⁹

The resemblance between the two texts and the use of the leitmotif of the *huacho* is evident. Even though this man did not meet his mother, he is told that his parents are a maid and a *señorito*, and thanks to that he gets to realize the extent to which this fact predefined his coming sorrows and hardships.

For the rest of the text a narrator takes the floor and continues this man's story. He says that after the mother of the *huacho* dies, he is left in the care of a Catholic school. In that place:

a priest with a parchment-like face of sensual look, used to stroke him with his flabby hands that looked like the belly of a batrachian, until one afternoon, [the priest] with a toneless and faltering voice asked him to do nauseating things... He rejected [him] and ran away from such filthiness.²⁰

But his freedom did not last long. A couple of days after, 'a jealous guardian of the public order saw him sleeping in a doorway and, after beating him, arrested him and he was enlisted into that aberration of humanity called the Army; but whose real name is the school of crime.'²¹ This orphan boy is constantly dragged from one institution to another where he is mistreated and abused. Now, as the narrator continues, he is on a ship, wandering through the ocean and his memories, while trying to make sense of his life. It is interesting that although this man did not have a mother who could teach him the truth, he was lucky enough to meet a barkeeper who told him how to hate his father. This because, as the narrator concludes:

today on a ship deck, he carries, soaked in his soul, the lesson that at the expense of several mishaps he learned: the brutal and lustful appetite of a wealthy scrounger who threw him into the world and of the powers legally constituted who made him a victim.'²²

Despite the fact that he never met his mother, it seems that there is a space of hope, a revolutionary promise at work that could lead the *huacho* to hate 'the wealthy scrounger who threw him into the world.' At this point I could conclude that the institutionalization of the *huacho* does not necessarily preclude him from becoming a potential revolutionary, and that

¹⁹ 'Remember', 1.

²⁰ 'Remember', 1.

²¹ 'Remember', 1.

²² 'Remember', 1.

it is still possible for him to hate his father in the absence of his mother. Nevertheless, there is a counter effect of the institutionalization of children that works against this possibility. It is a threat that was already anticipated in the form of a perverse proposal to a child which, even though the *huacho* managed to evade once, always returns to the scene. This counter effect is outlined in the text ‘Los Romanismos’ (The Romanisms), published in the paper *La Tromba*.²³ In this article a writer-reader, using an inflammatory rhetoric, regrets that:

[s]hockingly, our youth is degenerating rapidly. In boarding schools, in charity asylums, in correctional schools, in jails and prisons, in the clergy’s convents and monasteries, in hospitals, in mental asylums, and everywhere that men and women live in solitude, in celibacy and in permanent and constant friction with people of their own sex, the solitary vices, sodomy and pederasty are worshipped.²⁴

According to the writer-reader it seems that all these institutions produce the same effect: men, either by solitude or by being separated from the opposite sex, are driven to perform ‘unnatural sexual practises.’ It does not matter where this happens, if it is in an asylum, school, convent or in military barracks, either way the future male worker degenerates into a ‘sodomite’ or an ‘onanist.’

As the writer-reader continues, these ‘practises’ bring catastrophic consequences for the working class. He states that ‘[i]mpotency and sterility, almost always the outcomes of these *vices counter to nature*, are already a disastrous plague that mitigate the reproductive strength of our race, and [are generating] a crisis that kills many men and women in their midlife.’²⁵ It is not the first time that masturbation and homosexuality are linked to the decimation of the population. In Chapter 3, I analysed the way in which the text ‘¡Oh, mujer divina.....!’ posits the practise of ‘unnatural sexual practises’ by working-class women as a direct cause for a subsequent general state of sickness and madness. Nevertheless, here I am approaching the other side of the issue. That is, the question of the way in which men are affected by these practises. The writer-reader does not treat this problem in this text. But he announces that in subsequent issues he will publish different studies of ‘the utmost importance’ about the origin, causes, propagation and effects of these ‘vices’; he also adds that his studies will be complemented with an exposition of the main ‘curative procedures

²³ ‘Los Romanismos’, *La Tromba* (Santiago: March 6 1898), 5.

²⁴ ‘Los Romanismos’, 5.

²⁵ ‘Los Romanismos’, 5.

and *methods of conjuration* and extermination' (my emphasis).²⁶ It is interesting to consider the words and concepts that are at play in this quotation. On the one hand, the writer-reader refers to sodomy and onanism in terms of contagious disease, therefore, as a structural disorder that affects the organism from the outside. On the other hand, there is a Judaeo-Christian influence at work. He writes that in all the institutions that he mentioned, people worshipped [*rinde culto*] these 'vices', as if these 'diseases' were not only spread by the enactment of sexual practises, but also by the formation of a secret cult. Consequently, the only way to eradicate this 'evil', as he continues, is by *conjuring* it. In other words, it is necessary to purify the bodies of men by getting rid of this foreign cult/virus in order to 'restore' the health of the population. Thus, an antibody must secure the border that demarcates the proper working-class text/body from this textual/viral evil.

But what do these vices 'counter to nature' produce in the subject? The only study published as a continuation of the article 'Los Romanismos' is a text entitled 'Onanismo' [Onanism].²⁷ This article provides a very interesting insight into the effects of one of these 'unnatural practises.' According to the writer-reader, '[the effects of] this vice, which had already invaded the majority of the feminine sex, is much more devastating and degenerative in men.'²⁸ He posits this problematic statement as an a priori maxim on which he anchors the rest of his argument: even though onanism is more common among women, it affects men's health in a much more radical way.

He then reinforces the narrative that the origin of the 'vice' is inextricably related to places of confinement by asserting that onanism:

must have been born in the first days of the religious institution, when chastity was imposed through the force of punishment and the threat of hell. Men of that time, born in the noon of sensualism – as History proves –, used to have a hot and lustful constitution that did not allow them the [practise of] venereal sobriety and betrayed them while Nature's back was turned. That is why we see that masturbation is epidemic among religious fanatics and, especially, in convents of both sexes or in houses of confinement

²⁶ 'Los Romanismos', 5.

²⁷ 'Onanismo', *La Tromba* (Santiago: second week of March 1898) 5-6.

²⁸ 'Onanismo', 5.

and isolation, such as prisons, seminaries, boarding schools, hospitals, barracks and war vessels, etc.²⁹

The writer-reader keeps drawing conclusions without sustaining his claims, because according to him ‘history proves it.’ But, he is just reproducing what seems to be common (and even natural) knowledge for the working class. The main principle that governs the process of collective degeneration that the Chilean youth is suffering from consists in ‘the fact’ that isolation and confinement leads to the enactment of ‘abnormal’ sexual practises. But still, how does this degeneration even work? He adds that ‘[t]he effects of onanism are greater than those of syphilis and those of sodomy. The masturbator begins with the obstruction of the functional movement of the genital organ and concludes with the loss of memory and reason.’³⁰ Hence, according to the writer-reader’s logic, ‘onanism’ is the greatest threat for the working-class male, even more dangerous than syphilis and sodomy, since it basically leads the subject to madness. In a paradoxical manner, sexuality seems to be inextricably linked to reason and, therefore, to the possibility of the individual becoming a revolutionary. But that is not all:

[e]verything that I have said [he asserts] would be a trivial matter if the masturbator, after having surrendered and corrupted his whole organism, did not *metamorphose, destroying his psychic and moral sympathy and violating the laws of harmony, the character and soul of his being*. The wretched individual who is a victim of masturbation loses his moral and material sensibility, falls before the seductive empire of women, who push him further into perdition and deviancy, because they exert on him a false and fake or erroneous influence. He loses his courage, dignity, affect, tenderness and his natural grandeur by becoming an eating animal, lazy, stupid, ignorant, feminine, cowardly, useless and despicable (my emphasis).³¹

In this quotation every dimension of the problem that I have been treating is addressed. Onanism triggers a form of metamorphosis in which the male individual’s identity and body are displaced by a chain of animal features that are associated with a lack of reason and a consequent feminization of the subject. This conception of femininity not only brings forward a highly problematic portrayal of women as intellectually inferior to men, but also reinforces

²⁹ ‘Onanismo’, 5-6.

³⁰ ‘Onanismo’, 6.

³¹ ‘Onanismo’, 6.

the idea that women are deceitful and treacherous. They seem to be constantly ‘plotting against men.’ It is as if they want to make them fall into this monstrous process of animalization/feminization. Therefore, as the writer-reader concludes, the only way to remedy the effects of this ‘vice,’ is by restoring the natural order, that is, for men to regain (sexual) dominion over women in general. He asserts that ‘[s]ince onanism is no more than an attack against Nature, there is no other remedy than to put the venereal machine back on the right sexual track. That is, by the moderate and methodical exercise of the natural act or coitus.’³² By means of engineering a metaphor of mechanics, the writer-reader warns the workers about the urgent need for them to recover the expropriated body of women in order to restore their lost manhood. The only problem here is that, as I have been anticipating, what characterizes the institutionalization of working-class boys is their separation from the opposite sex.

C) The Working-Class Boy Enters the Catholic School

According to the working-class narrative, the first institution that the working-class child encounters is the Catholic School. I already treated the way in which the clergy takes control over working-class women (see Chapter 4 Section E), now I will focus exclusively on the way in which the working-class press portrays the interaction between the clergy and boys. Nevertheless, both types of encounter are inherently related.

The public discussions surrounding the sexual abuse of children perpetrated by the clergy in Chile can be traced back to a particular scandal that took place in December of 1904. In the aristocratic school of San Jacinto, the 8-year-old son of a conservative member of Congress was sexually abused by a priest. The child told this to his family and his father publicly denounced the crime.³³ This was the starting point of a heated debate between liberals and conservatives regarding the necessity of promoting secular primary education and the need to separate the Church from the State.³⁴ It goes without saying that this was not

³² ‘Onanismo’, 6.

³³ Ramírez, Hugo, *La Cuestión del Colegio San Jacinto y sus consecuencias políticas, sociales y religiosas, 1904 -1905*, In: *Revista Repositorio Historia Universidad Católica de Chile* Vol. 18 (Santiago: Universidad Católica, 1983), 193-234.

³⁴ The Church was separated from the state in 1925.

the first time that a child was molested or abused by a priest. However, since the event took place in one of the most iconic schools of the elite and the victim was the son of a powerful politician, this case was the first one to be made public. It is also important to add that the school was run by the Archbishop Mariano Casanova, a staunch opponent of the secularization campaign.³⁵ In this context, the San Jacinto school scandal presented the perfect opportunity for the anti-clerical parties to instigate a public campaign meant to convince the public of the immorality of the Church. The Radical party published a pamphlet called ‘La moral católica en los colejos congregacionistas’ [‘Catholic Morality in Congregational Schools’],³⁶ which was shortened and reproduced in their liberal periodical *La Lei*. This text narrates the case of San Jacinto school and calls upon the people to mistrust the clergy.³⁷ This text constitutes an unprecedented blow to the public image of the Church, especially since it served to substantiate with an actual case all the ‘stories’ about the clergy that were circulating in the liberal, anti-clerical, satirical and working-class press since the 1870’s.

The bourgeois press published articles about the scandal and its repercussions emphasising the importance of this political conflict. However, after a couple of months of heated discussions, the scandal ended with the closure of the school and with the perpetrators being transferred to other countries as ‘punishment.’³⁸ The debate regarding the separation between Church and State was dropped and the bourgeois press avoided referring to the San Jacinto Scandal and to other cases that came after. In this context, the working-class press wavered and then criticized the actual impact of this anticlerical campaign ruled by the dynamics of party politics and the ‘bourgeois press.’ This state of mistrust is very well represented in the article ‘Lo que ví en Santiago’ [‘What I Saw in Santiago’], which reproduces the fictional memoirs of a worker apprentice who returns to his hometown after

³⁵ For many years Casanova led a very strong campaign against liberals, radicals and the working-class press of the time through his publications in the *Diario Ilustrado*, *El Porvenir* and *La Revista Católica*.

³⁶ Ramírez, 195-203.

³⁷ As a precedent to this campaign, Juan Agustín Palazuelos, director and founder of the periodical *La Lei*, published the book *Los Papas a través de la historia* written by the anarchist and deputy of the Sociedad Obrera Avelino Samorati to commemorate the first year since his excommunication. This constituted not only a provocation to the Church, but also the beginning of a broader campaign to discredit the clergy by referring to sexual practises.

³⁸ Heise, Julio, *Historia de Chile: El periodo Parlamentario* (Santiago: Editorial Andrés Bello, 1974), 205.

spending a couple of years living in the capital.³⁹ He regrets that the first thing that comes to his mind is the San Jacinto scandal,

[b]ut what head of mine! [he asserts] The first thing that I remember is this affair of the San Jacinto School. How much was spoken and how much was written [about it]! And for what? The outcome was: they made more propaganda for the vice, and because many wanted to know what it was about, it became a trend.⁴⁰

It is interesting to read this quotation considering what I have stated about the ‘worshipping of the vice’ as a form of contagion by words and the need to face it by *conjuring* it. It is as if proper working-class writing operates in an analogous manner to ‘proper sex’, and thus any ‘bourgeois text’, no matter the intention behind it, always expands and disseminates the so-called ‘vices counter to nature.’⁴¹

In this context, the working-class press launched their own campaign which radicalized the original publication of the Radical Party by resorting to the motifs of contagion, degeneration and de-identification that I have encountered in other cases. Interestingly enough, in contrast to the subsequent silence of the elites regarding the scandal, the popular, satirical and working-class press started to use the name *Jacinto* as a derogatory label that stands for homosexuals in general.⁴² Hence, the writers-readers began to use the ‘proper name’ *Jacinto* in a way that exceeds its reference to a specific school or scandal, and assimilated it, in a clearly homophobic manner, to a disease-like phenomenon that can be spread, repeated and actualized in other common cases to come.

³⁹ ‘Lo que ví en Santiago (en 1905)’, *José Arnero* (Santiago: January 20 1906), 3-4.

⁴⁰ ‘Lo que ví en Santiago’, 3.

⁴¹ I address this problem of proper (working-class) writing in contrast to improper or bourgeois writing and its relation to the problem of inter-class contagion in Chapter 1.

⁴² The clearest example of this is the creation of a section called *Jacintazos* in the periodical *José Arnero*. This section is devoted to the public denouncement of ‘homosexual practises’ in Santiago. As an example, I will quote one of their publications: ‘[t]o the young Jacinto Cosme of 322 Jofré street: stop inviting kids to *jacintear*, otherwise we will tell it to the old jacinto of Maestranza street [...] To the Little-jacinto la Sevillana: stop painting your face so much during the day because we could publish [about] the life you lead in Buenos Aires [...] To the Aristocratic *Jacinto* J.I.P: we have seen you twice *jacinteando* with the guard of the 8.º station behind the phone booth on the corner between Molina and Delicias street. If we see you again, we will publish the name and number of the guardian as well’ (‘Jacintazos’, *José Arnero* (Santiago: August 14 1905), 2).

The article ‘Siguen los escándalos Jacintianos. Ahora los Nolascos’ [‘The Jacintian scandals Continue. Now the Nolascos’]⁴³ resorts to this principle of iterability in order to posit the issue as part of a broader ongoing process of degeneration of the country as a whole. In response to a new scandal of sexual abuse, this time in the San Nolasco School, this text exposes the detrimental effects that pederasty and ‘sodomy’ are producing among the people by focusing its narrative on the idea of contagion. The writer-reader begins by referring to the state of corruption that the country is immersed in by asserting that:

[i]t is being seen and shown that our country has entered the path of the most shameless corruption. In all social circles, and especially in the leading ones, corruption has assumed the most alarming proportions. Not only men in their private interests are corrupt, *but the vice has taken control of every area: administrative, legislative and judicial*. The clergy, the roman priesthood that used to be the guarantor of virtue in this country, has little by little been degenerating until losing among thinking people the respect that used to be sacred for workers (my emphasis).⁴⁴

As the quotation shows, the text frames this issue in terms of class difference. Even though he clearly states that all classes are affected by the ‘vice’, he also claims that its effects are stronger in the ruling class. He also characterises this ‘disease’ with human features. It is as if the vice could operate as some kind of virus that not only affects the subject’s health, but that through the infected subject can also take control of institutions. This is especially relevant considering that, as I have been defending, institutions are the main focal point of the outbreaks of these same ‘vices.’ Hence, I could ask: does ‘this vice’ have an agenda? Why does it take control of the administrative, legislative and judicial powers? What does it want? Does it even have wants and desires? I do not know. The only thing that is clear is that all these calamities are being produced by something alien, a foreign element that has come from the ‘outside’ to infect and re-shape the nation. But paradoxically, even though this vice is depicted as a foreign virus, its origin and causes are always already found *inside* the community. As the text continues, the writer-reader posits the origin of the vice as a direct consequence of the isolation that the convents imposed on the clergy. He asserts that ‘[i]t is logical. Men who are confined in a convent, who profess chastity and claim to be ministers

⁴³ ‘Siguen los escándalos Jacintianos. Ahora los “Nolascos”’, *José Arnero* (Santiago: August 31 1905), 1-2.

⁴⁴ ‘Siguen los escándalos Jacintianos’, 1.

of God on earth, have gradually turned into crapulous, arrogant, prideful and selfish individuals and sodomites in front of the oppressed ones that suffer.’⁴⁵ It is logical, it is rational and its principle is crystal clear: if you lock up people of the same sex in a place and make them practise chastity they will ‘naturally’ develop all sorts of ‘vices counter to nature’ that will be spread to the rest of society when they leave their places of confinement.

From there, as the writer-reader continues, there are two forms of contagion. On the one hand, there is the actual practise of the vice within Catholic schools. On the other hand, there is a much subtler contagion which operates through writing. I am referring to the dissemination of the vice by the ‘bourgeois press’ and constituted powers which, being unable to deplore and punish these crimes (maybe because they are already controlled by them), legitimate and propagate them when addressing the scandals. He refers to this issue using as an example the San Jacinto case as follows:

[n]ot long ago, society saw one of its most distinguished boys being prey to the lust and corruption of a brother of the Christian Schools. Everyone was outraged, they demanded a severe punishment for the guilty ones (for it was discovered that there were many other perpetrators of the same crime). A fuss was made. Ordinary tribunals showed a certain interest in punishing the crime; but the Archbishop and his entourage intervened, and the issue did not constitute more than a well performed farce: the sodomites escaped with impunity and this impunity established the free and correct functioning of sodomy in convents and Catholic schools.⁴⁶

Hence, because of the intervention of the Archbishop the perpetrators were not punished and all the campaign that the anti-clerical parties and the liberal press put forward was turned into a form of institutionalization of pederasty and sodomy by means of a ‘well performed farce.’ According to the writer-reader the effects of this did not take long to appear. The cases began to multiply at an alarming rate and, as he regrets, another aristocratic school (the school of San Pedro Nolásco), also in the charge of the ones he calls ‘the mercenary fathers of this capital [Santiago], shamed once again the Chilean people.’⁴⁷ Filled with shame thus he adds that:

⁴⁵ ‘Siguen los escándalos Jacintianos’, 1.

⁴⁶ ‘Siguen los escándalos Jacintianos’, 2.

⁴⁷ ‘Siguen los escándalos Jacintianos’, 2.

[t]his vice used to be almost unknown among us; but celibates, men who live in cloisters, because they are just brothers, don't have the opportunity that priests have to cultivate sexual relations with the opposite sex in the confessional, succumb to the most repulsive of crimes.⁴⁸

This quotation is interesting for two reasons. Firstly, it brings back the motif of the necessity for men to have 'natural sex' in order to prevent all sorts of calamities from happening.⁴⁹ Secondly, by postulating that the 'vice' originated due to the lack of interactions with the 'opposite sex', he introduces a hierarchy in the sexual threats that affects the working class. If I am to be faithful to the consequences of the write-reader's words, I should conclude that 'sodomy' is worse than the sexual abuse and rape of women in the confessional setting.⁵⁰ It seems that in this state of affairs in which 'sodomy' is taking control over men in general, it becomes 'preferable' that the clergy abuse working-class woman than for them to develop 'the vice' that is undermining the masculinity of the (male) nation as a whole. Accordingly, the writer-reader concludes by addressing the (male) people, 'Chileans: yesterday we were virile and immaculate men; today we are weak faggots [*maricas*].'⁵¹ By means of excluding women from the idea of the Nation, he reveals the extent of the 'contagion' using a paradoxical masculine 'we' that includes him as well. Then, by following the passage from an originary (even mythical) Chilean masculinity to a state of general feminization of the nation, it could be said that this text, because of its impure origin, is serving a double purpose. On the one hand, it reinforces the working-class narrative about sexual abuse perpetrated by the clergy in order to create awareness among the people. On the other hand, the writer-reader recognizes himself as part of this already infected 'we', which implies that his words might serve to propagate and promote the 'vice' instead of *conjuring* it. It is also paramount to consider that since I am thinking in terms of contagion here, the notion of victim and perpetrator becomes almost undifferentiated. In all the texts that I have analysed so far, children and young men appear as victims only before the 'infection' takes place. That is to say, they are victims only in relation to the potentiality of an event that might happen in the future, but not as actual victims of an event that already took place. This ambiguity regarding

⁴⁸ 'Siguen los escándalos Jacintianos', 2.

⁴⁹ I treat this issue in Chapter 3 Section E) *The lost lover*.

⁵⁰ I treated this issue in Chapter 4 Section E) *The convent/brothel where she dwells*.

⁵¹ 'Siguen los escándalos Jacintianos', 2.

the idea of the victim is due to the problem that after sexual abuse takes place, according to the narrative of the working-class press, the boy becomes a ‘sodomite’ himself, a *Jacinto*. Therefore, in this becoming victim of children, the contagion takes place, and, in the blink of an eye, the subject passes to the side of the perpetrators and gets excluded from the revolutionary *telos*. Thus, how could someone tell the difference between a text that propagates the vice and one that *conjures* it?

This association between sodomy and ‘bourgeois writing’ is addressed in the text ‘Los caftens y la prensa’ [‘The Pimps and the Press’], published in the paper *El Productor* [*The Producer*].⁵² This article, in a highly ironic tone, refers to the way in which:

[t]he serious press of this capital discovered in the October just gone a plague of poisonous insects that threaten to poison the pure environment and customs of this beautiful country, praised by poets for its blue sky, snowy range and every other beauty that delight those who visit us (my emphasis).⁵³

The text begins by introducing the recent interest that the ‘serious press’ seems to have in a specific issue: a plague has come to infect the country. The idea of external contamination is reinforced. Nonetheless, it is important not to disregard the ironic tone of the text. He continues: ‘[s]uddenly, the blue sky started to turn grey and... goodbye happiness, one day, the *caftens* [male pimps] appeared dressed as priests and another time as women, and their evil work began.’⁵⁴ A plague of male pimps that only appear in public sight by disguising their identity disrupted the idyllic and poetic images of the country and, by doing so; they corrupted the inner connection between nature and morality. But, who are these *caftens*? The article is specifically referring to the stir produced by two men (a priest and a man dressed as a woman) who were caught kissing in a public square.⁵⁵ What is interesting about this new ‘scandal’ is that, even though the writer-reader agrees with the denunciation of ‘immorality’ by the big periodicals, he accuses them of twisting the facts in order to use the scandal for their own political purposes. According to the worker-reader the ‘bourgeois press’ is taking

⁵² ‘Los caftens y la prensa’, *El Productor* (Santiago, November 1913), 3-4.

⁵³ ‘Los caftens y la prensa’, 3.

⁵⁴ ‘Los caftens y la prensa’, 3.

⁵⁵ According to this article the event took place on October 21 of 1913 in an iconic square situated in the city centre of Santiago called Plaza Brazil (‘Los caftens y la prensa’, 3).

advantage of this case to put forward an anti-immigration campaign⁵⁶ by claiming that both men were from Argentina. In contrast, the writer-reader asserts that:

as workers, we know perfectly well that that is not *la madre del cordero* [the case].

The *caftens* have been residing here for many years: they are from San Jacinto, San Pedro Nolasco, San José and from everywhere that individuals of the same sex are gathered. It is worth mentioning the barracks and especially naval ones.⁵⁷

Then again, the text reminds the reader that the ‘outbreak’ and later contagion originated and is cultivated from within the country, and that the ‘bourgeois press’ has managed to cover up the issue, promoting the ‘vice’ at the same time. Interestingly enough, the writer-reader knows this truth and can write it down because he belongs to the working class, as he claims. But, the purity of the working class is threatened by this same plague and, therefore, he is also exposed to all the illogical and mad effects of the ‘vice’.

I have analysed the way in which (the so-called) ‘sins against nature’ take control over institutions through infecting the ruling classes and the way in which through Catholic schools these ‘vices’ are spread to the people. Now I must trace the spread of this ‘vice’ in other institutions. After the orphan working-class boy, or *huacho*, finally manages to escape from the hands of the clergy, he gets enlisted in the army where his process of degeneration continues.

D) The *Huacho* Enters the Barracks

The article ‘¿Quereis ser soldado?’ [‘Do You Want To Be a Soldier?']⁵⁸ gathers all the figures that have supplanted and displaced the ideal male proletarian by defining the barracks as follows: ‘[t]he barracks is a brothel where young men lose their idea of being men by becoming slaves, sodomites, beasts of burden, human tigers, world murderers, executioners of the people, killers of progress and killers of humanity.’⁵⁹ Once more, there is a principle of (ex)changeability that affects and shapes the body and identity of the ideal worker who, after entering the barracks, can only appear on the scene as what he is not, that is, as an

⁵⁶ During 1913 a residence law was being discussed in parliament.

⁵⁷ ‘Los caftens y la prensa’, 3-4.

⁵⁸ ‘¿Quereis ser soldado?’, *José Arnero* (Santiago: April 15 1909), 2.

⁵⁹ ‘Quereis ser soldado?’, 2.

always already metamorphosised worker. It is also interesting to note that the setting in which this metamorphosis takes place is also (ex)changeable. The text commences by assimilating the barracks to a brothel and, as I stated in Chapter 4, this is not an innocent metaphor for the working-class press since it refers to a complex principle of substitutions and (ex)changes that is run by what I have called the *hyperbolic brothel*. I already analysed the role of men as customers in the transformation of working-class women into prostitutes/commodities. But, since now I am approaching a form of *hyperbolic brothel* that operates in segregated ‘masculine space’, it is worth asking, how is this principle of (ex)changeability triggered in the case of men? And how does it operate?

The article ‘La Instrucción obligatoria i la escuela del crimen (artículo dedicado a la juventud chilena)’ [‘Mandatory training and the school of crime (article dedicated to the Chilean Youth)’], published in the paper *El Acrata*,⁶⁰ extensively addresses the causes and effects of the enrolment of young male workers in the army. The writer-reader begins by arguing, from a very simplistic and idealistic point of view, that American countries do not need to imitate the European military because, in contrast to Europe, the continent could feed its current population forty times over.⁶¹ Accordingly, there would be no need to fight for land in the future and therefore no international antagonism or tensions could possibly arise in the Americas. Of course, this is a very weak argument, especially considering that during the nineteenth and early-twentieth century there were several international conflicts related to the demarcation of borders between the Latin American Nations.⁶² Nevertheless, the writer-reader omits this well-known information.

Then, quoting Tolstoy, he remarks that it is a mistake to believe that national armies are only conceived with the aim of defending national borders, since they are also meant for oppressing the working class of every country. Therefore, in a country where there it is seemingly no danger of international conflict the army could only serve as a mechanism of

⁶⁰ ‘La Instrucción obligatoria i la escuela del crimen (artículo dedicado a la juventud chilena)’, *El Acrata* (Santiago, September 15 1900), 2-3.

⁶¹ ‘La Instrucción obligatorio i la escuela del crimen’, 2.

⁶² For example, by the time this article was published Chile had already entered into conflict twice against Bolivia and Peru. And by the end of the Salpêtre War (also known as War of the Pacific), Chile had expanded its territory by annexing a former Bolivian territory which used to be its only access to the sea and where there were the main copper mines of the region –. It also worth considering the multiple wars and genocides perpetrated against the indigenous population within each State.

repression. Based on these two arguments (the supposed lack of international conflicts in the Americas and the uses of armies for internal repression), he addresses the main periodicals of the country claiming that:

[t]he bourgeois press, inspired by the base and petty calculus of sales and subscriptions, argues that the fatherland [patria] is in danger, that the national integrity is threatened and a thousand other standard phrases that the know-it-all paid journalists know by heart... The microcephalic soldiers claim in their conferences and in their fake publications that military instruction is necessary for educating the people in their civic duties, the love of labour, hygiene, good manners, the love of the fatherland and in obedience, which are the basis of order and prosperity, as they say (my emphasis).⁶³

He asserts that, since the bourgeois press is run by greed and lucre, it is incapable of articulating a truthful discourse,⁶⁴ and therefore, its campaign for the institution of a mandatory military instruction can only be grounded upon lies and (self-)interest.⁶⁵ Then the writer-reader directs the discussion to the question of the way in which this supposed education shapes the people. According to him, the bourgeois press defends a form of instruction that radically differs from the one promoted by the working-class press. The barracks' education, instead of preparing working-class men for the revolution (a form of education that is based upon the teachings of single mothers), is designed to impart a military training based upon the love of the *Fatherland* [*Patria*]. Consequently, as the writer-reader continues:

what these moralizing pimps or *priests* who wear *dormán*⁶⁶ and kepis forget or hide, is that the education that the people receive in the barracks consists in despising their

⁶³ 'La Instrucción obligatorio I la escuela del crimen', 2.

⁶⁴ See Chapter 1 Section C) *Worker's proper writing and truth*.

⁶⁵ The Chilean mandatory military instruction was introduced in the year 1900 after the act number 1.362 'de Reclutas y Reemplazos' ['Conscripts and Replacements'] was passed. In its first paragraph, this act specifies that 'every Chilean between the ages of 20 to 45 years-old, in capacity to carry guns, is compelled to serve in the Army of the Republic for a minimum of nine months.' It is noteworthy, that the parliamentary discussion about the mandatory military instruction was not only focused on ideas about National defense, but this instruction was also understood as the continuation of the education given by public schools which was meant, from a paternalist perspective, at teaching civic duties to the people (Maldonado, Carlos & Quiroga, Patricio, *El Prusianismo en las Fuerzas Armadas chilenas. Un estudio histórico, 1885-1945* (Santiago: Ediciones Documenta, 1988), 89-90).

⁶⁶ Jacket with badges and furs used as a uniform by different military troops and more specifically by the Hussars.

families or women for obeying men who are tyrannical, brutal, bestial and barbaric' (my emphasis).⁶⁷

As the quotation shows, this model of national education is based on the separation of the individual from his family. The young man that is subjected to military discipline learns that he must reject his loved ones in order to be prepared for the eventuality of having to repress or kill them in the future. Therefore, in contrast to the ideal maternal education that would allow the *huacho* to hate his father, this education imparted by 'priests wearing kepis' continues the endeavour of the Catholic school by breaking every bond that could illuminate the worker with the truth of his origin. Military instruction achieves this aim only by increasing the worker's condition of *huacho*, that is, by finally uprooting him from his genealogy and by erasing every possibility for him to become aware of the inequalities that surrounded his inception. It is interesting to note the recurrence of the word *patria* (fatherland) instead of *nación* (nation) or *país* (country) and its uses in the text, particularly since this word is semantically charged with paternal references.⁶⁸ So, even though this choice of word might seem fortuitous it is important to bear in mind that I have been discussing two different forms of education that are based upon the difference between loving/hating the mother or the father(land).

In relation to the issue of teaching civic duties, the writer-reader asserts that the man subjected to military education renounces his condition of 'man and citizen: his right to vote, his individual sovereignty, right of opinion, of residence, of reunion and association.'⁶⁹ everything and every right that distinguishes the modern citizen from the ancient slave.'⁷⁰ The working-class man that is enrolled in the army step by step loses not only the source of enlightening and revolutionary knowledge (the love for his mother), but also his will, character and individuality. He becomes a mere passive body that is run by an *external will*.⁷¹

⁶⁷ 'La Instrucción obligatorio I la escuela del crimen', 3.

⁶⁸ It derives from the Latin *pātrius* which stands for land of the father.

⁶⁹ Chilean women were granted the right to vote in 1934.

⁷⁰ 'La Instrucción obligatorio I la escuela del crimen', 3.

⁷¹ This phenomenon makes it harder to posit these individuals as part of the working class, since they become passive bodies that are run by a bourgeois will. Hence, the border that separates and distinguishes the working class from its other melts with the appearance of subjects that, because they have suffered the bourgeois contagion (for example the 'prostitute'), they remain in a space in-between the social classes. See the conclusion of Chapter 2 Section C) *The thing is to clap and whistle*.

He is no longer himself; subordination and discipline have turned him into a slave, into a beast of burden.

Finally, the writer-reader challenges the alleged love of labour and hygiene that the bourgeois press defends as outcomes of the military education. To do this, he refers to the work on Social Parasitism of E. Vandeverlde and G. Massar and more specifically, to the way in which they conceptualize the army as a form of parasite.⁷² According to Valdeverlde and Massar, these parasites:

may be farmers grown rich and indolent, public functionaries whose office has lapsed to a sinecure, or *soldiers degenerate* into thieves and loafers. Speaking generally, we may say that to this category belong the individuals or the social classes who are either useless or mischievous to the community which harbours them. The aim in life of these parasites being to consume without producing, the methods they employ may be classified thus: 1. Fraud or violence. 2. Exploitation of debauchery and the *sexual passions*. 3. Useless public offices. 4. Private appropriation of the means of production. *We shall therefore distinguish social parasitism under four headings: predatory, sexual, political and proprietary* (my emphasis).⁷³

Although Valdeverlde and Massar distinguish four types of social parasitism, the writer-reader only resorts to one of these headings to define the parasitism of soldiers. He asserts that it becomes clear ‘that the hygiene that the people acquire in the barracks is reduced, after the well-known baths at dawn, to the acquisition of syphilis, gonorrhoea, onanism, sodomy and spermatorrhea.’⁷⁴ He depicts the barracks as a source of sexual infection, where young men not only come to lose their will and their love for their families, but also develop all sorts of venereal diseases that affect the normal functioning of the/their (social) organism. The concept of parasitism that he refers to, not only derives from the classic idea of a class that consumes without working what another class produces, but mainly from a form of biological contagion that derives from the sexual exploitation of individuals in a state of

⁷² The book that is referenced in the article is a collaborative work by the botanist Jean Massart and the socialist economist Emile Vandervele. Together they researched the field of ‘Biologic Sociology’ and took the metaphor of the ‘social organism’ to its limits. In their book *Parasitisme Orgauique et Parasitisme Social* (1898) they resort to the figure of the parasite to explain the causes of social inequality and its effects in society. See: Massart, Jean & Vandervele, Émile, *Parasitism, Organic and Social* (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co. Limited, 1895).

⁷³ Massart & Vandervele, 24-26.

⁷⁴ ‘La Instrucción obligatorio i la escuela del crimen’, 3.

multiple inequalities. The ‘logical’ outcome of the exposure of the subject to all these factors, as he adds, is his absolute subjugation to his superiors. Thus, it is only regarding the issue of obedience that the writer-reader recognizes that the ‘bourgeois press’ does not deceive the public. He asserts that:

military instruction is meant at reducing the human personality to its minimum expression, to kill in men the spirit of rebellion which is characteristic of human dignity and grandeur, to supplant the citizen with a simple monkey without judgment and character, for a spring-loaded puppet that is ready to shoot any citizen at the slightest movement of their superiors.⁷⁵

As the quotation shows, the becoming soldier of the individual operates through a principle of imposture and displacement of the male worker by the introduction of multiple figures (the beast, the oppression machine, the monkey, the slave, etc.) that supplants him. All these metaphors and figures are used by the writer-reader to refer to the lack of will and masculinity that characterises the soldier after receiving military training.

To prevent this degeneration from continuing its course, the writer-reader encourages workers to protest against the mandatory military service. He posits his counter campaign in terms of a distribution of sexual difference in which a masculine ‘we’ must speak up for the female members of the working-class families who once more, seems to not have a voice of their own. He writes:

[w]e protest in the name of human dignity, of our mothers and wives, of our sisters and daughters who do not want to be accomplices, victims or spectators of this monstrous attack on Liberty, Justice [and] on the honour and nobility of the robust sons of Chile!⁷⁶

The protest that he demands of his comrades is framed in the name of their women. Men must fight the military service because of the way their enrolment might affect their women and, by doing so, they will be securing their own honour and nobility as ‘robust sons.’ The distribution of values is quite traditional: these male subjects that face the danger of becoming soldiers can keep their masculinity intact only by defending their ‘helpless women.’ Then, in a language that is no less noteworthy, he continues his protest by asserting:

[g]et back, *religion of the uniform*. Back! Back!... The people – that tame chained lion – must grab with its claws the vile breast of the next great betrayal of Popular sovereignty,

⁷⁵ ‘La Instrucción obligatorio i la escuela del crimen’, 3.

⁷⁶ ‘La Instrucción obligatorio i la escuela del crimen’, 3.

perpetrated in the name of the Law, *that prostitute of all brothels*. People arise! [...] Let cremation and trinchina be the supreme treatment to prevent the great devastation of the Military Bubonic Plague! (my emphasis).⁷⁷

The article thus concludes alluding to a set of references and analogies that I have addressed many times before. Firstly, there is the expression ‘religion of the uniform’ that, alongside with the depiction of soldiers as ‘priests who wear kepis’, relates the army to the Church. These ecclesiastic references tie together both institutions based upon their common degenerative effect, which (according to these writers-readers’ argument) derives from the ‘unnatural’ confinement of men. Consequently, both institutions are in principle analogous for the working-class press, and thus are (ex)changeable. Secondly, the text refers to the Law as ‘that prostitute of all brothels.’ This analogy brings back to the scene all the semantic charge and the multiple uses of the references to sex work that the *hyperbolic brothel* inaugurates. The general principle of prostitution that takes many forms and occupies all places at the same time (common to all brothels) here signifies a relation of complicity between the Legal framework and Capitalism. The Law is presented as an already prostituted thing that, as the prostitute/commodity, is for sale. This implies that legality in general does not bear any other ruling principle than its (ex)changeability, for it is contaminated with (self-)interest. Hence, by following the logic of the *hyperbolic brothel*, I could claim that military instruction ‘prostitutes/commodifies’ the bodies of male workers by legitimating its actions in a legal framework that is prostituted/commodified as well. Lastly, the writer-reader resorts to biological principles for framing this issue in terms of the contagion and spread of what he calls the ‘military bubonic plague’, which, as he adds, must be treated with insurrection, fire and political organization as the only remedy.

As I have been showing, this article claims that the education that workers receive in the military barracks led to a collective state of degeneration. The text resorts to arguments related to intellectual impairment, lack of individual will and character, sexual perversion, contagion and the destruction of the already precarious family bonds of the working-class family. All these motifs and issues are not just specific to this text; indeed they are commonly used to criticize military service in the working-class press. For example, the text ‘El Servicio

⁷⁷ ‘La Instrucción obligatorio i la escuela del crimen’, 3.

Militar Obligatorio' ['Mandatory Military Service'], published in the paper *El Acrata*,⁷⁸ refers to the way in which the enrolment of the working-class 'son' into the army literally dismantles the family. The write-reader asserts that:

the young girl who devotes the time that she has left afterschool to mending her brother's clothes, cooking and taking care of her mother disabled by work and old age. What are they [the sister and the mother] going to do when they feel their stomachs empty and with no prospect of any food, since the military have snatched away their caring brother to be turned into cannon fodder? What path is left for them to take? Only robbery, prostitution and beggary. If some follow the first two paths, [they will end up] filling up the prisons and similar establishments with inmates and prostitutes. If [they choose] the third, [they will] only receive some words of compassion and... that's it. These and many others are the fruits of military service.⁷⁹

As the quotation shows, everything orbits in a spiral of abandonment, poverty, prostitution, criminality and institutionalization. Once again the fate of women is in the male worker's hands: if he gets enlisted they will end up living in extremely precarious conditions that will lead them to prostitution or criminality. It is also noteworthy that the members of the family are almost only women. There is only one man in each case (the son), who is constantly forced to abandon this female space.

Regarding the intellectual impairment of workers, in the text 'La Paz Armada' ['The Armed Peace'], published in the paper *La Campaña*,⁸⁰ a writer-reader argues that recent progress in the fields of anthropology and psychology has proved that any man subjected to a system of slavery, oppression, tyranny and to a strict routine:

stunts his brain, feels his heart withering, dulls his sensibility, feels how the harmony between matter and spirit gets broken, for while [matter] relaxes the other gets degraded; and after all that, when discipline has squashed his character, when servility and obedience finally extinguish the pride that *distinguishes men from women, then he ceases to be a man to become a beast*. And without delay, after some years of the corruption and debasement of as many men as go to the barracks, what is going to be the result?

⁷⁸ 'El Servicio Militar Obligatorio', *El Acrata* (Santiago: July 25 julio 1900), 1.

⁷⁹ 'El Servicio Militar Obligatorio', 1.

⁸⁰ 'La Paz Armada. El Servicio militar obligatorio en Chile, El militarismo', *La Campaña* (Santiago: January 1 1901), 2.

The degeneration of the species, the servility of the race, giving rise to the political tyranny of any little ruler [*mandarin*], any bold man or scoundrel (my emphasis).⁸¹

The writer-reader of this seemingly quasi-scientific text bases his argument on an intellectual hierarchization of the sexes. He claims that the degeneration of men in the barracks operates through a form of neuronal dystrophy that makes it impossible to distinguish men from women. In other words, somewhere in the process of becoming a beast that men experience during their military training, they become intellectually feminized by means of a dismantling of the harmony between matter and spirit. Consequently, from a eugenic point of view, he concludes that this collective degeneration triggered by military service will eventually corrupt the race and the human species as a whole, producing thus the perfect environment for tyranny and oppression. It is also quite clear how he applies biological arguments related to the principle of infection and reproduction of an illness-like phenomenon that is inherited through generations. He refers to some kind of stigma that condemns the Chilean race. This issue is also addressed in another article entitled 'Los Caines' ['The Cains'], published in the paper *La Batalla*,⁸² although this time from a more biblical perspective. The writer-reader asserts that:

[t]he military is the degradation of humans and the monstrous offspring⁸³ of Cains, let us produce antimilitarist propaganda and the eunuchs will fall with a mortal shiver: their reign of injustice will have come to an end [...] In the army, lazy men are engendered, and all the vices are freely developed, even sodomy, which leads individuals to degeneration. It is time for the Cains to disappear.⁸⁴

The reference to the biblical tale of Cain's punishment introduces multiple cultural references to a sinful lineage from the Old Testament that lasted for six generations until God made it disappear with the flood.⁸⁵ The use of Cain's story is serving several purposes here. Firstly, the reference is clearly signifying the way in which soldiers are portrayed as class traitors

⁸¹ 'El Servicio militar obligatorio en Chile', 2.

⁸² 'Los caines', *La Batalla* (Santiago: first week of August 1914), 4.

⁸³ The Spanish word *engendro* can mean something or someone that bears monstrous characteristics, but also the word *engendró* in the past tense can also mean to give birth to someone or to produce something.

⁸⁴ 'Los Caines', 4.

⁸⁵ According to the Old Testament Cain was the first-born son of Adan and Eve, but in popular culture there is the belief that Cain was the product of an adultery between Eve and the Devil, which would explain why God preferred his brother Abel over him.

who kill their ‘brothers.’⁸⁶ Secondly, the text refers to soldiers as eunuchs, and this might come from the common confusion between two biblical characters from the Old Testament: Enoch son of Cain and Enoch son of Jared (from the lineage that survives the flood through Noah). According to the bible the second one was chaste and represented as the first biblical eunuch. Lastly, the resemblance between Cain’s punishment (he was ‘a tiller of the soil’ condemned to a restless wandering) and the figure of the peasant who does not own the land that he works, inspired during nineteenth century new interpretations of this biblical passage. The most notorious versions are the ones of Lord Byron⁸⁷ and Charles Baudelaire⁸⁸ who reframed Cain’s story in the light of modern social injustice and rebellion. However, it is quite paradoxical that this reference to Cain in the Chilean working-class press seems to only refer to more classical and conservative readings of this biblical passage. This reference to the murder of Abel does not bear the revolutionary elements that Byron and Baudelaire attributed to this passage; Cain is not a representative of the working class, instead he is just a degenerate soldier who practises all ‘the vices’, and who is also always ready to kill his class brothers. But are these soldiers irretrievably lost? Or do they still bear the spectre of the male worker that they should have been?

⁸⁶ To understand the intertextualities between this biblical tale in which Cain commits fratricide and the violent repression of workers by Chilean soldiers, it is important to consider the powerful imaginary of the brutal massacres perpetrated by the Chilean army against the working classes. The most iconic one is the Santa María School Massacre in 1907, but there were many others that were constantly commemorated in the working-class press such as the Valparaiso massacre (1903), the Mitín de la Carne (1905), Massacre of Plaza Colón (1906), the Massacre of San Gregorio (1921), among many others.

⁸⁷ ‘Cain: - Thou speak'st to me of things which long have swum/ In visions through my thought: I never could / Reconcile what I saw with what I heard. /My father and my mother talk to me / Of serpents, and of fruits and trees: I see /The gates of what they call their Paradise / Guarded by fiery-sworded Cherubim, /Which shut them out and me: I feel the weight / Of daily toil, and constant thought: I look / Around a world where I seem nothing, with / Thoughts which arise within me, as if they /Could master all things but I thought alone / This misery was mine. My father is / Tamed down; my mother has forgot the mind / Which made her thirst for knowledge at the risk /Of an eternal curse’ (Byron, Lord, *Cain, a mystery* (London: William Crofts, 1830), 9).

⁸⁸ ‘Race of Cain, your children beg / for bread beside the road. / Race of Abel, your corpse will fatten the teeking earth; / your labor, Race of Cain, / is not yet done. / Race of Abel, behold your shame: / the sword yields to the butcher-knife / Rise up, Race of Cain, / and cast God down upon the earth’ (Baudelaire, Charles, *Abel & Cain*, In: *The Flowers of Evil* (Boston: David R. Godini Publisher, 1983), 143).

E) The Dismantling of Class/Sexual Difference

I am at the end of the *huacho*'s journey. He has been finally taken from the working-class family and raised by institutions that made him divert from his lineage and destiny. All these young men that were meant to swell the workers' ranks have degenerate somewhere along the way, and there is no one left to do the revolution on their behalf. The future generation of the working class has become no more than a group of 'fallen men' as the writer-reader of the article 'Caidos' ['The Fallen Ones'], published in the paper *Jerminal*, regrets. He asserts that:

[b]ecause of a phenomenon that cannot be rationally explained, individuals who used to embrace the new ideas of redemption, regeneration and human perfection, have either *metamorphosed* or remain in stagnation. The first ones broke with the ligatures that used to tie them to unknown regions that would allowed them to experience new sensations and a new life and that would made them untie Gordian knots tirelessly, decipher enigmas and try to snatch the infinite of its secrets; the second ones, after seen the long work routine are left behind, laying on the long road to let themselves be carried away, rolling like pebbles, by the social flow that propels them (my emphasis).⁸⁹

These young men have either suffered a metamorphosis that made them unrecognizable or they have lost their will and now remain in absolute lethargy. One way or another, they have broken with everything that tied them to their own true future. There seems to be no rational explanation for this and, facing this hopeless present, the only remaining thing to do it is to ask: 'what sacrifice, then, what good and what struggle can we expect from the physically, intellectually and morally degenerate ones?'⁹⁰ To which the writer-reader replies without hesitation:

[s]adly, not much [...] The young men that yesterday represented hope for the cause of Humanity, whom we believed would constitute the vanguard of the fight for the Future to come [*Porvenir*], today are seen far away exhaling painful expressions and complaints [three illegible words] Poor fallen ones. When will benevolent forces give them the energy to stand up from their shameful grovelling? [...] Poor miserable ones, they fell short of wearing on their proud foreheads the title of revolutionaries, because they were

⁸⁹ 'Caidos', *Jerminal* (Santiago, 2 September 1904), 1.

⁹⁰ 'Caidos', 1.

impotent, and they fell. What Goddess will come to breastfeed them in order to make them once more into Hercules?⁹¹

These physically, morally and intellectually degenerate young men destroyed all the writer-reader's hopes and dreams. Nothing can be expected from them, they did not get to be proper revolutionaries and they got lost on the way. But still, out of desperation he begs for a loophole by invoking a female redeemer one last time: he calls upon the mythical maternal Goddess.⁹² She seems to be the only one who could regenerate men by breastfeeding them with her knowledge which will restore the distribution of sexual difference and will turn them into the Hercules they are supposed to be. But, as I argue in Chapter 3, these men have been always already separated from their mother/lover/Goddess, and their condition of *huacho* has been intensified with their process of institutionalization. There is no coming back from this degeneration. At the end of their journey, in this tireless search for what is proper for the working-class scene of writing, I have repeatedly shown how all my premises and definitions are challenged and dismantled by an ongoing process of contamination that affects the entire Chilean working-class scene of writing. It seems that the only proper feature of this scene of writing is that it can only emerge from an improper (*huacho*) place of enunciation that compulsively postpones the revolution. Let us now read the most radical repercussions of this issue.

The text 'Corrupción Social' ['Social Corruption'], published in the paper *El Acrata*,⁹³ introduces a final problem that has been at the core of this thesis since its first chapter. The text begins by denouncing the fact that:

[t]he bourgeois society displays such symptoms of corruption that it is necessary to be blind not to see it or to notice them more or less consciously. All the rampant orgies that happen are so well known that any individual, no matter how stupid, can notice and observe them.⁹⁴

This quote is followed by a sentence in parenthesis, where he asserts: '(and this degradation not only exists among the higher classes, but also among the working class, among the labouring class that produces the national wealth).'⁹⁵ It is interesting to note the textual

⁹¹ 'Caidos', 1.

⁹² See Chapter 3 Section B) *Our goddesses, undines and chaste maidens that the Monster consumed*.

⁹³ 'Corrupcion Social', *El Acrata* (Santiago: December 9 1900), 2-3.

⁹⁴ 'Corrupcion Social', 2.

⁹⁵ 'Corrupcion Social', 2.

disposition of this sentence. It is in parenthesis, it is secure, separated from the rest of the text. It operates as some kind of antibody that segregates working-class degradation from the one that affects the bourgeoisie. It maintains the frame even though the source of contamination is exactly the same. He has decided to maintain this class difference for a bit longer. Just like me.

The text continues referring to the sterility of providing examples of the well-known corruption of the bourgeoisie, especially regarding the ones related to the way in which they ‘engender and perpetuate the corruption, the vice and the *bastard degradation*’ (my emphasis).⁹⁶ There is no need to go back to this again. Then, the writer-reader expresses something new. He recalls the countless times that from this rotten and degenerate class, well-intentioned aristocrats have emerged with the aim of trespassing across the class border. He remembers how he has seen rising countless ‘corporations that A PRIORI seems to regenerate THE STATUS QUO of things, and [how these well-intentioned members of the higher classes] out of MUTO-PROPIO, throw themselves into discovering the filthy plague of the aristocratic parasites.’⁹⁷ Nevertheless, as he regrets, all these experiences have ended in disillusionment for the working class. This, since:

the *metamorphosis* of these gentlemen redeemers, makes us reject every promise of social regeneration that comes from these privileged men of fortune, and because of that, without hesitation, we had accepted Marx’s sentence: ‘THE EMANCIPATION OF THE WORKERS MUST BE BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE WORKERS THEMSELVES’ (my emphasis).⁹⁸

Until now, because of the constant metamorphosis of these well-intentioned individuals who always end up betraying the workers, Marx’s maxim remained as the only path for the revolution. Workers could not trust the bourgeoisie since their class interests necessarily clashed with their own. The frame then is secure. The parenthesis is reinforced:

[b]ut today [he asserts], in the presence of a new corruption that, if I may say so, we will call working class, we see ourselves overwhelmingly needing to reject every preconceived sentence and to walk in favour of the long-awaited emancipation, with the deep conviction that our emancipation must be far-reaching.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ ‘Corrupcion Social’, 2.

⁹⁷ ‘Corrupcion Social’, 3.

⁹⁸ ‘Corrupcion Social’, 3.

⁹⁹ ‘Corrupcion Social’, 3.

It seems that in a context of general corruption and infection that affects society as a whole, Marx's maxim does not seem to apply any more. It is as if in view of this problem of undifferentiation by contamination, orthodox Marxism, as the writer-reader asserts, only serves the personal interests of workers who, affected/contaminated by/with bourgeois inclinations, seek to establish a Socialist Workers party to gain social status, money and power. Hence, party politics with its emphasis on individual personalities has turned the infected workers against the common and collective speech of the working class.¹⁰⁰ Then, in a context in which the borderline that used to separate what is proper for workers from its other disappears, 'they' became unable to differentiate comrades from enemies. This is the last mad effect of the constant (ex)change of bodies and identities and the multiple metamorphosis that the *hyperbolic brothel* triggers. These workers have always already become other than themselves, they appear as beasts of burden, 'sodomites', 'onanists', monkeys, toys, 'effeminates', etc., as (ex)changeable forms and shapes, as mere matter controlled by an external will that displaces all the reassuring certainties and binominal differences (male/female, worker/bourgeois, human/animal-monster, etc.) that sustain all the premises of a working-class scene of writing.

Finally, in this state of undifferentiation, as a last attempt, the writer-reader concludes by invoking the absent Goddess, who now returns in the form of the revolution itself, by asserting: '[w]e will fight for the advent of the Revolution, because she is the Goddess of the future to come [*porvenir*] and the destroyer of tyrants (to be concluded).'¹⁰¹ Similarly to the last article I analysed, this writer-reader posits his last hopes in the return of an ideal Goddess who previously took the form of the mother/lover, and now represents the revolution itself. It is the *huacho's* dream of recuperating his mother/lover that is narrated by means of a *huacho writing* (*escritura huacha*) that compulsively repeats and 'cries' its own lack of origin. It contours a scene of writing that in its compulsive wanderings through the workers' tales can only repeat the movement of their path to become *huachos*.

¹⁰⁰ See Chapter 1 Section D) *The Death of the Author/Worker and the Rise of the Workers*.

¹⁰¹ 'Corrupcion Social', 3.

Conclusion: Incarnations of the ‘Universal Proletariat’

I have staged a paradoxical scene of writing that cannot be recuperated by its author. A scene whose origin must remain uncertain in order to convey the collective experience of a class that emerges in the always incomplete abstraction of ‘the voice of the people.’ I have been trying to follow a worker who never appears as such, who is always already absent and who only emerges through his feminine-bestial-animal remnants. Nevertheless, I want to be emphatic in stating that I am not claiming that there were no workers, or that the state of exploitation was a literary fiction. Quite the opposite, I have simply been arguing that some of the conceptual certainties that some orthodox or traditional trends of Historical Materialism tend to presuppose, imply a normalization of meaning that is founded upon the idea of a coherent and self-identical notion of the worker that always fails to be embodied by the ‘workers themselves.’ Thus, this tradition conceals the fact that the abstraction of the worker becomes necessarily inadequate when the actual worker enters the factory. Therefore, what the Chilean working-class press reveals in a complex, fragmentary and often contradictory manner, is the uncanny anguish of a group of Chilean workers who could not find themselves and their class comrades in the images of the ideal ‘universal proletariat.’ They took it too seriously, they believed so much in the revolution that they used almost every cultural reference that they had at their disposal (to the point of textual saturation) to make sense of their constant failure to start what was supposed to be a rational and natural revolution.

What emerges in this scene of writing is a worker’s reading of the canonical ideas of political economy and of the class struggle, rewritten as a conceptual struggle that shows the conflicts which the impossible task of becoming the ideal worker creates for these workers. The value of their attempts lies in the way in which they tried to fill the gaps and air their contradictions by resorting to Latin American popular culture, and more specifically, to a complex network of references which come from the misogynistic and macho patriarchal construction of Chilean popular and national identity. They used these references as a threat to themselves which allowed them to frame this ‘failure’ in terms of the feminization of their class; as an interruption of the distribution of sexual difference that is produced by the absence of the mother and the lover. In their writings these figures are interpreted in relation

to the motif of the *huacho*. ‘Unfortunately’ for the male workers, it seems that these ideal women never returned to ‘their arms’; they cry the fact that those commodified (ex)changeable women abandon them on their path to sexual, physical and intellectual degeneration which turned them into (ex)changeable commodities as well. Someone that did come back, though, was another female figure, this time with a voice that was channelled by a group of women who challenged this male centred narrative. I am referring to a group of female workers who wrote as well and by doing so reclaimed their place as political agents by trespassing and occupying, as squatters do, the working-class scene of writing. As I will show in the next and final chapter, when women finally return to the scene, they do it in order to contest the male monopoly over words, their regime of property and place of enunciation to establish their own revolutionary distribution of sexual difference. This is the final contamination at work in the working-class scene of writing.

PART III: WOMEN SQUATTING IN THE WORKING-CLASS SCENE OF WRITING

I mean it when I speak of male writing [...] writing has been run by a libidinal and cultural-hence political, typically masculine-economy; that this is a locus where the repression of women has been perpetrated, over and over, more or less consciously, and in a manner that's frightening since it's often hidden or adorned with the mystifying charms of fiction; that this locus has grossly exaggerated all the sings of sexual opposition (and not sexual difference), where woman has never her turn to speak--this being all the more serious and unpardonable in that writing is precisely the very possibility of change, the space that can serve as a springboard for subversive thought (Hélène Cixous).¹

In the previous chapters I showed the ways in which the working-class scene of writing is erected upon the exclusion of female workers. I argue that for these male workers, the repossession of the expropriated maternal/romantic love constitutes the condition of possibility for them (as beasts of burden) to become the virile revolutionary workers that they have always been supposed to be. And thus, these writers-readers are inclined to describe the process of degeneration and commodification of the working class, and their apathy towards the state of exploitation, as a direct consequence of the absence of women in the working-class family. Moreover, these periodicals compulsively reveal an inner complicity between Chilean revolutionary thought and a patriarchal economy of sexual difference. It is this point of convergence which allows these male workers to conceptualize everything that resembles femininity in terms of a pre-Capitalist form of communal property that has been commodified and expropriated by the bourgeoisie.

In order to trace this exclusionary distribution I have consciously reproduced the male workers' principle of segregation in a twofold way. On the one hand, with the intention of being faithful to the (male) working-class scene of writing, I have endorsed its narrative in order to unravel the different forms in which the expropriation of the mother/lover is depicted by male workers. Every time that I have addressed the figure of the female worker, the

¹ Cixous, Hélène, *The Laugh of the Medusa*, 879.

mother, the prostitute and the *beata*, I have done it by means of referring only to texts written from a masculine gaze, and consequently, I have framed women in an object/subject distinction that made it impossible for them to reply. On the other hand, even though I have been reading these texts from a deconstructive perspective aimed at dismantling the distribution of sexual difference, I have anchored my readings in principles that rely on a patriarchal distribution of conceptual values. Thus, regardless of how feminized these men appear in their own writings, the ideal/original form from which they diverged is always conceived as masculine. Hence, although masculinity only appears on the scene embodied by already feminized bestial workers, this does not preclude them from keeping their masculine dominion by depicting everything that resembles femininity (including themselves) as inferior, negative or degenerate, and masculinity as ideal and superior. In other words, I have been able to trace a phallogentric principle of feminization (or I could also say, these worker's 'fear of being a woman') in the working-class press only on the basis that these same texts establish and reproduce an exclusionary patriarchal locus of enunciation. Therefore, a women's account of the state of exploitation remains to be read.

In this final part I will 'break' this confinement. However, I need to be cautious here. This change of perspective cannot be simply understood as a derogation of women's exile for two reasons. Firstly, femininity has never entirely left the scene, since it has not stopped returning from its exclusion by means of contaminating the border regime from within, making it hard to maintain any clear or absolute distinction between femininity and masculinity.² Secondly, I do not think that it is correct to treat the writings of female workers as part of an alternative, isolated or even secondary scene of writing. This, since both Elizabeth Q. Hutchinson in her work on working-class women and Claudia Montero in her work on women's periodicals and magazines, have shown that Chilean female workers did

² In order to avoid falling into any form of sexual essentialism, it is important to consider, for example, that Hélène Cixous found what she calls '*écriture féminine*' in the work of male authors such as Jean Genet and James Joyce (Cixous, 884-885). Thus, I share Nelly Richard's critique of the essentialization of women when she asserts that '[a]s "being a woman" does not guarantee, *by nature*, the critical exertion of a femininity that challenges hegemonic masculinity, to "be a man" does not condemn the author to become an accomplice of the power of the official culture, even if he benefits from it. In fact, there are several and compelling examples of literary practises signed by men [...] whose poetic-literary experiments managed to twist language and identity to the point of completely decentralizing the subject-function that the dominant masculine cultural ideology promotes' (Richard, Nelly, *Feminismo, género y diferencia(s)* (Santiago: Palinodia, 2008), 47-66).

not write about and for women only. These writers strategically resorted to gender norms to publish their texts in the broader public sphere.³ Thus their entrance into the ‘world of letters’ cannot be understood as an absolute transgression of the norm, but as a way of occupying the scene that allowed them to tamper with the principles that shaped that same scene in the first place. In this regard, if I approach working-class women’s writings from a contemporary feminist perspective, I will be dealing with texts that tend to frame women’s struggle as subordinated to the class struggle. I will also find articles that do not challenge the given priority of men in the revolutionary *telos* or the maternal role of women in raising male workers.⁴ Hence, I could easily be tempted to think of these works as reproductions of the patriarchal rule, but the issue is far more complex than that. By strategically occupying the place of the ‘mother’, for instance, these women were able to write against misogyny, sexual violence, political and intellectual exclusion of women and to criticize the exploitative sexual division of labour from within the working-class family. The precariousness and difficulties that working-class women faced when publishing in a scene dominated by men should not be disregarded; the censorship and forms of control that they had to circumvent in order to circulate their thoughts must be taken into account. Therefore, I will conceptualize these writings by means of the metaphor of a squat (*okupa*) that is inhabited by peripheral female writers who have come to occupy a space at the centre of the working-class scene of writing. This, in the sense that by the simple act of trespassing on the (patriarchal) property laws and men’s monopoly over space, letters and bodies, these women re-configured and transformed the foundations of the space as a whole. I will read their texts, as written by subjects that take advantage of the porosity of the border, the malleability of the norms and that tactically use the codes in order to displace the centre.⁵ Consequently, I will not build a ghetto of ‘women’s writings’ surrounded by a masculine wall. If I separated women’s writings from the other chapters, it was only for strategic reasons: I did it because in order to be able to perceive the ways in which women’s writings affect the scene of writing, first I had to unravel the textual

³ Hutchinson, Elizabeth, *Labores propias de su sexo* and Montero, Claudia, *Y también hicieron periódicos. Cien años de prensa de mujeres en Chile 1850-1950* (Santiago: Hueders, 2019).

⁴ Montero, 127-138.

⁵ This perspective recalls, for instance, the attempt of a group of women who in 1875 took advantage of the fact that the Chilean Constitution of the time did not explicitly claim that women were unable to vote and registered to vote in the town of San Felipe to participate in the presidential election. See: Eltit, Djalmea, *Crónica del Sufragio Femenino* (Santiago: SERNAM, 1994), 21.

dynamics of this masculine-centred scene. It is important not to mistake the strategies of explanation or argumentation for the problem itself.⁶ Likewise, if I devoted more space to men's writing than to women's it is only because of the lack of works about working-class thought from the perspective of sexual difference and masculinity. I believe that there is a theoretical and political need for disarticulating the traditional hierarchical distinction between the class struggle, which historically occupies the centre of left-wing politics (traditionally dominated by men), and the feminist struggle that is deemed as a secondary women's affair. This distinction is also reinforced by the number of male left-wing scholars who deal with the first one by virtually omitting the second, and by feminist scholars who only analyse feminist or women's writings. However, the previous five chapters show that Chilean working-class thought was founded upon a conceptualization of sexual difference that is inseparable from these workers' understanding of the class struggle and Capitalism. Therefore, I argue that the problem of sexual difference cannot be treated separately from the development of Chilean revolutionary thought, or as the result of the appearance of a 'new' regional trend of studies or political thought.

A) Women's Writing in Chile

To re-discover and recuperate Chilean women's writing has increasingly become an important matter for historians and literary critics.⁷ Nevertheless, there is still a lot to be done, especially since Chilean women have historically suffered from a double concealment that must be contested: one of which is related to the difficulties that they had to endure in their own time to publish; the other, to the contemporary dynamics of the archives, where the

⁶ The structure of this thesis consists in the deliberate disaggregation and isolation of different problems (not only the gender of the writers-readers) that in the periodicals appear intrinsically bound to each other. The difficulties of explaining each of these problems at the same time leads me to the contingent need to construct different levels of explanation by resorting to the abstract principle of *Ceteris Paribus*.

⁷ The work and research of Joyce Contreras, Damaris Landeros and Carla Ulloa has been fundamental for this. See: Contreras, Joyce; Landeros, Damaris & Ulloa, Carla, *Escritoras Chilenas del Siglo XIX. Su incorporación pionera a la esfera pública y el campo cultural* (Santiago: Ril editores, 2017).

perpetuation of a male gaze still determines the value of the material and the criterion for its preservation and diffusion.⁸

Regarding the writings of female workers, the books of Asunción Lavrín and Elizabeth Q. Hutchinson in the 1990's and, more recently, of Claudia Montero and the Catrileo+Carrion Collective,⁹ have given a new impetus to studies of the Chilean working-class press. All these authors have boosted the diffusion and analysis of two working-class publications that were run by women: *La Alborada* (1905–1907) and *La Palanca* (1908). Thanks to these authors we now know that in the pages of these two periodicals women like Carmela Jeria, Elísa Zurita, Esther Valdés de Díaz and many others, addressed issues related to the role of women in the class struggle from a female, and sometimes, feminist perspective. However, it is noteworthy that those are not the only issues addressed in these periodicals. In *La Alborada* and *La Palanca* it is easy to find articles that treat all sorts of topics that were common to all the working-class press of the time. These women did not exclude themselves from the scene of writing; they actively participated in the common discussions of the workers' press. The fact that some periodicals dominated by men, such as *El Combate*, *El Pueblo* and *La Reforma* applauded and promoted *La Alborada*, and even recognized it as part of the working-class press without alluding to any gender distinction stands as proof of this.¹⁰ But this is not all. These periodicals also reproduced articles from *La Alborada* and *La Palanca*, and published other texts written by their collaborators.¹¹ Likewise, it is also important to consider that even though *La Alborada* and *La Palanca* published mainly articles written by women, they also published articles that were signed with male names. Therefore, it is important not to treat the texts of these female writers in isolation from the rest of the working-class press. These periodicals were more than just publications meant for women only. Their texts reached male writers-readers that read or copied these periodicals themselves or the reproductions of their articles in other periodicals. And, therefore, these

⁸ This could be the reasons why all the copies of *La Obrera* (1897), the first working-class periodical run by women in Chile, are lost. See: Montero, 13.

⁹ Colectivo Catrileo+Carrion (Comp.). *Torcer la palabra. Escrituras obrera-feministas* (Santiago: Tiempo Robado editoras, 2018).

¹⁰ See: 'La Alborada', *El Combate* (Santiago: Second week of November 1906), 3; 'En honor de una escritora obrera', *El Combate* (Santiago: first week of January 1907), 4; 'La Alborada publicación social obrera', *El Pueblo* (Santiago: 13 January 1906), 4.

¹¹ For example, the article 'La Mujer' from *La Alborada* was republished in the periodical *El Pueblo*. See: 'La Mujer', *El Pueblo* (Santiago, 21 January 1906), 4.

pieces of women's writings went beyond the locality of a periphery or a 'women's only scene of writing.' Due to lack of space, in what follows I will not engage in a thorough analysis of working-class women's writing.¹² Instead, I will limit my analysis to tracing the ways in which women strategically occupied the (patriarchal) working-class scene of writing to disseminate a different interpretation of the class struggle to the one that I depicted in the previous chapters. I am particularly interested in analysing the way in which these writings re-configure and contest the paradoxes of the working-class press from within. Hence, I will address the consequences that derive from reading texts that, since they were signed with women's names, are not affected in the same way by the problem of working-class degeneration by feminization as texts signed by men. I will read these texts as an interruption, a displacement and as a form of digression that operates as a leakage point in the patriarchal working-class scene of writing.

¹² For that I recommend the exhaustive and systematic works of Lavrín, Hutchinson and Montero.

CHAPTER 6: THEY LOVE US SO MUCH THAT THEY KILL US

And then they murder women! We all see it! They love them so much! In this ultra-Catholic and proto-*Hidalgo* country, the murder of women is becoming a custom. To have a boyfriend is for the young woman of the people a lethal danger [...] For those gallant men of today, the woman of their preference is obliged to put up with them or die. These kinds of crimes of passion are called murders for love... For love! (Una obrera).¹

A) A Women's Advent of the Anarchist Idea

In 1909 the periodical *José Arnero* published a text entitled 'Luz' ['Light'] which addresses, in an ironic tone, an issue that from a male perspective could only be perceived as an anomaly. In it a female writer-reader under the pseudonym of 'Una Mujer Nueva' ['A New Woman'] refers to the upsurge of the 'Anarchist Idea' in herself: a woman. She confesses that:

[u]ntil today I have not been able to resist the desire of making public the existence of a new life that has started for me; even though my rough brain and my clumsy pen will only manage to engrave brusque phrases that will not be read without criticisms. But, male masters and male apostles of the new Idea, I apologize because the new Idea has surfaced in me and it raises its strong voice, making me shake with its harmonious *son* [rhythm] [...] I feel a voice that calls me eagerly, I know it, it is the voice of *Anarchy* that has reached me as a chant of salvation; I think I am alive.²

In a scene of writing in which the possibility for enlightenment is intrinsically bound up with a certain way of being men, this woman writes a testimony of an 'exception to the rule.' She does not justify it, she does not attempt to prove it, she does not give a reason for it; she just writes and that is the only proof she needs. However, what makes this text more exceptional even, is the fact that it was published in a periodical run and dominated by the masculine

¹ 'La Mujer', *La Alborada* (Santiago: 14 May 1906), 3 / 'La Mujer', *José Arnero* (Santiago: 7 December 1908), 1-2.

² 'Luz', *José Arnero* (Santiago: 27 December 1909), 2.

gaze.³ So, before analysing the transgression that this text constitutes, a question must be asked: how is it that these words were published there? She did it by resorting to a set of subtle writing strategies. On a superficial reading it is possible to appreciate that, even though this text challenges the notion of masculine writing, this woman seems to reinforce the idea of ‘women’s inferiority’ by depicting her brain as rough and her pen as clumsy. This could easily be interpreted as an acknowledgement of her ‘intellectual inferiority’ which would turn her process of enlightenment into a deviation. But conversely, if I consider the style and literary mechanism deployed by working-class writers, the issue becomes less clear. As I showed in Chapter 1, to describe one’s own writing and intellect in a negative manner was a very common strategy used by workers to legitimize their texts as *proper* working-class manifestations. Moreover, working-class writers tended to use this literary mechanism to prove that their pen only functions as a medium to express what the Idea dictates to them. Thus, even though from a contemporary perspective, the words of this woman could be interpreted as an ironic way of referring to the machismo of working-class men, this way of referring to one’s own writing is not alien or simply negative in the context of the working-class scene of writing, and it could even be used as a strategic way of entering the working-class press. This tactic is reinforced in the second paragraph by means of what might be label as a ‘non-apology.’ This female-worker, in an ironic way, addresses those she calls masters [*maestros*] and apostles [*apóstoles*] to notify them that she has been affected by the Anarchist Idea. Thus, she apologises for being subjected to this external force that manifests itself as a voice over which she bears no responsibility. In this way, by repeating what an alien speech dictates to her, she informs men that the Idea has chosen her. It is the Idea itself, and not her, which broke men’s monopoly over reason. And again, this matches another working-class writing principle which posits workers as a mere medium through which an external knowledge expresses itself. And, as I argue in Chapter 1, it is a form of knowledge that the worker will never be able to sign or be accountable for.⁴

³ In previous Chapters I have referred to this same periodical and quoted many patriarchal texts that were published in it.

⁴ See Chapter 1 Section D) *The Death of the Author/Worker and the Rise of the Workers*.

For the rest of the article she promises to commit herself to the revolutionary cause until its ultimate consequences in a way that also resembles other working-class texts. She asserts that:

[t]he working day [*jornada*] will be long, there will be difficulties in my path that will hinder my steps; I will have no name; finally, my life will be in danger. But at the end, [by wearing] the red emblem bequeathed by the blood of millions of women workers that were victims of the fierce bourgeoisie, I will triumph against the rough wave.⁵

She anticipates the revolution by claiming that from now on she will have no name, no identity of her own, she will be just another revolutionary worker who will risk her life in the struggle to come. However, this lack of proper name does not imply her mere de-identification, but instead it is a form of re-identification that melds her own individuality with the common name of the female workers, the *obreras*. She becomes one among the living workers, who wear an emblem that gathers the blood (like the ink made of blood with which the male writers-readers write)⁶ of the workers who were victims of the bourgeoisie. But this time, it is not the blood of male workers, as she clearly expresses, this red emblem is forged by the blood of the *obreras*. Is this the anticipation of a feminist revolution? I do not know; she does not say. However, she opens the possibility of posing this question at the centre of the patriarchal working-class scene of writing, a question that I will trace from now on.

Up to this point, it is clear that this female writer does not directly challenge the masculine gaze, rather she takes advantage of the writing norms available in order to disrupt its logic. The way in which this text displaces patriarchal rule is by simply informing men, through a periodical largely written and read by men, that she has been enlightened. But since this appears as an ‘anomaly’ there is no way to justify it in the established order. Moreover, she does not need to defend herself in front of the phallogocentric court, since she is not bound by its law; she is not ‘afraid of being a woman’ and much less, of being an enlightened anarchist woman. I could be tempted to celebrate this text as a symptom of an opening-up of the world of working-class letters for women. I could rejoice in the name of equality and claim that both sexes share this scene. Moreover, I could even say that it was logical for the

⁵ ‘Luz’, 2.

⁶ See Chapter 1 Section D) *The Death of the Author/Worker and the Rise of the Workers*.

‘Anarchist Idea’ to ‘affect’ both sexes since it is just an idea, and ideas should not have gender. However, it would be naïve to think that a current of thought that is founded upon the defence of the oppressed would not be modified or affected in its *tone* and *emphasis* when dealing with a woman’s account of oppression. I have been writing about the ways in which an ink made of male workers’ blood is used to depict and reproduce a very specific state of exploitation founded upon a male-based distribution of sexual economy. Now, I will focus on how the Anarchist and Socialist Idea change when they are expressed through female mediators. In other words, I will be reading the inscriptions of that badge forged with the blood of the *obreras*.

B) The ‘Origin’ of the ‘Origin’ of Capitalism

In Chapter 3 I discussed (through a close reading of the text ‘El Hombre-pulpo’) how the working-class press depicts the mythical origin of Capitalism. As I argued, this text claims that before the rise of Capitalism there was a community of equal men that was founded upon a communal possession of women and femininity/nature in general. According to this narrative, what characterises the passage from an ideal pre-Capitalist society to a Capitalist one is the expropriation, commodification and privatization of women. Paradoxically, this masculine account of the origin of Capitalism does not drastically differ from the version that a female proletarian published in *La Alborada* under the title ‘La Mujer ayer hoy y mañana’ [‘Women Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow’]. However, the difference in tone and emphasis of this text changes it all. This female writer-reader begins by condensing the passage from the ‘origins of times’ to the contemporary world, as follows:

[i]t is a long, very long, time since woman, secluded to the genesis, waited shaking for the visit of her harsh husband; her master and owner, without [having] the right to a caress, to see the light or other men; like a repellent being that people only touched out of charity or need. Even more time has passed, since the primitive and savage times when women, after being brutally beaten by men, [ended up] lying in the middle of the forest, pasture for the lasciviousness of men and having to conceive their children in violence and unbearable pain, only to be abandoned afterwards [...] It is true, the times of ignorance and barbarism have passed. We have arrived at the century of steam, light and of electricity. However, women’s condition is almost identical to the one they had

in those times that horrify us. There have been some innovations in the form, but not in the content; despite the objective progress that humanity has achieved, women are still the hunted ones of the forests that yield to the rough blows of the male.⁷

According to this teleology, time and progress have not stopped moving forward through the centuries, and men have advanced a long way from the 'primitive times' to arrive at the 'century of light and reason.' Nevertheless, the progress of civilization has disjointed the temporality between the sexes. While men enjoy the technological developments of the modern world; 'women are still the hunted ones of the forest that yield to the rough blows of the male.' It is *as if* the material progress of *mankind* operates as a façade that modifies the form and leaves the content untouched and stuck in time. But how could this temporal disjuncture be explained? As the quotation shows, this narrative begins with a notion of property. No matter how rudimentary these ways of living look like in the eyes of this progressive account of history, women always already appear as the property of men, who are their 'masters and owners.' And this fact immediately excludes them from progress and time. Women mark at every moment the origin from which men's time begins. Thus, it could be said that in a certain way men's time moves because women's time does not. Moreover, I could even claim that the possibility of this linear progression towards the revolution seems to be anchored in the segregation of women.

It is also noteworthy that what in the patriarchal version of the ideal pre-Capitalist community is presented as a state of plenitude, happiness and solidarity, for women has been no more than exploitation, rape and violence. However, if I analyse this from a political economy perspective, I should conclude that this text does not provide more information than the one I already have: I knew that the foundations of the ideal 'community of the valley' depended on a collective distribution of women's bodies. Yet still, the tone and emphasis of this text shows the bitter and harsh experience of the excluded ones. But, then again does this female gaze change anything? Yes, it displaces the 'origin' of Capitalism. If I follow the logic underneath this woman's words, I should reach the conclusion that since the situation of women has been always the same, Capitalism could not have commenced with the 'expropriation of women.' The rise of the Octopus did not alter a thing since the catastrophe was already inscribed in the programme. In other words, the

⁷ 'La Mujer ayer hoi y mañana', *La Alborada* (Santiago: 10 September 1905), 1-2.

Octopus/Sultan/Giant/Monster/Priest/Dandy/Patrón was always already in the valley under the name of *Mancebo*/Husband/Lover. This issue becomes clearer when she, referring to the timeless oppression of women, asks the following rhetorical question: ‘[w]hat is the reason for such a strange, anomalous and depressing condition?’⁸ To which she replies:

[t]o Capital and to this economic order that has given birth to force. Since the most ancient times, the boldest and most daring ones had come to subjugate the weakest part of humanity to their whims, which then they turned into law. There was slavery and, therefore, Capital was born. Woman, even less strong than those who were called slaves, pariahs, idiots and today proletarians, had to endure the worst part in this struggle for life.⁹

According to this female writer-reader, the dynamics of Capitalism are inextricably related to an older form of patriarchal slavery that shaped the conditions for Capitalism to emerge. In contrast to the male narrative, Capitalism does not appear as an external element that came to contaminate an ‘ideal and pure valley,’ instead, its germ has always already been in the community, and since ancient times women have been subjugated by men’s force and law. Thus, the dashing *Mancebo* of the valley and the Octopus alike have equally enslaved women and, therefore, the alleged ‘origin’ of Capitalism posited by the male working-class press as the original expropriation of women, was for women nothing more than a change of regime in a timeless space, just a substitution of rulers that did not modify the social structures. However, she still recognizes the way in which this change of regime (the transition from male communal property to male private property) affected male workers. She asserts that Capitalism by:

demanding men work and produce more than is humanly possible, has deformed their bodies, soured their character and perverted their taste. The noble feelings, inherent in the human being and which through centuries have allowed them to develop the association or sociability in which they must live, have been crushed by the most urgent needs of brutes [...] the hideous exploitation that man suffers by the hands of man himself [...] has allowed some men to disproportionately develop their intelligence and atrophy the brains of the rest, [thus,] it has become impossible to demand from the ones

⁸ ‘La Mujer ayer hoi y mañana’, 1.

⁹ ‘La Mujer ayer hoi y mañana’, 1.

from below more love and kindness towards women. Men, born to become *beasts of burden*, from their most tender age only have contemptible role models (my emphasis).¹⁰ Women are once again excluded from time. The deformation of brains and bodies that she refers to only affects male workers. This is a solely masculine scene in which the reader witness how the lost community of brothers has been destroyed by means of an exploitative labour regime that has erased the ‘noble feelings’ of working-class men. Those are the alleged ‘inherent and noble sentiments’ that would allow men to live in a society of equal brothers and to care for women, but now they have been supplanted by the needs of the brute. Thus, although she claims that men have always subjected women, she then writes that under the current exploitative regime men treat women even worse than before, since they have been turned into ‘beasts of burden.’ As I have argued before, male workers claim that this process of degeneration is triggered by the expropriation and commodification of ‘their’ women. In contrast, this text introduces another explanation for this ‘lack of working-class love.’ From her perspective, the lack of love is a repercussion of the brutalization of men by labour, and not of the commodification and ‘prostitution’ of women. Thus this text introduces an alternative reading of working-class love affairs and their relationship with Capitalism. It is another explanation for the separation of the proletarian couple; it is a narrative that differs from the one that I have been tracing since Chapter 3.

C) Working-Class Love and Femicide

In 1906 an article entitled ‘La Mujer’ [‘The Woman’] was published in *La Alborada*¹¹ and then republished in 1908 in *José Arnero*.¹² Both versions are almost identical, the only difference between them is that when it was first published it was signed by A. Calderon, but then when it was republished in a periodical largely written and read by men, the article appeared unsigned. The main reason that could explain this difference between the ‘original’ and its ‘copy’ is related to the space in which the text was displayed for reading. But I can only speculate about this. One thing that is certain is that this text is strikingly contemporary

¹⁰ ‘La Mujer ayer hoi y mañana’, 1.

¹¹ ‘La Mujer’, *La Alborada* (Santiago: 14 May 1906), 3.

¹² ‘La Mujer’, *José Arnero* (Santiago: 7 December 1908), 1-2.

to the ideas of today's Latin American feminism, and constitutes one of the most radical and direct critiques of patriarchy from within the working-class press. She begins by introducing the way in which women are exploited as follows:

I have seen her in the fields, hunched on the furrows, tilling the soil with the desires and the eagerness of a beast. I have seen her, in the middle of the day, sedated, imprisoned, enslaved by social prejudices; being an object of luxury and lust for her owner. In the workshop she is oppressed and reduced. In the factory she is exploited, she is insulted and barely receives payment. They take advantage of her misery to dishonour her and to despise her later. To trick her is for men a great triumph from which they take pride.¹³

This quotation introduces all the different forms of exploitation of women that I have previously referred to. Working-class women are subjugated to a regime of demanding labour, low salaries, sexual exploitation and rape. Again, there is nothing new in this account of the regime of (sexual) exploitation. But these are not the only forms in which proletarian women experience oppression, subjugation, violence and exploitation. She also asserts that '[w]omen of the lower classes of society, more indulgent, sweeter, more submissive bear all of life's burdens: the lazy father, the drunken husband and the wayward and ungrateful son.'¹⁴ She introduces a more subtle, but equally exploitative form of labour. It is a working-class division of labour that operates from within the working-class family; one in which the male members of the family take advantage of the female members. Then she refers to the ways in which bourgeois women are also oppressed. She says that they 'reign in a court of conventions, on top of a throne made of talcum, alien to all the things that uplift and ennoble existence, they are surrounded by a perverse atmosphere of elegant frivolity.'¹⁵ She exposes this situation in order to unveil the hypocritical morality of the Church. She addresses the clergy, and asserts:

you say that you have emancipated her! And you assure us that the Messiah has come for her as well! No, the time of her emancipation has not sounded yet! Her Messiah is about to come. You, men of faith, what have you done if not just to persuade her of the inexorability of her servitude, to make her love her chains, [and] to feed her soul with scents destined to make her captivity eternal?¹⁶

¹³ 'La mujer', 3.

¹⁴ 'La mujer', 3.

¹⁵ 'La mujer', 3.

¹⁶ 'La mujer', 3.

In a direct fashion, she challenges the clergy and claims that Jesus is not the real Messiah, at least not the one that will redeem women. Moreover, she says that the Church has only worked towards the strengthening of women's oppression.¹⁷ Therefore, she then announces the coming of another Messiah; a Messiah that will truly emancipate women. Considering that this critique is directed at the ruling class, I could claim that this messianic revolutionary promise does not seem to contradict the male working-class narrative. However, she adds a phrase that, in line with what she already said about the exploitative constitution of the working-class family, challenges the male-centred narratives about Capitalism. She addresses working-class men by asserting: '[y]ou revolutionaries, occupied in unmaking and making constitutions, how have you not thought that all freedom will be no more than a ghost while half of humanity continues living in slavery?'¹⁸ In order to appreciate how radical these words are, it is important to recall that this article was published both in a periodical run by women and in one dominated by men. She is at the centre of the working-class scene of writing stating that the male workers' notion of the revolution is a ghostlike revolution. That is, a revolution that changes regimes without modifying the underlying inequalities of the system as a whole. Since she claims that Capitalism and patriarchy are inextricably related, the exclusion of women from any revolution to come will inevitably re-inscribe the former gender and class inequalities into the new order.

Here I could picture a male worker who comes to interrupt her with all his misogyny. He would most likely argue that women are the ones who constantly betray the cause of the people, as I showed in Chapter 3 and 4. Moreover, that they are the ones who driven by their bourgeois inclinations, decide to sell their bodies to wealthy men and to abandon their class companions and sons. He would even assert that women are the ones who broke the sacred bond between the sexes by turning 'love' (understood as the only ideal aneconomic value) into a commodity and turned working-class men into (ex)changeable beasts of burden, sodomites, pederasts and idiots. But, I have already addressed all these issues, so now I will *listen* to her version of the story instead. Because of course, she also has a different explanation for the problem of the 'lost lover.'

¹⁷ In Chapter 4 I analysed the way in which the working-class press portrays the subjugation of women by the clergy through the figure of the *Beata*. See Chapter 3 section E) *The convent/brothel where she dwells*.

¹⁸ 'La mujer', 3.

In the last two paragraphs of the article, she addresses the issue of love in a way that resonates with the *Ni una menos* movement.¹⁹ She bluntly writes:

[a]nd then they murder women! We all see it! They love them so much! In this ultra-Catholic and proto-*Hidalgo* country, the murder of women is becoming a custom. To have a boyfriend is for the young woman of the people a lethal danger. A woman cannot defend her honour against the brutal demands of an imperious male, or reject the attentions of a bothersome one, or grow tired of some imbecile's flirting without putting her life in great danger. For those gallant men of today, the woman of their preference is obliged to put up with them or die. These kinds of crimes of passion are called murders for love... For love! Peculiar is the love that does not pursue the wellbeing of the loved object, but instead destroys and annihilates it! Love without generosity, without grandeur, without sacrifice; that does not know how to suffer immolation, nor to forgive the passion of a beast, the appetite of a creature; impure mix of lust and arrogance! To kill is our banner. We kill for God, we kill for order, we kill for love. What kind of race is this our race, in which religion is turned into fanaticism, politics into corruption and evil, and even love, the sacred and divine love, father of life, it is turned into murder?
*Oh, what times!*²⁰

I cite this passage at length because it introduces a radical shift in perspective. The 'poor and lonely' male worker that the periodicals depict lamenting the loss of his 'natural partner,' is here portrayed in a very similar manner to the lustful bourgeois men.²¹ These same male workers who so many times have been described as the perfect partners for working-class women by the pen of other men, now, after giving the floor to a female writer-reader, appear in a radically different light. They proved to be as oppressive and violent towards women as men of the ruling class. Here it is possible to appreciate that since for working-class men love

¹⁹ For information about this social movement see footnote 53 of the Introduction.

²⁰ 'La mujer', 3.

²¹ Real stories about feminicides perpetrated by men of both social classes were commonly published in these periodicals. But, in the working-class press they tend to justify the cases in which the feminicide is committed by a worker and only criticize the murderer when he is a member of the ruling class. The most prominent examples were the feminicides perpetrated by the priest Garrido ('Recuerdo de un asesinato', *José Arnero* (Santiago: 21 December 1905), 1) and the murder of Teresa Zañartu by her husband, the aristocrat Eduardo Undurraga ('Rememoracion de un crimen aristocratico', *José Arnero* (Santiago: 31 January 1910). Both cases were condemned by the periodical. In contrast, when this same periodical covered the case of the worker Pascual Torres, who also murdered his wife, the periodical mainly referred to the irregularities of the trial and attempted to justify Torres' actions by alluding to his social background ('Los Grandes Crimenes. Asesino Roto I Asesino Caballero', *José Arnero* (Santiago: 6 July 1905), 2.

has always been conceived in terms of objectification and commodification of women, nothing has substantially changed for women over time. The only thing that did change is the notion of love itself. For male working-class writers, love understood as a communal possession was supplanted by commodification, as I showed in Chapters 3 and 4. But, for women, it is misogyny and murder which took the place of love. Thus, in a context in which working-class men, instead of supporting and including women in their struggle, have mistaken sexual exploitation, abuse and rape for class treason and unleashed the most absolute form of misogyny: femicide.²² According to this female writer-reader, it is the ‘brutalization’ of men, their radical jealousy and their eagerness to control and possess women that have destroyed the potential promise of the constitution of the ideal ‘proletarian couple.’²³ However, the male workers do not see it that way. I have shown how in their writings women are rejected from the revolutionary telos, how they are blamed for all the workers’ mishaps and how these men abuse and even kill them. But in the end, they end up crying and expressing that they are alone; that their mothers and lovers are gone and they seem not to understand why, so they keep blaming, excluding and killing them.

Conclusion: They Kill For ‘Love’

The excess and incommensurability of female working-class writing in this scene of writing, does not derive from the creation of an alternative conceptualization of the revolutionary *telos*. They addressed all the core issues of the working-class press from within that same press and they partook in the common discussions. But, their locus of enunciation as women (as mothers and lovers), allowed them to re-write those same topics in a way that bears the potential to disrupt the patriarchal logic of the working-class press and expose its inner contradictions. These women by referring, re-writing and twisting the male working-class narrative managed to challenge men’s monopoly over words and to expose the paradoxes that derived from any patriarchal conceptualization of the revolution. Thus, since these writers-readers did not write in isolation from a broader scene of writing, I analysed their

²² The question as to what extent this form of violence against women is a re-actualization of a previous tradition remains to be thought.

²³ Salazar & Pinto, *Historia Contemporánea de Chile IV*. I addressed this concept in the introduction. See the Introduction section E) *The Chilean left-wing historiographical tradition*.

texts in contrast to other working-class texts in order to grasp this movement of displacement. I addressed three problems: I analysed how women resorted to working-class writing strategies to legitimize their texts according to the writing principles that I addressed in Chapter 1; then I compared the narratives about the origin of Capitalism in terms of an expropriation and commodification of women as I analysed in Chapter 3 with a text that posits the commodification of women as a foundational element of the ideal pre-capitalist community; and finally, I addressed the problem of the ‘commodification of women’s love’ as the main principle of the market economy as I analysed it in Chapters 4 and 5 in contrast to an account that posits that male workers were left alone because they turned love into murder, and not because women decided to betray their class companions.

CONCLUSION: RESIST LIKE A WORKER IN DRAG

In 1986, at the end of Pinochet's dictatorship, the queer activist, performance artist and writer Pedro Lemebel read his '*Manifiesto (hablo por mi diferencia)*' [Manifesto (I Speak for my Difference)] in a congress of the Chilean Communist Party. Pedro was wearing hills and had drawn the Hammer and the Sickle on his face with makeup and glitter. His words were a sharp critique of the Socialist and Communist parties that during the transitional period were quietly moving to the right of the political spectrum by, borrowing Chantal Mouffe words, 'euphemistically redefining themselves as centre-left.'¹ It was year zero of Neoliberal post-partisan politics inspired by the Social Democrat's 'Third Way.' In this context, this queer left-wing manifesto was a twofold critique of the left: On the one hand, Lemebel criticized these parties for accepting the 'Third Way' and for being part of the Neoliberal transitional agreement.² On the other hand, he openly denounced the historical homophobia of the Party. This performance, as Nelly Richard remembers, 'destabilized the leftist composure of the Communist Party which, habituated to the dry propaganda of the watchword and pamphlet, attributed it the character of literary sedition, this because it was a prose that contained, as pearls in a necklace, allegories and metaphors of sexual carnivalization.'³ At a time when nobody was asking the hard questions (maybe because everyone was just too concerned with the fall of the dictatorship, too afraid of repression, disappointed with the left or just ready to embrace the neoliberal future) a queer left-wing activist in drag, wearing hills, makeup and glitter was the only one who confronted the left-wing establishment and exposed the comrade's naked body. In front of a stunned audience he introduced himself like this:

I'm not a fag disguised as poet / I don't need a disguise / Here is my face / I speak for my difference / I defend what I am [...] don't speak to me of the proletariat / Because to be poor and queer is worse / One must be tough to withstand it / It is to avoid the machitos on the streetcorner / It is a father that hates you [...] It is to have a mother whose hands are slashed by bleach [...] Cradling you as if you were ill / Because of bad habits / Because of bad luck / Like the dictatorship / Worse than the dictatorship / Because the dictatorship ends / And democracy comes / And right behind it socialism / And then

¹ Mouffe, Chantal, *The Democratic Paradox* (London: Verso, 2000), 6.

² For critical insides into the Neoliberal character of the Chilean transition to democracy see: Richard, Nelly, *Cultural Residues* and Moulian, Tomás, *Chile Actual*.

³ Richard, Nelly, *Abismos temporales: Feminismo, estética travestis y teoría queer* (Santiago: ediciones metales pesados, 2018), 85.

what? / What will you do to us, compañero? / Will you tie us into bails by our braids,
destined to arrive in some AIDS-ridden / quarter of Cuba? / Put us on some train to
nowhere / Like general Ibáñez's ship / Where we learnt to swim / Although no one
reached the shore [...] In that year that the Human Rights Commission doesn't
remember.⁴

In the middle of a process of transition to democracy based in the establishment of a selected memory meant to delimitate the official victims of twentieth-century Chile that the country needed to mourn in order to move on, Lemebel overflowed the canny report of the Human Rights Commission by adding a group of victims that the traditional left had conveniently forgotten in the name of 'national reconciliation.' To even suggest that there were other victims who were not killed by the dictatorship, but by sectors of the left could only be a transgression. However, he insisted:

And you? / What will you do with those memories of us as children wanking each other,
/ amongst other things, on holiday in Cartagena? / Will the future be black and white? /
Day and night, without ambiguity? / Won't there be a fag on some street-corner,
destabilising the future of your new man? [...] And don't feel offended / If I speak to
you of these things / And look at your package / I am not a hypocrite / Don't a woman's
tits make you lower your eyes? / Don't you think that, all alone, up in the ranges, we
might have gotten up to something? / Although you would hate me later / for corrupting
your revolutionary morality / Are you afraid of life becoming homosexual? ⁵

This speech addresses the core issues of this thesis: fear, desire, guilt and repression. As a repetition compulsion, the fear of the revolutionary becoming homosexual returns to the scene over and over again. Lemebel is not talking about a new issue, someone could have asked the same questions to the workers of the 1870s (a hundred years before) as I have shown. So I keep asking (together with Pedro): 'Are you afraid of life becoming homosexual?' Nobody replies. This must remain a hidden secret that takes the young man who wants to become the New Man that Che Guevara imagined (according to his machoism and homophobia) to forbidden memories and desires. 'Let it go, it was a long time ago,' someone might reply. But, it is not just about sex, it about so much more than that. Pedro

⁴ Lemebel, Pedro, *Manifiesto (Hablo por mi diferencia)*, Trans. Sergio Holas-Véliz & Israel Holas Allimant, (Cordite Poetry Review) Retrieved from: <http://cordite.org.au/poetry/notheme4/manifiesto-i-speak-for-my-difference/>.

⁵ Lemebel, *Manifiesto (Hablo por mi diferencia)*.

continued: ‘I’m not talking about putting in and taking it out / And only taking it out and putting it back in / I’m talking about tenderness, compañero / You don’t know / How hard it is to find love / Under these conditions.’⁶ It is about tenderness, care and love. Those same feelings that the early working-class movement destroyed by blaming women on everything and by rejecting any form of non-normative sexuality alleging that they were degenerative bourgeois practices. As I have exposed in this work, to vindicate tenderness, care and love does not imply to abandon the revolutionary cause in order to privilege ‘secondary or sectorial struggles.’ Instead, it enhances and strengthens the critique of Neoliberalism by exposing the way in which a Marxism devoid of affects can easily become an accomplice of the commodification of human relationships, the wage-less exploitation of care givers (mainly women) and the fragmentation of the working class into women, LGBTIQ people, migrants and heterosexuals. It is no secret that this issue has led to the destruction of solidarity bonds and created multiple difficulties for political organization and action. And also, as I have defended, this is not an ‘alien’ or ‘new’ problem for the Chilean left. It is all over its early working-class press. It was just, as Lemebel expresses, repressed as a forgotten memory of two kids wanking each other in holidays in Cartagena. It is an issue that resists and remains. However, it is as if to recognize this would be too shameful, too harsh, and too unnecessary for the contemporary left. Maybe there are still people who fear that life could become homosexual, I do not know. In either case the result is the same: silence, exclusion and omission. This is what the Chilean feminist philosopher Alejandra Castillo refers to when she asks: ‘how would it be a left described from [the perspective of] desire? Clearly, we do not have an answer for this question. Almost without thinking about it, we assume left-wing politics without a body and without desire.’⁷ This thesis constitutes an attempt to study the early Chilean left from that perspective. It proposes a feminist reading protocol inspired by deconstruction to approach the worker’s body before orthodox Marxism began to exclude sex and desire from the realm of politics. This, with the aim to display the way in which this exclusion operated when was still exposed in the open. Therefore, this thesis provides clues and traces that can be used to read and follow this exclusion throughout the twentieth century up to today. It reveals, as an anticipation of the exile of the body that Castillo spotted while

⁶ Lemebel, *Manifiesto (Hablo por mi diferencia)*.

⁷ Castillo, Alejandra, *Crónicas feministas en tiempos neoliberales* (Santiago: Palinodia, 2019), 102.

analysing contemporary Chile, a previous attempt to control women's sexuality and to eradicate homosexuality in a way that foretells the horrors that Lemebel denounces. However, it also shows that this compulsive attack against homosexual men and women was grounded on the idea that these people were destabilizing the boundaries of sexual difference in general. For the early working-class movement the issue was not only about controlling and excluding the other's body, it was also about enforcing a new archetype of working-class masculinity that failed to be embodied by male workers. In other words, the excluded (the female sex and everything/everyone that resembles it) contoured the frames of the included (ideal masculinity), but as a paradox, by becoming a constitutive exteriority it overflowed the inside with the outside generating the feminization of the scene of writing in general and the dislocation of the economy of sexual difference. Hence, this thesis is not only about violence against women and homosexual men, it is also about the foundations and inner flaws of a regime of sexual difference. It shows that behind the dry solemnity and harshness of a contemporary body-less left, there is a systematic history of sexual control and rejection from which the New Man emerged without a body and without desire. Therefore, this work demonstrates that the exile of the body that desires and is desired can only begin to be grasped if we become aware of the patriarchal, homophobic and misogynistic conditions on which this inclusion/exclusion was founded upon. Hence, in a way that resembles Judith Butler's ideas in *Bodies that Matter*, I could assert (as she did) that this thesis:

has traced materiality as the site at which a certain drama of sexual difference plays itself out. The point of such an exposition is not only to warn against an easy return to the materiality of the body or the materiality of sex, but to show that to invoke matter is to invoke a sedimented history of sexual hierarchy and sexual erasures which should surely be an object of feminist inquiry.⁸

Consequently, this research was written in direct opposition to some forms of feminism that by understanding the bodily materiality of sex as a sign of irreducibility that is prior to signification (that is to say, as a surface on which construction operates) tends to essentialize female anatomy.⁹ In opposition to this perspective, this thesis recuperates a certain Marx that writes about the malleability of bodies crafted by labour (as I expressed in the introduction

⁸ Butler, Judith, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive limits of "Sex"* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 49.

⁹ Butler, 28.

and further developed in section II) in order to read the working-class body that emerges through the Chilean working-class press as a fluid body that resists the constraints of form (beasts and monsters constantly substitute the worker) and of a stable gender and sex. The fact that the material studied here was written by workers themselves makes it particularly rich for the deconstruction of sexual difference. These sources display a cruel and painful struggle to define and delimit, by means of erasures and repressions, one's own sexed and gendered body. It is a never-ending process of historical sedimentation of a self-infringed norm that always-already fails, and therefore, has to be periodically re-enacted and reinforced (the Cuban concentration camps for the 'rectification of gay men' and General Ibáñez's ship can be interpreted under this perspective). Henceforth, the value of this thesis does not lie in the simple reconstruction of the patriarchal values of working-class men and the violence they perpetrated against women, this is nonetheless a fundamental ethico-political issue which must be discussed. However, the novelty and the task this work poses to the field of Critical Theory and to the studies on the tradition of the left is the deconstruction of the worker's stable gender and body by means of the problematization of the early attempts to delineate the normal body and sexuality of the class as a whole. This not only provides new perspectives for the study of the working-classes from a gender or feminist perspective, it also exposes that the way in which the gendered and sexed body is experienced, crafted and resisted by workers is intrinsically related to the way in which they experienced Capitalism, the labour routine, the market economy and exploitation. Using a Marxist vocabulary, I could assert that there is an inner connection between the (de)construction of the workers' sexed and gendered body and the material conditions of production. This approach also provides new critical insights to the way in which these workers' understanding of the body informed their critique of industrial Capitalism and the market economy. By means of tracing the recent history of pornography, pharmacy and medicine, Paul Preciado has sharply exposed the inner connection between contemporary Capitalism (he calls it Pharmacopornographic biocapitalism) and the construction of the sexed and gendered body, thus it should not be a surprise that this connection between Capitalism (including its critique) and bodily sedimentation could also be found in previous stages of capitalist production.¹⁰ According to this perspective, the notions of men and women are understood as contingent terms that can

¹⁰ Preciado, Beatriz (Paul), *Testo Yonkie*.

be strategically used for different political needs without relying on any kind of metaphysical essentialisation of sex and the body. Therefore, it is only by engaging in a feminist deconstruction of the body as the one that Butler and Preciado advocate for (which also resonates with the work of Latin American authors such as Alejandra Castillo and Nelly Richard), we can critically engage with the ideas about body formation in Marxist theory and to galvanize left-wing politics. The fact that the Latin American far-right is more scared of and concerned with Butler than with any renowned Marxist scholar, should be read as a symptom. All the fuzz, protests, attacks and rallies that her visit to Brazil generated in 2017, should not be taken slightly. Neither, the fact that Jair Bolsonaro (the president of Brazil) was linked to the murder of Marielle Franco, a lesbian and left-wing city councillor of the Municipal Chamber of Rio de Janeiro, and that the following year (2019), Jean Wyllys (Brazil's first openly gay congressman) had to leave the country because of death threats. We should neither forget that the fore-front of the Chilean anti-neoliberal protests of 2019 was the feminist movement, and that this revolt led to the world's first openly recognized feminist and plurinational Constitutional Assembly. We should also bear in mind the capacity of the Argentinian movement *Ni una menos* to cross borders in order build new forms of feminist left-wing solidarity across Latin America and Spain. Today the political struggle between left and right in Latin America has in its core the intersectionality between economics and the body. The current Latin American anti-Neoliberal movement is based on a feminist postcolonial perspective that recognizes the political role of indigenous people, women, LGBTIQ people and different other sectors which the traditional left never managed to mobilize. In this context, the critique of economics and the body must become part of the same intellectual and political endeavour.

This is a problem that Rancière did not see in his *Proletarian Nights*.¹¹ He is right in arguing that the traditional left organises, fights and resists in the name of physical labour. Exploited bodies have to be made visible in the public sphere so the collective can gather enough symbolic resources to shout 'we are the working classes and here we stand.' He is also right in identifying that left-wing intellectuals need to represent the working class as a mass of mind-less physically productive bodies in order to justify the existence of an intellectual elite or vanguard. Thus, it makes sense that against this monofunctional body/mind

¹¹ Rancière, Jacques, *Proletarian Nights*.

division, Rancière interprets artisan writing and dreaming (understood in terms of free activities that contest this hierarchy in ‘non-productive’ ways) as the greatest emancipatory practices. But this is not the whole story. It is important to contest the body/mind distributions, but it is not enough to only flip this hierarchy in order to reveal that there is independent artisan or working-class thought. Since he does not problematize the construction of the working-class monofunctional body, he is not able to fully criticize the sexed and gendered substratum of the male productive body and the way it can be also experienced and re-shaped by the workers themselves. This is not a minor issue, especially if we consider that those same bodies that have to be made visible in day light as exploited workers, must then go ‘underground’ during the night and become clandestine in order to partake in the guerrilla warfare of love affairs, non-normative forms of care, pleasure and desires. As Lemebel shows, for the traditional left is paramount that we do not mess with their normative, monofunctional and conservative daily images of the body. Our libido, ‘tendencies’, ways of life and, more importantly, our tenderness must not ‘corrupt their revolutionary morality.’ Rancière did not realise that bodies are tricky and that through corporeal action the ideal images of the universal proletariat can also be contested and smashed into pieces: bodies can misbehave, they are erogenous, they can be stimulated, they can channel libido and they can waste energy in non-reproductive sexual acts or in just taking care of a friend (as an artisan that waste an entire night writing poetry). Bodies drink, touch, kiss, feel, fuck, love and fight, and all of this is a massive waste of time and energy in the eyes of the left-wing intellectual. This is a more radical and profound way of contesting and resisting the ideal image of the immaculate proletariat and the conservative moral out of which it was crafted. Rancière nonetheless opened a field of studies that allows us to address to working-class writers the same questions that scholars such as Butler, Preciado, Castillo and Richards asks to philosophers, artists, writers, film makers, drag queens and scientists. These authors have centred their research in different cultural artefacts that have proven to be highly fruitful for the critique of the body, gender and sexual difference in the Capitalist regime. However, the lack of genealogical studies on the ways in which the norm has been re-read and re-imagined by the working-class movement and how the struggle of embodying (or failing to embody) that norm has been experienced by workers themselves, leaves a gap that needs to be addressed in order to critically engage in new ways with the tradition of the

left from within its history. This is what Lemebel's intervention teach us. He exposed the fears and secrets of the left in an official act. He did not hide or exclude himself, he neither attempted to form a new and more modern left. He decided to act surrounded by the traditional left and to be part of it. From that problematic, uncertain and uncomfortable place of enunciation, he managed to unsettle the solemnity of the tradition by not only desecrating the Hammer and the Sickle, but by profaning the masculinity of the Latin American New Man. This is a gesture that this thesis vindicates, follows and repeats. It is the task to radicalize the left by enhancing the Marxist critique in order to face contemporary politics and theory. Like Lemebel in drag, this thesis uncovers the fragile masculinity of the left, its secrets and exposed a worker, who against his will, stands in drag as well. And, by the same token, this work has also shown the ways in which different forms of conservatism hijack left-wing politics from the inside. It is an intellectual gesture that steams from the political need to imagine and practice politics based on a de-centred and fluid subject which can move beyond the rigid boundaries of the Cuban New Man. Pedro knew this and this is why when the parties of the left were ready to betray the cause by becoming part of the Neoliberal future, he vindicated a queer radical approach as a form of resistance. He laugh at the left-wing fragile masculinity by closing his speech, and with it this thesis, as follows:

You think that I think with my ass / And that with the first electro-shock from the CNI [The political police and intelligence body of the Dictatorship] / I was going to spill it out / Don't you know that my manhood / Wasn't learnt in the barracks / My manhood was taught to me by the night / Behind a street-post [...] My manhood wasn't given to me by the party / Because they rejected me with laughter / Many times / I learnt my manhood by participating / In the toughness of those times [...] I don't turn the other cheek / Instead I present my ass, compañero / And that is my vengeance / My manhood waits patiently / For the machos to get old / Because at this stage of the game / The left sells its flaccid ass / In the parliament / My manhood was difficult / That's why I'm not getting onto this train / Without knowing where it will go / I will not change for Marxism / That rejected me so many times / I don't need to change / I am more subversive than you / I will not change / Because of the rich and the poor / Try that on somebody else.¹²

¹² Lemebel, *Manifiesto (Hablo por mi diferencia)*.

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Appendix 1: Original Quotes in Spanish

A) Introduction

- Footnote 3: ‘Mientras la imprenta no estuvo en manos de los obreros, no éramos nadie; vivíamos en la oscuridad, ignorados. Pero la creación de la imprenta revela que ha habido un genio en el pensamiento de los trabajadores. Cuando ellos han dicho: “Tengamos imprenta y entonces perfeccionaremos nuestra inteligencia”, entonces las cosas han empezado a cambiar’ (Recabarren in: Arias, Osvaldo Arias, 15).
- Footnote 4: ‘Los diarios y periódicos laborales fueron un vehículo determinante para la articulación de las expresiones políticas locales, dada la tasa relativamente alta de alfabetismo (72% en 1895) que se encontraba en la población urbana chilena. Esta prensa obrera nos da el acceso no solamente a las asambleas, a las reuniones y grupos que componían el movimiento obrero, sino también testifica la alta prioridad otorgada a la propaganda y a la educación en las sociedades de trabajadores de este periodo’ (Hutchinson, 92).
- Footnote 33: ‘La historiografía se hizo eco de ese olvido, distorsión o silencio. Por ello, hasta casi fines del siglo XX, la bibliografía sobre los ácratas chilenos era muy escueta’ (Grez, 9).
- Footnote 34: ‘Un examen acucioso arroja un panorama más complejo, caracterizado por cierta laxitud e indefinición ideológica en los grupos populares de izquierda’ (Grez, 14).
- Footnote 35: ‘A principios del siglo, no existía en Chile el comunismo. Por lo menos, sus miembros no estaban agrupados en un partido político, ni poseían programa definido, ni obedecían a normas de organización internacional. Pudiera ser que algunos llegaran a formar grupos dignos de consideración; pero su alcance social se limitaba a una acción de montoneras dispersas que, esporádicamente, se agrupaban para alcanzar objetivos determinados. Había, sí, revolucionarios anarquistas a quienes se les solía llamar comunistas, aunque, en realidad, no lo fueran’ (Santivan, , 223).
- Footnote 36: ‘El movimiento obrero chileno, difícilmente puede concebirse sin la vida y obra de Luis Emilio Recabarren. La trayectoria personal de este líder sindical, social y político resulta enormemente esclarecedora para entender un capítulo importante del Chile del siglo XX’ (Memoria Chilena (DIBAM)).
- Footnote 40: ‘La figura señera de la historiografía de izquierda es, actualmente, Gabriel Salazar’ (Correa, 48).
- Footnote 44: ‘Su objetivo principal es exponer bosquejos históricos creíbles, que permitan trabajar los problemas domésticos del género dentro de un cauce unitario y conforme a una actitud solidaria frente o contra las provocaciones y abusos del sistema global’ (Salazar & Pinto, 16).
- Footnote 47: ‘La Historia Social y la Educación Popular son herederas del sentimiento de solidaridad que inflamó a la juventud revolucionaria de los años 60s y 70s, y del que inflamó la “fuerza de los 80s”, que combatió a la tiranía militar. Por eso, ni la una ni la otra son meras ciencias académicas, ni meros peldaños de la carrera universitaria, pues contienen un ADN ético y político esencial: la solidaridad, el diálogo fraterno, la entrega a la causa, etc., prácticas que son, también, parte de la mística interna del movimiento popular [...] Quienes, de partida, se han sumado a la práctica comunicativa de destruir prestigios que estorban, entran en colisión con el ADN del “ser solidario”, y corren el riesgo de alimentar el doble fondo típico de la “solidaridad neoliberal”... Debemos, pues, todos, asumir los valores de largo alcance’ (‘La carta abierta de Gabriel Salazar’)
- Footnote 50: ‘Recabarren -y muchos otros como él- sintieron hacia 1900 que la responsabilidad de un jefe de familia incluía no sólo ganar el sustento de su familia, sino también combatir a quienes, abusivamente, estaban robando una parte sustancial de ese sustento. El trabajo se duplicaba: uno era el trabajo asalariado, el otro, el revolucionario. Uno, el que proveía a “su” familia; el otro, el que conducía a la “felicidad proletaria y luego a la universal”. La “hombria socialista”, conforme la entendía Recabarren, era, pues, la tradicional, pero complicada por un ineludible compromiso ético, político e histórico con la “liberación” de todos’ (Salazar & Pinto, 82).

- Footnote 51: 'La lucha por la justicia y la libertad -el trabajo revolucionario inevitablemente transformaba (y transforma) la relación "normativa" de pareja en una relación "histórica" de compañerismo y camaradería; una relación entre dos seres de sexo distinto, pero "hermanados y fundidos" por un mismo objetivo: la libertad y la felicidad de todos' (Salazar & Pinto, 83).

- Footnote 53: 'Escribo estas modestas líneas en la certidumbre que con ellas contribuiré al triunfo de los ideales que el bienhechor Socialismo viene defendiendo, con tanto calor como éxito, en todas partes del mundo, a fin de preparar la futura redención que esperamos alcanzar todos los explotados del orbe. Jamás los luchadores han fijado su atención en nosotras, ni mucho menos han tratado de llevarnos al campo donde ellos luchan y desenvuelven su actividad, tal vez porque han creído ver en nuestro sexo seres inútiles e incapaces de secundarlos en la campaña que se hallan empeñados. Error, profundo error. Yo creo y pienso que nosotras las mujeres, las eternas esclavas del hogar y del taller, sentimos más que nadie hervir de indignación la sangre en nuestras venas al considerar que siendo seres racionales se nos haya considerado y se nos siga considerando como un objeto de placer destinado a satisfacer los apetitos del hombre, o como uno de los trastos del hogar que desempeña una función mecánica, o, finalmente, como una reclusa del taller, inclinada eternamente sobre las piezas de costura' ('Un tesoro escondido', 3).

- Footnote 58: 'Las Mujeres historiadoras chilenas generalmente han clasificado a Recabarren como feminista, tanto por sus textos que analizan la condición de las mujeres como por su participación en la organización de grupos de mujeres en el norte de Chile en 1913' (Hutchinson, 135).

- Footnote 61: 'La "Nueva Historia" o "Historia del Bajo Pueblo" -hoy en crisis- en mucho se quedó en la simple inversión de las categorías del orden historiográfico dominante -sin cuestionamiento- y en la afirmación del pueblo casi siempre figurado en las historias, gestas y cuerpos de los hombres. Bien podría ser dicho, sin embargo, que la historia social de las mujeres es la distancia polémica a esa figuración masculina en la propia historia del bajo pueblo. Lo que había silenciado la historia del bajo pueblo es puesto en escena por la historia de las mujeres. Sí, es cierto, pero nuevamente las categorías que organizan el saber que la Historia porta quedan intactas. La operación historiográfica que describe a la historia de las mujeres no parece ser distinta a la "inversión de la inversión". No olvidemos que el feminismo -que es interrupción y no inversión- habitualmente es percibido como pequeño burgués por las historias del bajo pueblo. Tal vez el tiempo de la revuelta sea también el tiempo justo para (in)pensar la historia, sus historiografías' (Castillo, 37).

- Footnote 66: 'En el fondo, pareciera que lo que está en disputa por izquierdas y derechas... es quien cautela mejor este núcleo de valores del orden patriarcal que es -en nuestra opinión- la familia' (Kirkwood, 11).

- Footnote 68: 'Como aquella ejercida sobre los hombres en interés de la misma reproducción de las condiciones que posibilitan la violencia, lo que nos permite entender la guerra no como un evento excepcional en la historia moderna latinoamericana, sino como un tipo de violencia que no por lamentable deja de ser recurrente' (Villalobos-Ruminott, 121).

PART I

- Footnote 4: 'Eran pequeños de formato, infamemente impresos sobre pésimo papel, duraban unos pocos números y luego se extinguían asfixiados por razones financieras o perseguidos por la fuerza pública. Esta los confiscaba, arrasaba sus talleres tipográficos y detenía a los editores. Pero era inútil: transcurridos unos pocos meses, aquellas publicaciones resurgían bajo un nuevo nombre, y la historia re-comenzaba' (Santa Cruz, 54-55).

- Footnote 7: 'La prensa tenía un papel central en este proceso educativo-agitativo. Su tarea iba mucho más allá de la simple información, era un canal de formación de la conciencia obrera [...] En síntesis, la prensa era la columna vertebral del campo político-cultural del mundo obrero; a través de ella se manifestaban las expresiones más racionales y estructuradas del pensamiento [...] A través de ellas también aparece otra dimensión, el campo del imaginario colectivo o el lado oscuro y oculto del

discurso. La prensa, por su complejo carácter de medio de información, educación y propaganda, es un lugar privilegiado de aparición de lo que es dicho sin decir, de los sub-textos, de los discursos segundos, de aspectos que no están expresados de manera directa' (Moulian & Torres, 11-12).

- Footnote 8: 'El universo mental es muy heterogéneo, incoherente y todavía incompleto. La percepción de las condiciones de la lucha por el poder dentro del régimen político existente, las teorías vigentes de la revolución, las imágenes del futuro, la descripción de los medios de lucha corresponden a una época de transición, cuando todavía no se ha formado el movimiento obrero contemporáneo, no obstante que ya está en gestación' (Moulian & Torres, 15).

- Footnote 9: 'Un continente con una tradición cultural y especialmente con una tradición filosófica mucho más importante' (Moulian & Torres, 15).

- Footnote 10: 'Esos "hombres ilustrados" no eran académicos o especialistas si no obreros, que acicateados por el amor al saber, eran capaces de aprender para enseñar a sus "hermanos proletarios"' (Moulian & Torres, 29).

- Footnote 11: 'Multiplicidad de luchas sectoriales —todos, no sólo los llamados "profesionales de la escritura" pueden o deben ser "intelectuales"—, desorganización total de la sociedad preparada por desorganizaciones sectoriales, método a seguir por una Nueva Izquierda chilena —necesidad de crearla. Así, a partir, pero sólo a partir de ahí, de la negatividad de su mirada, el "Intelectual negativo" puede adquirir lo que algunos gustarían llamar "positividad."' (Marchant, 224-225).

CHAPTER I

- Footnote 5: 'Los redactores de los diarios que ganan 300 a 500 pesos mensuales, los que le permiten vivir holgadamente no pueden ser los voceros exactos o fieles de la opinión pública porque codeándose con la aristocracia no bajan a las masas que las componen las clases media y el proletariado, y por lo tanto no pueden reflejar las necesidades de esas inmensas mayorías, resultando así sus opiniones vertidas casi personales' ('Plebiscito al País. El deber de la prensa ante la hora presente' (La Voz Socialista, Santiago: Second week of November 1913), 2).

- Footnote 6: 'La emancipación de los trabajadores tiene que ser obra de los trabajadores mismos' 'La Voz Socialista' (La Voz Socialista, Santiago: second week of November 1913), 1

- Footnote 10: 'Otro canto de sin igual grandeza:/ el canto que consagra el pobre a su pobreza' ('El Gran Poema (Fragmentos)', 2).

- Footnote 12: '¿Quién, despreciando, del rico el anatema/ recojerá los cantos del inmortal poema/ que en ritmos armoniosos de infinita tristeza/ consagra silencioso el pobre a su pobreza?' ('El Gran Poema (Fragmentos)', 2).

- Footnote 15: '¿I cómo hallar el ritmo magnífico i sencillo/ que encarne los acentos terribles del martillo?/ i cómo darle forma a ese potente lazo/ que forma aquel martillo unido a un férreo brazo?/ I de la fábrica triste la atmosfera pesada,/ habrá quien la describa de una sola plumada?' ('El Gran Poema (Fragmentos)', 2).

- Footnote 17: 'Los ruidos infernales de llantas i poleas/ ahuyentan del cerebro la vida i las ideas/ en medio de esa noche horrible, que nos pasma/ se ajita el pobre obrero como infernal fantasma:/ sus cuerpos se ajigantan [...] / son ellos los despejos/ que buscan insaciables los hornos con sus ojos,/ hasta que ya pasado el resplandor del día,/ se queda la caverna silenciosa i sombría' ('El Gran Poema (Fragmentos)', 2).

- Footnote 27: 'En Chile casi todos los cuadros o difusores eran nacionales que provenían del mundo popular. Fueron escasísimos los artistas e intelectuales que actuaron "militantemente" junto a los obreros y artesanos en la primera década siglo' (Grez, 182).

- Footnote 31: 'El anarquista no admitía la división de trabajadores manuales e intelectuales' (Santivan, 224).

- Footnote 33: ‘Al dejar, por un momento la herramienta para tomar la pluma, pensamos quéde tantos asuntos- decir a nuestro pueblo. Nosotros queremos hablarle con franqueza con sencillez con la verdad en las silabas’ (‘La Tromba’ (La Tromba: Santiago, March 6 1898), 1).
- Footnote 35: ‘Venimos de abajo. Es verdad. Somos soldados del Taller. Allá en el fondo de nuestros presidios industriales ha llegado un eco a nuestros oidos. Es el eco sordo de un gran derrumbe. El derrumbe que anuncia el momento de la catástrofe!’ (‘Nuestra Labor’ (La Campaña, Santiago: Second half of August 1899), 1).
- Footnote 39: ‘Nuestros enemigos nos criticaran, dirán que nuestro vocero es rudo y grotesco que estará muy mal escrito, pero ruda y grotesca es la piedra que sirve de cimiento a los grandes edificios que se alzan en las opulentas ciudades, si es verdad que nuestro querido Spartacus está mal escrito, no es ménos cierto también que está escrito con lo que no pueden escribir los que venden sus pensamientos a tanto por columna. Nuestro Atalaya que, servirá de sudario a los gemidos, a falta de reglas gramaticales y literatura estará engalanado con palabras escritas con el corazón’ (‘Nuestro Saludo’ (Spartacus, Santiago: November 1920), 1).
- Footnote 41: ‘Todos estos Buenos obreros no han aspirado mas que a ser útiles a sus semejantes i no ocupar los principales puestos de la Nacion como lo hacen los *caballeritos* [...] con un subido sueldo. El obrero que se dedica a escribir nos es como esos hijos de ricos [...] pues el obrero escribe [...] con seriedad i enerjía como lo hace todo hombre que nada teme, porque habla con la mano puesta en el corazon’ (‘La Prensa Obrera’ (La Union Obrera, Santiago: May 23 1892), 1).
- Footnote 55: ‘Nacemos a la vida del periodismo como un aborto de las hondas necesidades populares. Somos la expresión de las quejas y llantos que se escapan de todos los hogares donde se anida la miseria’ (‘Nuestra Primera Palabra’, *La Situacion* (Santiago: September 18 1914), 1).
- Footnote 56: ‘El pensamiento nos visita y en sus fuertes vibraciones nos dice, que no debemos callar por mas tiempo, para abrir paso a la verdad y para que triunfe el derecho de todas las clases sociales que sufren en silencio las graves consecuencias de la hora presente’ (‘Nuestra Primera Palabra’, 1).
- Footnote 57: ‘Pertenece al pueblo y por lo mismo sentimos como él, odiamos como él u moriremos junto al pueblo sin hacer odiosas claudicaciones sin humillaciones ni bajezas de ningun género’ (‘Nuestra Primera Palabra’, 1).
- Footnote 58: ‘Nuestra pluma, forjada al calor de los rudos sacrificios, la mojaremos en el llanto de nuestros hermanos de miseria y en la sangre inocente que han sacrificado los tiranos’ (‘Nuestra Primera Palabra’, 1).
- Footnote 59: ‘Nosotros somos vapores sociales, formados al calor de la injusticia, i elevados en virtud de la lei de Newton’ (‘La Tromba’, *La Tromba* (Santiago: March 6 1898), 1).
- Footnote 62: ‘¡La eterna historia! Siempre la misma historia!’ (‘Desgraciada’, *La Campaña* (Santiago: January, 1900), 2.)
- Footnote 63: ‘Por este rápido prólogo se comprenderá sin esfuerzo el desarrollo del drama i su justo epílogo. Sencilísimo i de frecuente uso’ (‘Desgraciada’, 2)
- Footnote 64: ‘Ella, una honrada i laboriosa jóven, nacida en cuna humilde, privada de todo recurso con qué atender sus necesidades [...] condenada a trabajar, para ganarse el sustento, confundida con otras compañeras i compañeros tributarios de la desigual lei del trabajo actual’ (‘Desgraciada’, 2).

CHAPTER 2

- Footnote 3: ‘La prensa obrera es la válvula de escape del sentimiento popular’ (‘La Prensa Obrera’, 5).
- Footnote 4: ‘La prensa obrera es el faro que guía a los trabajadores a la conquista de todas sus reivindicaciones’ (‘La Prensa Obrera’, 5).
- Footnote 5: ‘Un pueblo sin prensa que defiende sus derechos es un pueblo esclavo i desgraciado, que servirá de pasto al despotismo de los tiranos’ (‘La Prensa Obrera’, 5).

- Footnote 6: ‘El trabajador que protege un diario obrero, suscribiéndose o comprándolo, cumple con el mas grande de sus deberes’ (‘La Prensa Obrera’, 5).
- Footnote 7: ‘Los trabajadores que no leen la prensa que lucha por su bienestar, son indignos de llamarse libres i merecen el desprecio de los demas obreros’ (‘La Prensa Obrera’, 5).
- Footnote 9: ‘La prensa obrera, es el sol que alumbra el cerebro de las multitudes, despeja las tinieblas de la ignorancia i le señala el camino del progreso i de las ciencias’ (‘La Prensa Obrera’, 5).
- Footnote 10: ‘Los intelectuales dicen con firmeza que la imprenta es la lengua del mundo; la luz brillante que ilumina las conciencias; la gran escuela donde se conoce al pueblo; -bien, todo esto puede ser, pero yo creo, i como creo puedo decirlo que la imprenta es el dinamo del mundo que hace evolucionar las cosas i los hombres uniéndolos en una gigante esperanza: la Verdad, el Progreso. Para mí, individuo del mundo, la imprenta es luz para el espíritu i crisol para la intelijencia en la incesante labor de escribir en bien del pueblo. Y el pueblo es el cerebro del universo’ (‘El Pueblo’, 4).
- Footnote 12: ‘Tú lo mueves todo: desde las campiñas a las minas, i de éstas a las grandes conquistas de la industria i de la ciencia, tu mano lo fecunda, lo arranca i lo crea todo [...] Dominas las olas embravecidas del océano, horadas las montañas, conquistas los desiertos. Tus manos callosas escriben poemas grandiosos en el yunque del trabajo, donde se forjan los grandes adelantos del siglo. Tu brazo lo mueve todo, i en tus hombros gravita el edificio social, amasando con tu sangre i con tus huesos. I de siglos i siglos, es tu esfuerzo, tu aliento, tu obra, que cae en la tierra como rocío bendito de un eterno jerminal’ (‘Lo que eres obrero’, 2-3).
- Footnote 13: ‘¿Saben quién soi yo? Ya voi a decirlo: yo soi el Carrilano, el hombre que hago doblarse los fierros de mi martillo. Ante mis fuerzas incontestables, no hai poder humano que se atreva a sobreponerse al empuje de mi brazo, porque todo ha sido creado bajo mi absoluto dominio’ (‘¿Quién soi yo?’, El Carrilano (Santiago: October 15 1913), 3). /‘Titan que glorias reparte, que a los monarcas sostiene, a los próceres mantiene i crea milagros de arte no es el rico de alta historia cuyo poder avasalla, sino la chusma, la escoria... - La canalla!’ (‘La Canalla’, 3).
- Footnote 14: ‘En las pájinas oscuras de la historia, donde tú tienes un solo capítulo: ¡El Olvido! Hai luchas titánicas, obras ciclópicas, dolores sin fin, que relatan tu eterna odisea, dolorosa i grande siempre! Cuando las semillas de la libertad, marchistas en el campo del fraude i del despotismo, exijan la lluvia fecunda, tu sangre jenerosa fue el riego dispensador. Cuando las ideas han precisado mártires que las afirmaran hasta e las fauces del caldoso, fue tu cuerpo arranado a la labor bienhechora, quien se balanceó en horcas gloriosas. I cuandolos errores, los crímenes i las infamias humanas, exijan una espiacion i un lavacro, tú ¡oh pueblo! Depuraste con tu abnegación grandiosa el alma humana, manchada por los malos hijos de la vida!’ (‘Lo que eres obrero’, 3).
- Footnote 18: ‘Eres el motor, es verdad, que todo lo mueve; pero ¿qué representas en la sociedad? Qué recojes de la gran cosecha, oh pueblo? Qué eres en el concierto hermano, oh proletario?’ (‘Lo que eres obrero’, 3).
- Footnote 19: ‘Eres la bestia. Sí, la bestia que suda i fatiga para engordar los amos. La bestia que se revuelva en la podredumbre de sus cubiles, en brazos de la miseria física e intelectual, riendo estúpidamente en el festin de sus verdugos, donde se disipan su labor [...] donde se sacia la crápula i los apetitos de los señores, sobre la carne inocente de los hijos del pueblo. La mansa bestia, que espera los mendrugos del banquete; que lame la mano que lo azota; que contesta con jemidos a los insultos, con la hipocresía, los ruegos i las lágrimas a las brutalidades, por que su arma es el servilismo. No eres hombres, nó, no lo eres; perdiste la dignidad de tal; el azote de los señores, al cebarse sobre tu espalda, vilmente encorvada, escribieron el nombre infame de esclavo, nombres que se ha venido perpetuando porque reforzaste con tu cobardia los hierros de tu servidumbre. I a través de tu carrera hácia el ceno, carrera donde pisoteaste tu dignidad i tu conciencia en la noche oscura de tu existencia, ante el espectáculo repulsivo de tus asquerosidades, ¿no se levanta aun el espectro de tus martirios, de tus lágrimas, de tus dolores, pidiendo reparacion?’ (‘Lo que eres obrero’, 3).
- Footnote 20: ‘Levántate! Todas las tinieblas guardan una aurora. Tras de tu servidumbre se vislumbra una aurora anunciadora de Libertad; es necesario subir el Gólgota para dignificarte, regarlo con tu sangre i con tus ideales para que puedas ser libre, para ser hombre!’ (Lo que eres obrero, 3).

- Footnote 22: 'El esclavo moderno es el paria de todas las edades, el ilota de todos los tiempos, que no se ocupa de su situación, que quiere seguir siendo bestia de carga; eso le han enseñado los encargados de velar por él, algo le habían de dar a cambio de los gozos que él proporciona' ('La Masa al Desnudo', 4).

- Footnote 24: 'Son fervorosos creyentes, sus cerebros son incapaces de pensar por su cuenta, otros han de hacerlo por ellos, están dejenerados física y moralmente, por tantos años de servilismo, y sucumben ante las preocupaciones y prejuicios atávicos, no pueden torcer la ruta en que fueron iniciados, dejarían de ser modelos de buenos "ciudadanos", de ser bien vistos por el amo, y lo que aun es más grave, Dios se enojaría y los mandaría a un infierno peor que el que sufren todos los días' ('La masa al desnudo', 4).

- Footnote 25: 'Que los burgueses se defiendan están en su derecho; pero que vosotros los defendáis y guardéis es bajo, ruin y absurdo' ('La masa al desnudo', 4).

- Footnote 26: 'Ahí está el reflejo de la masa del montón de anónimo que ríe, canta y llora, que aplaude igual a un orador libertario que católico, una procesión que una corrida de toros, la cuestión es aplaudir y silvar, no importa saber qué se grita, la cosa es hacer montón' ('La masa al desnudo', 4).

PART II

- Footnote 1: 'Pueblos mestizos [...] los pueblos latinoamericanos. Pueblos invadidos y destruidos por Europa y, por ello mismo, pueblos para cuyos descendientes Europa pasó a ser parte de ellos mismos, ante todo su lengua; pero, por su otro esencial componente, pueblos que difieren, racial y culturalmente de Europa. Así, "raza mestiza latinoamericana", como dice Gabriela Mistral, que ha demorado cuatro siglos en constituirse, "raza", por ello, cuya estancia —o habitar— y, por ello, su cultura, no puede ser ni estancia ni cultura europea' (Marchant, 219).

- Footnote 18: 'El Mestizo no tiene historia no posee genealogía, su historia es el mito y el rito, y su escape la heroicidad' (Montecinos, 128).

CHAPTER 3

- Footnote 4: 'Aquel valle era un Eden. Sus pobladores soberanos. I sus existencias un idilio interminable. Las nubes de sus horizontes – si las habían- eran blancas como las conciencias de los soberanos vivientes de aquel valle [...] Los negros nubarrones ni las deshechas tempestades se conocían porque tampoco se conocía la maldad' ('El Hombre-Pulpo', 2).

- Footnote 6: 'Hay un ser, una idea que domina. Es la Idea-Ley-Deber. No es el soy solitario, individual, isla en la creación. Es el somos social. No es el yo un absoluto; es el somos el distribuidor de la medida de bien a cada uno. Desde este primer paso queda abolida la anarquía, la concurrencia, la usura, el despotismo del capital, que es la voz del yo individual: soberano solitario; todo privilegio, toda usurpación, todo despotismo. Desde este momento entronizó metafísicamente el deber, es decir el somos, la humanidad, el deber, el ideal, la asociación, la solidaridad' (Bilbao, 13).

- Footnote 7: 'Las aguas de su lago, cristalinas, límpidas como los grandes y hermosos ojos de sus diosas, albergaban en su seno ondinas que embriagaron con cánticos tiernos a las púdicas doncellas y jentiles mancebos que iban a refrescar sus cuerpos en aquel lago' ('El Hombre-Pulpo', 2).

- Footnote 11: 'Allí todo era grande, sublime. La humanidad confundida en un solo y estrecho abrazo. Libres, sin jefes, sin propiedad individual, sin fronteras. Todo colectivo. Todos abejas, ninguno zángano. Aquello parecía la inmortalidad de la justicia, de la igualdad, de la fraternidad, pero' ('El Hombre-Pulpo', 2).

- Footnote 12: 'Pero... Un día - ¡día de tristeza para los habitantes del valle! – las ondinas del lago enmudecieron, dejaron de entonar sus endechas de amor. Al mismo tiempo la nitidez de las aguas desapareció. Aquello era sobrenatural' ('El Hombre-Pulpo', 2).

- Footnote 13: ‘Otro, desapareció la mas bella, la mas querida de sus mujeres. I el lago adquirió un tinte mas oscuro. I los felices habitantes conocieron por primera vez el dolor, las lágrimas amargas de la desgracia! La transformacion principiaba a operarse, pero una transformacion cruel, injusta, brutal... El cómo i el porqué no lo sabían. (Concluirá)’ (El Hombre-Pulpo, 2).
- Footnote 15: ‘Los habitantes quedaron consternados, mudos de sorpresa. ¿De dónde había aparecido aquel monstruo que no se podía clasificar? ¿A qué especie pertenecía? ¿Porqué devoraba a sus mujeres? ¿Porqué infundía el terror en ellos?’ (‘El Hombre-pulpo’, *El Proletario* (Santiago: October 17 1897), 2).
- Footnote 16: ‘Y (lo que peor es) las mujeres para otras cosas peores de suerte que en solo el lugar en que estaban los soldados recién venidos de España juntos con los demás que tenían el maestre de campo, hubo semana que parieron sesenta indias de las que estaban en su servicio aunque no en el de Dios’ (De Lobera, Pedro, *Crónica del Reino de Chile* (Santiago: Colección de Historiadores de Chile y Documentos Relativos a la Historia Nacional. Vol VI, Imprenta El Ferrocarril, 1856), 396). / ‘También les han quitado sus hijos e hijas... Y no ha faltado quien, no satisfecho de vivir enredado con cuantas chinas apetecía su desenfrenado apetito, que cogía también a la usanza dos y tres mujeres teniéndolas públicamente por tales en su casa’ (Fray Antonio Sors cited in: Montecino, Sonia, *Sangres Cruzadas: Mujeres Chilenas y Mestizaje* (Santiago: SERNAM, 1999), 22). / ‘Abundaban estas ciudades perdidas de mujeres blancas y de calidad, y habiendo quedado las más cautivas, fueron el debo de la lascivia de los bárbaros, quienes al principio con violencia, y después con voluntad se hicieron dueños de todas, **y sus hijos son los enemigos más implacables de los españoles**. Estas cautivas, como el trato muda costumbres, luego se conformaron con su suerte, y les pareció lo feo hermoso, y por volver a él, y hubo quien se volvió a los indios huyendo de los españoles’ (Gerónimo de Quiroga in: Montecino, 50).
- Footnote 17: ‘La realidad se presento en toda sus desnudez. Contemplaron todos el mónstruo i fueron impotentes para destruirlo. I aquella masa informe, sin miembros exteriores de ninguna especie, se multiplicó, multiplicando tambien el espanto, el abatimiento de los habitantes de aquel valle. I el mónstruo se aprovechó del abatimiento i descubriendo poco a poco sus flexibles ligaduras principió su obra’ (‘El Hombre-pulpo’, 2).
- Footnote 18: ‘**El Pulpo**, el mónstruo horrible, descrito por Victor Hugo’ (‘El Hombre-pulpo’, 2).
- Footnote 21: ‘El lago desbordó i arrojó pulpos a millares por las fértiles llanuras de aquel Eden, convirtiéndolo en un infierno’ (‘El Hombre-pulpo’, 2).
- Footnote 22: ‘La cultura campesina de la zona central chilena y sur está plagada de leyendas sobre estos seres sincréticos. Desde nuestra óptica lo que hay detrás de ellos es la imagen negativa del mestizo, de aquel engendrado por especies –ya sea del agua, del cielo o de la tierra– que se conjuntan y producen lo abominable’ (Montecinos, 136).
- Footnote 23: ‘Se transformaron en señores absolutos. Abofetearon a los subditos, robaron sus hogares i arrojando a puntapiés a sus moradores se proclamaron dueños!’ (‘El Hombre-pulpo’, 2).
- Footnote 24: ‘¡Inventaron **dioses** de oropel i se dieron títulos de ministros, hipócritas, i respirando lujuria por todos los poros, violaron a sus mujeres convirtiéndolas en un lupanar donde saciar el bestial apetito de sus pasiones. (Concluirá)’ (‘El Hombre-pulpo’, 2).
- Footnote 26: ‘Ajena a todo percance vivía en el mundo una hermosa judía, pero quiso la malvada i tirana suerte que, adolescente ya i habiendo abandonado el hogar paterno, su belleza despertara el apetito de un sultan, quien a fin de satisfacer cierta pasión se echó sobre ella, viéndose por circunstancias especiales en la obligación de condenarla a eterno claustro, en una horrorosa fortaleza. Aquella judía estaba encinta’ (‘El...’, 4).
- Footnote 27: ‘Pobre! La baldosa asquerosa i hedionda de una cloaca fue su cuna, el primer alimento a sus pulmones fue viciado i repugnante. El sér nacido en tales condiciones estaba condenado a una muerte segura i prematura’ (‘El...’, 4).

- Footnote 30: ‘Aquel varon parecía ser el remedo de Hércules; apenas desata los lazos que lo ligan a su madre, de cuyas caricias no podía disfrutar, porque estaba escrito que su existencia extinguiría la de aquella’ (El..., 4).
- Footnote 31: ‘La miseria es... Diluvio permanente, plaga incesante, naufragio de la mayoría del jenero humano en las riberas predestinadas de la vida y sumerjidas en los abismos de las enfermedades y los vicios por la mano infernal del egoísmo [...] Entremos en esa caverna de dolores sin fin que se llama el proletariado; prole del dolor y de la muerte. La miseria es no tener tiempo para ser hombre [...] La miseria es consagrar al hombre, que es la luz divina, en el rango de las maquinas y de los animales [...] es la dispersión de la familia, los matrimonios falsos, el concubinage, la prostitucion. Es tambien el embrutecimiento del alma, la depravacion del corazon, la variedad de monstrous y de crímenes, la diformidad del cuerpo, el empobrecimiento de la sangre, la dejeneracion de las razas [...] Sublime revolucion, santa revolucion, cuanto tardas’ (Bilbao, 89-91).
- Footnote 32: ‘Anciaba la luz i la libertad [...] Sus primeros pasos dentro de las paredes que lo aprisionaban eran una protesta de su suerte i motivo de serias inquietudes para su verdugo. Aquellos movimientos de un reo al comienzo de la vida llevo a la existencia del tirano un torcedor tremendo i sufrimientos incalculables’ (‘El...’, 4).
- Footnote 34: ‘No hace todavía un siglo, era casi el soberano de la Tierra un mónstruo horrible de innumerables cabezas, que llevaba en su rostro las huellas de la lujuria i de la crápula. Su constante preocupacion estaba siempre en un castillo de férrea estructura, detrás de cuyos muros vivía encerrada una mujer hermosa i gallarda que el tiempo no había marchitado, ya que el mundo no le había entregado sus pasiones’ (‘El Gigante i el Nene’, 4).
- Footnote 35: ‘Nunca criminal alguno vió su cuerpo mas encadenado que esta pobre i sin embargo temible señora, madre cariñosa, que sentía diariamente llegar a sus oidos el ¡ai! desgarrador de sus hijos, maltratados por sus verdugos a unos cuantos pasos del lugar de su cautiverio’ (El Gigante i el Nene, 4).
- Footnote 37: ‘Ignoraban que cerca de ellos, palpitaba, horriblemente torturado, el corazón de quien un dia los hechó al mundo i esta ignorancia les ocultaba en parte la realidad amarga de su dolorosa situacion’ (‘El Gigante i el Nene’, 4).
- Footnote 39: ‘Un dia los que ya eran hombres reflexionaron, ese secreto, esa venda que cubria sus ojos se desprendió i sus pupilas, iluminadas por una linterna májica, por una luz invisible, atravesando aquellos muros de fierro como si lo fueran de diáfano cristal, vieron ¡qué horror! el cuerpo encanado de su madre, con sus pechos repletos de leche, ávidos de prodigarles su abundancia’ (‘El Gigante i el Nene’, 4).
- Footnote 40: ‘I entonces aquellos tímidos cervatillos que tanto tiempo soportaron docilmente un yugo odioso, sintieron que animaba sus almas un fuego desconocido i una palabra hasta entonces desconocida para sus almas de esclavos, la palabra venganza, unió con lazos de acero a aquellos séres ya unidos por la doble cadena del infortunio i de la sangre. Un dia una raza de hombres disparó sus flechas a los cielos i atacó al dueño del Olimpo, verdad es que los titanes no vencieron’ (‘El Gigante i el Nene’, 4).
- Footnote 41: ‘Siento necesidad de amar (si amar se puede o debe llamarse el deseo de satisfacer una necesidad que es tan imperiosa como el alimento, etc, etc.), i por mas que pienso en todas las mujeres que me la hacen sentir no me animo a dirigirme a ninguna de ellas’ (‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’), 3).
- Footnote 43: ‘Es porque me repugna mentir para que me correspondan, poniendo de intermediario al interes, casi el único i exclusivo ajente del amor conocido hasta la fecha’ (‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’), 4).
- Footnote 44: ‘¡Oh, mujer: al que no te enganá, ofreciéndote lo que dejo indicado, lo rechazas; cuando sientes amor por algun hombre, a mas de prestarse a hacerte dichosa en determinados momentos, ántes i después tiene que obserquiarte, ser esclavo de tus caprichos i satisfacer todas tus irrazonables exigencias: Esto es amor?’ (‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’), 4).

- Footnote 45: ‘El hombre que se acerque a ti por amor, tanto porque él te solicite como porque tú lo intereses con tus artimañas, una vez que te haya hecho feliz, tiene que pagar lo que tú disfrutaste. Esto es amor? Yo no lo concibo, i no hallo fundamento alguno para que desprecies i te creas superior a la prostituta. Eres igual a ella. Si así no es, ¿porqué te entregas al que te llena de alhajas i adornos supérfluos, te pagan sirvientes i costea para ti sola una casa que podría habitar cómodamente una familia, i rechazas al que no lo puede hacer?’ (‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’ , 4).
- Footnote 50: ‘El que te paga te mira como a cosa comprada, de la cual hace uso como se le antoja’ (‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’ , 4).
- Footnote 51: ‘Para prestarte a tal prostitucion no pasas por las ceremonias de estilo, ni consultas a nadie mas que a tu voluntad [...] Esto lo encuentro mui bien; eres dueño de hacer lo que mejor te parezca mientras no perjudiques a otros’ (¡Oh, mujer divina.....!, 4).
- Footnote 53: ‘I si te has dado cuenta: ¿por qué sigues alimentando ilusiones estúpidas i no dejas todas esas ceremonias que no resultan mas que dificultades que llevan al vicio, a la corrupcion, a la muerte en la flor de la juventud a la mayoría de la especie humana?’ (‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’ , 4).
- Footnote 54: ‘¡Oh, mujer burguesa!... Te odio; en nombre de todos los insignificantes, como yo, te maldigo: aunque tambien eres victima de la actual organización social, no te perdono la parte de culpa que tienes. Tu educacion te permite conocer el fon natural de las cosas i apartar los Velos artificiosos con que las han desfigurado i, sin embargo, te dejas llevar de la corriente de la costumbre i das lugar con ellos a que las hijas del pueblo se enloquezca de deseos por ostentar tu lujo i gozar de tus comodidades; contribuyes a que vendan su cuerpo al mejor postor, i como consecuencia de ello, a que nos condenen a adquirir los vicios mas repugnantes i a dirijirnos a las prostitutas para, a medias, llenar una funcino natural a la que nadie es capaz de anular o resistir; obligas a los hombres a reemplazar a la mujer, i te horrorizas cuando llega a tu conocimiento’ (¡Oh, mujer divina...!, 4).
- Footnote 56: ‘I tú, mujer del pueblo, que has tenido necesidad de recurrir a medios que te perjudican para engañar a la naturaleza por no querer unirse al hombre de tu agrado sin los requisitos de práctica que has llorado la muerte, en temprana edad, de tus hermanas i amigas, palpando el resultado de los vicios adquiridos, porque los has practicado con ellas’ (‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’ , 4).
- Footnote 57: ‘Tú, que deseas impacientemente la llegada de la noche para que todos se entreguen al descanso, que te esfuerzas en que no te domine el sueño i esperas mal humorada, nerviosa, sobresaltada, a los ronquidos de los que duermen en tu misma habitacion te aseguren que no serás sorprendida, por ciertos signos característicos, practicando un ejercicio que te aplaca momentáneamente, pero que te descubre al otro dia por las grandes ojeras que ostentas, i que resiente tu salud: ¿por qué no realizas naturalmente lo que así debe i puede hacerse?’ (‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’ , 4).
- Footnote 60: ‘Procediendo así evitarás que dos o mas hombres se hagan pedazos por ti, porque serás libre i ninguno te considerará obligada a él únicamente’ (‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’ , 4).
- Footnote 61: ‘Harás desaparecer la envidia a los afortunados en el amor, (que entonces no los habrá), i los chismes, calumnias celos i crímenes que en la actulidad son las consecuencias de lo que te enrostro’ (‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’ , 4).
- Footnote 62: ‘Como nadie tendrá necesidad de valerse de promesas i engaños; como nadie tendrá necesidad de cortejar la compañera de otro porque no carecerá de la suya, como carece hoi; como nadie podrá ponerte trabas para realizacion de lo que desees o necesites, no tendremos que lamentar tantas desgracias, ni una quizás, como lamentamos hoi’ (‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’ , 4).
- Footnote 65: ‘Pero no reconoces que eres culpable hasta cierto punto i que, al privar al hombre de lo que le es necesario, lo obligas a cometer todas las barbaridades que te espantan, todas las porquerias que te repugnan, i muchísimas enfermedades secretas que nos diezman sin cesar tienen que seguir rápidamente en aumento por mas medidas que se tomen i por mas que se evite su contajio, pues muchas tienen su orijen en los vicios que nos hacen adquirir en la forzosa abstinencia en que tus preocupaciones i tus aspiraciones de encumbramiento social nos ha sumido. Muchas de las enfermedades llamadas de las señoras, tienen su orjjen en la abstinencia que tú misma te impones.....

i suprimo hasta otra. Abandona las preocupaciones que te convierten en un monstruo de la naturaleza i que te vuelven humanicida!’ (‘¡Oh, mujer divina...!’ , 4).

CHAPTER 4

- Footnote 3: ‘Solo a los veinte años, juguete de todas las ilusiones, se puede querer así, con tanta inocencia, entregándose de un modo tan absoluto [...] mas tarde el amor se convierte en vicio ó en comercio’ (Thomson (D’Halmar), 260). - Footnote 5: ‘Llegó la hora de los grandes cuidados ¡La Pubertad! Aquí se vio asediada estrechamente por mocitos de dorada alcurnia [...] [quienes] hicieron la desviarse del camino de la lealtad y la consecuencia y la llevaron a lupanares lujuriosos entregándose de lleno en corrompidas bacanales. Estaba prostituida!’ (Fin del Mundo’, 4).

- Footnote 9: ‘Actualmente se atraviesa por un estado por demas calamitoso. Por todas partes se nota la maledicencia i la corrupcion. El ladronismo, el dandidaje de guante i levita, de sable i capote, son las causas del malestar social, son las causas de la miseria del pueblo trabajador porque le esplotan, porque le roban su trabajo para saciar sus vicios, para perpetuar la corrupcion, para mantener siempre sus orjías en dorados lupanares de relucientes colgaduras tapizadas de oro i raso; donde corruptas mesalinas de alta alcurnia, ostentar sus cualidades, sus bellezas, sus extravagantes caprichos, haciendo gala de sus dotes en el arte de la depravacion cual modernas Lucrecias, entre esa multitud de atrofiados magnates, dejenerados física i moralmente herencia, fruto del concubinato social burgues’ (*Malestar Social*, 3).

- Footnote 10: ‘Doloroso es decirlo, pero el Instinto de la conservacion lo requiere-, el pueblo chileno, ese pueblo robusto i viril, pitando en la innumerables pájinas de escritores nacionales i extranjeros, es hoi el juguete despreciable, que se arroja a puntapiés a la letrina, después de haber servido de diversion al niño mimado que lo compró. [...] El ájio i la usura de los banqueros; el robo de la iglesia; el quijotismo de la guerra; el lecho dorado de la prostituta, i la sodomía de los representantes del pueblo: hé ahí la causa del cataclismo económico’ (‘Lazaro...!’ , 1).

- Footnote 12: ‘En la montaña de la vida, el hombre honrado i trabajador, atado a la roca de la miseria, vé que le roe sus entrañas el hombre águila, que vive sin trabajar. Es el sacrificio de Prometeo. En el verjel del hogar, la mujer, cegada por la ignorancia i vencida por el hambre, sacrifica su cuerpo i entoda su alma, por un plato de lentejas. Es el abuso del matrimonio. En el sucio escenario social, elaboran la depravacion de la humanidad, la sodomía, el onanismo, la embriaguez, la relijion, la propiedad, la explotacion, la gloria, la prostitucion i el voto de castidad. Estos son los virus de la llaga social’ (‘Nuestra Respuesta’, 2).

- Footnote 14: ‘Actualmente las jóvenes, desde los doce años tienen que ir á trabajar á las fábricas ó talleres para ayudar a sus padres ó á la familia en los gastos de la mantención y es aquí cuando principia la explotación terminando con la prostitución de la joven’ (‘La explotación de la mujer’, 2).

- Footnote 15: ‘El ambiente las contagia, les agrada la decencia y el lujo, les gustaria imitar á las señoritas de la aristocracia, pero su sueldo es mísero’ (‘La explotación de la mujer’, 2).

- Footnote 16: ‘El patrón aparece tentador, les ofrece buen sueldo, hermosos regalos, bondades sin fin y la joven asediada por la rutina que la encuadra en un marco de hierro, se prostituye, aceptando sin amor y unicamente por lucro a un ser a quien debia despreciar’ (‘La explotación de la mujer’, 2).

- Footnote 19: ‘Otras fuentes sugieren la fluidez con la que las mujeres se movían entre los trabajos—de costurera a prostituta, de sirvienta doméstica a obrera de fábrica, de lavandera a empleada—en busca de mejores salarios’ (Hutchinson, 61).

- Footnote 20: ‘No todas las esclavas blancas son profesionales ocupadas únicamente en explotar el Vicio [...] que muchas de ellas no se separan jamás de ocupaciones honradas [...] A éstas les damos el nombre de esclavas blancas incidentales’ (Westphal, 13).

- Footnote 22: ‘Dada la precaria situación económica de la mujer, más dura hoy que nunca, y dada la atmósfera de inmoralidad que la rodea, ya en el conventillo, ya en la fábrica, ya en la solicitud y persecución constante de que el hombre la hace víctima, ya por su ignorancia absoluta sobre el

peligro de las enfermedades sociales, siempre existe diseminado en nuestras ciudades un verdadero burdel difuso [...] las del burdel difuso como lo hemos llamado, son víctimas de la ignorancia [...] o de su miseria, a causa de los salarios insignificantes que perciben, ya como lavanderas o como empleadas de cualquiera de nuestras fábricas' (Westphal, 5-6).

- Footnote 24: 'Que no te apures tanto. Es tan triste vivir casados i pobres; espera hasta que tengas algo mas' ('Un Acrata', 1).

- Footnote 25: 'Allá, a lo léjos, viene un gallardo mancebo; es Gaston. De pronto se detiene. Ha oído una voz, i es la de Sara; va a llamarla, pero otra voz se deja sentir, es la del caballero de mirada lasciva que dice: -vente conmigo, linda Sarita, yo pondré a tu disposicion todo lo que deseas. Tendrás los mas ricos vestidos, hermosos coches i magníficos caballos. Con tu hermosura i elegancia serás la reina de las mujeres. No es posible que tu belleza se oculte por mas tiempo i sigas viviendo en la miseria' ('Un Acrata', 1).

- Footnote 27: 'Aquí tienes esta cartera llena de dinero, por ahora... pero ven a mis brazos.....Un arma brilló en el espacio, dos horrible gritos se sintieron, i dos cuerpos rodaron por el suelo' ('Un Acrata', 2).

- Footnote 28: 'Oigámoslo: -mucho tiempo hace que me encerraron en esta cárcel, que léjos de ser un mal ha sido un bien. Aunque retirado de la sociedad, veo todo lo que en ella pasa. El mas fuerte oprimiendo al mas débil; la justicia vendiéndose al poderoso; los hombres de dinero esplotando, prostituyendo i corrompiendo' ('Un Acrata', 2).

- Footnote 30: 'Siempre el mismo movimiento; nuevas máquinas, ménos jornal i muchos chiquillos trabajando para ayudar a su padre a ganar lo mas indispensable para la vida' ('Un Acrata', 2).

- Footnote 31: 'En una rica alcoba se destaca, sobre unas sábanas color de nieve, el marmóreo cuerpo de una mujer; a su cabecera un pálido jovencito, saca de su cartera los billetes que posee, robados a la caja de su padre, i se los pasa. Ella se incorpora... Oh! Es Sara...!!! Sara!..' ('Un Acrata', 2).

- Footnote 32: 'La puerta se abre lentamente. En el umbral se destaca la majestuosa figura de un anciano de barbas i cabellos blancos, de mirada de águila i corazon de leon..... Contempla un momento el espacio i..... sale al mundo un Acrata' ('Un Acrata', 2).

- Footnote 34: '¡La eterna historia! Siempre la misma historia!' ('Desgraciada', 2).

- Footnote 35: 'Nuevamente la capital de Chile ha sido conmovida con el descubrimiento de un circulo anarquista que era representado en esta ciudad por el valiente periodista popular compañero Abraham Méndez Plaza. Como de costumbre, el Miércoles último el compañero Méndez en la plaza de armas ofrecia al público un periódico, lo que molestó en sumo grado el oído de los señoritos u ociosos del Portal, los que solicitaron la aprehension del amigo Mendez alegando que este hombre era terrorista i que bien podía llevar entre sus periódicos algunas bombas ocultas para hacer volar las guaridas que existen en aquel sitio i que son las siguientes: Palacio Consistorial, [...] i la Intendencia [...] Como se vé los vagos de la plaza de armas saben i conocen a fondo los sitios i guaridas que bien merecen ser pulverizadas por los grandes males que ocasionan al pueblo' ('El Anarquismo en Santiago', 1).

- Footnote 36: 'El, un dandy de portal, aficionado, como todos los de su clase, a robar el honor a cualquiera muchacha trabajadora i sencilla que encuentre a su paso: calavera i desvergonzado, a fuer de buen burgues, i con añadidura de ejercer un cargo superior cerca de su víctima' ('Desgraciada', 2).

- Footnote 37: 'En hacerla su presa. [...] Talvez llegaría hasta amenazarla con su salida del taller si no accedía a su pretensión, pintándole la vida de miserias que le aguardaba a la puerta de él, i prometiéndole, en cambio, un mundo de dichas si no resistía. Ella vería a lo léjos, si no otorgaba lo que se le pedía, por una parte el horizonte oscuro i sin fin de una existencia amargada por toda clase de privaciones i sufrimientos, i por otra, la prostitución con su repugnante cortejo de relajacion i de vicio' ('Desgraciada', 2).

- Footnote 38: '¡Qué ejemplo tan hermoso el de esta humilde hija del pueblo, ignorante, sin mas educacion que los principios que le inculcara su madre, pero, que la seducción, promesas i la miseria misma fueron impotentes para desarraigar de ese corazon virtuoso esos principios de dignidad, delicadeza, inherentes a toda mujer, que debe mantenerlos inalterables en el fondo del corazon, de ese corazon que solo debe latir al impulso magnético de un amor puro i noble!' ('Lectura Instructiva', 4).

- Footnote 39: 'I sucumbio..... Satisfecho los bestiales apetitos de carne del lobo burgues, se hastió de su antigua amante, y ya no pensó sino en ejecutar lo contrario de lo que hizo cuando empezaba su caza: deshacerse de ella. Dicho i hecho. Levantó un buen dia su tienda i las emprendió a otro campo en busca de nuevas aventuras con qué saciar su sed de placeres [...] Casos de esta naturaleza se repiten a diario, siendo una i mil veces violadas la pureza i honradez de la mujer proletaria por cualquier insolente aristócrata o por cualquier canalla barnizado' ('Desgraciada', 2).

- Footnote 46: 'Las necesidades domésticas reclaman la satisfaccion inmediate, hai que alimentar la familia de grandes i chicos i pagar al casero, la demora perpleja de un dia significa ayunar ese dia, nada hai que hacer sino un sacrificio extremo o cambiar el órden en la familia, poner los calzones a la mujer para que vaya a ganar el pan i el hombre quedar en casa para hacer la comida, dar de mamar al mas chiquitin i limpiar el culo al resto' ('El brazo de la mujer en competencia con el brazo del marido', 4).

- Footnote 47: 'Agriado su jenio ántes cariñoso i sufrido, grita a su marido, se desespera por los destrozos i desperdicios hechos en la casa' ('El brazo de la mujer en competencia con el brazo del marido', 4).

- Footnote 48: 'Si esto sigue así, te dejo, te planto con todos los cachorros, porque me haces impasible la vida, haragan, sinvergüenza, que en lugar de ir tú a trabajar me haces gastar la vida ca el trabajo de sol a sol [...] en la fabrica tengo que trabajar como una burra, darle gusto al patron cuando lo exige i aunque a mi no me guste, tú has de criar esos hijos hechos por fuerza [...], mira que si esto sigue así, marido, te planto con todos esos hijos de mis pecados' ('El brazo de la mujer en competencia con el brazo del marido', 4).

- Footnote 49: 'Mira que te mato, mujer! que es que ya no lo puedo sufrir, me tienes frita la sangre desde que vas al taller. Sabes que si no trabajo es porque no hai trabajo para el hombre i lo hai para la mujer, los pantalones los calzastes por la imposicion de los burgueses, no por mi barraganeria, me cago en Dios' ('El brazo de la mujer en competencia con el brazo del marido', 4).

- Footnote 51: 'Quédate en casa i atiende los chicos, que ya que el patron te chupa la sangre i enloda mi honra, para la fábrica me largo, ajustaré las cuentas i despacharé a ese patron, desde que las cosas han de seguir marchando siempre al revés' ('El brazo de la mujer en competencia con el brazo del marido', 4).

- Footnote 52: 'I se lanza a la calle nuestro hombre, calzándose sus desgraciadas bragas, a las que confía una filosa cuchilla, i la hace como la canta, arregla cuentas i firma el recibo con la sangre criminal del que lo bautizo cornudo' ('El brazo de la mujer en competencia con el brazo del marido', 4).

- Footnote 54: 'La justicia humana incapaz de prevenir el delito impidiendo que se cometan atentados contra la vida ordinaria de los pueblos, dejará que se transforme en niños a los hombres i en rameras a las madres; pero al que dolorido castigue al autor de su desdicha, lo juzgara asesino! Ah criminalidad togada! Ah complicidad rentada de la burguesía traidora!' ('El brazo de la mujer en competencia con el brazo del marido', 4).

- Footnote 56: 'Vengo, querido amigo, a pedirte perdón. Jamás he escuchado tus consejos ni he llegado siquiera a comprenderlos. Tú llamabas vicio a lo que yo llamaba suprema felicidad; tú llamabas lupanar a lo que yo consideraba un templo; tú calificabas de escoria social a las que yo tenía por sacerdotisas del placer [...] Ya ves ni podia comprender tu moral i ni haría esfuerzos para escuchar hasta el fin tus razonamientos. Hoy, mi querido amigo, todo ha variado; hoy podría darte consejos porque he aprendido en pocas horas lo que a ti te han enseñado los años' ('Redención', 3).

- Footnote 57: 'Tu sabes que en los teatros, en los salones, en los clubes, y en general, en todas partes, yo he sufrido la nostalgia de ese ambiente erótico que se respira en los que tu llamas invariablemente centro de perdición y que yo siempre he considerado la antesala de la dicha. [...] Como perla hallada en el fango había encontrado allí, hace tiempo a una mujer encantadora y de talento, que, al revés de todas las de su clase, había conseguido despertar en mi, no sólo la sensualidad de la materia, sino que cierto interés particular, que, sin ser amor, podría calificar de amistad' ('Redención', 3).
- Footnote 58: 'Todas nosotras tenemos una misma historia, cuyo prólogo es un burdel y el epílogo un hospital' ('Redención', 4).
- Footnote 59: 'La pieza o cuartucho de aquella mujer alegre y hermosa estaba convertido en una capilla murtuaria. El lecho de Rosalia servía de túmulo, sobre el cual se veía el cadáver de un hermoso niño que a lo sumo contaría 5 años de edad; a los lados cuatro velas; y abrazada del cadáver, llorando como saben llorar las madres, aquella muchacha espiritual y hermosa que yo buscaba para que me divertiera' ('Redención', 4).
- Footnote 60: 'Conjunto todo que pudo haber inspirado a Rafael su mejor cuadro' ('Redención', 4).
- Footnote 61: 'Ah! ¿es Ud.? celebro que haya venido aun cuando no puedo hoy divertirlo. [...] Ha deseado Ud. en muchas ocasiones conocer la historia de esta muchacha loca y complaciente; pues bien, hoy se la voy a contar y si hago esto es porque necesito hablar con alguien, y tener un confidente de mis infortunios' ('Redención', 3).
- Footnote 63: 'De todos los hombres que he conocido en mi degradante carrera Ud. ha sido el único en quien no he encontrado el corazón pervertido y por eso lo he considerado como un amigo' ('Redención', 3).
- Footnote 64: 'Va a oír, [...] la historia de mi vida que no tiene gran novedad, pero que puede interesarle o por lo menos, hacerle conocer un poco más el corazón humano' ('Redención', 3).
- Footnote 65: 'Trabajé día y noche, y aún cuando ganaba escasamente para no morirnos de hambre, resistí siempre a las deslumbradoras promesas y tentaciones infinitas que encuentra en su camino una mujer de mi edad' ('Redención', 4).
- Footnote 66: 'Un día, día fatal y maldito, Luis enfermó y no bastaba ni mis cariños ni mis desvelos para curarlo; había que ver doctores, había que comprar remedios caros y dar al enfermo alimentos que yo no podía adquirir con el precio de mi trabajo' ('Redención', 4).
- Footnote 67: 'Ella me dio el dinero necesario para atender a la curación de mi Luis, en cambio de mi cuerpo; el alma le habría entregado si también me la hubiera exigido, con tal de salvar a mi hijo' ('Redención', 4).
- Footnote 68: '¿Sabe Usted., continuó Rosalía lo que es una mujer como la dueña de esta casa?' ('Redención', 4).
- Footnote 70: 'Ustedes la ven únicamente en el escenario, llena de amabilidades y atenciones, sin sospechar que ese cuerpo que se inclina ante ustedes encierra una alma de Shylock, un corazón de negrero y unos sentimientos de hiena' ('Redención', 4).
- Footnote 71: 'La dueña de un lupanar es la vendedora de carne humana que entrega el placer a la pública subasta del vicio, de este mismo vicio, que a la mujer nacida para ser madre, esposa y hermana, la reduce a la miserable condición de mercancía vil' ('Redención', 4).
- Footnote 72: 'Veía a mi Luis que con los brazos estendidos salía a recibirme en la puerta de la casita blanca; le contemplaba contento y lleno de vida, y entonces secaba mis lágrimas en sus rubios cabellos y me arrepentía de mi debilidad. Sus caricias inocentes eran bálsamo dulcísimo que se derramaba en mi sér, regenerándome el alma, y volvía al sacrificio resuelta a no tener mas vacilaciones' ('Redención', 3).
- Footnote 73: 'Los hombres que llegan aquí comprando el placer y alquilando el amor, [...] Aguardan que se produzcan las tormentas en el mar de la vida, para recoger los despojos en los naufragios del honor. El licor y la sensualidad brutal borran por completo el barniz de la educación

para dejar solo la ameteria en su más repugnante desnudez. No ven en las mujeres otra cosa que el medio de satisfacer sus instintos de sátiros lujuriosos' ('Redención', 4).

- Footnote 75: 'Usted es joven y debe detenerse a tiempo, antes de caer en el abismo sin fin del vicio. Créame; aun es tiempo, no se deje rodar por la escabrosa, pendiente donde se van dejando girones de honor, trozos de alma y pedazos del corazón. En esta casa, los jóvenes como Ud. van perdiendo poco a poco la salud, el honor y la vergüenza hasta quedar convertido en seres despreciables' ('Redención', 4).

- Footnote 76: 'Yo me sentía transformado en mi sér: una fuerza irresistible me atraía a ella y la admiraba como a la creación más sublime de la mujer' ('Redención,' 4).

- Footnote 77: 'No puede, Ernesto descender hasta mí, ni podré jamás elevarme hasta Ud. Mi deshonor es estigma con que marca la sociedad la frente de la mujer impura, tan indeleable como su propio remordimiento' ('Redención', 4).

- Footnote 78: 'Sollozos y lágrimas pusieron término a la relacion de Ernesto. Mientras él lloraba, recordando aquella mártir del destino, yo contemplaba a mi amigo y comprendí que estaba completamente regenerado' ('Redención', 4).

- Footnote 81: 'Resucitará, pues, á una mujer que todos hemos conocido, pero á quien nadie tuvo el capricho de estudiar, acaso porque, – máquina de placer – se la creyó absolutamente desprovista de corazón y de sentimientos, sin nada que recordara una madre amante' (Thomson (D'Halmar), 7).

- Footnote 86: 'Viciado de cuerpo y alma, su obligación es adiestrarla en las monstruosidades sensuales. ¡No haya miedo! Maestra ya, formará discípulos á su vez, y entre tal sport nacen los hijos adulterinos ó espurios, con el jérmen de los vicios de sus padres, marcados desde la cuna por un estigma infamante, embriones de alcohólicos, de afrodisiacos, que llegarán hasta la degeneración sodomita ó el estupro criminal. Es la mosca Zolaniana, abandonado a su pudredumbre, subiendo á posarse en los palacios, sobre las damas, los señores y los niños, para envenenarlos con la muerte que de abajo recogiera' (Thomson (d'Halmar), 257- 258).

- Footnote 87: 'Los afeites cambian mucho, no habiendo mejor disfraz que el vicio; su máscara, si bien conserva las líneas, borra el aire, el gesto, la expresión, es decir, lo que el alma le prestaba al rostro, y desfigura, hasta suprimir todo parecido entre la muchacha buena y la prostituta' (Thomson (d'Halmar), 256).

- Footnote 90: 'Es una novela en que sale una tipa que hace mil locuras' (Thomson (d'Halmar), 231).

- Footnote 91: 'La otra ha muerto... ¡Es mejor que me llamen así!' (Thomson (d'Halmar), 231).

- Footnote 93: 'Como es natural, las fanáticas niñas creyéndose las patrañas de estos miserables, hacen cuanto se les dice i con el mayor sijilo entran en el foco de su perdicion, es decir en el convento, donde sus lujuriosos confesores matan su inocencia, virginidad i pureza' ('El asunto de los frailes en Chillan', 2).

- Footnote 95: 'Comprendeis que vuestra relijion marcha a la ruina con tanta ligereza como marcha al progreso la humanidad' ('A los Frailes', 3).

- Footnote 96: 'Habeis predicado la castidad i con vuestra lujuria habeis corrompido el mundo. La iglesia no esta bien representada aun por el papa Borgia, depravado miserable, cuyos crímenes como todos los de vosotros, manchan aun las pájinas mas negras de la historia, ese borgia que a mas de seducir a su hija lucrecia el mismo la asistia en el parto, ese padre i esa hija que precedían i daban ejemplo, en las inmundas bacanales, en que juntos con los mas santos padres de la iglesia i las mas honestas cristianas, buscaban nuevas formas a los placeres, hasta quedar extenuados por el vicio' ('A los Frailes', 3).

- Footnote 98: 'Cuanto habeis gozado i cuanto provecho habeis sacado, por medio del confesionario, cuan inmoral i sucio ha sido el método que habeis elejido para saber los que piensa el mundo i corromper virjenes inocentes [...] Cuanto habeis gozado cuando habéis visto pasar a vuestro

lado a un pobre hombre a quien habeis sometido a la esclavitud, a quien habeis corrompido su esposa e hijos' ('A los Frailes', 3).

- Footnote 99: 'La iglesia católica cristiana hizo de la mujer un ser repugnante, infiel al marido, al padre, a la familia. La iglesia católica instituyó el mas horrible de los adulterios: el adulterio espiritual, por el cual la mujer confía al fraile todos sus sentimientos, sus pesares, sus debilidades; en una palabra toda la mujer íntima, que no se entrega ni al marido, ni al padre, ni a la familia, se entrega al fraile' (Recabarren, 3-4).

- Footnote 100: 'Microbios, inmundos que habies infestado la humanidad; vuestra historia se cierra inclinad vuestras frentes manchadas ante el puro sol de la Anarquía, marchad al precipicio: vosotros estais de mas, al caos, al abismo. ¡La luz no admite la oscuridad!' ('A los Frailes', 3).

- Footnote 102: 'Estamos convencidos de que mientras la mujer continúe en la mas abyecta ignorancia, la cultura liberal i la libertad misma tendrán que marchar a paso de tortuga' ('¿La mujer es esclava?', 2).

- Footnote 103: 'La mujer, que es la madre del jénero humano, es el todo en el resorte de él mismo. Si ella es un mecanismo mohoso, casi inerte, que entraba las funciones del organismo social, claro es que se le componga, se le vitalice con las vias que otorga la ilustracion e instrucción' ('¿La mujer es esclava?', 2).

- Footnote 104: 'Pues la mujer de fortuna como la proletaria i obrera no poseen el espíritu de ilustracion que es necesario para impulsar la civilizacion moderna' ('¿La mujer es esclava?', 3).

- Footnote 105: 'Así ha vivido la mujer en la historia: cortesana de la iglesia aliada en todos sus crímenes contra la humanidad, contra sus mismos hijos. Mantenido en la ignorancia despues del salvajismo y la barbarie, durante veinte siglos, ha sido la mujer, madre de la humanidad, la propia asesina de sus hijos, debido a la ignorancia y al error que la iglesia la sometió' (Recabarren, 6).

- Footnote 106: 'La mujer pegada a las rejillas del confesonario en el cual el sacerdote le dirige su cerebro, como la brújula marca rumbos a una embarcación, como las riendas a una bestia, tiene forzosamente que ser una miserable esclava de aquel hombre lleno de pasiones que no tiene mas título que pregonar su mision divina, la que en verdad está en tela de juicio por su farsa o falso oríjen humano' ('¿La mujer es esclava?', 3).

- Footnote 107: 'Abdicará en manos de su director espiritual, sus economías si las tiene i el honor de su sexo, el cual tan valiosa joya es cuando ella sabe retenerlo sin mancha i con dignidad' ('¿La mujer es esclava?', 3).

- Footnote 108: '¿Puede la sociedad, si es católica, si está bajo el dominio del sacerdote-confesor, llevar una vida normal con sus miembros bastardos que salen de las confidencias del confesonario? Lójicamente debemos creer que la llamada aristocracia que oye al confesor, no es mas que la aristocracia de los adúlteros, pero jamas la del honor, es decir, de los hijos bien nacidos. Honor i orgullo para las mujeres trabajadores que saben huir de los miasmas que espide el confesonario' ('¿La mujer es esclava?', 3).

- Footnote 109: 'La aristocracia del honor i de la dignidad' ('¿La mujer es esclava?', 3).

- Footnote 110: 'La jóven que cae en el confesonario se corrompe material i moralmente, pierde la vergüenza para arrojar el fruto espúreo de sus entrañas a un asilo de monjas en donde el desgraciado será cuando hombre un bandido o un idiota' ('¿La mujer es esclava?', 3).

- Footnote 113: 'Para mí es una cosa incomprensible, un problema irresolubre, un monstruoso anacronismo' ('La Beata Política', 1).

- Footnote 114: 'Es cierto que la mujer, ese mas que algo del hombre, es un libro de oro siempre cerrado a los que pretenden leer en él. Sus manifestaciones son múltiples, emigmáticas i escapan fácilmente a nuestra penetración, puesto que teniendo ellas un poder de observación mas concentrado, mas sutil, que el de el hombre burlan con suma frecuencia nuestra experiencia, i se rien de las teorías con las cuales respecto a ellas hemos querido hacer un código' ('La Beata Política', 1).

- Footnote 117: 'No pretendo, pues, hacer un estudio de nuestros encantadores tiranos que eso acusaría pretensión i acusaría estupidez, pero sí me propongo hallar algo de ese marimacho llamado la beata política' ('La Beata Política', 1).

- Footnote 119: 'Para ella todas las armas son buenas, incluso, la delacion, la traicion, el crimen porque sin su credo es el famoso "El fin justifica los medios". Tiene su director espiritual-especie de inquisidor de su conciencia, si es que la tiene-al único que obedece, en el único que cree i por el único que renegaría la fé jurada al pié de los altares a su natural compañero' ('La Beata Política', 1).

- Footnote 120: 'Estaba la beata un día/ Enferma del mar / De amor el que tenía la culpa/ Era el fraile confesor // Chiribiribiribiri, chiribiribirbón / A la beata le gustaba / Con el fraile la cuestión // No quería que le pusieran / Zapato ni zapatón / Sino las sandalias viejas / Del fraile confesor / No quería que le pusieran / Mortaja ni mortajón / Sino la sotana vieja /Del fraile confesor' (Jara, Victor, *La Beata*, 1973).

- Footnote 121: 'Pero no quiero divagar. Quiero decir que la veata política tiene el corazón formado de una manera diversa al de las verdaderas mujeres, no obstante, esto será cuestión de un articulejo aparte i salvado el exordio los demás vendrá por su propio peso' ('La Beata Política', 1).

CHAPTER 5

- Footnote 1: 'Creció como huacho sin nombre ni origen... él también tuvo hijos moquillentos y desnutridos que esparcieron la sangre de los Azcoitia por toda la región' (Donoso, 360).

- Footnote 2: '¿Qué me creía yo? ¿Acaso podía venir a poner problemas en la vida de mamá? ¿Dónde estaba la obligación que ella tenía de cuidar de mí? ¿Acaso no me daba cuenta de lo que ella estaba sacrificándose por un huacho como yo?' (Gómez, 31).

- Footnote 6: '¡Nuestra camadería de huachos constituyó el origen histórico de la conciencia proletaria en Chile! Un primario instinto "de clase" que, para nosotros, fue más importante –para bien o para mal– que el instinto de familia. Fuimos, por eso, la primera y más firme piedra de la identidad popular en este país' (Salazar, 47).

- Footnote 9: 'Es cierto, don Ambrosio daba a su hijo ciencia i bienes; pero quedaba todavía una cosa que le rehusaba con orgullo, i que el joven podía reclamar con justicia. Era ese noble apellido de O'Higgins, que el ilustre marques negaba tenazmente al hijo de su amor. En la misma clausula del testamento en que le legaba una hacienda, le significaba con toda claridad que le prohibía llevar ese apellido, llamandole Bernardo Riquelme. Sin duda el mercachifle ennoblecido, el barón de fresca data, el titulado de Castilla por el oro i por la intriga, no creía a su bastardo digno de heredar un nombre tan decorado como el suyo; i en eso por cierto se equivocaba grandemente el virrei, que echando en olvido la humildad de sus principios, tomaba infulas de rancio aristócrata' (Amunátegui, 38).

- Footnote 15: 'Figuraos que tras los cortinajes negros de la miseria nace a la luz pública uno de esos desheredados de la fortuna que llamamos párias; la madre lo da a luz en medio de los mas atroces dolores i sin tener siquiera una mano compasiva que prepare el brebaje que ha de servir de alimento i tónico sin la presencia del padre del ser que con tanto dolor acaba de dar a luz, pues él un dorado aristócrata no le importa que sus vástagos pueblen los asilos o cementerios' ('Un error profundo', 2-3).

- Footnote 16: 'Cuando sus formas estén marchitas por el roce i ofrezca su cuerpo i los hombres lo desprecien entonces vendrá a su casa i maldecirá junto con su hijo cuanto les rodea, aun le enseñará a odiar al propio padre, entonces será cuando se despierte en el corazón de ese niño el furor o el amor a la venganza' ('Un error profundo', 2-3).

- Footnote 18: 'De pronto su cara se ensombrece y en sus ojos parpadados una lágrima y monologa ¡madre mia! ¿quien seria mi madre?' ('Remember', 1).

- Footnote 19: 'Yo conocí a tus padres, arrapiezo; tu madre se llamaba Rafaela, una hermosa muchacha de ojos glaucos de rubio y un díviago cabello; era sumamente pobre y servía de doméstica en casa de la familia Letona, y le señalaba un chalet señorial de arquitectura moderna. Una noche en que el señorito Enrique, hijo de don Marcial, salía a jugar al baccarat del Club de los Noctámbulos y que el espirituoso champagne despertó en él lujuriosos deseo, vió a tu pobre madre, a aquella Rafaela

modesta y recatada que preparaba su duro lecho para dedicarse al reposo, a viva fuerza mancillo la pureza de aquella desgraciada la que poco despues fue vergonzosamente espulsada por obscena y corruptora del señorito Enrique. No pudo sobrevivir aquella afrenta y dejó de existir al darte a luz en el miserable camastro de un hospital; tu padre murió a los 26 años padeciendo de agudas enfermedades venéreas' ('Remember', 1).

- Footnote 20: 'Cuando aun impúber, un cura de rostro apergaminado, de mira sensual le hacia caricias con su mano fofa como el vientre de un batracio, y una tarde, con voz opaca y entrecortada proponiale nauseabundas cosas.... Que él desechó espatado de tana inmundicia' (Remember, 1).

- Footnote 21: 'Un celoso custodio del órden publico viólo dormido en el dintel de una puerta y despues de propinarle menuda aporreadura fué detenido e incorporado a con aberracion de la humanidad que se llama Ejército; pero cuyo nombre en puridad es "escuela del crimen"' ('Remember', 1).

- Footnote 22: 'Hoy va en la cubierta de un navío, en su alma lleva impregnada, la enseñanza que a costa de numerosos infortunios conoció, el apetito brutal y lujurioso de un acaudalado parasito lo echó al mundo y los Poderes "legalmente" constituidos lo hicieron su victima' ('Remember', 1).

- Footnote 24: 'Nuestra juventud dejenera afrentosa i rápidamente. En los colejos internos, en los Asilos de caridad, en la Escuela Correccional, en los presidios i cárceles, en los conventos de frailes i en los monasterios, en los Hospitales, en los Manicomios, i en todas partes donde hai hombres o mujeres jóvenes que viven en la soledad, en el celibato, i en el roce contínuo i permanente con una mismas personas de su sexo, se rinde culto a todos los vicios solitarios, a la sodomía i a la pederastía' ('Los Romanismos', 5).

- Footnote 25: 'La impotencia i la esterilidad, resultados, casi siempre, de los vicios contra natura, son ya una plaga desastrosa que aminora la fuerza reproductora de nuestra raza, i una crisis que mata en el meridiano de la vida, muchas mujeres i muchos hombres' ('Los Romanismos', 5).

- Footnote 26: 'Complementados con los sistemas curativos i métodos de conjuración i exterminio' ('Los Romanismos', 5).

- Footnote 28: 'Este vicio, que ya ha invadido el sexo femenino, en su mayor parte, es en el hombre el mas, estragante i dejenerador' ('Onanismo', 5).

- Footnote 29: 'Ella debió haber nacido en los primeros tiempos de la institucion relijiosa, cuando la castidad se impuso con la fuerza del castigo i la amenaza del infierno. Los hombres de aquella época, nacidos en el apogeo del sensualismo-como la Historia lo demuestra- tenían una constitucion ardiente i lujuriosa que no les permitía la sobriedad venérea, traicionándolos a espaldas de la Naturaleza. Por eso vemos que la masturbacion es epidémica entre las jentes fanáticamente relijiosas i, especialmente, en los conventos de ambos sexos, o en las casas de reclusión i aislamiento, como cárceles, seminarios, escuelas internas, hospitales, cuarteles i buques de guerra, etc' ('Onanismo', 5-6).

- Footnote 30: 'Los efectos del onanismo, son mas grande que los de la sífilis i que los de la sodomía. El masturbador empieza por la obstruccion del movimiento funcional del órgano jenital, i concluye por la pérdida de la memoria i el estravío de la razon' ('Onanismo', 6).

- Footnote 31: 'Todo lo dicho seria poco si el masturbador, después de haber estragado i corrompido todo su organismo, no metamorfoseara, rompiendo la simpatía psico-fisica i violando las leyes de la harmonía, el carácter i el alma de su sér. El desgraciado que es víctima de la masturbacion, pierde la sensibilidad moral i material, se sustrae al imperio seductor de la mujer- que lo empuja mas a su perdicion i estravío, a causa de que ejerce en él una influencia falsa i falsificada o errónea- pierde el valor, la dignidad, el afecto, la ternura i la grandeza natural, para convertirse en un animal comedor, perezoso, estúpido, ignorante, femenil, cobarde, inútil i despreciable' ('Onanismo', 6).

- Footnote 32: 'Como el onanismo no es sino un atentado contra la Naturaleza, no tiene otro remedio que el encarrilamiento de la máquina venérea en la via sexual. Es decir, el ejercicio moderado i metódico del acto natural o coito' ('Onanismo', 6).

- Footnote 40: ‘¡Pero qué cabeza la mía! Lo primero que recuerdo es lo del Colegio de San Jacinto. Cuanto se habló, cuánto se escribió! I esto, para qué? Resultado: que se hizo mas propaganda al vicio, que él estuvo de moda; porque muchos quisieron saber lo que era’ (‘Lo que ví en Santiago’, 3).
- Footnote 42: ‘Al joven Jacinto Cosme, del conventillo de la calle Jofré 322, que se dejé de andar convidando niños a jacintear, de lo contrario se lo contamos al viejo jacinto de la calle Maestranza [...] Al Jacintito La Sevillana, que no se pinte tanto la cara de día, porque te podemos publicar la vida que hacías en Buenos Aires [...] Al Jacinto aristocrático J.I.P. lo hemos encontrado dos veces con el guardia de la 8.º Comisaría en la calle de Molina esquina de Delicias jacinteando detrás del poste telefónico. Si lo encontramos otra vez diremos el nombre tambien el número del guardian’ (‘Jacintazos’, 2).
- Footnote 44: ‘Está visto i demostrado que a entrado en este pais al sendero de la corrupción mas desvergonzada. En todo los círculos sociales i especialmente en los dirigentes, esa corrupcion toma cada día mayores i alarmantes proporciones. No solo están corrompidos los hombres dentro de sus intereses privados sinó que el vicio se ha apoderado de todas las ramas, amisionarivas, lejislativa i judicial. El clero, el sacerdocio romano que en este país antes era garantía de virtud, poco a poco ha ido degenerándose hasta llegar a perder en el pueblo consiente, ese respeto que antes era sagrado para los trabajadores’ (‘Siguen los escándalos Jacintianos’, 1).
- Footnote 45: ‘I ello es lójico. Los hombres que se encierran en un convento, que hacen profesión de castidad i que se dicen “ministros de Dios en la tierra”, se han ido convirtiendo paulatinamente en crapuloso, sodomitas, orgullosos, altaneros i egoístas ante el sufrimiento del oprimido’ (‘Siguen los escándalos Jacintianos’, 1).
- Footnote 46: ‘Ayer no mas, la sociedad de Santiago vió a uno de sus jóvenes mas distinguidos, presa de la lascivia i de la corrupcion de un hermano de las Escuelas Cristianas. Todo el mundo, indignado, pidió el severo castigo de los culpables, (pues se investigó que habían muchos otros culpables de igual crimen) i se formó gran alboroto, la justicia ordinaria demostró cierto interés por sancionar el delito; pero intervino el Arzobispo i su camarilla i todo no pasó de ser un buen representado sainete: los sodomitas quedaron impunes i se estableció con esta impunidad el libre i correcto funcionamiento de la sodomía en el convento i colejos católicos’ (‘Siguen los escándalos Jacintianos’, 2).
- Footnote 47: ‘Que poseen los padres mercedarios de esta capital, viene otra vez a llenar de vergüenza a los chilenos’ (‘Siguen los escándalos Jacintianos’, 2).
- Footnote 48: ‘Semejante vicio, antes era casi desconocido entre nosotros; pero los celibatarios, los hombres que viven en un claustro i que como son simplemente hermanos no tienen ocasion como los sacerdotes de cultivar en el confesionario relaciones con el otro sexo, se entregan al mas repugnante de los crímenes’ (‘Siguen los escándalos Jacintianos’, 2).
- Footnote 51: ‘Chilenos: Ayer éramos hombres viriles e immaculados; hoy somos débiles i maricas’ (‘Siguen los escándalos Jacintianos’, 2).
- Footnote 53: ‘La prensa formal de esta capital, ha descubierto en el mes de Octubre próximo pasado, una plaga de vichos ponzoñosos que amenaza envenenar el purísimo ambiente de las costumbres de este hermoso pais, tan alabado por los poetas, por tener un cielo azulado, una cordillera nevada y qué sé yo de bellezas mas que hacen el encanto de cuantos lo visitan’ (‘Los caftens y la prensa’, 3).
- Footnote 54: ‘Repentinamente, el claro azul de cielo, empieza ponerse gris, y... adiós felicidad, aparecen los caftens, un día, vestidos de fraile, otra vez de mujer y dan principio a su obra malsana’ (‘Los caftens y la prensa’, 3).
- Footnote 57: ‘Por lo que a nosotros toca como trabajadores, sabemos perfectamente que esa no es la madre del cordero. Los caftens estan radicados aquí desde muchos años: los hai San Jacinto, San Pedro Nolasco, en San José y donde quiera que haya individuos del mismo sexo reunidos. Para qué decimos nada de los cuarteles, sobre todo de la Marina’ (‘Los caftens y la prensa’, 3-4).

- Footnote 59: 'El cuartel es un prostíbulo en donde los jóvenes pierden sus nociones de hombres, convirtiéndose en esclavos, sodomitas, bestias de carga, tigres humanos, asesinos mundiales, verdugos del pueblo, matadores del progreso i matanceros de la humanidad' ('Quereis ser soldado?', 2).

- Footnote 63: 'Se arguye por la prensa burguesa, inspirada por el bajo i mezquino cálculo de la venta i la suscripción, que "la patria está en peligro", que "la integridad nacional está amenazada", i mil otras frases de molde que los sabiondos periodistas a sueldo, se saben de memoria... Los microcéfalos militares, sostienen en sus conferencias i en sus mentirosas publicaciones, que la instruccion militar es necesaria para educar al pueblo en sus deberes cívicos, en el amor al trabajo, en la higiene, en las buenas costumbres, en el amor a la patria i en la obediencia, que es la base del orden i la prosperidad como ellos dicen' ('La Instrucción obligatorio I la escuela del crimen', 2).

- Footnote 67: 'Estos alcahuetes moralistas, o frailes de dormán i kepí, olvidan u ocultan que la educacion que el pueblo reciben en los cuarteles, consiste en despreciar a su familia o a su mujer, por obedecer a hombres tiranos i brutos, bestiales i bárbaros, dicen' ('La Instrucción obligatorio I la escuela del crimen', 3).

- Footnote 70: 'Hombre i ciudadano: sufragio electoral, soberanía individual, derechos de opinion i de residencia, de reunión i de asociacion: todo esto i cuantos derechos diferencian al ciudadano moderno del esclavo antiguo' dicen' ('La Instrucción obligatorio I la escuela del crimen', 3).

- Footnote 74: 'Que la híjiene que el pueblo adquiere en el cuartel, se reduce, despues de los consabidos baños al amanecer, a la adquisicion de la sífilis, la gonorrea, el onanismo, la sodomia i la espermatorea' ('La Instrucción obligatorio i la escuela del crimen', 3).

- Footnote 75: 'La instruccion militar está toda encaminada a reducir la personalidad humana a su mínima expresion, a matar en el hombre el espíritu de rebeldia, que es la característica de la dignidad i la grandeza humanas, a suplantar al ciudadano, por un simple mono sin criterio ni carácter, por un muñeco de resortes listo a disparar sobre cualquier ciudadano, al menor movimiento de sus jefes' ('La Instrucción obligatorio i la escuela del crimen', 3).

- Footnote 76: 'I protestamos en nombre de la dignidad humana, de nuestras madres i esposas, de nuestras hermanas e hijas, que no quieren ser cómplices, ni víctimas, ni espectadores de este monstruoso atentado contra la Libertad i la Justicia, contra el honor i la nobleza de los robustos hijos de Chile' ('La Instrucción obligatorio i la escuela del crimen', 3).

- Footnote 77: '¡Atras la Relijion de Uniforme! ¡Atras! ¡Atras!... Al pueblo – ese manso león encadenado – le corresponde hincar sus garras en los pechos infames de la próxima gran traicion a la Soberanía Popular, perpetrando ese nombre de la Lei, esa prostituta de todos los lupanares! ¡Levántate, pueblo! [...] Que la cremacion i la trinchina sean el supremo tratamiento, para evitar los grandes estragos de la Peste Bubónica Militar!' ('La Instrucción obligatorio i la escuela del crimen', 3).

- Footnote 79: 'I la jóven que ocupa las horas que le deja libre la escuela, en arreglar los vestidos de su hermano i en prepararle el alimento, i atender a su madre inválida por el trabajo i la vejez ¿qué harán cuando sientan sus estómagos vacios i sin esperanzas de nada, pues el militarismo les ha arrebatado a su cariñoso hermano para convertirlo en carne de cañon? ¿Qué camino les queda que seguir? Solo el robo, la prostitucion o la mendicidad. Si algunas siguen los dos primeros caminos, las cárceles i establecimientos se repletan de reos i prostitutas. Si el tercero, unas cuantas palabras de compasion i... nada mas. Estos i muchos otros son los frutos que nos acarrea el servicio militar obligatorio' ('El Servicio Militar Obligatorio', 1).

- Footnote 81: 'Atrofia su cerebro, siente que se marchita su corazon, embota su sensibilidad, siente que se rompe la armonía entre el espíritu i la materia, i mientras ésta se relaja, el otro se envilece; i despues de todo esto, cuando ya la disciplina ha enrollado su carácter, cuando el servilismo i la obediencia han apagado la altivez que diferencia al hombre de la mujer, entonces deja de ser un hombre para ser una bestia. I en seguida, a través de algunos años, de la corrupcion i el envilecimiento de tantos hombres como van a los cuarteles, ¿qué resulta?- La dejeneracion de la especie, el servilismo

de la raza, dando así lugar a la tiranía política de cualquier mandarin, de cualquier audas o de cualquier pillor' ('El Servicio militar obligatorio en Chile', 2).

- Footnote 84: 'El militarismo es la degradacion de los humanos y el enjendro de Caines, hagamos propaganda antimilitarista y los enucos caerán con estremicimientos mortales: su reinado de injusticia habrá concluido. [...] En el ejército se enjendran los perezosos, y se desarrollan libremente todos los vicios, hasta la sodomia que conduce a la dejeneracion de los individuos. Es hora que los Caines desaparezcan' ('Los Caines', 4).

- Footnote 89: 'Por un fenómeno que positivamente no se esplica, los individuos que abrazaban las nuevas ideas de redencion, rejeneracion i perfeccion humanas, o se metamorfosean o quedan en estagnacion. Los primeros roempen las ligaduras que les atan i tienden el vuelo hacia las rejiones desconocidas, a vidos de nuevas sensaciones ide una nueva vida, desatando sin fatigarse nudos gordianos, descifrando enigmas i tratando de arrebatara lo infinito sus secretos; los segundos al ver lo estenso de la jornada van quedando como rezagados tendidos a los largo del camino para dejarse arrastrar, rodando como guijarros, por la corriente social que los impulsa' ('Caidos', 1).

- Footnote 90: '¿Qué sacrificio, pues, qué buegacion i qué lucha se puede esperar de los física, intelectual i moralmente dejenerados?' ('Caidos', 1).

- Footnote 91: 'Tristemente, bien poca [...] Jóvenes que ayer fueron una esperanza para la causa de la Humanidad a quienes se les hubiera creído que irian a constituir la vanguardia de la lucha por el Porvenir, hoy se les vé lejos exhalando ayes dolorosos i quejas jamebnudas que [three illegible words] Pobres caidos! ¿Cuando una fuerzas bienhechoras les dará enerjías para levantarse de es postracion que avergüenza? [...] ¡Pobres infelices, no alcanzaron a llevar sobre la altiva frente el título de revolucionarios, porque fueron impotentes i cayeron! ¿Qué diosa vendrá a amantarlos para tornarlos nuevamente Hércules?' ('Caidos', 1).

- Footnote 94: 'La sociedad burguesa nos presenta tales síntomas de corrupcion, que es necesario ser ciego para no verlo i constatarlos con mas o ménos conciencia. Todas las desenfrenadas orjías que se llevan a cabo son hoi tan conocidas, que cualquier individuo, por torpe que sea, puede constatarlas i observarlas' ('Corrupcion Social', 2).

- Footnote 95: '(I esta degradacion no existe solamente entre las altas clases sociales, sino tambien entre la clase obrera, entre la clase laboriosa i productora de la riqueza social)' ('Corrupcion Social', 2).

- Footnote 96: 'La sociedad burguesa enjendra i perpetúa el delito, enjendra i perpetúa la corrupcion, el vicio i la degradacion bastarda' ('Corrupcion Social', 2).

- Footnote 97: 'Corporaciones que A PRIORI parecen rejenerar LO STATU QUO de las cosas i MOTU-PROPIO se lanzan a descubrir la plaga inmundada de parásitos i delincuentes aristócratas' ('Corrupcion Social', 3).

- Footnote 98: 'Por las metamórfosis de esos señores redentores, nos hacen rechazar toda promesa de rejeneracion social por parte de los privilegiados de la fortuna, i por eso también sin titubear habíamos aceptado la sentencia de Marx: "LA EMANCIPACION DE LOS TRABAJADORES DEBE SER OBRA DE LOS TRABAJADORES MISMOS"' ('Corrupcion Social', 2).

- Footnote 99: 'Pero hoi, en presencia de una nueva corrupcion que, sí se me permite la frase, la llamaremos obrera, nos vemos en la imperiosa necesidad de rechazar toda sentencia preconcebida i de caminar en pró de la emancipacion anhelada, con la conviccion profunda que la emancipacion debe ser amplia' ('Corrupcion Social', 3).

- Footnote 101: 'Luchemos por el advenimiento de la Revolucion, porque ella es la diosa de porvenir i la destructora de tiranos. (Concluirá)' ('Corrupcion Social', 3).

PART III

- Footnote 2: 'Tal como "ser mujer" no garantiza, por naturaleza, el ejercicio crítico de una femineidad que sea necesariamente cuestionadora de la masculinidad hegemónica, tampoco "ser hombre" condena al autor a hacerse fatalmente cómplice del poder de la cultura oficial por mucho que se beneficie de sus ventajas. De hecho, son varios y convincentes los ejemplos de prácticas literarias firmadas por hombres [...] cuyas experimentaciones poético-literarias lograron torsionar el lenguaje y la identidad, hasta descentrar por completo la función-de-sujeto a la que le hace propaganda la ideología cultural masculina dominante' (Richards, 47-66).

CHAPTER 6

- Footnote 1: '¡I luego las matan! Ya se ve! las quieren tanto! En este pais ultra-católico i proto-hidalgo, el asesinato de la mujer va erijiendo ya en costrumbre. Tener novio es para una muchacha del pueblo peligro mortal [...] Para los galanes que ahora se estilan, la dama de sus preferencias está obligada a soportarlos, o morir. A esta especie de crímenes pasionales se les llama homicidios por amor.... ¡Por amor!' ('La mujer', 3)

- Footnote 2: 'Hasta hoy no me ha sido posible resistir al deseo de hacer pública la existencia de la nueva vida que ha empezado para mí; aunque de mi rudo cerebro i de mi torpe pluma solo conseguiré grabar bruscas frases, que no serán leídas sin que se les dirijan reproches. Pero, disculpadme maestros i apóstoles de la nueva idea, porque la nueva idea tambien ha surjido en mí, i fuerte alza la voz, haciéndome estremecer al solo sentir su armonioso son [...] Siento una voz que con afán me llama, la conozco, es la voz sonora de la Anarquia, que hasta mí llega en señal de salvacion; me parece vivir' ('Luz', 2).

- Footnote 5: 'La jornada será larga; en mi camino habrán dificultades que entorpecerán mi paso; no tendré nombre; por último, peligrará mi vida. Pero al fin saldré victoriosa en la ruda marea i con la roja enseña legada por la sangre de millares de obreras, víctimas de la fierra burguesía' ('Luz', 2).

- Footnote 7: 'lejos, mui lejos están los tiempos en que la mujer recluida al jénesis esperaba temblando la visita de su adusto esposo, su ñor y dueño, sin derecho a una caricia, ni a ver la luz ni otros hombres, como un ser repelente que por caridad o necesidad se toca. Mas lejos están aun los tiempos primitivos y salvajes, en que la mujer tendida en medio del bosque por el golpe brutal del hombre, era pasto de su lascivia y tenia que concebir sus hijos en medio de violencias y dolores atroces, para ser abandonada despues [...] Pasaron, es cierto, esos tiempos de ignorancia y de barbarie, hemos llegado al siglo del vapor, de las luces y la electricidad, y sin embargo, la condicion de la mujer es casi idéntica a la de aquellos tiempos que tanto horror nos causan. Se ha innovado en la forma, pero no en el fondo; y no obstante los progresos que a ciencia cierta ha alcanzado la humanidad, la mujer sigue siendo la perseguida del bosque, que cede al golpe rudo del macho' ('La Mujer ayer hoi y mañana', 1).

- Footnote 8: '¿A qué se debe tan estraña, tan anómala, tan deprimente condicion?' ('La Mujer ayer hoi y mañana', 1).

- Footnote 9: 'Al capital, y a este orden económico que ha jenerado la fuerza. Desde los mas remotos tiempos, los mas osados y audaces han venido sometiendo a su capricho, qu pronto se hizo lei, a la parte mas débil de la humanidad, con lo que nació la esclavitud y por ende el capital. La mujer, ménos fuerte todavía que los que se llamaron esclavos, párias, idiotas, hoi dia proletarios, tenia que llevar la peor parte en esta contienda de la vida' ('La Mujer ayer hoi y mañana', 1).

- Footnote 10: 'Obligando el hombre a trabajar y a producir mas de lo que humanamente puede, se ha deformado su cuerpo, agriado su carácter y pervertido sus gustos. Los nobles sentimientos, innatos el ser humano y que a través de los siglos ha venido desarrollando la mancomunidad o sociabilidad en que le es fuerza vivir, se han visto aplastadas por las necesidades mas premiosas del bruto [...] la explotacion odiosa de que es objeto el hombre por el hombre mismo, [...] han permitido a unos el desarrollo excesivo de su mentalidad a los otros la atrofia de su cerebro, casi no es dable

exigir de los de abajo mas amor y bondad con la mujer. El hombre nacido para ser bestia de carga, desde su mas tierna edad solo tiene ejemplos nocivos. ' ('La Mujer ayer hoi y mañana', 1).

- Footnote 13: 'La he visto en los campos encorvada sobre el surco, labrando el suelo con ánsias i afanes de bestia. La he visto en el media dia cedada, reclusa, esclava de los prejuicios sociales, objeto para su dueño de lujo i sensualidad. En el taller se le oprime i se le reduce. En la fabrica se le explota se le insulta i apenas se le paga. Se aprovecha su miseria para deshonrarla i se le desprecia después. Engañarla vilmente es para el hombre un gran triunfo de que se ufana' ('La mujer', 3).

- Footnote 14: 'Mas razonable, mas dulce, mas sumisa soporta en las clases inferiores de la sociedad toda la pesadumbre de la vida: al padre olgazán, al marido borracho, al hijo díscolo e ingrato' ('La mujer', 3).

- Footnote 15: 'La dama del gran mundo reina en una corte de convencion, sobre su trono de talco, ajena a todo lo que eleva i enaltece la existencia, rodeada por una atmósfera malsana de elegante frivolidad' ('La mujer', 3).

- Footnote 16: '¡I decís que la habéis emancipado! ¡I aseguráis que el Mesías ha venido tambien para ella! Nó, la hora de su emancipacion no ha sonado todavía! Su Mesías aun está por venir. Vosotros, hombres de fé, ¿qué habéis hecho sino persuadirla de lo inconciliable de su servidumbre, hacerla adorar sus cadenas, nutrir sus almas con las esencias destinadas a eternizar su cautiverio?' ('La mujer', 3).

- Footnote 18: 'Vosotros revolucionarios, ocupados en deshacer i hacer constituciones, ¿cómo no habéis pensado en que toda libertad será un fantasma mientras viva en esclavitud la mitad del jénero humano?' ('La mujer', 3).

- Footnote 20: '¡I luego las matan! Ya se ve! las quieren tánto! En este pais ultra-católico i proto-hidalgo, el asesinato de la mujer va erijiendo ya en costrumbre. Tener novio es para una muchacha del pueblo peligro mortal. No puede una mujer defender su honor contra las brutales exigencias de un macho imperioso, o rechazar las asiduidades de un importuno, o cansarse de los galanteos de un imbécil, sin gravísimo riesgo de muerte. Para los galanes que ahora se estilan, la dama de sus preferencias está obligada a soportarlos, o morir. A esta especie de crímenes pasionales se les llama homicidios por amor.... ¡Por amor! Singular es amor que no procura el bien del objeto amado sino que le destruye i aniquila! ¡Amor sin jenerosidad, sin grandeza, sin sacrificio; que no sabe sufrir el inmolarse, ni perdonar pasión de fiera, apetito de bestia, mezcla impura de concupiscencia i soberbia! Matar es nuestro lema. Matamos por Dios, matamos por el órden, matamos por cariño. ¿Qué especie de raza es esta raza nuestra, en que la relijion se hace fanatismo, política corrupcion i malda, i hasta el amor, el santo, el divino amor, padre de la vida, se convierte en asesinato? ¡Oh tiempos!' ('La mujer', 3).

Appendix 2: Historical Context of the Chilean Working-Class Press

The Chilean working-class press appeared in the context of what was labelled by politicians of the time as '*La Cuestión Social*' ['The Social Question'] (1880-1920). According to the historian Sergio Grez, this was a period of social crisis triggered by a cumulative intensification of collective hardships that spawned a multifactorial discontent in the working class and began a process of political and social upheaval in the country.¹

The profits that the saltpetre industry brought to the Chilean economy² started an aggressive process of modernization, industrialization and sudden urbanization which caused massive migrations from the countryside to the cities. Since the mid-nineteenth century, the Chilean population began to concentrate in urban districts. This expansion affected to a greater degree the city of Santiago which tripled its populated areas from 1810 to 1900 and doubled its population (from 60 thousand to 130 thousand inhabitants) between 1813 and 1875.³ It is important to consider that this was a third of the total Chilean population registered by 1907 (3.231.022 inhabitants).

This exponential urban growth shaped a dual city. By the 1900s Santiago was a highly segregated city that consisted of a modern city centre, which functioned as the administrative and commercial epicentre of the country, some residential neighbourhoods, where the upper class lived, and a periphery neglected by the state, where the vast majority of the population lived in precarious houses made by themselves.⁴ Hence, the recently arrived inhabitants of the 'periphery' continued living according to the practices and ways they had while living in the countryside. However, with the rising industrialization of the city, the ruling class rapidly started to consist of not only factory owners and merchants, but also of *arrendadores* [landlords]. These men were aware of the economic gains that derive from dividing old houses into several separated rooms and letting them to recently arrived workers. These

¹ Grez, Sergio, *La "cuestión social" en Chile. Ideas y debates precursores (1804 - 1902)* (Santiago: Dibam, 1995), 10-11.

² The Chilean economy of the 1900s was characterized mainly by its monoproduktive industry based on the extraction and exportation of saltpetre, followed, to a lesser degree by the exportation of agrarian products. This primacy given to the exportation of raw materials and products created a highly dependent and fluctuating economy characteristic of 'third world countries'.

³ Espinoza, Vicente, *Para una historia de los pobres de la ciudad* (Santiago: Ediciones sur, 1988), 13-14.

⁴ Espinoza, 16.

places where called *conventillos* [slums] and by the year 1900, there were 2.000 of these rooms in Santiago.⁵ These places were overcrowded with working-class families. According to Simon Collier & William Sater, up to 8 people used to share a room without ventilation and access to drinkable water.⁶ Unsurprisingly, the concentration of population produced a rapid escalation of diseases. The most common ones were the bubonic plague, cholera, typhus, smallpox, diphtheria, pneumonia and tuberculosis. It is estimated that between the years 1909 and 1914 more than 100.000 Chileans died because of bad sanitary conditions. Smallpox alone used to kill 10.000 Chileans per year.⁷ But that was not the only cause for the workers' social discontent. Considering that the first Chilean *Código del Trabajo* [Labour Code] was passed in 1931, urban workers of the time faced unregulated labour conditions that resulted in them working up to 90 hours per week under poor safety conditions and highly exploitative circumstances; they earned low salaries and did not have the right to sick leave, contracts and security against sudden layoffs.

According to the historian Mario Garcés, the '*Cuestión social*' defined more than the living conditions of workers. In the context of multifactorial inequalities and precarious life circumstances, this recently formed urban working class, which not long ago migrated from the countryside, built their class consciousness and became politicized. This was the basis for the formation of the Chilean working-class movement, which was materialized in different organizations such as workers' mutual funds, federations, societies, trade unions and political parties.⁸ These organizations began to publish pamphlets, magazines and papers that shaped the working-class press. The objective was to promote socialist and anarchist ideas, strengthen workers' organization and to make it into a means of popular education. Between the years 1900 and 1926 it is estimated that an average of 14 new working-class papers was founded every year.⁹

⁵ Collier, Simon & Sater, William, *Historia de Chile 1808-1994* (Madrid: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 161.

⁶ Ibidem.

⁷ Grez, Sergio, *De la regeneración del pueblo a la huelga general. Génesis y evolución histórica del movimiento en Chile 1810-1890* (Santiago: Ed Biblioteca Nacional de Chile, 1998), 120.

⁸ Garcés, Mario, *Crisis social y motines populares en el 1900* (Santiago: Lom, 2002), 116.

⁹ Santa Cruz, Eduardo, *Análisis Histórico del periodismo Chileno* (Texas: Nuestra América ediciones, 1988), 55.

In order to grasp the relevance of the press for these workers it is also important to consider that even though by 1888 only 16.6% of children attended school,¹⁰ by 1895 the urban population presented a literacy rate of 72%.¹¹ The reason for this contrast between low school attendance and high literacy levels was that working-class organizations intensely promoted forms of popular education.¹² This stands as proof of the fact that the Chilean working-class movement gave importance to writing and reading. It also explains why historians consider the working-class press to be the most important source for the study of the Chilean working-class movement.¹³

¹⁰ Egaña, María, *La educación primaria popular en siglo XIX en Chile: Una práctica de política estatal* (Santiago: LOM, 2000), 104.

¹¹ Hutchinson, Elizabeth, *Labores propias de su sexo: Género, política y trabajo en Chile urbano 1900-1930* (Santiago: LOM, 2014), 92.

¹² Moulian, Tomás & Torres, Isabel, *Concepción de la política e ideal moral en la Prensa Obrera: 1919-1922* (Santiago: FLACSO, 1987), 29.

¹³ Hutchinson, 92.