



Migrant Image

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Abstract

The spread of cell phones equipped with digital cameras has meant a radical change in the way social movements are experienced. Cameras no longer only record, but also participate and transform the experience. The resulting images are available to everyone in the virtual spaces generated on the Internet. The intrinsic relationship between image and memory is now a function whose interpretation is more than ever polysemic and subject to permanent re-reading. At the heart of the matter, it is digital technology the one that has come to alter the content of images and our relationship with them.

Certain videos produced during the social uprisings in Chile in 2019-2020, show a re-reading of recent national history. By projecting their interpretation of the past to the present they re-signify the developing social movement.

Keywords: video, digital technology, social movement, collective memory

Resumen

La propagación de celulares dotados con cámaras digitales ha significado un cambio radical en el modo en que se viven los movimientos sociales. Las cámaras ya no solo registran, sino que también participan y transforman la experiencia. Las imágenes resultantes quedan al alcance de todos en los espacios virtuales generados en el internet. La intrínseca relación entre imagen y memoria es ahora una función cuya interpretación es más que nunca polisémica y sujeta a permanentes relecturas. En el meollo de este asunto, es la tecnología digital la que ha llegado a alterar el contenido de las imágenes y nuestra relación con ellas.

Determinados videos producidos durante las revueltas sociales en Chile en el 2019-2020, muestran una relectura de la historia nacional reciente. Al proyectar esta interpretación al presente resignifican el movimiento social entonces en desarrollo.

Palabras claves: video, tecnología, movimiento social, memoria colectiva

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I. About the research

It will be opportune and useful to mention that the present research was imagined, at the beginning, as an audiovisual material. To a certain extent, the arguments that I will raise below have a replica in some experimental, performative, commercial or homemade video that is going around the Internet. Verbalizing arguments that are sustained in audiovisual works implies the transfer of a message to another language. This does not imply the abandonment of ideas along the way, but the need to rely on a varied set of resources. In the style of a miscellany, translating, overlapping and combining literary traditions that in themselves are not in dialogue, or at least are not recognizable beforehand, has been the strategy adopted to develop the present research.

The landing of digital cameras in the pockets of citizens has a revolutionary weight comparable to the invention of the printing press. In short, what has been occurring since the eighteenth century is the transition from a text-based civilization to a visually dependent civilization (Stafford, 1991, xviii). What we call images are changing at an astonishing pace, adding new qualities, formats, media, and provenance as never before. These days, the computer experience is more relevant than the capacity of the camera, the darkroom or the medium. Digitalization, has allowed an extraordinary increase and alteration of audiovisual experiences (Ball & Smith, 2001, p. 313).

It is the audiovisual experience that changes, and therefore, society, which is affected as both creator and receiver of the content, is also part of the change. How is our everyday life altered by the presence of surveillance cameras? Asks himself Harun Farocki (2013, p.3). In the context of a repressive political environment, a cheap and accessible technology that can be used to amplify and disseminate original images and sounds without prior institutional approval or professional training comes into tension with a society in which older forms of vernacular culture continue to shape many aspects of everyday life (Snowdon, 2014, p. 410).

I propose to make an interpretation of certain videos that emerged during the social revolts that occurred in Chile in 2019-2020. It is my intention to show that these audiovisual works perform a re-interpretation of the last 30 years of its national history, and by projecting this interpretation to the present they give meaning to the social movement that was developing at that time.

The audiovisual works I am referring to are non-commercial works that, as a general rule, do not seek to transcend social networks. Once their purpose of being an exercise of individual or collective expression has been fulfilled, they are archived and forgotten. They are not the object of academic study, they lack commercial value and are alien to artistic distribution channels, underestimating the value of these works as constructors of meaning and memory. Considering the above, I agree with Urbanczk that it is now imperative to examine small audiovisual narratives, create a community that actively engages in discussions and shares such material. This would greatly benefit students, researchers, creators, and viewers, as it would enhance their comprehension of the intricate dynamics of society, humanity, and art (Urbanczyk, 2019).

These works were projected in social meetings that were organized in that period of time to project and share this body of work. That is to say, the authors themselves, outside any distribution chain, promoted meetings where collectives or individual authors shared their works. These were non-commercial, non-competitive, non-financed and inclusive encounters -that is, without any basis that excluded certain formats or contents-.

My research proposes to value these audiovisual narratives, to make visible and discuss the contribution to social, human, identity and artistic understanding that such material can bring to the table. Digital video has opened new possibilities for the construction and communication of social memory, questioning traditional narratives. What is at stake are not only the specific social demands of October 2019, but the past and the present converge in audiovisual montages that seek to identify contemporary social demands with a certain interpretation of modern national history.

With this brief introduction I allow myself to introduce my research question, general objectives and specific objectives:

Research Question:

How do certain videos produced in Chile during the 2019 - 2020 protests actualize the link between the country's past and present?

General Objectives

1.- To analyse the memory potential of the digital audiovisual resource.

Specific Objectives

1.- The digital video as a construction of social sense.

- 2.- To analyse how the technical particularities of video alter the memory potential of the audiovisual resource.
- 3.- To identify certain Chilean videos of 2019-2020 as new expressions of community knowledge.

II. Introduction

2.1 The use of the Image

The film historian Annette Insdorf once stated that of all art forms cinema gives the greatest illusion of authenticity of truth (Berenbaum, 2014, p. 1). The author's very accurate statement allows us to highlight the illusion-authenticity paradox that characterizes cinema. Let us remember that cinema was a scientific apparatus that much later became an object of spectacle. Decades passed before the audiovisual language was developed, and since then the discussion about the purpose of this discipline has always been at its heart. That is to say, the antagonism between theatricality and documentation was positioned in the public as the identity of audiovisual works. However, such a rigid categorization only belongs to video clubs or exhibition halls. By reading film critics and, above all, filmmakers, we can learn to blur such boundaries. Cinema thus becomes a journey through a possible truth in itself. Film can become an invitation into the unknown that is the experience of living, and not just a dramatic or historical representation, or both. In the same vein, Nietzsche once stated that we have art so that truth does not sink us to the bottom (Nancy, 2005, p. 13). Art, and consequently cinema, is part of the digestive process necessary for the sublimation that, as a society, we carry out of the traumatic experience of living.

How such an undertaking is carried out is a matter of psychology, conveyed precisely by aesthetics. For we are talking about vital needs, spiritual we may say, and about psychological processes that involve the internalization of an external object through the senses, in order to give it a place in the individual narrative. For Jean-Luc Nancy (2005), the image is something sacred. The author does not emphasize a religious feature of the image, but stresses the distant character of the image. The sacred is that which remains, by itself, apart, unreachable elsewhere, and with which no link can be established. That is to say, the image cannot be



A couple with a mirror (Von Aachen, 1595-1600)

touched (page 2). The seduction of images, says Nancy, their eroticism, is nothing other than their availability to be taken, touched by the eyes, the hands, the belly, or by reason, and penetrated (page 10).

The linguistic turn has a referent in the perspectives explorations carried out by painters centuries before the audiovisual picture was created. In the painting *A couple with a mirror* (Von Aachen, 1595-1600), Von Aachen breaks the so-called fourth wall and addresses the viewer's eyes. It would not be so revolutionary if it were not for the fact that the gaze in the painting is that of the painter himself. Diego Velázquez (1599–1660) would take this idea further by painting himself painting a picture in *Las Meninas* (1656). These were the incipient steps to what



Las Meninas (Diego Velázquez, 1599–1660)

cinema later overexploited; the spectator-work identification. Whenever we see what the characters see, follow their conversations by jumping from one glance to another, hear their thoughts and speak from their mouths, we are identifying with a narrative that has been delicately constructed in advance. In film, there are no careless elements, but a careful manipulation that has often been criticized as inappropriate.

A fundamental phenomenological question is how what is taken for granted is formed in the first place, or as Durham (2015) puts it; how did water become invisible to fish (p. 36). We readily accept innovations in the realm of audiovisual technologies, often without hesitation, due in part to the way technological products simplify and adapt them for our consumption. The term "manipulation" can encompass various techniques and methods employed in this field. That which is manipulated will be the image, now, what is an image? Too many filmmakers, among them Raul Ruiz, Harun Farocki and Malcome Le Grice, to name only those used in the present investigation, abstain from any definition by cataloging it as a mystery. But they all agree with the title of Andrei Tarkovsky's book, *Sculpting in Time* (2022). Temporality is the essence of the image. We are summoned by the digital audiovisual, a technology whose computer storage support approximates all temporal distances to the distance that exists between 1- 0. An image can become the meeting point of multiple voices that meet in the same instant.

From the national flag to contemporary newsreels, the image has played a central role in the formation of national identities. The new remix culture facilitates the appropriation of these symbols, allowing to put them in dialogue with other types of material. If we assume the past not as something prior to the present but as an inner dimension of it, the image becomes a propitious resource to express this complexity (Vich & Zavala, 2004, p.18).

3.2 Form as Content

I seek to look closely at how the digital surname of the image defines our experience of the audiovisual. I assume a priori, that the process of creating analog images is not the same experience as the process of creating digital content. Likewise, as viewers of those images we do not access the content in the same way, nor do we necessarily face the same language. To finalize the triangle, the realization between creators and viewers is fundamentally redefined when we migrate to the digital space.

Our very existence, says Durham, depends on a wide range of techniques for managing nature and culture, most of them ignored by recent communication theory because of their supposedly poor meaning-making qualities (p. 3). The phenomenon of managing culture ultimately defines our experience of the real. The tools we use shape the content they work on; form is defined as content and vice versa. The technical innovations produced in the field of photographic reproduction changed the way we perceive reality. The technical image, Walter Benjamin would say, has the capacity to intervene in such a way in our perceptive field that it can even modify the notion of reality (as quoted by Cifuentes, 2004, p.88). The audiovisual digital language develops from innovations in the field of photography. The digital support has turned the audiovisual into a freer material, more manipulable than its predecessors.

The word "video" is derived from Latin, and its literal meaning is "I see." The etymology of the term not only refers to the act of seeing but also implies the first-person point of view and the present tense in which the verb is articulated. The fact that the protest videos that we will analyse are built in digital technology is not alien to the *what* and *how* of the content, on the contrary, it crosses and determines them (Diaz, 2011, p. 3-4). Not only the form defines the content, but the form is the content. In short, the material speaks of the time that inhabits it, by virtue of its technical qualities it determines the way in which it represents that time, and ultimately affects how we approach the representation itself as spectators.

I will argue that the image is defined by its quality as a memory-creating object and, secondly, that the technological particularities define the form and content of that memory. The digital medium provides a space for a living memory to unfold. In these stories, the meanings that the audiovisual montage proposes are neither closed nor unidirectional, but invite an interpretation by the viewer. Other stories, such as the 9 pm newscasts, produce a frozen memory, by proposing a univocal interpretation of the present (Feld, 2010, p. 10).

3.3 Experimental Videos

As for the type of audiovisual material that interests me, we can roughly categorize it as experimental audiovisual works. By experimental I understand the tradition of shamanic cinema, an idea developed by Raúl Ruiz (2002). From this perspective, the narrative is neither univocal nor unidirectional, but rather unfolds in different dimensions, one overlapping the other and often contradicting each other.

Because the language of experimental film lacks all the characteristics, norms and conventions found in other film genres, it is inextricably linked to the form rather than the substance of the film. That is, the language of experimental film is continually reinvented, and what is developed as language in one film may not be so in another. As Small (1994) states, the function of the language of experimental film "is to theorize its own foundation, reflecting on its own intrinsic semiotic systems" (p. 5).

The videos I am interested in drink, knowingly or not, from the accumulation of experimental works that more than 100 years ago have been developed in cinema. The intentions I read in their work are codified, argued and described in their theoretical work. Experimental practices are not something that each individual invents by himself, but are recipes, shortcuts and tricks, discussed and constructed decades ago in the praxis of experimental cinema.

3.4 Deconstructing Chile

What can be analysed today in the videos made in Chile in 2019-2020, has a direct antecedent in certain audiovisual material that emerged in the Arab Spring period. A relevant difference is that the videos referred to in this research involve a meticulous behind-the-scenes montage. Not only do they observe or participate in actions, but by recycling footage, they seek to construct a new relationship between present, past and community.

By dressing these videos in the garb of deconstruction, I seek both an analytical tool and a metaphor that encompasses the intention of the montage. By contrasting different historical periods in tension with the 2019 protests, the Chilean filmmakers seek to question the official post-Augusto Pinochet narrative. The freedom that the return to democracy implied is subjected to the violence in which the many Chileans spent their lives. Chile is the *country of lies*, Durán Toledo will say, in which a discourse was installed at the social level of a robust and solid economy that generated economic benefits to its citizens. This was the discourse on which the country's political and institutional stability was sustained from 1990 onwards. But this was always a chimera that lacks sustainability in light of the 2019 crisis (Durán Toledo, 2021, p. 4).

In the face of this style of repression implied by the transition to democracy in Chile, social protests have been consolidated as fertile fields for the expression of marginalized memories and identities. Collective memory, says Villa Gomez & Barrera (2007), can constitute identity *forts* in relation to societal projects that lead to exclusion or violence (p. 153).

For Derrida, deconstruction was about undoing, decomposing and de-sedimenting structures (Derrida in Peretti, 1997a). It is not a matter of annihilation, but of demonstrating the falsity of a certain argumentation. In the same line, I seek to make visible the story that these Chilean videos deconstruct. The conceptual confrontation, seeking to invert their position, is a necessity in itself for deconstruction as a method. In its capacity to question and demystify, conceptual confrontation encloses a unifying, unique and irreducible meaning (Aragón & Ranulfo, 2013, pg. 83).

3.5 Case of Study

Both in terms of the production of these videos and their exhibition, the authors manifest the intention to engage the community with their message. The community members are the ones who create and share their own stories within the community, forging connections between the past and present, the public and private, memory and identity. These connections establish concrete meanings from a particular point of view, namely that of the newer generations (Diaz, p. 4). Given that these videos have been exhibited in the very context of the protests, we should consider them as expressions of the social movement that produced the 2019 outburst in Chile, fostering local change and challenging the status quo through their collective efforts (Christens, 2012, p. 544).

At this point we are neighbours of Visual Anthropology. Although we prefer the nomenclature social aesthetics, understanding this as an aesthetic space of its own, which includes a particular structure of impressions of meaning, social relations and the way of behaving physically (Guarini, 2002, p.119). For these videos to be considered relevant to the community, they must have historical and emotional relevance, connecting apparently discrete events in a form of cause and effect. Following the ideas of Wiseman Chirwa (1997), the recounting of a simple event that does not have historical and emotional relevance is not collective memory. For collective memory to become part of the process of healing, reconciliation and reconstruction at both the individual and community levels, says Chirwa, it must invoke shared emotions and consciousness. (p. 482).

The Vlopcinema Collective¹ is a Chilean audiovisual collective that works in a communitarian logic, using audiovisual archives and material intervention techniques. For the authors, by working with patrimonial and domestic archives at the same time, many themes of territory-body, memory and dictatorship arise. It allows horizontalizing knowledge and reflecting on national identity. We start from the inside, says one of its founders Pavlo Mark, we map places of archives, of the interior, personal, and then we open ourselves to the larger patrimonies, seeking to bring the archive closer, open it, destroy it and resignify it (Archivo Patrimonial USACH, 2022, 37m00s)

Guerra, *Torture* and *Montage*² are three short films developed by the collective using archives and information obtained during the October 2019 outburst in Chile. Images captured by citizens who criticize the brutality of a truth that the government wanted to hide. *Guerra* is the video analysed in depth in chapter IX and X. In a nutshell, the video assembles domestic archives of the police repression of the 2019 outbreak in Chile, together with archives from the period of Augusto Pinochet dictatorship and Sebastian Piñera's government.

3.6 Method of Analysis

I have chosen the video *Guerra* as it expresses in a more obvious way the arguments exposed in this research. A list of videos that could have been used in the analysis can be found in the annexes section. It is not the social facts that *Guerra* exposes that are relevant, but the

¹ <https://vimeo.com/vlopcinema>

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0DJymM1JpfQ>

study of how the social facts are arranged in the overall story, how they relate to other images and how they are presented aesthetically.

To delve into the twists and turns of the video, I have followed Adele Clarke's footsteps and conducted a situational analysis of *Guerra*. Clarke has intended to represent the messiness, paradoxes and heterogeneities of particular fields through situational analysis (Mathar, 2008, p. 59). Influenced by feminism and science and technology studies, the author emphasizes the biases, positionalities, complications and contradictions of the subject under study (Clarke, 2005, p. xxiv).

III. Part 1

3.1 Boundary Event

Every voyage can be said to involve a re-siting of boundaries. The traveling self is here both the self that moves physically from one place to another and, the self that embarks on an undetermined journeying practice (...)
(Minh-ha, 2011, p.27)

Trinh T. Minh-ha, filmmaker and feminist studies scholar, in developing the idea of the *Boundary Event* explores the subjectivity of individuals living on either side of walls. The author argues that the boundary is one where its crossing implies abandoning a construction of univocal meaning; "(...) those who leave and risk in multiplicity, often tend to go on cold for a while, living life as it comes, fasting verbally and linguistically, before learning how to speak again, anew" (Minh-ha, 2011, p.2). Having many non-opposite worlds located in the same location as one's current location will surely result in silence, which is not synonymous with falling into an indescribable, inexpressible or unfathomable space, but rather, when one is one with many, the question is not so much whether to select between sight and speech as to see what the eye hears and hear what the ear sees (ibid).

We can draw on the conceptualization of *Boundary Objects* to strengthen and explain the relevance of the term *Boundary Event*. *Boundary Objects*, says Nick Fox (2011), are entities that enhance the ability of an idea, theory or practice to translate across culturally defined boundaries, as occurs in a community. They are not simply passive vehicles that enable communication between communities of practice or knowledge, but elements that encapsulate

the broader social meaning of a concept, theory, technology, or practice, and the underlying relationships surrounding its development and adoption (pp. 70-71, 82). The primary social activity here is to translate the item to satisfy the various specific desires or demands placed on it by the various worlds involved (Clarke, p. 50-51). Fundamentally, and pointing more to the argument that interests me, *Boundary Objects* serve as a kind of shared reference point for people to interact and establish shared meaning. Take into account, people inhabit numerous intersecting social domains that satisfy each of their information needs (Harnett, Malzahn & Goldsmith, 2014, p. 8-9). The *Boundary Object* have the potential to analyze and facilitate the adoption of an idea, product, or technique, in a given community (Fox, p. 72).

My proposal is to understand digital video as the vehicle, the technology, that constitutes the *Boundary Event* and that manages to behave as a *Boundary Object*. Quite freely I introduce the word migrant to designate this capacity - not so freely if we consider that the immigrant is the one who crosses borders par excellence, and that Minh-ha is in fact a Thai immigrant residing in the USA -. It is the technical possibilities of digital video that allow for the disarticulation of audiovisual language, techniques that encapsulate a conception of time quite different from that offered by educational and governmental institutions. This conception of time allows the deconstruction of official narratives. Clearly we are not referring to all types of video, but only to a certain type of audiovisual material that is worked with an awareness of its materiality.

Raul Ruiz's (2000) *shamanic cinema* always sought to move away from univocal messages. For the Chilean filmmaker, cinema is a journey where what is relevant are the discoveries, the inexplicable findings, the lost and recovered time (Ruiz, p. 90). The playwright Eugenio Barba expresses himself in a similar way when he says that his greatest learning was to know how to be in transition. Learning that occurred at the moment of assuming that it does not refer to a transition in search of knowledge, but on the contrary, of the unknown (Barba, 1994, p. 19). The experimental filmmaker Malcolm Le Grice is a curious case since he began his work in the 50's, in times where only celluloid existed, and then moved to digital in the 90's. For this author, in digital video time becomes a multidimensional grid through which we pass, a building whose cameras we choose to enter or pass (Le Grice, 2019, p. 13). It is polysemy that would characterize today's audiovisual world.

Video is undoubtedly a type of medium. John Durham defines media as tools by which meaning is communicated. Durham's invitation is to consider media as part of the environment, not simply as semiotic entries in people's heads. Broadly speaking, media enter nature and

society, objects and events (Durham, p.2-4). Because of this, we cannot think about videos without thinking about digital storage, editing software or YouTube

Video as a medium does not capture time, but it does approach its manipulation. By participating in situ in social movements, the cameras become participants of the human group, they are part of those bodies that for Jutith Butler (2011) congregate, speak and claim together a certain space as public space. The video is a *Boundary Event* insofar as it behaves like a ship that visits many temporalities at the same time, without demanding that we choose one of them, but rather that we pay attention to what we see and hear as we immerse ourselves in a polysemous world. This, taking into account that meanings emerge from the tension of all its elements.

3.2 The Video

(...) video breaks with the impositions and parameters of the television industry and cinema. Video promotes a personal construction through all the possibilities of production and creation that it offers as technology and aesthetics, a rebellious son of cinema that resists being television, that is video.
(Diaz, 2011, pag. 3)

The videos we are interested in inaugurate their own temporal space. The point of view of the authors from the present is determinant in how the past is presented. But expressing it more cyclically, the same can be said in the opposite direction; the reading of the past establishes the guideline for the reading of the present. Unlike historical documentary works, where we usually observe and the authors propose an interpretation, in the very new digital protest videos we are also part of the action. The camera often protests, hides, denounces or defends itself. It is the new technological possibilities that allow the camera to assume a position of action and not only of observation. In the new audiovisual narratives, experience and action are associated with memory, recreating the temporal link between the past and the present, but through the subjectivities of each creator who makes use of the tools of digital montage. More than "non-professional" or "non-commercial" videos, we can classify them in what Peter Snowden understands as vernacular video, pointing to that material generated by users and shared by social networks such as Facebook or websites such as YouTube (Snowdon, 406).

Ivan Illich (1983) raises the possibility that we could easily become more and more dependent on machines to speak and think, just as we already depend on machines to move. It is no longer

a matter of camera skill, nor of the quality of the equipment, nor of the need for a premeditated idea, much of it is now a matter of computational expertise.

Random Access Memory (RAM) is the digital storage technology that completely alters the relationship of creators to archival materials. This technology lays the foundation for the current culture of remix and social re-readings to which we refer in this paper. It is an essentially non-linear method of storing and retrieving information in digital systems.

When data is entered into a computer, a video for example, it is given a position in memory. The great peculiarity of this technology is that regardless of the address number used, all address locations are theoretically equidistant. To go from 4 to 8, the computer omits the starting numbers 5, 6 and 7: the number 1 is as close to 100 as it is to 2 (Le Grice, p. 457). This technical peculiarity of digital video has led to its language being highly chaotic and complex. At least three major possibilities of digital videos I would venture. Digital videos as polysemic spaces, without a univocal meaning, but multiple, simultaneous and contradictory. Digital videos as fragments of other digital videos, alluding to the remix culture. Finally, digital videos as permanent work in progress, which not only recycle videos but also intervene them aesthetically.

The theoretical limitations of a medium can always be redefined, says Le Grice, however, the power of economics, politics and technology dictates our alternatives and, more importantly, where the critical edge of our dialogue lies (p.448). For a new technology such as RAM to appear requires a material technical advance, but the form this technology takes is already intertwined with the historical preconditions of its social function and psychological determinants. It is impossible to separate the materials from the activity to which they are connected (ibid., p.73).

Both commercial cinema and television have been objects of criticism. The kind of perfection to which conventional cinema strives (in its use of slick technology for the sole purpose of maintaining order) is precisely engraved in its exact obedience to established social rules, says Minh-ha (p. 92). While about television, Machado (1996) argues that it would inhibit cognitive processes and induce subjects to states of somnolence and hypnosis that disorient them, separating them from "real" life, stimulating passive behaviors that favor authoritarian regimes and hegemonic powers (p. 33). In short, too much audiovisual information invades us to expect us to remain alert and critical receivers. The mega communicational offer proposes a virtual cosmopolitanism centered on values that refer to consumption as a source of identity (Barbero,

1997, p. 222). In opposition, the protest videos I refer to promote community empowerment, the multiplicity of memories and the multiplicity of identities.

IV. The Audiovisual Medium

4.1 The Audiovisual Arena

A fundamental phenomenon of the experience of seeing an image can be found when we face ourselves in front of the mirror. Note well, in the pupil of the eye in the mirror we will find our face again, if we could observe the pupil of that face we would see our face again. Something similar happens when we are in the middle of two mirrors. This alludes to an ontological characteristic of the image, we are part of that image. There is no image unless one is in it, says Nancy, we are the foundation and the depth of the eye that looks at us, just as in the reflections of the mirrors (p.10).

The audiovisual image is a true image, as a product of certain recording and reproduction technologies. The matter is distorted when real and true become synonyms. The audiovisual is an image of the real, it is not the real (Le Grice, p. 260). The expression capturing an image conveys precisely the idea of appropriation, while the German expression *ein Photo machen*, to make a picture, is much more pertinent. The audiovisual resembles the real, but it is not even an imitation of the real, it only resembles it in its functioning. It is, a technological reproduction (Minh-ha, p.66).

In psychoanalysis, we speak of the mirror image. In the mirror stage, Lacan (2006) interprets the first years of the infant as fundamental for the formation of the self, forming the idea of the self from the image projected by the *mother* herself - I include the italics to make it clear that we are not talking about the biological mother, but about a symbolic position -. It is the presence of another that gives the child a sense of being himself a different *other*. In turn, Freud considered the human brain as a chaotic filing system similar to the internet we live in today, a space where everything is recorded, even if not everything is easy to find (Durham p. 346). I would like to overlap these ideas to a broader plane. The idea of nation is also constructed from a set of symbols that must be incorporated by the community. We learn from these symbols when we are exposed to their images, each one comes with its emotional charge that we internalize and make part of our identity. That flag, those stories, the heroes and enemies, are the nation that identifies us. Perhaps this is why Gilloch (2022) says that the critical study of

the recent past must take a visual form since history decays in images, not in narrative (Gilloch, 2002, p. 182).

Narrative being a weaving between action and human intentionality, it is its ultimate purpose to render the exceptional comprehensible (Diaz, p. 9). The cinematographic image, today, has become part not only of macro narratives, but also of private narratives with the advent of domestic cameras. In these narratives we find ourselves as individuals and as a community, we recognize ourselves and perpetuate our identity. The audiovisual image allows the presence of the past within the present, making it possible to repair errors, rectify narratives, and ultimately prevent oblivion from blurring the past. Although forgetting is an inherent quality of our existence, it is at the same time a permanent source of regret. The discussion has focused primarily on the ability of the image to satisfy our permanent yearning to remember. Cherchi Usai puts it this way:

"(...) the marker of the moving images fabricates memories or visions of what is to come in the cherished belief that they will exist forever in an eternal present of the spectator's will. Exposing the spectator to a single viewing of that moving image is enough to reveal the futility of such ambition."

(as quoted in Castelló, 2013, pag.3.)

In the style of the magic act in psychoanalytic theory, the image would have a certain placebo character by mitigating our tendency to produce reminiscences of the past. For at least 50 years cameras have been accessible within the family environment, generating family filmic heritages that have taken decades to be valued beyond the anecdotal. What we could call the domestication of the camera has taken a radical turn in recent years. The digital format has completely changed our relationship with the image. For the support is no longer tangible, therefore the fixation of the image as an event observable by our eyes is no longer possible. This reality leads us to question the relevance, but not the certainty or falsity, of the academic developments that think about the relationship between memory and image, but do not take the risk of investigating the technological revolutions that are occurring while we take the time to think.

4.2 The Audiovisual Embodied

Talking about mind, consciousness and technology is a rough road. But it is a requirement to take certain positions. Andy Clark asks himself; can the dolphin mind be similar to that of man? Well, no, he answers, as the mind is essentially embodied in the body. Human cognition, says the author, is an orchestration of technical competence and the technological environment. Broader structures, such as institutions and technological devices, lead the way and modify the nature of individual reason (Clark, 1998, p. 32-52).

The audiovisual is embodied in two ways, from the camera and from the image. Let us begin with the camera.

To observe the world is in reality to respond visually to it, says Reuben Osborn (1969), for we are not apart from the world, but we are part of it (p.150). That is why the audiovisual is a form of knowledge. As Augusto Boal states in relation to the Theater of the Oppressed, this can and should be a means to transform society (Boal, 1992, p.XXXi). Barbara Harrison (1996) expresses a similar view, for whom the camera is not a lens through which we observe the world, but rather a tool with which we act upon it. The visual representations that surround us in everyday life, says Harrison, should be understood as actively shaping the world as it should be, rather than simply reflecting it as it is (p.80).

Is the camera an extension of the eyes or the arm? Well we should define who we are talking about. If we are talking about the one who holds the camera, it is actually an extension of the arm. That is why I propose to understand the participation of cellular cameras in today's protests as protesting cameras, devices that effectively protest hand in hand with human bodies. On the other hand, today's spectator identifies with the camera-eye. Fulfilling one of Dziga Vertov's dreams, today it is entirely appropriate to speak of the man-camera. Of a device that reacts like the human eye, which makes possible the identification of the spectator with the camera-eye, or if you will, with the point of view of the creator.

Any strategy that overlooks the materialities of human existence is insufficient, says Clarke, especially now that humans and various technologies are reshaping the world from the inside out (p. xxxv). The embodied camera entails both the extension of the human body, or ascribing corporeal adjectives to the camera as an action camera, and identification with the camera. Identification with the camera, says Le Grice, includes identification with the mechanism of the device, which is not the same as identification through the camera with the agency that controls it (p.269). Which brings us to the second point, the embodiment of the image.

To speak of the embodiment of the image assumes that there is a relationship between the thing filmed and the system through which the filming occurs. In short, it is to state that the construction of reality is invariably linked to the method by which it is observed. The digital medium allows both the recording and the editing process to occur in a similar way to the way our flow of thought works. There is a physical aspect of thought, thought has a behavior, says Eugenio Barba, a way of moving, changing direction and jumping. What characterizes creative thought is precisely its flow by jumps, through a sudden disorientation that forces it to reorganize itself in a new way, abandoning the rectilinear and univocal (p. 138-140). We can find the same idea in the shamanic cinema of Raul Ruiz.

As a *Boundary Event*, video has allowed the construction of narratives that seek to assimilate, not imitate, the flow of thought. These videos do not resort to the imposition of the viewer's identification with the character. The videos I refer to identify the viewer with the recording mechanism and with the montage procedure. In this process, there is no need for a heroic figure to bring the narrative to a climax, but rather to seek what Boal sought in the Theater of the Oppressed; that the spectator, not the character, adopt the heroic attitude (Boal, p. 28).

For Durham, we are not simply surrounded by historically significant objects of applied intelligence, but we are also such artifacts (p. 52). Our relationship to such artifacts mutates as we adapt to them, determine a type of relationship, and the apparatus evolves. The possibilities of representation of the apparatus are determined by the apparatus itself, as well as by the political, economic and social context in which it is inserted. The videos that interest me strive to construct new social meanings, making use of the techniques of experimental cinema. Following Le Grice, in the process of resisting and negating existing constructions of meaning, a work determines new forms and resolves itself into new meanings (p.282). In the same way, the videos I am interested in deny a type of audiovisual language at the same time that they deny the institutional Chilean national narrative.

4.3 Experimental Cinema

(...) I try to say that the cinema that interests me is always a journey into different worlds (...). This immense game that we call history can also become a territory open to shamanic filmmakers.

(Ruiz, 2000, p. 122)

Let us return to Vertov. The Soviet filmmaker was an enthusiast of technological advances in the audiovisual world. In his career he explored the audiovisual language far from

theatrical dramas, he rejected the submission of the machine to the human eye and sought to find a dynamic where one could think through cinematographic activity. Film drama and religion are lethal weapons in the hands of the capitalists, Vertov wrote in 1920. Modern art-drama, says the author, is a vestige of the past; It is an attempt to put our revolutionary reality into reactionary forms! (as quoted in Le Grice, p. 83). Vertov's cine-eye never considered the camera as a mere observational device, but assumed it as a technological advance whose mechanism allows us to expand our capacity for perception.

French filmmaker Robert Bresson (1975) complemented his work as a director with a disciplined diary where he defined the implicit intentions of his work. He differentiated his works from what he identified as cinema-theater; "Two types of film: those that employ the resources of the theater (actors, direction, etc.) and use the camera in order to reproduce; those that employ the resources of cinematography and use the camera to create" (p. 2). Bresson calls to create a film not with the intention of illustrating a thesis, but to discover the matter that forms his characters, a content that can be captured neither by poetry, nor philosophy, nor drama (p. 20). Cinema for audiovisual filmmakers alike to Bresson, is a possibility to connect man with the world through a medium other than language (Joret, 2019, pag. 127). What is relevant then would not be what he enunciates, but what remains in question. In Bresson's (1975) words, "the thing that matters is not what they show me but what they hide from me and, above all, what they do not suspect is in them" (p. 2).

To identify cinema in terms of theatrical norms would follow the same confusing path as identifying photography with painting (Gilloch, p. 144). Numbing technological progress to antiquated forms that have already found their purpose for conservative objectives has little to offer for social transformation - social movements being fundamental actors of the latter -. For Le Grice, making use of new technologies to explore new languages generates new standards for understanding and experiencing reality, ideologically it can be seen as a process of dislodging the union of social (state or economic) power and conventional patterns of representation (p. 423). This is why Walter Benjamin advocates the union of politics and art. For the author, the creative ambitions and political responsibilities of creators are inseparable (Gilloch, p. 144).

When the filmmaker Raul Ruiz died, a crowd took to the streets of Santiago to celebrate his memory, I was among them. At the Museum of Fine Arts a banner read something like; *Raul Ruiz, unusual filmmaker*. I have heard that adjective again to refer to Ruiz. The man died more

than 10 years ago, he made more than 120 films, and there are still works being released that he left unfinished. Only in his early period, which coincides with the period the *Unidad Popular* in Chile, the author made works that could be called politicized. However, in his writings and interviews, Ruiz points out a totally intrinsic relationship between the utopian images that capitalism generates and the narrative logic. The central conflict theory that Hollywood cinema imposes, the subject of the first chapter of his book *Poetics of Cinema* (2002), crushes culture and suffocates cinematic freedom. His metaphor of Mystery and Ministry are very useful for thinking about the language of the videos that interest me.

Ruiz invites us to imagine two teams. On the one hand, Mystery is a team that, like nature, likes to hide. Nature is concealment, and, by way of example, Mystery, takes pleasure in concealing its deep nature behind the showcase of ambiguous charms. Ministry, on the other hand, plays with defined positions, without big surprises and with its defined tactics. While Mystery manufactures objects, Ministry tries to seize them (Ruiz, p. 107-108).

What is relevant in this play on words? Well, the identities of modern states are part of Ministry's game. By recognizing the relationship between cinematic form and its content, or narrative-ideology, we recognize the position that the great ideological discourses assume and their use of the audiovisual medium for their benefit. Mystery is the creative field of that audiovisual language, which, like the videos I'm talking about, seek to transgress social norms, question national identities and construct meanings that are not definitive, but exploratory.

The authors and audiovisual collectives that interest me express themselves in a similar way to Ruiz - with less geniality and mischievousness, of course -. For now, we can close with a quote from the Mexican collective Los Ingravidos³;

Let us summon then the ostensible degradation of television communication. To make inoperative any "original" and "traditional" message through the induction of different semiologies. To dismiss the meaning of its echolalia. To make illegible the preferential content that its peroration would have to communicate.

(Spataro, 2021).

³ <https://vimeo.com/user15819885>

4.4 Fragmented Reality. The montage

Thesis33: Any contingency can be appropriated, organized and reformulated as a multinaturalist circumstance.

(Colectivo Los Ingravidos, 2021)

Bela Balazs, Hungarian film critic, affirmed that in cinema man has become human again. Since Guttemberg, he says, men have become concepts. Thanks to the cinema they have regained their faces, but much of the physiognomic richness of before we became the written word has been lost. Cinema has made man visible again (as quoted in Castelló, 2013, p.9). It is worth asking ourselves, in what way it has made him visible.

Walter Benjamin's particularity was to recognize that the technical character demanded by the new photographic technology would completely affect the future of art. Cinema, unlike the other arts, came to reconstruct reality from a technical maneuver, giving rise to a reality fragmented and recomposed in the process of montage. The apparatus intervenes in double measure, since it executes the creation of the image as well as its projection. The audiovisual apparatus devours, digests and spits out, if we may use the analogy. This operativity that Benjamin observes, I think is the visibility that cinema brought to mankind. The audiovisual image did not come to draw back the veil, but constituted itself as a tool that took us inside the veil itself. This is the scientific quality of cinema, developed in its beginnings in experiments like those of Eadweard J. Muybridge. Benjamin was acute in observing that there was an irreducible distance between reality and image, produced by the procedure of montage. In the newest audiovisual expressions, the past is not a static fact, nor is it a univocal datum; on the contrary, the past is endowed with all that humanity that Bela Balazs saw in the audiovisual; it is contradictory, actual and deeply affective. For Benjamin, the singularity of the event resists disappearing in the image, the event is not completely abandoned in the media image (as quoted in Cifuentes, 2004, p. 88). Therefore, montage is an exercise where the present experiments with potential pasts, not with a past. This exercise affects both temporal directions, it also creates a feedback in the direction of the present that enriches historical interpretations.

The ways of looking at images have been changing with technological advances. John Berger develops this idea in his work *Modes of Seeing* (2000). For the author, the cinematographic changes the subject-object articulation, destroying the original uniqueness of the work and thus producing a multiplicity of meanings that are projected in various directions (pp. 26-27). The true message of the work is no longer a truth about our history, to quote Eugenio Barba, the

true message is the unplanned, unprogrammed result of a journey in a conscious darkness (p. 66).

The above reminds me of Deleuze's rhizome. For the author, any point of the rhizome can be another, the structure is not defined by a set of points of positions with univocal relations. One of the most important characteristics of the rhizome, says Deleuze, is perhaps that of always having multiple entries (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 13-25). There is a clear influence of the digital in Deleuze's conceptualization. The digital is also an environment where we can access from any point and jump to any point in the chain without temporal difference.

Cinematographically the above echoes Ruiz's idea of shamanic cinema. According to Ruiz, an ordinary narrative film provides potential filmic sequences, which in the eagerness to build a narrative around a central conflict, disperse and fade away. A shamanic film, on the contrary, will appear more like a minefield, which, when exploding, provokes chain reactions within those filmic sequences, allowing the production of new events. These sequences make us believe that we remember events that we have not lived, while our own memories are connected to these fabricated memories (Ruiz, p. 91-93).

By linking contemporary contentious events with the records of the past, the audiovisual works I bring to the table take ownership of the past by assuming an active agency with respect to the present and raising their political voice in the civil-political arena. It is precisely the temporal linearity proposed by institutionality with which these videos conflict. Instead, they assume a temporality similar to that of Retributive Justice, recognizing that processes are dynamic, moving forward and backward in space and time, in a circular time frame that opens the possibility for setbacks and a variety of experiences (de Haan & Destrooper, 2021, p. 221). The processes of forgetting and remembering, says Elizabeth Jelin (2002), do not respond simply and linearly to the passage of chronological time (p. 43).

While in the street we are witnesses of a generalized violence, the image also protests seeking to fight back with alternative interpretations to those proposed by the political actors and the traditional media. It is in this battle where memory, as an image, assumes a historical and active meaning, since it is used to problematize the present.

4.5 Experimental Practice in the Digital Era

The progressive writer, as pioneer and exponent of 'technical innovation', understands that modern conditions require the demise both of established aesthetic forms (the novel, poem, novella, play, etc.) and of traditional distinctions between genres, writers and readers, performers and audience.
(Gilloch, 2002, p. 146)

The car modifies the road, says Durham (p.104). The physical nature of the medium has been decisive in exploring the possibilities of the cinematic, transforming the audiovisual experience and language.

In the 19th century, photographic and mechanical technology enabled rapid sequential recording of complete images in the form of film. Over time, the technology evolved to continuous magnetic recording in the form of video, characterized by a rotating scan and a linear sequence of images. With the emergence of computer and microprocessor technologies, image recording technology has become digital, where images are recorded as discrete data elements and their sequence is a matter of specific address within the context of RAM. Digital technology is a sophisticated form of embodiment of intellect that allows the manipulation of image data in a more fundamental way. By storing data independently of its recording sequence, digital applications in videos open up new possibilities in terms of philosophical and artistic implications.

In narrative, the real problem lies not in the linearity of presentation or perception, but in the ideology hidden behind the "unproblematic" linearity. The causal sequence presented in the dominant culture is authoritative and although the content may be transgressive, the form looks to the audience towards a unifying consequence that integrates the subject within the narrative. Computer technology, which is based on RAM, allows for nonlinearity in accessing and assembling sequences, although this does not imply that the end result is nonlinear (Le Grice, p.351-353, 421-432).

Authors of the stature of Andrei Tarkovsky are rather more conservative when it comes to conceiving the relationship between time and image. For the author, the force, precision and

severity with which cinema is capable of reproducing the perception of events immersed in time cannot be compared to any other art, and he goes so far as to consider "pretentious" the desires of the current "poetic cinema" to distance itself from the realism of time (p. 88-90). I consider this pretentiousness necessary when what is sought is to transgress the normative limits of a practice, in terms of form, in order to construct new meanings. Normative limits not only subdue practice, but also reveal the extent to which cultures are products of the ongoing struggle between official and unofficial narratives (Minh-ha, p. 45).

I want to end this section by naming certain features that Le Grice identifies as important in computer-based work. First, the input is analyzed and transformed into a more abstract form, in the form of digital pulses, resulting in the loss of any similarity between the original input and its computer representation. Second, in order for the output to be readable by humans, it is necessary to synthesize the stored data into an analog form or language. The success of computer work depends on the software used, since it specifies the form, interaction, manipulation and transformation of the data. The computer is not a single-purpose machine, but its purpose changes in relation to the program used. Third, the information storage system is fundamentally nonlinear, and is usually expressed as RAM. Fourth, interactivity is an important feature of the computer, as it allows the user to influence the particular way in which a program emerges through input (Le Grice, p.446).

Experimental video presents a variety of techniques that allow creators to explore new forms of visual and sound expression:

Still Motion: A sequence of unrelated images that are captured frame by frame to create animation.

Loop: A visual or sound fragment that is repeated in a hypnotic and systematic way.

Text: Technique in which text is used as an object or image in experimental video, acquiring new properties such as color, movement or personality.

Found Footage: Technique in which archive images are used but are given an order and meaning different from the original.

Freeze: Technique that consists of temporarily stopping a frame in a video.

Slow motion: Technique that consists of reproducing images in slow motion.

Acceleration: Technique that consists of reproducing images at a higher speed than normal.

V. The Memory of an Image

5.1 Memory

We can speak of collective memory when we evoke an event that occupies a place in the life of our group and that we have brought to memory, that we make it present at the moment when we remember it from the point of view of that group.
(Halbwachs, 2005, p.36)

Tzvetan Todorov (2000) reflects how deeply disconcerting it is to equate the capacity of computers to conserve information with human memory. The latter would be characterized precisely by selection (Todorov, p. 19). The dictatorial past of our Latin America has resulted in forced forgetfulness, either by discomfort or by force. But a silent society is not a healthy society, but a silenced society. In social movements, by questioning the socio-political status quo, the ideas of society that we have as a social group are put into play. Continuity between the past and the present is the main function of memory. By allowing knowledge from the past to be familiar and recognizable, it gives it permanence (Blondel, 1928, p. 138). But this process is not free of conflicts, on the contrary, memory is an active and constantly reworking process, full of tensions (Feld & Stites Mor, 2009, p. 262).

For the Greeks, memory was more than a psychological function. Mnemosýne, goddess of memory, allowed things from the past to become part of thought and to become memories. While Léthe, the daughter of Éris, the discord, was the goddess of forgetfulness. The river Leteo in hell made the souls of the departed forget their past. The Muses, daughters of Memory, recovered what was subtracted from oblivion or from the river of oblivion. For the Greeks, oblivion is seen as a definitive death closer to non-being than to having been. Memory is important because it broadens the field of our consciousness and helps us to become freer and to enrich the field of freedom. For the Greeks, the worst kind of death was oblivion (Bauzá, 2018).

After being inaugurated as an art by the Greeks, memory remained as a form of knowledge, as a discipline that treasured rhetoric, since it was the basis, to a large extent, of oratory and the art of persuasion. It was able to maintain itself and was nourished and clothed in new forms with the advent of writing and technological advances, such as the printing press (Mendoza, 2005, p. 4). When the methodological bases of history as a science were established in the middle of the 10th century AD, the past and history were conceived as synonyms. The study

of history, says Pfoh, with Europe as the center of Western development, had in essence the same principles as the study of nature; that is, the immutable historical facts lay "buried" in the past, waiting to be discovered by the historian (Pfoh, 2010, p. 689).

Maurice Halbwachs (1877-1945) was a pioneer in reflecting on memory in its cultural context, grounding it in the field of social relations, distancing it from the biological realm (Green, 2004, p. 37). For the author, collective memory is a living tissue that flows into the present. He suggested that the need for an affective community ensured that individuals remembered mainly those memories that were in harmony with those of others. Thus, the memories of the individual are merged and submerged within group or collective memory (ibid, p. 38). Collective memory, in Halbwachs' conceptualization, is a collective reconstruction from elements of the past, whether they are products of the customs of a current of thought or of a culture (Guarini, p.115). Here the social character lies in the context that surrounds the phenomenon of evoking a memory. That is to say, the memory recreated by photographs of the First World War in a classroom in Lima is not the same as the one recreated in a discussion among young Englishmen. Memory borrows the language and traditions of a given society (ibid.). It can be concluded, then, that every cultural object produced in a given era carries the weight of the specific social memory of that time. In the same way, each individual memory is a point of view on the collective memory (Halbwachs, p. 50).

We see that Halbwachs unravels a theoretical framework that relates the individual to the collective, both in memory and identity. From the moment we are part of the same group and think in common in certain aspects, we are able to identify with it and confuse our past with theirs (ibid. p.29). As a consequence, the lines that separate individual memory and collective memory blur, walking one together to the other.

Jan Assmann (1995) sought to go further by combining memory, culture and society within his idea of cultural memory. For this author, the social group bases its consciousness of unity and specificity on the knowledge rooted in cultural memory, and from this place derives formative and normative impulses that allow it to reproduce its identity. This process Assmann calls it concretization of identity, and leads him to conclude that objectified culture has the structure of memory (Assmann & Czaplicka, p. 128-129). Halbwachs, says Assmann, probably thought that once living communication crystallized in the forms of objectified culture - symbols, images or videos - the group relation and the contemporary reference are lost and, therefore, the character of this knowledge as a collective of memories disappears as well. When, in fact,

there is a close connection with the groups and their identity that is similar to that found in the case of everyday memory (ibid., p. 130).

To remove the past is to open a new future. For Elizabeth Jelin (2002), when memory, truth and justice sit at the same table, it is not only the sense of the past that is being fought for, but also for justice in the present, and, consequently, for another possible future (p. 48). Todorov differentiates between what he calls literal memory and exemplary memory. While literal memory obfuscates the possibility of change, turning in on itself without providing resources to mobilize the social group, exemplary memory turns the past into a principle of action for the present. While literal memory carries risks, says Todorov, exemplary memory is potentially liberating. Literal memory subjugates the present to the past, turning it into an old, insurmountable and non-transferable event. Exemplary memory, on the other hand, without denying the singularity of the event itself, is used as one manifestation among others of a more general category, serving as a model for understanding new situations, with different agents (Todorov, p. 30 - 31).

Todorov raises something that for my analysis is extremely relevant, since exemplary memory is not conceived as a continuous phenomenon, it does not require proximity, but functions on the basis of analogy. From this, we can relate events that appear to be discontinuous - such as the dictatorial period in Chile, the subsequent democratization process and the social protests of 2019. In the same vein, Jelin, recalling Paul Ricoeur, poses the paradox of the immutability of the past versus the uncertainty of the future. What can change, says the author, is the meaning of the past, subject to reinterpretations anchored in the intentionality and expectations towards that future (p. 39). Here the state actors play a fundamental role, since in their hands lies the construction of an official history, that history that we learn in school, that is celebrated in official events and that survives in monuments. In this sense, certain agents hold a privileged position vis-à-vis the past (ibid., p. 40).

Other memories, not the official ones, take refuge in the domestic. In reduced collective spaces, in trenches, so to speak. They may remain silenced for years, but we have learned that generational change comes equipped with a megaphone. This is why Jelin asserts that if the state does not develop official and legitimate institutionalized channels that openly acknowledge past events of state violence and repression, the struggle over truth and appropriate memories unfolds in the societal arena (p. 61).

The imposition of social oblivion can result in the displacement of collective memory, replacing the diverse and broad with the single thought of societies and nations with tyrannical

dominions (Mendoza, p. 18). However, memory does not let itself vanish easily and often returns from its exile and clandestinity to be named again. Language is the tool that allows this resurrection, naming that which has been absent (Calveiro, 2002). Memory is fundamental for the identity of a society, since without it, there is no past or origin, and without these elements, society cannot recognize itself and is in trouble (Mendoza, p. 19).

According to Fernández Christlieb (1994), identity is understood as the recognition of oneself through the vicissitudes of life, and this occurs because the collectivity needs continuity to know that it is the subject of previous experiences and also that it is the subject of itself (p. 99-100). For his part, Spaggiari (2004) emphasizes that at the collective level, identity has multiple meanings and uses, including the construction of a sense of belonging and individual identity, the collective representation of identities and the legitimization of territory appropriation practices (p. 10). There cannot be a collective cultural identity without shared memories or a sense of continuity on the part of those who feel they belong to that community.

Paulo Freire, the Brazilian educator and philosopher, had a critical perspective on the use of technology and media in society. He believed that electronically mediated culture played an important role in the formation of identities and that the production of knowledge was constantly changing in the era of computer-based technologies (Giroux, 2000, p. 153). Despite this, he does not criticize the media *per se*; "it is not the media themselves that I criticize, but the way they are used" (Freire, 1972, p. 136). The advance of time in history, politics and culture necessarily entails the creation of new processes of interpretation of the past, resulting in revisions, changes in narratives and new conflicts. Memories of the recent political past, says Jelin, are the battlegrounds where those who seek social recognition and legitimization of their narratives of the past (p. 49). This battlefield is irremediably traversed by technology and all those devices that participate in the social movement by observing, capturing, interpreting and transforming.

5.2 Memory and Image

We cannot think of collective memory in the absence of some means of communication. The oral and the written did theirs for millennia, now it is the image where most of the memories are built. I have argued that the camera participates and transforms the reality it represents. The image is fundamentally a creator of meaning.

As a medium of communication, the image is expression, interpretation and memory of experiences (Fernandez Christlieb, 1991, p. 56). Bringing back Durham, media are our infrastructures, the environments and materials through which we operate and exist (p. 15). Audiovisual images have come to modify our existence, endowing the past with a medium to store and process its presence. Both the Vietnam war and the Gulf war were televised, we can imagine how this has altered the way in which those conflicts have been collectively remembered through the filter of television.

The new digital audiovisual forms have allowed experiences that previously would have been ephemeral to be inscribed in time. But the matter does not end with the recording - that would mean limiting ourselves to talking about the camera -, but also involves the construction of narratives by the hand of editing. The characteristics that I have mentioned that define digital video affect the way in which memory is constructed, constituting a vast field of data and at the same time defining their qualities and their possible relationships.

The narratives that emerge from the digital audiovisual sphere differ in the way in which other media, even other audiovisual supports, have provided continuity between the past and the present. These narratives are constructed with a different materiality, in a different process, in a new interface, all these characteristics that determine the emergence of a new way of constructing social discourses. In short, each medium implies a particular communication channel whose characteristics will determine not only the what, but also the how. Adele Clarke, speaking of Foucault, argues that a discourse not only establishes the limits of what can be said, but also operates as a tool to empower the discourses of certain agents, while disempowering that of others (p. 160).

VI. Myself, the others and us

6.1 The Social

The struggle for recognition and inclusion is and has been the struggle to be represented - to have one's identity, ethnicity, color recognized for the purpose of being part of the political community (Tormey, 2009, p.93).

Better dead than invisible goes the saying. Returning to Halbwachs' position, we cannot think of memory as a psychological phenomenon that occurs behind the back of the social group. Social memory and individual memory are more like two sides of the same coin. It is in function of this process that identity is constructed. But as with memory, it is not fruitful to imagine an individual identity and another identity that fulfills a function on the social plane. Social identity is not only an extension of individual identity, but is part of a continuous and dialogical process in which identity as a whole is recognized and accepted in the reflection provided by the social. As happens with the eye in front of the mirror, we are because we see ourselves in the eyes of others.

The videos that interest me show that there is no memory without community. Community is an abstract concept that often goes unnoticed, but it takes shape through the collective memories that are expressed. Young people are part of this community and play a fundamental role in its construction, since, by narrating themselves, they also contribute to narrating the community. The construction of a claim by young people towards the community is a way of continuing to narrate it, to pose an explanation of the past, which is also an opinion about the present and puts the community under tension (Silva, 2015 p. 10).

The writer Julio Cortázar (1914 - 1984) said in 1980 that in Latin America there was a desire for identity, but that this was a desire that had not been achieved. Underlining his optimism, he said that every attempt of liberation was an impulse towards identity (Romero, 2019, 16m45s). Social movements, have been the form of unofficial politics - that is, forms of politics not mediated by electoral or representative devices (Tormey, 2009, p. 95) - where the struggle for identity has taken center stage. During social movements, collective memory is challenged by creating instances where alternative narratives, often repressed, emerge and manifest themselves in a collective context. In this sense, I am drawing a bridge between memory and social reconciliation, a bridge traversed by the idea of identity. This leads me to characterize social movements as fertile spaces for social reconciliation.

If we were to represent identity as a Moebius Tape - in the Lacanian style - it would not be so easy to determine which components are unique to individuals and which are social, both of which are part of the counterpart. Let us analyse what we mean by social identity and how it is articulated with memory and national identity. The concept of identity, say Rottenbacher & Espinosa (2010), is related to the perception of those central features that are considered by the person as the core of his or her identity. Thus, identity is understood as something multiple, made up of many elements, perceived by each individual as close or distant to the centrality of his or her own self-definition. Jorge Larraín, on the other hand, defines social identity as a narrative discourse interactively constructed through culture (Aranguiz Pinto, 2007). It is in culture where we find the cultural baggage, what we could call the symbolic apparatus, Lacan's *Other*, which provides the symbolic resources for the construction of heterogeneous narratives. The fact that we understand identity as narratives that are constructed, implies that we identify them as highly divergent dynamic processes among different groups within the same society. Finally, both in terms of group identity and national identity, collectivity implies a sense of belonging which, in essence, is a narrative that is projected over time. Identification and social recognition allow this narrative to be expanded and sustained over generations.

The description of social identity just presented contains the germ of conflict, insofar as hegemonic discourses enter into tension with non-hegemonic cultural representations. For the mentioned Jorge Larraín, the problem arises when identity is thought of as a finished fact, as an already established set of common experiences and shared fundamental values, which was constituted in the past, as an immutable essence, once and for all (2001, p.143). Social movements are one of the platforms where identities manifest themselves and come into conflict with those more essentialist narratives. As such, we can identify social movements, and with it the videos produced in their context, with what Ivan Illich calls vernacular practices. These are practices that help the autonomy of the community from both the market and the state, improving subsistence and reducing dependence. Subsistence is thought of by Illich in a broad sense, encompassing both the autonomous relationship with the material means of survival and the complex dialogue between the individual and the collective. According to Snowdon, to say that vernacular practices are subsistence-oriented is to affirm that they are inherently ethical and political (Snowdon, p. 407-408).

6.2 The National

Thesis30: History is a grave for the eye. An overdetermination for the ear.
(Colectivo Los Ingravidos, 2021)

Benedict Anderson defines the nation as a politically imagined, inherently limited and sovereign community. For Anderson the essence of a nation is that all individuals have many things in common and have forgotten many things (Anderson, 1993, as quoted in Villa Gómez & Barrera, p. 156). Forgetting is an essential part of national memory, and therefore, of that national identity that is constructed from the spheres of power. In certain countries, maybe in all of them, the mere fact of remembering is a political act, since different social circles have constructed a different version of their recent history. Memory is thus fractured and reflected through the officially sanctioned group narratives of each social circle, preventing the development of a unified collective memory (Takševa, 2018, p. 5).

National identity is essentially a vertical exercise. As an identity it offers the meanings necessary to recognize ourselves in a position within the community, constructed from those narratives of heroes and great moments. It is vertical in that it favors the concentration of power in agents who have greater control over what the community *is*. As Jelin says, these are actors who struggle for power, who legitimize their position in privileged links with the past, affirming its continuity or its rupture. It would be the state agents who would have the central weight in establishing and elaborating the official memory (p. 48).

Power groups provide the reference points for collective memories - note that we speak in the plural, there is no singular collective memory -. They resort to social oblivion to maintain their privileged position and to show themselves as the fittest. This oblivion is fabricated with different materials and procedures, and is influenced by power, which determines what to forget and what to remember. Social forgetting prevents the evocation or expression of significant events that were once important to a society, but their communication is blocked or prohibited. Power groups often present themselves as heirs to a particular version of the past and argue that one should not look to the past, but to the future. However, this can be uncomfortable for them and can lead to the denial of memory. In short, social forgetting is a tool used by power groups to impose their vision and control the memory of a society (Mendoza, p. 9 - 11). By power I mean the power of some to determine the behavior of other people. When Foucault says that in order to resist power one must doubt the rationality of the

game (Foucault, 2000, p.324), I think that is exactly what the videos I present do; they question the national identity.

The visual imaginary of the nation arises from the centralized state. In the 2019 Chilean protests, for example, it was the flag of the Mapuche⁴ identity that was raised, and the flag of the Chilean state that was burned. Exercising control over national memory implies having power over those means that allow the circulation of meanings. The image being one of them. In this sense, the visual is one of the fundamental means that sustains the meanings of national identity. The censorship of memories is also the censorship of a visual imaginary and of the identities that are constructed from them. Therefore, power also permeates the image, it is as involved in the meanings constructed as in the technologies used for this purpose.

The national heroes move in a national imaginary that moves in a single direction and without major shocks. In audiovisual terms, the visual national memory comes fundamentally from the TV. It was the TV that amplified the message with enough force to connect people and institutions through space and time. TV behaves like Durham's infrastructures, it does not function as a passive vessel for content, but rather transforms them (Durham, p. 25-31). But as is often the case, software's outlasts hardware's. Technologies have fallen into disuse, but images remain.

Societies that omit interpretations of their past are less rich, experientially and communicatively speaking. There is no exchange of visions and what moves from the spheres of power is information, not communications (Mendoza, p.11). The possibility of enjoying social recognition, with its capacity to confirm the version of the self and of the world, is reduced (Green, p. 39). These societies, such as the Chilean one, respond well to the following phrase of Perrot; "what is not told does not exist (...) Tyrants know this very well and that is why they erase the traces of those whom they try to reduce to nothing" (Perrot, 2002, p. 61). Like Le Grice, I think technological innovations are crucial, but my concern is not the technology itself, but the changes in the form, language, concept and meaning of video that result from it. Through the videos I reference, individuals explore, express and negotiate their

⁴ The Mapuche people are one of the many original peoples of what we know today as Chile. Like the Spartans, the Mapuches built their identity from the fight and protection of their territory. Let us consider the following; Mauche's were the only Chilean people that resisted the Spanish conquest. Once Chile became independent, it would take more than 60 years to conquer Mapuche's territory. To this day, Mapuches continue to fight against state authority.

relationship to the collective and thus redefine the values, practices and symbols of the community itself (Snowdon, 413).

6.3 Videos and protest

Single-use cameras, disposable cameras, suicide cameras. I wanted to take those images and represent some aspect of image processing for military or civilian purposes.
(Farocki, 2013, p. 118).

I have already named crucial moments in the romance of video and society. Key was the emergence of domestic cameras. Fundamental was the spread of television. Today we talk about the cellular camera. Tomorrow we will talk about the landing of Artificial Intelligence. I speak in this work of deconstruction. I argue with Deleuze's ideas but fundamentally I have in my mind an image; a lego. The structure must not fall but be reduced. The senses given to the past are already in the veins of what was, or as Jelin says, the controversies over the senses of the past begin with the conflicting event itself (p. 44). The videos I am talking about review and re-signify the discourses, putting them in relation is how they deconstruct.

In the spirit of defining by exclusion, these are not documentary videos, nor are they civic journalism. Although they include images from those records, they respond better to what Raul Ruiz understood as techniques of cultural resistance; a form of non-verbal language whose only way to formalize and elevate itself to an ideological level is through film (Lihn, 1970). Memory is itself a Ministry, as opposed to the named Mystery, whose works have the capacity to reorganize the world according to its own perceptions. Memory was once part of the Mystery team, before becoming the Ministry of Memory (Ruiz, p. 110-112).

The visual narratives that interest me are linked to what Peter Snowdon calls vernacular videos. In the context of the Arab revolutions, vernacular videos constituted the first time that a people have taken into their own hands the task of filming their attempts to overthrow an oppressive order. For Snowdon, what is relevant is the "affective energy they gather and transmit as they travel through the complex online and offline ecosystems that these events have forged across the region" (Snowdon, p. 401- 402).

The landing of digital cameras within social movements makes that protesting community appear. The image of protest is an active participant, it jumps and moves with the bodies that

also protest. In this sense the image is embodied as part of the same protesting collectivity. They are part of that "people" that Snowden says exists only as a projected result of his own statement. It is the collective that by asserting that people want something creates the sense that there is a social actor by that name (Snowdon, p. 404). The videos thus perpetuate the space of appearance for politics to appear, a space where we look like each other. The camera, like other bodies, when it appears crosses the line by politicizing virtual spaces that are not as constrained as public squares (Butler, 2011).

Videos have been one of the latest vehicles to establish a different relationship with collective memory. The immediacy makes Le Grice's idea more pertinent, when he says that films are real interactions of the authors with the world, creating consciousnesses that branch out into the world (Le Grice, p.51). The videos that interest me in this work, just as Boal's Forum Theater identifies form with content, seek to stimulate the desire to change the world, to change the collective memory (Boal, p. 28).

The collective Los Ingravidos, from Mexico, speaks directly of political cinema, understanding it as the practice of a cinema that juxtaposes the old and the new in an aberrant trance, producing collective *audiovisions* of the missing people (Colectivo Los Ingravidos, 2021). That trance refers to the experimental aspect of the process. They are videos that relate to experimental cinema in their eagerness to liberate sound, rhythm and image from traditional structures, to listen to the origins of cinema and to recognize the device as creator. In this exploration it results in videos that emerge naturally as something closer to a manifestation of their thoughts and emotions (Experimental Film Society, 2017, p. 12, 35).

New political films, Farocki says, obviously have to come from the web (p. 284). The videos I am interested in fall into this group imagined by the filmmaker. They deconstruct collective memory by seeking to transform it. The anti-monument trend of the outburst in Chile can be observed in different monuments in cities across the country with skulls that were placed on various statues symbolizing the destruction of the colonizers, images mostly posted and viralized on social networks (Pinto, 2020, p. 33). Already in 1995, at the New Latin American Film Festival, the authors recognized the video and the way it was used by non-governmental organizations of community character, where a greater attempt of democratic and participatory use of audiovisual communication was perceived. They recognize that a good part of the recent history of our people is being recorded on video, instead of the traditional audiovisual media (Gomez, 1993, p.1-2).

Ignacio Aliaga calls this type of video, community video. He identifies it as a subgenre of documentary video that has as one of its main characteristics the testimonial and horizontal communication, where what is privileged is the process of production and distribution, opening the debate and becoming a dynamizer of the group. In this type of video, the group participates in the content and in the subsequent debate, emphasizing the collective practice and the intention of positioning itself differently from television and the official media (Aliaga, 1996, p.104). We can understand these videos as "tools for coexistence", that is, as alternatives to the tools of domination, promoting learning, sociability, community, and autonomous and creative relationships between people and their environment. They create a more democratic society, in which individuals can communicate, debate and participate freely in cultural and political life (Illich, 1973, p. 27).

VII. Chilean Nationality or Nationalized Chile?

7.1 Brief National History

The imaginary that invades the social movements in Chile is the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet.⁵ The violence of that period has been marked as a black stain that in one way or another, distances the whole community. The video *Guerra* that I will analyse in section IX and X, is constructed from images and speeches of Pinochet, as well as from a speech of Sebastián Pinera in the 90' and another from the first days of the social outburst of 2019, in addition to domestic records of police repression in 2019. In the following I focus on the period that preceded Pinochet, as this is part of the imaginary that surrounds the silences that accompanied the subsequent periods.

The case of Chile, like most Latin American countries, is that of a nation whose imaginary was built on the heroes of independence. Later, the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet would take this imaginary to symbolically justify his regime. The *cueca*, for example, the emblematic national dance, was established as such by means of a decree law in 1979. Its inclusion in the portfolio of national symbols responds to an ideological purpose of intervening in culture

⁵ This is to some extent a simplification. The memory of the Spanish conquest is also present, as well as the *cuestión social* of the late 20th century and the more contemporaneous Feminist Movement. Still, it is worth highlighting the figure of Pinochet, since there is no other character as such in the modern history of Chile.

through institutional reinforcement (Cuevas, 2009, p. 137). In Pinochet's period, it was an institutional initiative to promote a homogenized national identity, invoking an identity and patriotic discourse that denies the real contradictions of a society in which one part of the population feels excluded by the other (Martin-Baro, 1998, as quoted in Villa Gómez & Barrera, p. 157). Superficially, social cohesion is not questioned, fitting the sociohistorical meanings constructed in the veil of national memory.

Somehow in Chile communism-anticommunism would be older than communism, says historian Joaquin Fernandois (1998, pag. 152). This conflict has been highly violent and is at the base of the police oppression of the social outbreak of 2019-2020. In the Chile of the 1930s, says Fernandois, a Marxist subculture had been installed in Chilean politics, which had enormous regional, trade union and often family ramifications (p. 154). The antagonism between the Communist Party and the Executive power reached its peak in 1948 when the government of Gonzalo Videla sent to Parliament the so-called "Law for the Defense of Democracy", which outlawed the Communist Party and erased from the electoral registers all those identified as its militants (Hunneus, 2008, p.7). Salvador Allende's onslaught on Chilean politics posed a threat to U.S. economic interests. Allende's program planned to transform the Chilean economy to reduce the inequality gap through the nationalization of the most economically important industries, promote agrarian reform and strengthen relations with socialist countries (Carrera Espinosa, 2020, p.83). According to William Blum, who traced the CIA's interventions in Chile, Allende set off the first alarm bells for the U.S. government in 1958, when he lost by only three points in the presidential elections. From this election period on, the U.S. government determined that the results of the next election in 1964 could not be left to chance or democracy (ibid.). The Nixon administration was especially aggressive in trying to stop Allende, suspending almost all aid programs to Chile, including credits from the Exim-Bank, the IDB and the World Bank (Bozza, 2009, p.66). By the 1970 presidential elections, the possibility of Allende being elected president was more real than ever. In a report entitled "Fidelism without Fidel," the U.S. administration fictionalized the Chile that would result if Allende were elected. In essence, says the report, the *Unidad Popular* represents the same kind of uneasy alliance between revolutionary nationalists and orthodox communists that Castro has established in Cuba (Korry, 1998a, p.335).

By 1964, in Chile, political parties with different projects for the country were vying for governability. While worldwide revolutions were gaining strength, Chile turned to the idea of

reformism, with ideas such as the "revolution in freedom" or the "Chilean road to socialism". These ideas can be found in the speech Allende gave in 1971 in the Chilean Congress.

Chile now has in the government a new political force whose social function is to give support not to the traditional ruling class, but to the great majorities. This change in the power structure must necessarily be accompanied by a profound transformation in the socio-economic order which the Parliament is calling to institutionalize.

(Allende, May 21, 1971)

On September 4, 1970 Salvador Allende won the presidential elections. In the following three years he would govern with his formula of socialism through democratic means, with policies aimed at the nationalization of copper and an agrarian reform that would put an end to the latifundia in agriculture (Valdés Urrutia, 2012, p.164). Through the copper nationalization law, in 1971, large mining became State property, and subsequently the State came to control not only more than 400 companies but also prices, banking, credit, interest rates, capital movements, and became the main foreign debtor (ibid.). It is not only Chilean private enterprise that is threatened, the fact of nationalizing copper initiates a direct offensive against U.S. property (Baltra & Maya Zavala, 1970, p.10)

By 1973 the specter of a possible coup d'état lurked. The suspicion became real with the bombing of the *Palacio la Moneda* on September 11, 1973. President Allende, with no other solution than death or confronting the armed forces that had betrayed him, shot himself in the temple after making a public speech on *Radio Magallanes*. Salvador Allende repeats the tragic history of the former president of Chile, Jose Manuel Balmaceda, who in similar conditions committed suicide in 1891. Augusto Pinochet assumed command of the *Junta Militar*, invoking from the beginning the objective of restoring the broken institutionality. The military authoritarianism outlawed Marxist-inspired groups and declared all democratic political parties in recess (Valdés Urrutia, p. 164)

Augusto Pinochet's coup d'état has historically been argued as necessary. In a confidential exchange of telegrams between Commonwealth officials, one ambassador opined that whatever the excesses of the military during the coup, the Allende administration was leading the country into economic ruin, social disorder and political chaos (Perry, 2020, pag.7). The

sense of urgency attributed to September 11 runs along the same lines that justifies police violence in the streets of Santiago in October 2019. Violence responds to the need for order and prosperity. The war announced by Sebastian Piñera in October 2019 was rejected by the population as it resembled the internal war promoted by Pinochet, it was Chileans attacking Chileans. The cancerous germ of the dictatorship returned to shake the country.

''The military coup pitted brother against brother. My brother, a social worker, took refuge and when he wanted to leave the country, his military brother took him off the plane and handed him over to the garrison tied up and pointed a gun at him to be arrested.''

(Testimony of Sofia Romero, in Valdés Urrutia, p.188).

The 1989 plebiscite marked the end of the dictatorship led by Augusto Pinochet and the beginning of a process of transition to democracy. During this event, Chilean citizens had the opportunity to vote for the continuation of Pinochet in power for eight more years or for the convocation of free and democratic elections to elect a new president. The plebiscite took place on October 5, 1989, and was widely attended by citizens. The results indicated that the "No" vote obtained 55.99% of the votes, while the "Yes" vote only obtained 44.01%. This result made it possible to call presidential and parliamentary elections the following year, in which Patricio Aylwin was elected president.

The Pinochet dictatorship had put an end to the welfare state in order to impose the laws of the market in both economic and social relations (Correa, 1985, p.107). But the shadow of the dictatorship did not magically disappear with the return to democracy, but rather Chile was presented as a new and modern country. In Moulán's words, "(...) when the military succeeded in imposing such a systemic transition, within the legal framework of a protected system, a predictable result is generated; the democratic system does not produce dynamics of change, but only tendencies to reproduce the existing, through adaptive changes" (Moulán, 2000, p.25).

7.2 The Latin American Jaguar

After the return of democracy, the metaphor of Chile as the Latin American Jaguar played a significant role in legitimizing the economic model of the military dictatorship. Following the discourse of *The Four Asian Tigers*, the metaphor of the *Latin American Jaguar* alludes to a discourse of Chile as a company of ideas, Chile works, Chile country of solid people and generous wealth (Correa, Figueroa, Jocelyn-Holt, Rolle, Vicuña, 2001, p.352). But

the metaphor hides the country of lies, that Duran Toledo's mentions, where people are faced with the fact that what they could obtain implies very high degrees of personal sacrifice. The famous sacrifice-success dyad. The neoliberal model, says Duran Toledo, with its consequences in terms of labor precariousness, inconsistency in social positions, loss of social protections and privatization of social services, have produced excessive demands to be able to manage their ordinary lives (p. 4).

Although the governments of the Concertación, a leftist political conglomerate, governed during the first 20 years of the transition, they accommodated, or were accommodated it is also argued, so that the economic system would persist. The former Minister of Finance between 1990 and 1994, Alejandro Foxley, stated: "I have no interest or any complex in recognizing that a large part of those tasks in the economic policy of the dictatorship were necessary for what we are doing today" (Del Campo, 1995, p. 114). Parallel to the continuation of the economic program developed during the Pinochet period, the Concertacion governments turned the memory of the dictatorship into a series of dry and incomplete data, leaving out all the wounded memory, the affective traces and memories of a large part of the population (Richard, 1998, p.31).

The following quote correctly summarizes the irony of the transition;

“(...)the critics of the opposition had no alternative but to admit, although initially in silence, the achievements of the regime. To the point that from then on, at the time of analysis, they tended to bow to the logic of the model without prejudice to continue emphasizing the still very high social costs it implied. During the 1988 and 1989 campaigns, they even expressed reluctantly, if not with a hint of cynicism, that the economic model could do much better if they administered it. Thus, they ended up accepting, first the political terms and then the rules of the order imposed by the military dictatorship”

Correa, Figueroa, Jocelyn-Holt, Rolle & Vicuña, p.334

Let us highlight two ideas from the quote; social costs and rules of the imposed order. The second one brought as a consequence the first one. A social order is imposed vertically, with social costs such as the marginalization of narratives that do not conform to the rules of the order. Forgetting, silences and exclusions, says Villa Gómez & Barrera, are fundamental for the generation of social cohesion (pp. 153). They are the agents of power, those who exercise

more control over social imaginaries and narratives of the past, which we could well call rules of the game (ibid., pp. 153-154). In the period of transition to democracy after 17 years of military dictatorship, there was a sector that emerged as the one chosen to carry out the task. As Mendoza says, other dissidents who also resisted, who also fought, who also contributed to the longed-for change, were left out of the subsequent recognition and were sent to oblivion (Mendoza, p. 14).

The slogan of the 2019 social outburst in Chile was; it is not 30 pesos it is 30 years. The phrase refers to the increase in the price of the Metro and the post-Augusto Pinochet period, arguing that protests are not about the former, but about the latter. The phrase makes it clear that the protests were motivated by ongoing social and economic inequality, making visible the extent to which the past continues in the present. The situation had already been warned by authors who read in the Chilean case an unfinished struggle for truth and justice due to the contiguous effects of structural violence, foreseeing that these could fuel new waves of conflict (de Haan & Destrooper, p. 207 - 210).

The videos that interest me critique national identity, its symbols and assumptions. They agree with Cuevas, for whom there is no meaning, no Chileanness, but rather the meaning of Chile is that with which a Chilean simply identifies in an imaginary and projective way (Cuevas, 2009, p. 134-137). In this exercise, they recognize the institutional narrative and contradict it with stories from different sources. The memory that the videos deploy is circular, not rectilinear, it refuses to keep the past in the past and resignifies the events of the past in the light of the present (de Haan & Destrooper, p. 212).

VIII. About us

8.1 Social Movements

Although scholars have begun to address the policy impact of Latin American social movements, we have a limited systematized understanding of the conditions and mechanisms by which social movement protests affect policy outcomes (Silva, p. 27). Whether due to the diversity of social manifestations or the diversity of political systems where social movements flourish, the Latin American situation prior to COVID, the color revolutions in the countries of the former USSR and now the latest Iran, make it evident that social movements

are at a peak, and more interestingly, evolving in the way they are expressed and conceived. Social movements are not static expressions, but are conditioned by the socio-temporal context.

Social change, says Silva, will come from the diffusion of new meanings and praxis that originated in communities far from the centers of economic and political power. From this perspective, social movements are generally defined as loose networks of activists and sympathizers with low levels of organization in which power is horizontal and which favor protest rather than engaging the political establishment (ibid, pp. 28-29). In this sense, the starting point of social movements would be the contrast of a need, deficiency or urban problem that generates collective vindicative action (Sánchez Vidal, 1991, p. 324).

An important, if not fundamental, motivation for the political participation of citizens is the desire to influence public policies. Social movements are a normal form of political participation in democracies along with voting for representatives (Silva, p. 30). As expressions of political participation, they not only seek to influence institutions or the political agenda, but also advocate for inclusion (ibid, p. 37).

Social movements are dynamic social expressions, they not only move crowds, but are also constantly redefining themselves. In the context of democratic regimes, a focus on the impacts of social movement policies highlights the fact that policy outcomes are also the beginning of a new phase of struggle (ibid.). In this sense, the social movement re-actualizes itself even when it has achieved its goal.

Before the social outburst of October 2019 in Chile, a string of social movements had managed to consolidate, to a greater or lesser extent, in the public imaginary. The Student Movement, the *No + AFP* and *Patagonia Sin Represa*, among others, were effective in their political objectives. But it would be the Feminist Movement that would broaden the call to large sectors of Chilean society that have experienced precariousness, lack of rights and abuse (Llanos, 2021, p. 65). Borrowing a lyric from the singer-songwriter Patricio Manns (1937-), the slogan *until dignity becomes customary* became the emblem of the 2019 protests. The trajectory of social movements in Chile shows the transformation of the social movements.

8.2 The Impact of the Feminist Movement

(...) became fire, many - the elite, the politicians, the businessmen - discovered that there were thousands of people who felt that they did not have a country because that country called Chile had despised them for years: an absent State, an elite absolutely disconnected from reality and the majority of the media, managed by that elite...
(Zúñiga, 2020)

I am of the idea that if we make a historiography of the social movements in Chile starting in 1990 until today, we could observe the change produced by the feminist movement in the set of movements seen as a whole. In Latin America it was the movement *Ni Una Menos*, #niunamenos, of 2016, who propagated a demand to observe new cultural patterns and raise their voices denouncing cases of abuse, private and institutional. In Chile, the Feminist Movement of 2018 was the fundamental impulse when it came to mobilize the citizenship, under its eave, subjects with different demands were gathered. This capacity of congregation made it the largest mobilization ever seen in Chile.

Social mobilization and rebellion against all forms of patriarchal and neoliberal abuse converged in the Feminist Movement, says Llanos (p. 68). As just mentioned, it is the most relevant antecedent of the 2019 social outburst. We can explain the impact of this movement if we think from the ecological logic of Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005). The author proposes the visualization of the social as concentric systems, where each system contains norms, roles and systems of relationships that differentiate them from other systems. They are the social substratum that contains us and that we contain, from where we live our social identity and collective memory, through broad contact with society as well as intimate family contact. The alteration in a system will have consequences in the rest of the systems. The macrosystem is the level that represents the attitudes, beliefs and cultural values that permeate the culture in general, influencing the factors and structures of the more central systems (Heisse, 1998, p.277).

The Feminist Movement travels through all systems, leaving its traces wherever it passes. It seems to me that the exercise of conscientization that the Feminist Movement demands from society, makes those traces more and more noticeable, every time that the pattern of daily behavior is questioned. The Feminist Movement has made more obvious the relationship between the norms that are imposed in the macro, and how those norms permeate other systems. For these reasons, some authors have identified the revolt of 2019 as a kind of popular

feminist revolution in which the people have taken to the streets to decolonize themselves and break with all areas of the established order (Llanos, p. 65).

Decolonization is fundamentally an exercise of deconstruction. The temporality offered-demanded by the latest Social Movements in Chile is reflected in the temporality constructed by the videos that interest me. Just as the past is not synonymous with history, narrative is not synonymous with linearity. In Chile, the attempt to re-identify with pre-colonial history has been a struggle that has gained strength since the Feminist Movement. To such an extent, that the first president of the Constituent Assembly, where the new constitution that would govern the country would be drafted, was a representative of the Mapuche people, Elisa Loncon.

The Feminist Movement seems to be more of a transition than an isolated episode. As such, it has created a scenario of confrontation between actors with different political experiences and expectations. Each of these positions, says Jelin, involves a vision of the past and a program for dealing with that past in the new stage that is defined as rupture and change in relation to the previous one (p. 45).

Finally, how the feminist movement is made visible is closely connected to its anti-patriarchal and anti-neoliberal imaginary, which makes visible and empowers dissident bodies. The camera is one more of those protesting bodies, transformed by the feminist rebellion that imagines an inclusive and plurinational order (Llanos, p. 68).

8.3 October 19, 2019

On October 19, 2019 began the social outburst that would conclude with an agreement to draft a new constitution. The current constitution that governs Chile was enacted in 1980, during Pinochet's dictatorship. Changing the constitution became synonymous with changing the social order and removing the shadow of the dictatorship from Chilean politics.

One of the graffiti located at the foot of the monument to *General Baquedano* in *Plaza Baquedano*, colloquially understood as Santiago's ground zero, the phrase "It was not peace it was silence" challenges the government's and Piñera's claims of Chile as a peaceful and stable place. According to Daniel Domingo, this graffiti also dismantles national figures and symbols, leading to a reconfiguration of urban space that seeks to present a counter-discourse of resistance (Domingo, 2020, pp. 51, 55). The protests are the most evident sign that the social pact of the last thirty years has been exhausted and has come to an end. The massive

demonstrations that took place uninterruptedly between October 2019 and March 2020, says Llanos, gave an account of the depth of citizen discontent against the police, indebtedness, labor precariousness, discrimination and gender abuse, among other factors, evidencing a crisis of multiple character. *Carabineros de Chile*, Chilean law enforcement, was one of the institutions most criticized for excessive use of force and abuse. Of the 493 complaints against state agents at the time, 444 correspond to Carabineros, 30 to the Investigative Police, 13 to the Army, 4 to the Navy and 2 to other institutions (Llanos, p. 65, 73).

The social outburst of 2019, like any process of political opening, produced that the thaws, liberalizations and transitions enabled a public sphere where narratives and stories previously censored were incorporated (Jelin, p. 41-42). The videos I am interested in are part of this public sphere, characterized as a new repertoire of collective action. If like Durham we think of the history of media as the history of the impossibility of capturing what exists (p. 11), then the new protest videos are the latest experience in the attempt to perpetuate the experience of protesting.

Chile has an important history with videos. During the 1970s and 1980s, video art became a fundamental tool of resistance and struggle against the military regime. Through this modality, performances and artistic interventions that were developed outside the official artistic field were recorded, with the objective of expressing a critique against the cultural institutions of the State and the dictatorship. Video became a tool for recording and counterinformation to disseminate human rights violations and actions against the regime (Olhagaray, 2008). It is from the appropriation of this technology by sectors of the population that recognize its capacity to disseminate human rights violations, that social movements begin to appropriate video and use it for community, cultural and educational purposes (Mouesca, 1992).

Farocki invites us to ask ourselves how (we) look, how (we) think and how (we) touch each image (p. 14). Asking those questions also brings us closer to the need raised by Adele Clarke to take into account the sociohistorical context of both the production of the videos as well as the context of the viewing experience (Clarke, p. 217). The digital is accompanied by the internet, which has promoted new opportunities for social movements to restructure their internal communications, as well as the external use of media to enhance their strategic possibilities (Bräuer, 2008, p. 229). It has also facilitated access to other people's records, their appropriation and manipulation. The old celluloid film libraries have been digitized, making

available a large part of the official records of a region. This context opens a new audiovisual interface, in which it is very easy to have two historically distant images on the same screen. These attributes of digital technology have brought the audiovisual languages that I bring up closer to the languages of experimental filmmakers and video makers. It is to this extent that the videos produced by collectives such as Los Ingravidos or Vlopcinema, are more conscious of the image, the camera and the political in them. These videos establish a very interesting link between domestic registers with the practice of experimental cinema, each time that with their images they seek to change the internal logics of the events they show.

To modify the way in which visual spaces are made to coexist was the call of Raul Ruiz's *shamanic cinema*, a call to put an eye on the grammar of cinema and the emotional power that the manipulation of the space and time of images has (Ruiz, p. 103, 105). The video *Guerra* of the Vlopcinema collective, responds to this call head on.

IX. Analysis

9.1 The sample

The experimental film diffusion space *Marginalia Audiovisual* was founded by a group of video enthusiasts in 2016 in Santiago, Chile. The space functioned as such until 2019, then it would continue in Europe under the name of *Factoria Itinerante, Experimental Film Projection*. Both initiatives have sought to collect experimental works that play with the language of cinema and create a space where to exhibit these works. More than a traditional film projection, it is considered an installation or a performance. All the videos I mention below were presented either in the *Latinoameria Colectivo*⁶ series, in *Out of Order* or *Re-memories*, from these encounters.⁷

Latinoameria Colectivo refers to the collective germ of experimental film groups in Latin America. Groups such as Vlopcinema or Los Ingravidos, whose political-social commitment is clear and strong, and whose organization has a strong communitarian outlook. The *Out of Order* series refers to being outside the law, identifying the temporality of unidirectional

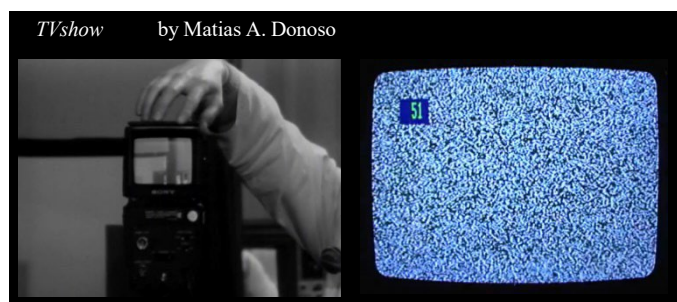
⁶ https://malavoadora.pt/espectaculos/experimental-film-projection-curadoria-de-matias-a-donosso_400.html

⁷ https://www.goethe.de/ins/pt/de/ver.cfm?fuseaction=events.detail&fbclid=IwAR06Dby45unvaYCcmQO569w-BEwhgVX5Ooc57ae1uADtIsa81yFYhZDEIc4&event_id=22007135

narratives as law. The videos show a lot of manipulation of different media, especially digital. Now that it is relatively easy to access domestic audiovisual records that are as foreign as the official audiovisual record, the videos play the game of *re-memories*. They engage in re-memorizing, in what seems to be an exercise in drawing water from a deep well.

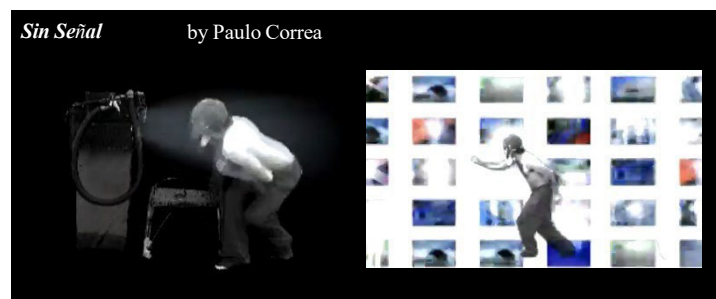
There is nothing I can argue that I have not seen first in this series of videos. I will now present a selection of these videos, whose constructions of meanings through audiovisual resources, I wanted to explain in words. It is worth noting that my research is very negligent with the soundtracks of the videos. Since all these videos work with image and sound as independent sources of information, the sound is as important as the image.

*TVshow*⁸ makes the history of Chile emerge from a television channel. It is the exercise of representing the national narrative as a television show, where the spectator and the show are confused, and the control over the image is the



secret under lock and key. The show begins with the image of Pinochet announcing the closing of the congressional chambers. That then takes the form of visual education, with the imperative of *learn to see*. Both are ways of controlling the image. Controlling the image implies submitting to the reality of an image. The reduction of plurality in the narratives, the advent of the show. When there is only one television show, how long will it take for us to become a mirror of that show? And at this moment the boxers realized that it was the viewers who were fighting.

Paulo Correa Varga's video *Sin Señal* (2011)⁹ explores the experimental use of new media and the continuous dialectic between culture and simulation. The video expresses very well the identification of the observer with the image. The viewer becomes the device. The human being is absorbed by the



⁸ <https://vimeo.com/648233116>

⁹ <https://youtu.be/k5Y9VT8v4yU>

device, and ends up living in the world of images. It is a visual exercise of my argumentation of the image embodied. The image is thought and man lives in a visual matrix. My idea of the embodied also expands to the camera, which as an extension of the body runs, hides and gets angry.

Colectivo Los Ingravidos is the best reference I could find for this research. Their body of videos is very extensive and they have achieved greater recognition since the COVID pandemic began in 2020.



Their objective could well have been a chapter of this thesis; "(...) to dismantle the audiovisual grammar that the aesthetic-televisual-cinematographic corporativism has used and uses to effectively guarantee the diffusion of an audiovisual ideology through which a continuous social and perceptive control over the majority of the population is maintained" (Colectivo Los Ingravidos, 2021). The manipulation of the medium is the manipulation of the content. Of this last statement, Los Ingravidos are clear examples. In their video *Amerika*¹⁰, they propose a Kafkaesque vision of the New World. A narrative is dismantled by destroying the image. They link the idea of continent with digital degradation.

9.2 Guerra

The *Colectivo Vlopcinema* seeks what they define as an instinctive creation, free and Accessible. They use mainly experimental and documentary video, in order to provide an identity of rescue and resistance to Latin American Cinema. The collective identifies and includes in its matrix of meanings, the economic value that can assume the technologies that produce images, and with it, the images themselves. They work with images that come from different places, from the street and from institutions.

The video *Guerra* was presented at the *Conversatorio Rescatar para Resignificar* (Archivo Patrimonial USACH, 2022)¹¹. As the name says, the meeting sought to discuss the new discourses that emerge when working with archival images. *Guerra* is a video that brings

¹⁰ <https://youtu.be/QBrhYM9oTe4>

¹¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZljQ8DP5pws>

together with greater emphasis the ideas that I have been developing. In order to interpret the present of the country, the video makes *orphan videos* dialogue with other types of television archives. Each group of images comes from a different register, and it is in the construction of the audiovisual discourse where we can read the experimentation as a form within the binomial form-content.

The video *Guerra* is part of a series that also includes the videos *Tortura* and *Montaje*¹². All are short films made with archives and records that circulated during the October revolt in Chile. Although they are part of the same series, each video exists separately and was shown both in groups and independently.

What is an orphan video?

A pixel limited to gigabytes to see the light and come to life when we look at it. A coding without identity, abandoned and without rewinding, because it was born inverted, without affection, carelessly assumed as an irresponsible and unlovable format. Of incorrect genealogy assuming a probing veracity of those who want to look at it, use it and touch it.

That we are godfathers and godmothers of all this flock of oblivion, will save countless orphan archives. And later this kind of asylum will grow, and those who want to continue leaving audiovisual heritage will call us to recover and give them a new life, to an obsolete format or to a forgotten 0 and 1. Here, with love, these images will take on another character and tomorrow they will be able to overthrow their oblivion, with another force, with another impetus, with another dignity.

Colectivo Vlopcinema, 2021

¹² I shared a link that includes the three videos since this is the only link that includes subtitles. The *Colectivo Vlopcinema* has also uploaded each video separately.

9.3 Situational Analysis

Situational analysis "enables researchers to bring together studies of discourse and agency, action and structure, image, text and context, history and present moment, to analyze complex research situations broadly conceived" (Clarke, p. xxi). What Clarke proposes is to complement basic grounded theory with a situation-centered approach, extending its study to narrative, visual and historical discourses. One reads the influence of the postmodern perspective of considering knowledge as social and culturally produced (Clarke, p. xxiv).

I will follow the steps suggested by Adele Clarke in her book *Situational Analysis: Grounded theory after the postmodern turn* (2005). From the generation of maps, I will make descriptions and reflections around the relationship of elements that I will identify in each map. It is a methodology that welcomes without negativity the chaos, the disorder of information. It is partly this lack of rules that allows it to represent a variety of positions, discourses and multiple complexities.

In order to achieve the greatest symbiosis between argument and image, I have dismembered the video in the total of images that compose it. It is recommended to accompany the following pages with Annex II, for a better understanding of the argument.

9.4 Situationals Maps

Seeking to specify the non-human elements in the situation, to make visible the materialities and discourses, we begin with a situational map. In a second instance, a series of relational maps will allow us to delve into the relationships of the elements and anchor them to the images of *Guerra*. There are three categories of images that we can observe in *Guerra; Chile, Image* and *Social Justice*. The figure 1.1, a complete situational map of *Guerra*, contains all the elements of the video. The colors allow us to classify each element within one of the categories mentioned. When an element contains two colors, this is because it is essential to consider it as part of both categories.

Chile is the category that encompasses the elements that are part of the nation Chile, this includes fundamentally its history and institutionality. *Social justice*, on the other hand, encompasses those elements that are behind the social outburst of 2019. While these two categories refer to discourses, institutions, history and society, the category *image* refers to the audiovisual medium, its language and technology.

Logically, each image of *Guerra* is a conjunction of elements, it is the dialogue of images. If we observe the progression of images, we recognize that all the images classify at the same time into two categories; television images and domestic images. This is precisely the exercise

of appropriation that I have been mentioning. The authors collect historical television records and construct the narrative of the video by tensioning these images with domestic images - images captured by domestic cameras in unprepared situations. We could argue that criticizing a type of image can't be done without the use of the images themselves.



Figure nº 1.1 Situational Map of the video *Guerra*

The idea of *Chile* is represented by Augusto Pinochet, Sebastián Piñera, the geography of the territory, the national symbols, the forces of public order and the political discourses that advocate social order and progress. All these images come from television archives with one exception; the forces of public order – *Carabineros de Chile* -. This subcategory is captured by domestic cameras. The only familiar face of Chilean institutionality is the forces of public order, and it is in this area where the ambiguity of political discourse is most obvious.

Let's take a look to the Annex II, where you will find a vertical presentation of each image of *Guerra* in chronological order. Within the domestic images we can recognize voyeuristic cameras (nº 47), protesting cameras (nº 63), spy cameras (nº 26) and denouncing cameras (nº 29). It is the opposition of these images to the television images, in conjunction with the construction of an audio that articulates Pinochet's discourse with Piñera's, from which the discourse of social justice takes shape.

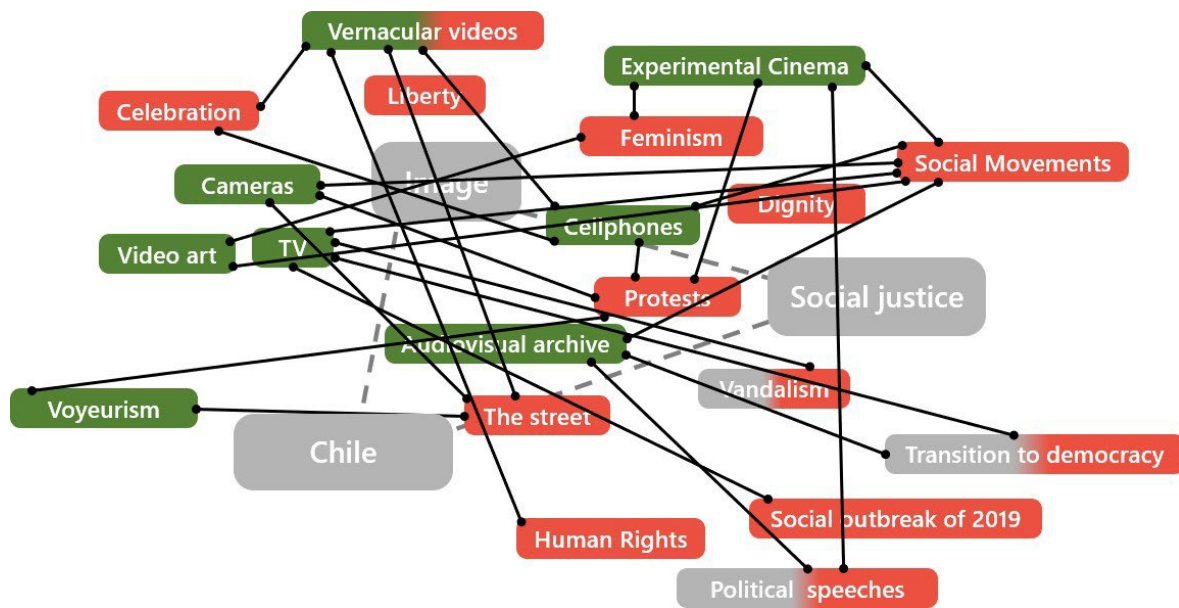


Figure n° 1.2 Relational Analysis Using Situational Map: Focus on the subcategories *image* and *social justice*

Map n° 1.2 shows the relationships between the subcategories found in *image* and *social justice*. These relationships allow us to reflect on how meanings are constructed within the video. As I have mentioned, domestic cameras, vernacular videos and audiovisual archives are now part of social movements. I have wanted to separate protests from social movements since the latter are broader than protests, they also include other processes that span more time and are manifested in other spaces. On the other hand I have included experimental cinema and video art, because they refer to a type of audiovisual language, a language that is clear in the video *Guerra*, in segments such as images n°4 - n°10, where a sequence is disarranged to emphasize Pinochet's gaze in front of the camera.

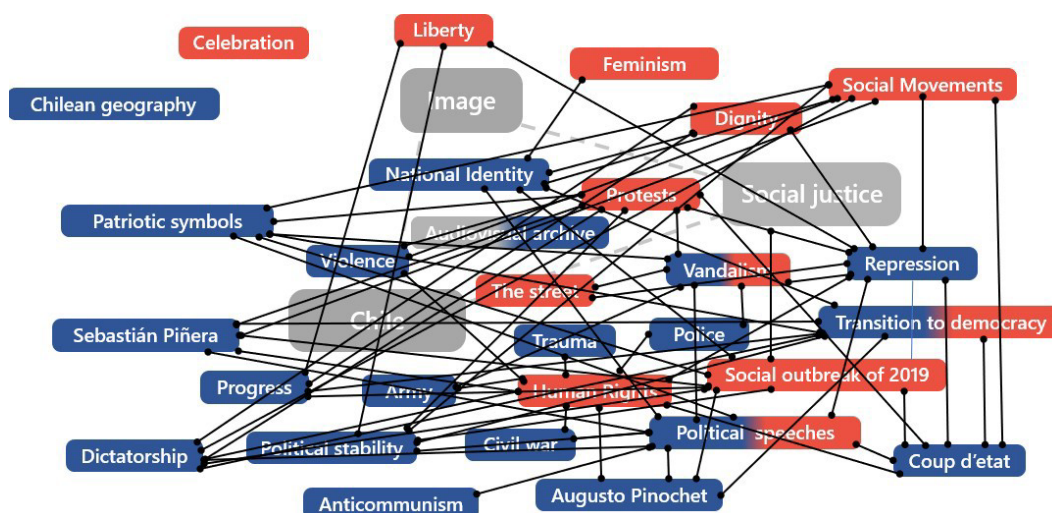


Figure n° 1.3 Relational Analysis Using Situational Map: Focus on the subcategories *image* and *Chile*

Map n° 1.3 shows the relationships between the subcategories that make up *image* and *chile*. Here the relationship is fundamentally one of support and language. As for the former, TV functions as the guardian of the country's institutional memory, mediated by the possibilities that the Internet offers today. TV plays a fundamental role in what is understood as national identity, since it fulfills an educational, protective and disseminating role of the content sanctioned and promoted by the institutionality. On the other hand, elements such as violence and repression have been captured more faithfully by domestic cameras. For this reason, they are also linked to the elements that make references to experimental language, since these are the fields where these elements have been manipulated with greater freedom with the intention of questioning their meanings.

Finally, map n° 1.4 shows the relationships between the subcategories found within *Chile* and *social justice*. The chaos is visible, this is preferable since I just want to show how the content of each image is related to the rest of the images, at the same time that they are mediated by the particularities of the support and the audiovisual language that are part of the image category.

If this video were to use the traditional narrative techniques of cinema, it would oppose the aforementioned images in such a way as to bring out a third element. This is known as contrast montage. Vsevolod Pudovkin made some classic examples of how the opposition of two images can create a third meaning. However, *Guerra* does not use traditional narrative techniques, but rather practices of experimental cinema. In the section X, I will elaborate more on this.

9.5 Social Worlds/Arenas Map

According to Clarke, social worlds are fundamental in the organization of social life and consist of universes of discourse and affiliative mechanisms. These worlds are part of layered mosaics that make up society as a whole. To understand a specific social world, it is important to take into account all the collective actors, non-human elements and spheres of engagement involved in the ongoing discourse and negotiations. This makes it possible to generate maps that offer meso-level interpretations of the situation, considering its social, organizational, institutional and discursive dimensions. Likewise, to fully understand a social world, one must understand all the arenas in which it participates and the related discourses, as these are mutually influential and constitutive of that world (Clarke, p. xxxvi, 45-46). The figure N° 2 is a representation of the social worlds we observed in the *Guerra* video, including the sub-arenas that compose these worlds.

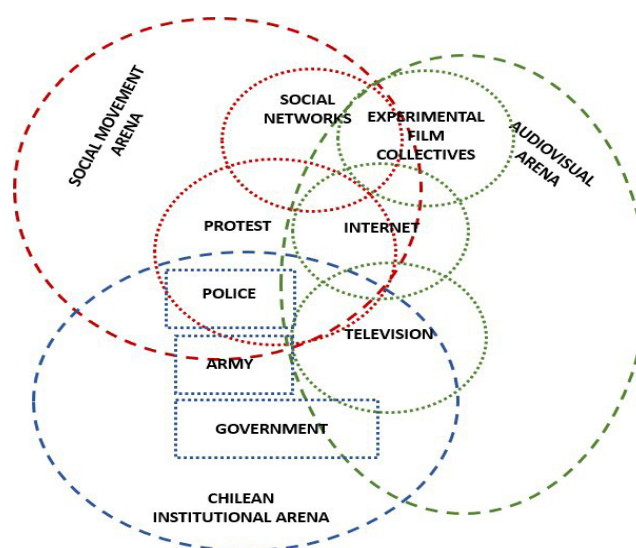


Figure n° 2 Social Worlds/Arenas Map: *Guerra*

The Chilean institutionality is the arena that is composed of the social worlds that represent this institutionality. In the video we can recognize three actors; the government, the police and the army. It is worth mentioning that Sebastian Piñera's declaration of war in October 2019 - a declaration that he later had to come out and explain -, involved the army's display in the streets of Santiago, something that had not happened since Pinochet's dictatorship. Of these three worlds, the government is the most elusive. It allows itself to be seen only through the television, in settings that are fully controlled and prepared. For this reason the government interacts very little with other arenas, instead it has emissaries; the forces of public order. The Chilean police - *Carabineros de Chile* - are in the middle of this conflict. *Guerra* makes a point about the violence of the carabineros, and because of this I would like to prescure an image of the protests. When marching in Santiago, I imagine it must happen in other places as well, the police do not protect the march, they arrange themselves in such a way to enclose the march in a fenced perimeter and deploy their weapons in front of the march. The way police forces are organized during marches is not about protection or the right to protest, but about protecting the rest of the citizenry from the marchers. The army is not a typical actor in the protests, its role during the 2019-2020 protests was highly criticized, not only by the citizenry but also in reports from the National Institute of Human Rights and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The discourse that is constructed in the *Chile* arena is precisely the discourse of the Chilean nation. The video *Guerra* makes use of that same discourse to deconstruct it, this can only be achieved through a creative use of audiovisual language. It is similar to what Nicanor Parra did with anti-poetry, using foreign literary resources to disarm the traditional sense of poetry and thus create a monstrous poetry. It is my proposal that collectives such as Vlopcinema and Los Ingravidos recognize not only the institutional discourse, but also identify its code; television. Therefore, the intention is not merely a documentary-style audiovisual montage, but a monstrosity of language.

The Social Movement is the great arena where the meanings constructed by *Guerra* emerge. Ultimately, the final phrase of the video is the total message of the work; we only want justice, we are not at war. The two great social worlds that compose it are protests and social networks. Social movements in and of themselves involve many other worlds that are deployed in education, unions, culture, community organizations, etc. Social movement is a much broader phenomenon than protest. But *Guerra* is fundamentally about protest and government response. Its central issue is state violence and the right to protest. Social networks, on the other hand, are the new social world that has come to change the rules of the game. It is no exaggeration to say that there would have been no social outbreak in Chile if it were not for Facebook, since it was precisely this social network where the first protest gesture was clandestinely organized, jumping over the barriers of the Santiago subway. But even more important for my analysis, is the fact that social networks allow the dispersion of a multitude of speeches and individual records. The section of the video that goes from image n° 35 to n° 56, expresses in its visual structure the multitude of points of view. As in the so-called expanded cinema, the screen is fragmented into a multitude of images, up to 4 images at the same time. This is social networking at its best. This is the conjunction between protest, social networks and audiovisual language, because the anonymous capture of the domestic cameras is dispersed in the social networks, many times also anonymously, and it is the audiovisual language that manages to reconstruct the complex framework of the protests, the chaos that is lived in them. If we think about it, the fact that a crowd of more than a million people is reduced to an image, let's say a drone image that captures the immensity of the protesting crowd, does not express by any means what it means to be part of the protest. Another audiovisual language is needed. The Audiovisual arena is where different audiovisual languages confront each other. Television sets the tone for the construction of the institutional narrative, what we have come to call Chilean identity, whatever that is, as well as the narrative that is built about the protests themselves. Regarding this last one, the message was that the country was at war against an internal enemy - a remnant of the National Security Doctrine. The internet is both a meeting ground for individuals and a language, since it is only understandable as a digital medium. Only digital information can travel over the Internet, and therefore also alters its content. This brings us to the last social world, Experimental Cinema. This subarena is built from the critique of traditional television language, the traditional audiovisual language of cinema and the submission of the image to the powers that concentrate social, economic and political control. As I have developed, this tradition has been fertile in its re-conceptualization of the medium as content, a tradition that the video *Guerra* is avowedly indebted.

The Audiovisual arena is the one that essentially puts in dialogue the other two arenas, not in its real sense, but in the video I am analyzing. Lets bear in mind, that all these social worlds appear in *Guerra*, in a more or less obvious way, and it is through this dialogue of worlds that they construct the meanings of the video.

9.5 Positional Map

Positional maps represent all discursive positions on an issue without focusing on specific individuals or groups. This allows the articulation of multiple positions and even contradictions, both within individuals and collectivities (Clarke, xxxvi). But let us clarify that positional maps do not seek to represent individuals or collectivities, but positions within discourses.

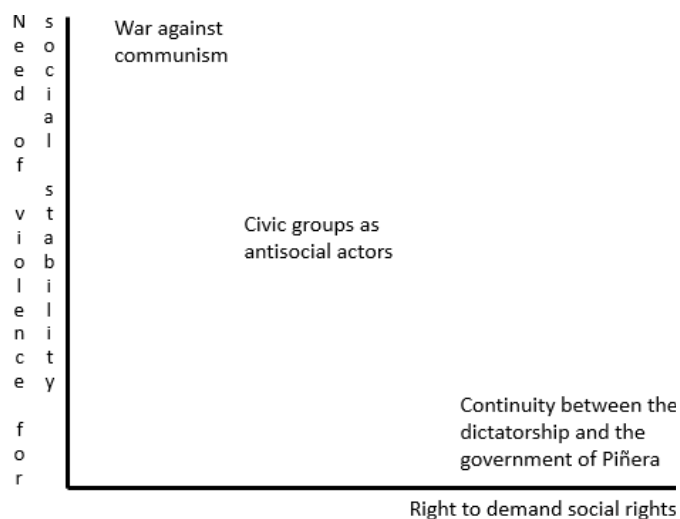


Figure n°3 Positional Map: Need of violence for social stability / Right to demand social rights

Figure n° 3 represents the two discourses on which the video *Guerra* is built. On the one hand we find the need for violence for social stability, while on the other hand we find the right to demand social rights. Axis X is strongly linked to the aforementioned National Security Doctrine. It refers to the need to control social disorder, in order to aim at social stability. At this point it is impossible to continue the argument if we do not include *Guerra's*

soundtrack, since it is through a collage construction between Piñera's and Pinochet's speeches that the video manages to express its interpretation of the social outburst. In the following section I will go into this in depth, for now it is necessary to mention that the video identifies Piñera with Pinochet, at the same time that it manages to identify their speeches as one. In doing so, it identifies Pinochet's war against communism with the war declared by Piñera against what the former president called the implacable enemy. This is the continuity *Guerra* proposes between the Pinochet dictatorship and the Piñera government's response to the social outburst.

The war against communism, with Augusto Pinochet as its emblematic representative, is the position that most emphatically recognizes the need for violence for social stability, while it does not recognize at all the right to demand social rights. Let's remember that during Pinochet's period Chile suffered from a long history of assassinations, disappearances and exiles. In the opposite corner is the discourse that recognizes a continuity between the dictatorship and the Piñera government. The period of democratic transition is critically understood as a period of lies and camouflage. The war of one is the war of the other. This is why this discourse identifies with the old demand for social rights prior to Pinochet, and they reject the declaration of war. There is no war, they say, there is a demand for social rights, and to be able to demand these rights in the streets is in itself a social right. In the middle of these two discourses, not being 100% one or the other, is that discourse which recognizes the need for social rights but at the same time accepts state violence in order to maintain social stability. This discourse does not repeat the words communism, but speaks of antisocial groups. It borrows the same logic of the anti- communist discourse, but disguises it in other clothes, maintaining itself as the savior of the nation. In short, social rights are necessary, it is true, but if the social order is threatened, the former military will come out to control the environment.

X. The Deconstruction

Let us be clear, I am not going to deconstruct the video *Guerra*, but as I announced at the beginning, my proposal is to understand the narrative construction of the video as a deconstruction in itself. This does not mean either that the authors have deconstructed with decision of that, rather it is my decision to equate the deconstructive exercise to what we can observe in *Guerra*. Another analytical method could have been used as well, on this occasion I chose Derrida's concept since it fits well with my research development around the use of the audiovisual resource as an agent of memory.

Deconstruction is presented as a form of critical analysis that seeks to dismantle the underlying structures of a text or discourse in order to reveal its complexity and ambiguity. Unlike conventional analysis, deconstruction arises from the Nietzschean tradition and the "school of suspicion", which seeks to unmask the hidden motives behind the apparent neutrality of philosophy and signs in general - its greatest stalwarts being the Nietzsche - Marx - Freud triad. In this sense, it is understood that deconstruction is neither an analysis nor a conventional critique, but a concrete modality of reading discourses that traverses reading possibilities not

yet explored. We must keep in mind that deconstruction cannot be reduced to a set of transportable rules and procedures and that its aim is to explore the multiple possibilities of interpretation and to question the hierarchical oppositions that underlie philosophy and culture, without falling into the temptation of fixing a single meaning or comprehensive sense to any text (Derrida in Peretti, 1985; Vásquez Rocca, 2016, p. 48).

Colectivo Vlopcinema talks about their work in a way that irremediably brings us closer to deconstruction. Pavlo Mark, co-founder of the collective, speaks of approaching the archive, opening it, deconstructing it and re-signifying it. It is precisely a resignification of the archive through its manipulation. At the base of this exercise is the form-content dyad, since the authors recognize the origin of the archive. This goes hand in hand with the fact that they are active agents in the exercise of memory. They do not take memory for granted, but seek to "sabotage the perceived sacredness of memory to open up other logics with the archives (...)" (Archivo Patrimonial USACH, 2022, 36m00s)

Jacques Derrida's general strategy of deconstruction is based on three moments. The first moment consists in detecting and isolating the conceptual couple that generates an aporia in classical philosophy. Derrida shows that, in these pairs of opposing terms, one always dominates the other, subjecting it to a violent hierarchy. In the second moment, the hierarchical order of the pairs of concepts is inverted, affirming the priority of the subordinate term with respect to the dominant one. For example, Derrida affirms the priority of writing over speech or of matter over spirit. Finally, in the third moment the pair of concepts is neutralized and the subordinate term is liberated, emerging a new concept that is an undecidable with respect to the binary logic from which it proceeds. Thus, Derrida shows how deconstruction allows transcending classical oppositions and opening new possibilities of thought (Gastéllum, 2013, p. 118-119).

The conceptual pair that *Guerra* seeks to invert are the concepts of *violence* and *freedom*. *Violence* supposes that discourse that I have positioned on the X axis of the positional map. *Violence* would be necessary in order to obtain *freedom*. Now, *freedom* is understood as progress and efficiency. It is a conception of freedom that is strong economically and poor socially. *Freedom* is subject to *violence* because it needs it, it is the cost to be paid.

Violence is obviously camouflaged, at the end of the day it is fundamental to trust our institutions. But *Guerra* calls for not trusting institutions, and he achieves this by emphasizing the distrust of images. Images n°3, n°7, n°9 and n°15 make use of the inversion and modification of colors to accentuate the ominousness of the images. They invert the national

coat of arms just as the Chilean institution inverts its values when attacking its citizens. The palace of the coin is altered by a second fragment to sepia, reminding us that it was Pinochet himself who ordered the bombing of the palace in 1973. Then Pinochet himself inverts his color to the negative of the image, just like the ghostly images in the photograph.

That Augusto Pinochet violated the basic rights of Chileans is hard to dispute. It is another thing to argue that Sebastian Piñera is, to some extent, a continuation of Pinochet. The video builds this argument in image no. 16. The dictator's face melts into the face of the then president. For a few seconds, it is Pinochet's eyes that look at us from Piñera's facade. It is from this moment that Piñera's speech of October 20 merges with a speech by Pinochet: "That the war is not over," says Pinochet, seconds after Piñera declares war. But the images do not show Chile being attacked; on the contrary, they show Chile attacking Chile. While Piñera describes the powerful and implacable enemy, the screen begins to break down into a group of images that classify into what we have called vernacular videos, coming from domestic cameras.

It is in the opposition between discourse and image that *Guerra* makes clearer his intention to identify the forces of public order with the enemy described by Piñera. In this exercise, since the enemy with whom Pinochet also declared war has already been identified, the forces of public order are identified as the one against whom the war continues. Violence subdues freedom today, just as it did during Pinochet's dictatorship. In the sequence between images n° 34 and n° 49, the message is clear: the enemy is ready to use violence without any limits (Piñera), to save freedom and rebuild Chile (Pinochet). But the enemy is not antisocial civic groups, the video argues, but the same armed forces that should protect us.

Image n° 54 shows three images. Two on the side give an account of the violence during the 2019 protests, while the middle image shows the following sequence: a canvas flies from an airplane with the phrase "my general does not surrender", then an image of Piñera accompanied with the Chilean flag, to then show images of people supporting him, among them a woman with a photograph of Pinochet. In this sequence the authors build a visual structure whose form contrasts three historical moments; Pinochet's dictatorship, Piñera's government and the 2019 protests. In this exercise they identify the first two, bringing Pinochet to the present. The general does not give up, as the general is still in the voice of the Chilean institutional.

Guerra breaks with the univocal message by fragmenting the screen. It is not only the sequence of images that constructs meaning, but also the tension between images that unfold in the same moment. This visual polysemy accounts precisely for the circular temporality I have mentioned. A more vulgar way would be to assimilate Pinochet to a zombie, a living dead - a

film with this argument by director Pablo Larrain is about to be released in theaters -. Instead, the video places in the same space images of different temporalities, resignifying one and the other, while allowing him to build the continuity between Pinochet and Piñera, which is the basis of his message.

Although this revolution, say Aragón & Ranulfo, in terms of transformation, does not necessarily imply destruction, the process inherent to revolutionary deconstruction implies rather the appearance of new and novel forms (p. 85). These new forms have to do with a renewal of social arrangements. That is precisely the main desire of social movements; the renewal of social agreement in certain matters. In *Guerra* the intention is to achieve the second movement of deconstruction; to invert the binomial and submit *violence to freedom*. It is argued that there is no war, but freedom to demand social rights. The freedom to demand justice and dignity are the first step to be able to imagine new social agreements.

Jose Dario Herrera explains how all interpretation has a practical dimension that not only has to do with the present, but also with the future. Interpretation is thus also understood as a project; that is, as part of what we can become. The question of historicity and its oblivion is not only an object of the historical sciences, but is part of any attempt to understand any social phenomenon (2010, p. 183-184). As part of this impulse, *Guerra* fundamentally calls for a state that does not violate its population. He responds to the call of authors such as Erich Fromm, for whom repressing an impulse means extirpating it from consciousness, but does not mean depriving it of its existence (1957, p. 227). The impulse here is that of national self-knowledge, not to forget the violence of the past and to find its traces today. Only in this way will it be possible to project a future where social justice can take place.

This idea is beautifully expressed in image no. 34. In it we see a member of the army under the effect of the mirror. The soldier smiles at us, but we know that in front of him is himself. The military forces are not only attacking the very population they are supposed to protect, but they are also the same military forces that have previously attacked the population. It is no coincidence that this image is positioned just at the moment when Pinochet's speech is articulated with Piñera's. Violence must be looked in the eyes, to reflect its origin.

Ideas, emotions and sensations, says Boal, are indissolubly intertwined. A bodily movement is a thought and thought is expressed in corporeal form (1992, 51-59). In *Guerra*, thought is the interpretations and the body is the camera-images. Although this is true for the totality of the

images that compose the video, the embodiment is different between the images from television archives and the vernacular videos. The images coming from domestic cameras manage to penetrate the action of the protest in a way that television never can. So these images from the protests manage to express thoughts in another way.

As an affective practice, videos like *Guerra* allow for cohesion between the past, present and future of the world they represent and affect their participants as public affairs whose affective dimension is meaningful to others (Wiesse, 2019, p. 132, 137). I want to highlight how the video *Guerra*, through its polysemous audiovisual construction, manages to evoke the feeling of the repressed self in the context of social manifestations. It is as when Schmidt & Wiesse observe that the events recorded in certain videos not only affect the participants who took part in the event, but also seek to affect the viewers of the video (Schmidt & Wiesse, 2019). This is the corporeal affectivity of the videos, which transcends the projection itself and affects the viewer. The domestic cameras, unlike the television archives, bring the viewer into the affective world of state violence itself.

The video *Guerra* never declares the need for freedom. It is the institutionalism, present in the speeches of Pinochet and Piñera, who subject *freedom to violence*. The second will lead us to the first. The third deconstructive movement has to do with dignity. By inverting the binomial and showing the incoherence of the institutional narrative, the video destroys both concepts as they lose their meaning. There is no longer credibility in those discourses. What violence are we talking about? If it is the state that attacks as if it were that powerful enemy of which Piñera speaks. What freedom are we talking about? If repression does not allow peaceful demonstration. In this dilemma it is the slogan of the social outburst that emerges; dignity. At the center of *Guerra* is the same slogan that the social outburst raised loudly; dignity is demanded, dignity to express, to demand and to remember.

XI. Community Migrant Reflection

Since my original profession is Community Psychology, it is better for me to formulate some ideas that bring this thesis closer to my profession. To a certain extent, the following reflections come to be a mantle that covers the totality of the conclusions previously raised.

In broad terms, Community Psychology could be defined as focusing on the individual implications of social functioning and structure (Sánchez Vidal, p. 42). Two concepts lay the

foundations of this discipline: community and sense of community. By the former we mean "system or social group with local roots, differentiable within the society of which it is a part on the basis of characteristics and interests shared by its members and subsystems that include: Geographical locality (neighborhood), interdependence and stable psychosocial interaction and sense of belonging to the community and identification with its symbols and institutions" (Sánchez Vidal, p. 42). The feeling of community, on the other hand, refers to the experience of belonging to a we, to "the feeling of being part of a stable and reliable larger social structure" (ibid., p.17).

This last concept is key in my analysis insofar as it allows me to move to the meeting point between the individual and the collective. The loss of the subjective experience of community, experienced by certain groups as a result of the exclusion processes inherent to the imposition of hegemonic discourses, would be the most psychologically destructive force and the most important social problem in modern Western societies (ibid.).

Within Community Psychology there is a fierce criticism of the psychological approaches that emphasize the adaptation of the individual - knowingly or unknowingly -, which is why many of its authors are akin to Antipsychiatry. From the community methodology, the demands imposed on the subjects in relation to values, goals or conditions for their well-being, come into tension with their adaptive resources. This imbalance is called Psychosocial Stress (Ibid., p. 83). I am interested in this concept as it highlights the combination of social and personal components in the intrapsychic realm of individuals. It is the most marginalized or less powerful members of societies who experience the greatest vulnerabilities and instabilities in their community contexts (Christens, p. 540).

The self-representations of national identities are highly rigid and normative, people who derive their social identity from these constructs are more likely to react violently to threats to their identity groups (ibid., p. 516). Thus, intergroup conflict and violence are often functional in providing people with a means to address psychological needs for identity, safety, and security (ibid., p. 519). Even more specific to my work, they present obstacles to social reconciliation (Leidner, Tropp & Lickel, 2013, p. 517).

To address the aforementioned, Community Psychology proposes community strengthening, empowerment being its methodological construct. Empowerment has most often been defined as the mechanism by which individuals, organizations, and communities gain mastery over their affairs (Christens, p. 542). As such, psychological empowerment includes one's skills and motivations to bring about social and political change, the knowledge required to do so, the

interpersonal relationships and behavioral actions that can contribute to social and political change (ibid., p.543).

Ultimately, finding a place in a we, recognizing a social role and participating in meaningful social interactions is fundamental to mental health. While social phenomena of stigmatization, discrimination and exclusion are obstacles to the development of Social Wellbeing (Galderisi, Heinz, Kastrup, Beezhold & Sartorius, 2015, p.232).

Writing seems to fit more comfortably in a linear temporality than the image, we can accurately recognize the past, present and future. Just as the change in sight brought about by the telescope and eyeglasses changed our relationship with ourselves and the world, the decentralization of digital information and the malleability of today's cameras is that the digital video record is changing our relationship with ourselves and the community.

There are more and more testimonies of digital activism, from all over the world, sharing information and spreading awareness about local political struggles (Gregory & Losh, 2012, p. 16). Videos, today, are undoubtedly a tool of social power, of that "power generated from below by groups and communities that assume the business of social reproduction" (Tormey, p. 104). Videos can be devices that favor individual and collective empowerment. They are images that look at the community while observing from the community. In this conjunction, they allow the community to increase its sense of control over its own narrative and to express itself critically of the socio-political context. In their form of psychological empowerment, these videos promote social change and challenge the status quo (Christens, p. 544).

Chris Marker's cameraman, Sandor Krasna fantasized about being able to unsettle the mechanism that governs our memory and rewrite it by changing the positions of the images, our memories (Luque Gutiérrez, 2013, p. 227). It is in essence an exercise of deconstruction, which poses a freedom in the exercise of questioning the order of representations (Aragón & Ranulfo, p. 85). If we talk about the representations that emerge from television, power groups, national identities and contentious political spaces, then the videos I have brought up have fulfilled Krasna's fantasy. The book on which culture writes its text, is rather a moving image.

XII. Conclusions

Le Grice claimed to be uncomfortable with the discrepancy he felt between the actual experience of making and watching cinema - erratic, impulsive and irrational -, and the linear logic that arises from writing about it (Le Grice, p.39). It is with a similar feeling that I conclude my thesis. I have sought to build my argument from an eclectic group of sources, setting them against each other, moving forward from similarities and open paths. But in the end the image is unfathomable and the audiovisual languages I analyze prefer mystery.

My fundamental idea is that image and memory are inseparable. In their creative symbiosis, transformations in one alter the destiny of the other. The image is not rigid, much less in digital, and memory is not a list of events. Digital video is a support that allows the transformation of the space-time of the image in a simpler way than the audiovisual technologies that preceded it. The audiovisual image has been domesticated and invaded the intimate space. I have wanted to demonstrate that for these reasons digital video has been used as a vessel that crosses the temporality of Chile's audiovisual records, associating elements while re-signifying the images by intervening them. The migrant image welcomes different temporalities, and takes its diverse senses under the logic of remix. As in a spaceship, it takes us on a journey that is visually overwhelming, indigestible, whose ultimate purpose is not the transmission of a clear message, but the embarkation on the journey itself. The migrant image does not explain its images, it transports us and identifies us with the journey itself.

The home video has become a resource to make marginalized narratives visible while rejecting the accepted ones. This exercise has allowed to bring the past to the contingency of the present, projecting the relationship that sustains them. It is the discontinuity that disconcerts, the idea that one should not look back, only forward. Such logic was the one that was founded in Chile in the period of transition to democracy in the early 90's, and that still explains the social outburst of 2019.

The videos that have interested me, reject the limits of truth sanctioned by institutionality. Instead, they question official discourses and identify the state as a violent agent that oppresses citizens. It is Chilean identity itself that is called into question, for it is the representatives of Chile who oppress, staining the entire history. The type of video I have exposed is one more of the artifacts that operate in the constant restructuring of cultural memory (Assmann &

Czaplicka, 1995). It is because of the discourses that videos construct that I have compared their temporality with that of Restorative Justice. The temporal framework of the latter is precisely that of a transition, continuous and multidirectional, and not a linear relation of punctual events.

Noam Chomsky said that propaganda is to democracy what violence is to dictatorships (Manufacturing Consent, 1992). The imposition of a hegemonic narrative from the spheres of power serves the ideology of the political regime, foreshadowing future conflicts between social groups. If we want to achieve the integration of diverse narratives and identities, we should not equate memory with history, but develop a more cyclical, multidimensional and diverse understanding of it (de Haan & Destrooper, p. 212). Social movements should be understood as spaces where marginalized memories manage to express themselves, allowing the consolidation of excluded social identities. Struggles, for the classic Georg Simmel (1908), constitute one of the most vivid reciprocal actions necessary for socialization. For the author, the error lies in considering unity as homogeneous, omitting the richness of splits and disharmonies (Simmel, 1908, p.450-451). Therefore, we must consider social movements as fertile spaces for social reconciliation.

During a debate in the 1980s, Freire rejected Papert's assertion that computer technology would mean the death of schools. Freire believed that technology should be used critically to reconstruct the political, economic and cultural issues facing people in an ever-evolving global media culture (Papert, 2000). Yet the image remains hidden, without showing its full meaning. We do not know exactly what images are, says Mitchell, nor of their relationship to language, to the world and to observers, nor how we should understand their history or what to do with them (Mitchell, 1994, p.13). But they are already here and have invaded all our spaces.

As a final words, my invitation is to recognize the importance of this new range of videos, of the images that constitute them and of the language that constructs them. YouTube, Facebook and other virtual spaces have been forged as containers of community knowledge, but there are very few public spaces where the community gathers as critical viewers of these images. For this purpose, my intention has been to recognize the value of these images, with the dream of generating spaces of audiovisual diffusion where human bodies are reunited in the light of migrant images.

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Annexes

I.

The following list of videos includes works whose logic, both internal and of production and distribution, classified in the argumentative framework that I have developed. In one way or another, all these videos are part of the same family of new audiovisual products.

Colectivo VlopCinema (Chile)

Guerra, Tortura y Montaje, 2019, 10.46 mins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0DJymM1JpfQ>

Las Nadies, 2018, 1.23 mins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGT0EAr0YIM>

Hijos del Perro, 2016, 5.26 mins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u1-MBuSZ1ak>

Compañero Mario no existimos, 2018, 19.42 mins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=813lkzIJrhQ>

Colectivo Los Ingrávidos (Mexico)

Shrines (Altares), 2019, 3.30 min

<https://vimeo.com/308051203>

Eroded pyramid, 2019, 8.40 mins,

<https://vimeo.com/285734959>

Paralax, 2019, 6.00 mins,2

<https://vimeo.com/90283113>

Amerika

<https://youtu.be/QBrhYM9oTe4>

Other videos

TVshow by Matias A. Donoso

<https://vimeo.com/648233116>

Transformation by Antoni Hidalgo

<https://fb.watch/jbd5bGEccy/>

Truly Chilean Landscape, 2008, by Samuel Cortez

<https://youtu.be/YYm9Zzwg49A>

Sin Señal by Paulo Correa

<https://youtu.be/k5Y9VT8v4yU>

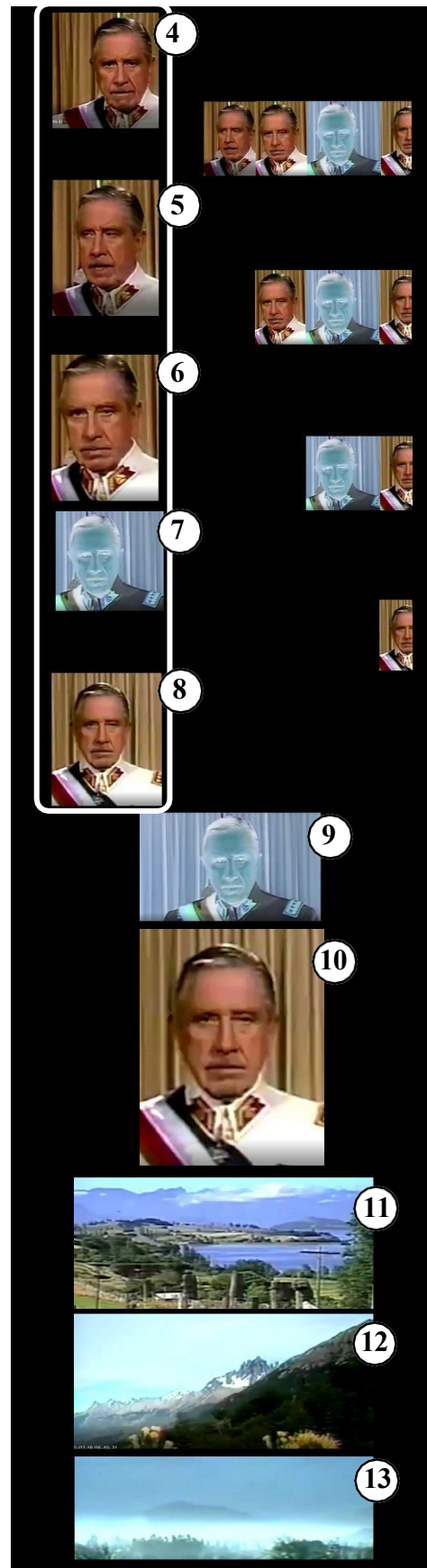
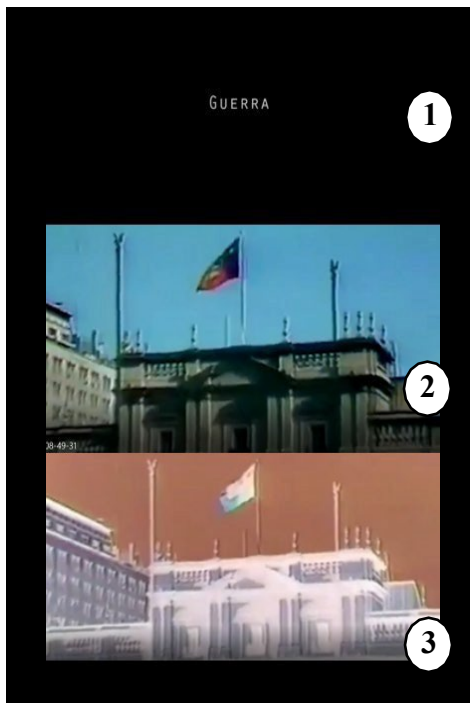
II.

Guerra, Colectivo Vlopcinema
2019
Digital video, 02.05

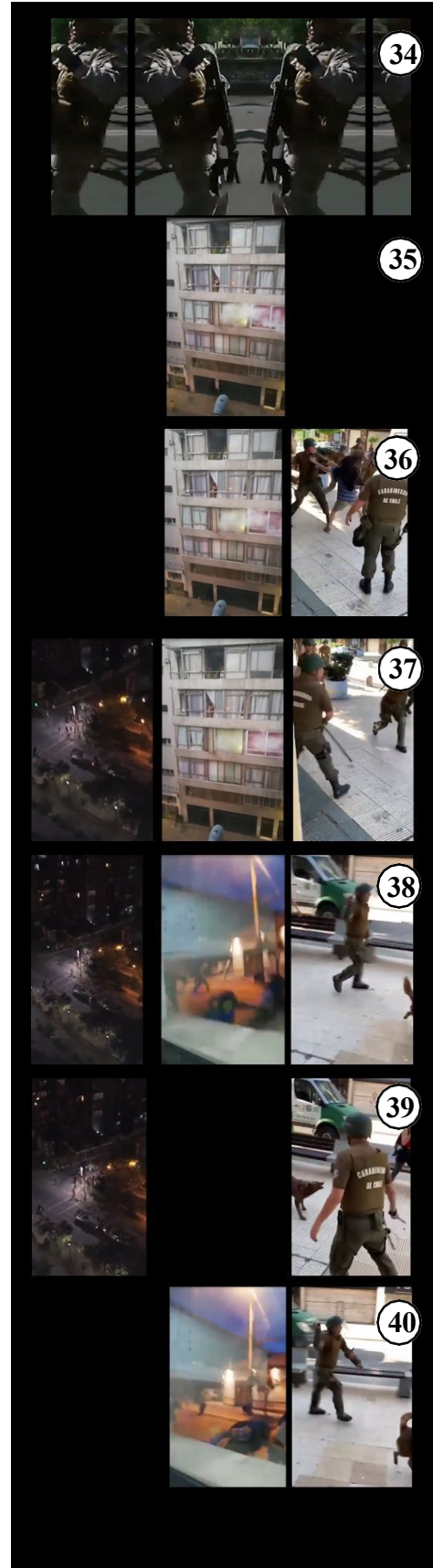
I share the link of the series *Guerra*, *Tortura y Montaje* since it is the only link that includes subtitles. Vlopcinema collective has also uploaded the videos separately to YouTube.

Available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0DJymM1JpfQ>









MI GENERAL NO SE RINDE

