

Affect and Emotions in Two Chilean Postmemory Narratives: *La dimensión desconocida* by Nona Fernández and *La resta* by Alia Trabucco Zerán

La dimensión desconocida (2016) de Nona Fernández y *La resta* (2014) de Alia Trabucco Zerán son novelas recientes sobre la memoria de la dictadura de Augusto Pinochet (de 1973-1990) en Chile que usan las emociones para reconstruir lo que pasó en una época histórica a través de la memoria. Las dos novelas comparten un énfasis en el afecto y las emociones tanto de los lectores como de los personajes. *La dimensión desconocida*, novela histórica, hace que el lector se identifique y empatice con sus protagonistas, mientras que *La resta*, novela alegórica, crea reacciones de choque en el lector a través de los juegos violentos de los niños recordados por los narradores.

Palabras clave: *afecto, emociones, historia, alegoría, dictadura*

La dimensión desconocida (2016) by Nona Fernández and *La resta* (2014) by Alia Trabucco Zerán are recent novels about the memory of the Augusto Pinochet dictatorship (1973-1990) in Chile that use emotions to reconstruct a historical era through memory. The two novels share an emphasis on the affect and emotions of both readers and characters. While *La dimensión desconocida* is a historical novel that invites the reader to identify and empathize with the protagonists, *La resta* is an allegorical novel that provokes the reader to think about history by startling him or her through the narration of the protagonists' violent games.

Keywords: *affect, emotions, history, allegory, dictatorship*

In *Cartografía de la novela chilena reciente: Realismos, experimentalismos hibridaciones y subgéneros*, Macarena Areco, Marcial Huneeus, Jorge Manzi, and Catalina Olea classify the Chilean post-dictatorship novel according to generations of authors and categories of techniques. The authors define four generations of writers, namely the generations of 1972, 1987, 2002, and 2017.

The novels by these writers fall into four broad stylistic/generic categories: realism, experimentalism, the hybrid novel, and the subgenres of science fiction and detective fiction (8-12).

Another critic who attempts to classify novels written during and after the dictatorship is Grínor Rojo. According to Rojo, one hundred and seventy-nine novels that revolve around the period of the Pinochet dictatorship (1973-1990) had been published when his book *Las novelas de la dictadura y la postdictadura chilena: ¿Qué y cómo leer?* appeared in 2016 (12). Rojo defines numerous categories of Chilean dictatorship novels including “Lukácsian novels,” “Romanticism of Disappointment,” “Mimetic Expansionism,” “Censure and Self-Censure,” “Torture,” “Exile,” “Resistance,” “Time of Childhood,” “Vanguard Novels,” “Parodies,” “Science Fiction,” and “Allegory.”

Two of the most recent additions to post-dictatorship novels are Nona Fernández’s *La dimensión desconocida* [*The Twilight Zone*] (2016) and Alia Trabucco Zerán’s *La resta* [*The Remainder*] (2014). On the surface, these two novels appear to reflect on Chilean history in very distinct ways. *La dimensión desconocida* is highly historical in nature, basing most of its characters on an article that appeared in 1985 in the magazine *Cauce*, in which a former torturer for the Pinochet government confessed his actions. In contrast, the characters and the events portrayed in Trabucco Zerán’s novel are largely fictitious, with intermittent references to historical events, such as the 1988 plebiscite in which Chileans voted to end the government of Pinochet.

My thesis regarding these two important novels on the Pinochet dictatorship is that the technique of provoking affect and emotions is employed in the memory and retelling of history by these two “second generation” writers (Hirsch 5) to create reader identification, which in turn allows the reader to better comprehend the historical events that are remembered in the novels. As I illustrate below, affect and emotions are not synonymous, but rather two distinct concepts. Although each of the two novels studied here deploys both affect and emotions, Fernández’s novel relies more heavily on emotions, while Trabucco Zerán’s novel favors the use of affect. The reason I have chosen to analyze these two novels together is because they accentuate how literature can express the essence of historical trauma in ways that history books cannot. This idea is perhaps best expressed by Michael Lazzara, who, in his landmark study of the representation of the dictatorship, *Chile in Transition*, argues:

Art is crucial to the construction of post-dictatorial memory insofar as its unique ability to incorporate silence and the “unsayable” permits a fuller, more direct

engagement with absence than other representational modes. Likewise, a poetic device ... can also function in art to help us feel what is not there. Of course, when I speak of “feeling,” I speak of affect, which raises a related question regarding the role affect can or should play in historical reconstruction. Though some might argue that history (as distinct from memory) relies on our ability to form linear, chronological accounts based on factual evidence ... traumatic experience appears to defy our ability to reconstitute it in a linear fashion. Because there are certain aspects of trauma that cannot be fully apprehended through acts of pure cognition, I am convinced that affect does have a place in the construction of post-dictatorial narratives. (Lazzara 103)

Lazzara points to the common thread shared by these two novels, their focus on affect (used here by Lazzara in the more general sense of feelings). Affect and feelings are both used to recall history in a way that communicates the essence of an era in a non-linear, non-chronological fashion.

Affect theory as a discipline has developed over approximately the last two decades. Among its foundational theorists are the American psychologist Silvan Tomkins and the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze. According to Ernst Van Alphen, who discusses the work of these two theorists in his article “Affective Operations of Art and Literature,” Deleuze defines affect as “an intensity embodied in autonomic reactions on the surface of the body as it interacts with other entities” (qtd. in Van Alphen 23). Similarly, Tomkins uses “density of neural firing” to refer to physiological shifts that individuals experience. These shifts can take the form of an increase, a leveling, or a decrease in stimulation. Depending upon the intensity of neural firing, a person may react with fear, interest, or anger, or by being startled. Affects in themselves are not emotions, although emotions may be attributed to the affects felt by an individual (Van Alphen 24-25). In other words, affects are physiological responses to a phenomenon, while emotions are labels attributed to different affects. For example, a feeling of distress might be the emotional response attributed to a person who experiences a rapid heartbeat. However, the heartbeat itself is an affect or physiological reaction to a situation.

Although all novels produce emotional responses in their readers, this is a secondary characteristic for many novels that does not reflect the novel’s main purpose. Many, if not most, historical novels focus on the complexities of representing historical figures, as is the case of Simón Bolívar in Gabriel García Márquez’s *El general en su laberinto* (1989), or José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia in Augusto Roa Bastos’s *Yo el Supremo* (1974). Although readers may indeed at times identify or feel empathy for these

characters, strategies to produce affects, emotions, and identification are not the principal techniques employed by these novels. For example, Roa Bastos's *Yo el Supremo* employs dialogism and postmodern contradictions between various sources to examine the black legend created around the dictator, which the novel partially debunks. In contrast, both *La dimensión desconocida* and *La resta* are novels that construct memory of the Pinochet era by stimulating affect and emotion in the reader as well as by focusing on the emotions and affects experienced by their characters. *La dimensión desconocida* accomplishes this affective and emotive activation and characterization through various techniques, including the utilization of elements from the television series *The Twilight Zone* (as well as of other cultural artifacts),¹ while *La resta* achieves similar effects through its use of symbolism and allegorical representation. Both novels share the ultimate goal of creating identification between their readers and characters.

According to Walter Kintsch, readers construct what he terms "situational models" during their process of comprehension of literary texts. In other words, when we read, what we read reminds us of past situations, things that we experienced either directly or vicariously. Readers relate what they read to their existing knowledge structures (Gernsbacher 141-42). Morton Gernsbacher has theorized that, in addition to activating temporal and spatial knowledge, these situational models also trigger knowledge about human emotions that helps readers to "build mental representations of fictional characters' emotional states" (143). Gernsbacher conducted experiments on readers that suggest that situational models of emotion are constructed during the reading process. Readers were given two sets of paragraphs to read: one in which the last sentence contained the emotion word evoked by the content of the passage, and one in which the emotion word did not match the emotion stimulated by the content of the passage. Gernsbacher reports his findings as follows:

We predicted that the target sentences would be read more rapidly when they contained matching emotion words than when they contained mismatching emotion words because reading the story would activate information corresponding to the emotional state captured by the matching emotion word ... Subjects read the target sentences considerably more rapidly when they contained an emotion word that matched the emotional state implied in the story as opposed to when they contained an emotion word that mismatched the emotional state implied in the story ... Gernsbacher et al. suggested that these data illustrate the roles that activation of previously acquired knowledge plays in how readers understand fictional character's emotional states. The hypothesis that the ability to understand fictional characters' emotional responses is based on exposure to actual or vicarious

emotional experiences predicts that the more emotional situations a person encounters, the more memory traces are stored, and therefore the more emotional knowledge is available during comprehension. (145-54)

LA DIMENSIÓN DESCONOCIDA

The theories on affect (Tomkins, Deleuze, Van Alphen) and emotion (Kintsch and Gernsbacher) discussed above are useful tools for analyzing *La dimensión desconocida* and *La resta*. In particular, Kintsch's and Gernsbacher's theories help us to understand how Nona Fernández employs the incorporation of the U.S. television series *The Twilight Zone* as a technique to inspire reader identification in her novel *La dimensión desconocida*. Fernández is a Chilean actress and writer who, prior to *La dimensión desconocida*, had published numerous novels that reconstruct aspects of Pinochet's dictatorship. Such works include *Mapocho* (2002), *Space Invaders* (2013) and *Chilean Electric* (2015). In her most recent novel, Fernández incorporates references to at least three episodes of the television program that was popular in her youth.

La dimensión desconocida narrates the disappearance, torture, and murder of several individuals who appear in a torturer's confession published in *Cauce*. The journal *Cauce* was established in 1983 during a period of political openness in the dictatorship. The Minister of the Interior, Sergio Onofre Jarpa, thought that it would be a good idea to allow the publication, which was to express public thought, especially the views of the Social Democrats, as a response to the tense political climate of the era. The journal's eventual goal was to lead to the restoration of democracy in Chile ("Periodismo"). The challenge that Fernández faces is how to make readers comprehend and identify with a practice like torture, as described in *Cauce*. It is difficult for the reader to identify with things which they have probably never themselves experienced. The atrocities portrayed in the novel might seem unbelievable, as if they could never occur in a country like Chile. According to Van Alphen, one of the principal ways in which identification and affect are created in readers is through visualization:

Reading for meaning [allegorical reading] has to leave out a lot to be efficient ... But texts and images are full of details in excess of any allegorical reading. Another textual aspect that is usually neglected in the pursuit of allegorical meaning is powerful physical depictions. Elaborate descriptions enable the reader to visualize a text ... These visualizations can have an especially strong affective impact on the reader. (Van Alphen 26-27)

In addition to highly visual descriptions of the torture suffered by her characters, Fernández gets readers to construct the characters' emotional states through the strategy of likening their experiences to similar episodes of *The Twilight Zone*.² In other words, through movies and television programs, visual media that can portray situations in which viewers never directly engaged, people vicariously participate in feelings and situations that they have never personally encountered. These media serve as bridges that help readers to formulate situational models of characters' emotions. Specifically, Fernández employs the feelings that *The Twilight Zone* episodes evoke, such as surprise, fear, disquiet, unsettlement, to create a form of identification between the feelings of the characters who were subjected to abduction and torture and those of the reader.

TWILIGHT ZONE EPISODES

As the following examples illustrate, Fernández uses *The Twilight Zone* episodes in her novel as a strategy to generate identification and empathy on the part of the reader. If Fernández had simply chosen to include excerpts from the *Cauce* article or other historical documents (which occurs, for example, in other historical novels like *Yo el Supremo*), the reader would not necessarily experience the same connection to the events, and consequently would not achieve such a strong identification with the characters. The familiar television series serves as a bridge between readers and shocking occurrences in order to help readers process actions that might seem very foreign to them. Although children watching the series might have been totally unaware of any political connotations, the main point is not that there is an explicit political connection, but rather that the viewer experiences sensations of disquiet, unsettlement, and unease while viewing the program, and this is equally true for both adults and children.

One of the first episodes that the narrator recalls, is that of Carlos Contreras Maluaje, who threw himself under a moving bus to escape capture and anticipated torture by government officials. This character is documented in the journal *Cauce* as a real-life left-wing activist, without further details about his life, other than this episode. The narrator prefaces this episode by mentioning *The Twilight Zone* and the specific episode featuring Captain Cook [the episode titled "Probe Seven"]:

En los años 70 ... veía los capítulos de la *Twilight Zone* ... *tengo grabado esta sensación de inquietud que me seducía* ... El coronel Cook, viajero en el océano del espacio, con su nave destruida e incendiada, no volverá a volar jamás. Adolorido y asustado, envía mensajes a su hogar para que alguien vaya a su rescate, sin embargo, eso parece

imposible ... un pequeño planeta en el espacio, pero para el coronel Cook es la dimensión desconocida. (Fernández 46-48; emphasis added)

Captain Cook's compatriots cannot act to save him because his country is engaged in a war between good and evil that is on course to lead to its total destruction, a battle that the narrator sees as similar to the one fought in Chile during the dictatorship. The memory of this *Twilight Zone* episode is immediately followed by the narration regarding Contreras Maluaje. One day over lunch, the narrator's mother relates the following story:

Un hombre se había lanzado a las ruedas de un micro ... Dice que de pronto apareció un grupo de personas que lo venían a buscar ... El hombre, cuando vio a estas personas, comenzó a gritar *como si hubiera visto al demonio o un grupo de gnomos* que lo acosaban. Decía que eran agentes de la inteligencia; que se lo querían llevar para seguir torturándolo, que por favor lo dejaran morir en paz ... Un auto apareció y ... subieron al hombre que se fue a desaparecer definitivamente de los límites de la realidad. (49; emphasis added)

In addition to the parallel between Captain Cook and Contreras Maluaje suggested by the juxtaposition of these two episodes, the narrator makes specific reference to *The Twilight Zone* through the phrase "as if he had seen the devil or a group of gnomes who were pursuing him." This reference will evoke in anyone familiar with *The Twilight Zone*, the episode "Nightmare at 20,000 Feet," in which a gremlin (similar to a gnome) appears on the wing of a plane to dismantle it, while a horrified passenger observes his actions.³

A second instance in which the intimation of parallels to a *Twilight Zone* episode is highly significant for eliciting reader empathy and identification is in the construction of the character Carol Flores. Flores, another historical figure, is arrested and tortured along with his two brothers. The narrator informs the reader that Flores turned government informer and became a torturer in order to save his brothers, who were then released.⁴ Ultimately, Flores is murdered by the military for an alleged betrayal.

Fernández likens the segment about Flores to the *Twilight Zone* episode titled "The Four of Us Are Dying." In this chapter of the series, the main character, Arch Hammer, who can make his face change into anything he wants, uses his gift to obtain money. However, at the end of the program, he is killed by a man who mistakes him for his own son. After the narrator describes what happened to Flores, she states:

Recuerdo otro capítulo de la dimensión desconocida. En él un hombre cambiaba de rostro cada vez lo necesitaba. Era el hombre de las mil caras, así le decían ... Si

hubiera estado en Chile en los 70 hubiese sido un feliz trabajador de la municipalidad ... y luego un agente feroz, capaz de torturar y delatar a los suyos. ¿Cuántos rostros puede contener un ser humano? ... ¿Cuántos yo? (Fernández 92)

Fernández's narrator incorporates *The Twilight Zone* as a means of creating identification with the character Carol Flores, despite Flores being a traitor who aligns himself with the torturers. By questioning how many different "faces" any of us has, including herself, the narrator suggests that, under similar circumstances, any of us might have done the same as Flores. Meir Sternberg discusses what he terms primacy and recency effects in characterization. Primacy effects refer to the initial impressions that are created regarding a character, which can be either confirmed or negated by subsequent character development (Sklar 461). Primacy effects establish the first idea that a reader has about a character, so if the primacy effects are strong enough, they may, as in the case of Carol Flores, have greater influence on the reader's opinion than any subsequent information. In other words, the reader's initial positive impression of Flores is not overshadowed by the later negative impression (when he betrays his cause and sides with the enemy), not only because the reader understands his motive (saving his brothers), but also because the initial positive impression was strong enough to counteract the ensuing information.

This technique of creating identification is central to the novel *La dimensión desconocida*. In addition to incorporating *Twilight Zone* episodes, the novel's narrator draws constant parallels between ordinary Chilean citizens and those who were abducted, tortured, and murdered, as well as connections between the reader and these same victims. For example, one of the first atrocities that the narrator describes is the fate of José Weibel Barahona, who disappeared from a bus one morning as he set off to take his children to school. The narrator emphasizes the similarity between that morning in 1976, and a typical morning in her own home, or any home with children, before relating Weibel's disappearance and the ultimate difference between the past and present:

Desconozco como habrá sido la rutina mañanera en la casa de los Weibel Barahona en 1976 ... pero con un poco de imaginación puedo ver esa casa ahí en La Florida y a esa familia comenzando la jornada. No creo que su rutina se haya diferenciado mucho de la que día a día y yo misma ejecuto con mi familia, o de la que día a día todas las familias con niños de este país desarrollan desde hace años ... El 29 de marzo de 1976 a las 7:30 horas, la misma hora en la que mi hijo y su padre se van a diario de nuestra casa, José y María Teresa salieron con sus niños para llevarlos al colegio. (Fernández 30)

The strategy of drawing parallels between the normalcy of the narrator's life and that of the tortured victims before their disappearance is repeated numerous times by Fernández's narrator. She employs this same technique with respect to ambiguous or "gray zone" characters, such as the torturer turned informant who is the axis of the novel. At the beginning of the book the narrator asks:

¿Por qué hablar de un hombre que participó de todo eso y en un momento decidió que ya no podía hacerlo más? ... ¿Qué habría hecho yo si a los dieciocho años, igual que Ud., hubiera ingresado al servicio militar obligatorio y mi superior me hubiera llevado a hacer guardia a un grupo de prisioneros políticos? ... ¿Qué haría mi hijo en este lugar? ¿Tiene alguien que tomar ese lugar? (26-27)

By asking this difficult series of questions, the narrator imagines herself in the place of Andrés Antonio Valenzuela Morales, "el hombre que torturaba," which makes the reader also put him or herself in Morales's place and wonder what he or she might do in a similar circumstance. According to Van Alphen, this type of "idiopathic identification" has great affective power:

Identification makes reading concrete, in the sense that reading is no longer a matter of signifying transactions but of an event that one experiences directly and even bodily ... Some forms of identification are more affectively powerful than others. One form involves taking the other into the self on the basis of (projected) likeness ... idiopathic identification ... Here, the self doing the identification takes the risk of ... becoming like the other. This is both exciting and risky ... but at any rate, affectively powerful ... When we identify with the inner states or ethical dilemmas of a narrator or character, we are no longer reading signs to which we have to attribute meaning, but we are living or experiencing them. (28)

EMPATHY AND SYMPATHY

An important result of “idiopathic identification” as defined above is the creation of reader empathy and sympathy. In other words, the identification of the reader with the characters will likely lead to these emotions. The process of identification, and not the emotions themselves, is risky, because it causes the reader to feel as if he or she is undergoing the same dangerous or difficult experiences as those of the characters. Empathy has been variably defined, as summarized by Howard Sklar:

Social psychologist Lisa Myyry ... suggests that empathy “could be defined as an affective response more appropriate to another’s situation than one’s own.” Similarly, Suzanne Keen ... suggests “we feel what we believe to be the emotions of others.” ... Educational philosopher Nel Noddings proposes ... “I do not project; I receive the other onto myself and I see and feel with the other, I become a duality.” ... Empathy operates as a “chameleon emotion” in the sense that, when we experience it, we take on the emotional experience of the other as our own. (453)

Sklar goes on to distinguish empathy from sympathy. In his opinion, empathy and sympathy are two different processes. While empathy, as we have seen, involves idiopathic identification or a type of fusion with the character, sympathy

involves greater distance between the individual who feels it and the person toward whom it is ... directed ... I have identified the following elements as essential to the definition of sympathy: 1) awareness of suffering as “something to be alleviated”; 2) the judgment that the suffering is unfair; 3) negative, uncomfortable feelings on behalf of the sufferer; 4) desire to help. (Sklar 453)

Although Sklar sees empathy and sympathy as two distinct processes, they are often concurrent and not mutually exclusive in the development of readers’ emotional responses to characters. Jaén’s definition of empathy seems to have much in common with Sklar’s definition of sympathy, suggesting that the creation of empathy and sympathy are intertwined processes. Jaén relies on Jean Decoty’s definition of empathy:

The natural capacity to share, understand, and respond with care to the affective states of others. This definition includes ... the three fundamental steps involved in the affective function of historical memory narratives — feeling with (sharing); feeling for (understanding) and reacting (responding with care) to the affective states of others — embracing a notion of empathy as a complex experience that encompasses feeling (both felt and witnessed) and behavior. (807)

“Feeling with” is clearly what Sklar defines as empathy, while “feeling for” and consequently, ethically responding, coincide with Sklar’s notion of sympathy. In Decoty’s definition, the empathy one feels for a character (the sharing of feelings) ultimately leads the reader to sympathize with that character (understanding the character), which in turn stimulates an ethical response (responding with care) in the reader. This ethical response is the result of the emotive reactions (both empathy and sympathy) that the reader experiences.

MEMORY AND FASCISM

By creating identification, Fernández leads the reader to both empathize and sympathize with her characters. However, eliciting an emotional response in no way detracts from the memory of historical events but is rather a technique employed to ultimately keep ever-present the atrocities of the Pinochet dictatorship. Fernández fuses history and feeling in the novel as a form of political activism that encourages future generations to remember past events, to act ethically in the future and to fight fascism, dictatorship, and authoritarianism in general. According to Sergio Alzate, who conducted an interview with Fernández about *La dimensión desconocida* and *Space Invaders*:

Recuerda e imagina porque sabe que tiene que escribir. Que si nadie más lo hace, ella lo tiene que hacer. Porque hay un boquete oscuro por el que pasa la memoria de su país y ella quiere saber qué fue lo que sucedió, iluminar las esquinas, confrontar a sus compatriotas con el recuerdo del horror para no olvidar y evitar que algo así se repita: “Ha sido en la escritura donde realmente he tomado completa conciencia de lo pasado.” (Alzate)

In another interview with Ivana Romero, Fernández states:

La democracia pactada con los militares el año 90, pactó a la vez con la justicia y pactó también el olvido. Entonces el proceso ha sido lento y voluntarioso. Tenemos la construcción de un relato oficial que cuenta las verdades a medias y que busca tranquilizar conciencias. Y tenemos también la construcción inacabada de un relato que no termina nunca de contarse, y donde todos van aportando fragmentos. La memoria política chilena es un ejercicio en construcción que, probablemente, no tendrá nunca un fin y dejará muchos vacíos, muchos hoyos negros. *La dimensión desconocida*, este libro, es también un intento por aportar y despertar esa memoria colectiva. (qtd. in Romero)

These interviews emphasize the important role of Fernández’s work within the context of novels written about the Pinochet dictatorship. First

generation writers who went into exile during the dictatorship, such as José Donoso, Ariel Dorfman, Antonio Skármeta, and Poli Délano, had different concerns than second generation writers.⁵ The first generation was focused on bringing the atrocities to light, while second generation authors dealt with how the dictatorship is remembered. Fernández points out the need to “awaken collective memory” and “gain consciousness of the past” so that it will not be repeated. These comments imply that there is a segment of the Chilean population that wants to forget what happened or is resistant to the anti-authoritarian message behind her texts. According to Guillermo García-Corales, many writers from this second generation, including Fernández, “revisan las prácticas político-culturales que ... intentan dominar el imaginario colectivo y blanquear u olvidar los episodios más oscuros y traumáticos de la reciente historia nacional. Además, erigen estrategias de sospecha con respecto a la ideología neoliberal posdictatorial que propone la panacea de la estabilidad y el progreso” (3).

Isabel Jaén studies this phenomenon of implied political activism in Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) narratives, with a focus on Dulce Chacón’s novel *La voz dormida* [The Sleeping Voice]. These novels are comparable in many ways to novels of the Chilean dictatorship. Employing Jo Labanyi’s term “haunting,” Jaén explains the historical past as “something that chases us, obsesses us . . . What matters about the past is its unfinished business, which requires critical reflection and action in the present” (806). That explains why Fernández criticizes post-Pinochet neoliberal governments and the continued influence of Pinochet in Chilean politics well after democracy was restored. The author achieves this criticism through three principal techniques: 1) use of the different zones from the Museo de la Memoria Chilena; 2) a parody of the poem “Noticiero 1957” by Nicanor Parra; and 3) the constant juxtaposition of imagination versus memory.

El Museo de la Memoria Chilena was inaugurated January 11, 2010, in Santiago. The museum focuses on the abuses of the Pinochet dictatorship and the subsequent transition to democracy. Miguel Caballero Vázquez argues that the museum was built as a way in which the Concertación government could control the memory of the dictatorship. The Allende government is barely mentioned in the museum, while the Concertación Government [the neoliberal Coalition government of left and centrist parties established upon the transition to democracy] is institutionalized by the museum as the best form of government to ensure future democracy, morality, and the destruction of evil (Caballero Vázquez 514-15).

A compelling example of how Fernández employs the zones of the museum to criticize Chilean politics is found when the narrator and her son arrive at the “Zona Fin de la Dictadura.” The narrator explains to her son

that Pinochet, who caused all the destruction documented in the museum, was also the man who created the new laws for the country after the dictatorship. When her son reacts by laughing in a disconcerting fashion, the narrator states that: "A los 10 años mi hijo se daba cuenta ya de las malas bromas de la historia chilena" (Fernández 41). The narrator satirizes here the continuance of Pinochet's and the right's influence in the Chilean transition to democracy. Similarly, the narrator criticizes the fact that at the end of this section of the museum there is a huge photograph of President Patricio Aylwin (1990-1994), the first president after the Pinochet years, who is thus presented as Chile's savior, even though he initially supported the coup that brought Pinochet to power. Aylwin, then a member of the Christian Democratic party, was "instrumental in the breakdown of the 'Dialogue' between the Unidad Popular government and the Christian Democrats. In August 1973, Patricio Aylwin provided a Green Light to the Chilean Armed Forces led by Augusto Pinochet on behalf of the CD" (Chossudovsky, n.p.).

Toward the end of the novel, Fernández's narrator further emphasizes the absurdity of Pinochet's continued influence as Senator for life through her parody of the poem "Noticiero 1957," by Chilean poet Nicanor Parra. Parra is known for writing irreverent, nihilistic poetry that questioned and criticized traditional institutions. "Noticiero 1957" evokes the notion of absurdity through its juxtaposition of important national and international events with insignificant occurrences during a newscast. Each stanza ends with something trivial that contrasts with serious news, such as "el autor se retrata con su perro" or "Jorge Elliot [a Chilean writer] publica una antología." The fact that these items are mixed in with events like "Terremoto en Irán: 600 víctimas" or "nuevos abusos de los pobres indios/quieren desalojarlos de sus tierras" (Parra 164-67) creates a sense of the absurdity of history. Fernández's narrator achieves this same effect in her parody in which she blends major events from Chilean history since the beginning of the dictatorship with commonplace daily activities. The poem begins with "Golpe Militar en Chile" and contains lines like "Se crea la DINA, Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional" and "Atentado al general Carlos Prats," mixed with verses such as "Entro al liceo, uso por primera vez un uniforme y una lonchera de lata" or "El Chapulín Colorado se presenta en el Estadio Nacional, voy a verlo y llevo mi chipote chillón plástico" (212-25).

Finally, although the narrator repeatedly invites the reader to imagine the feelings and experiences of the tortured victims, there is a constant counterposing of imagination to history which underscores that despite the need to fill in certain details with imagination, what we are reading is a retelling of actual historical events. A typical example is when the narrator

discusses the disappearance of Alonso Gahona: “No imagino, sé que don Alonso Gahona fue trasladado a este lugar. No imagino, sé que cruzó la Puerta del número 037 de la calle Santa Teresa y desde ese mismo momento ingresó a una dimensión de la cual nunca regresaría” (Fernández 99). Despite the immersion in imagining the characters’ feelings, the reader is never left to doubt or forget the connection between the novel and history.

In his study on the memory of the dictatorship, Lazzara astutely notes that: “Chilean artists have confronted disappearance by employing two primary strategies that coexist in a profound dialectical relation: marking the presence and marking the absence” (102). Throughout the novel, Fernández records the absence of the disappeared who are swept up in the “Twilight Zone” – the parallel universe of disappearance, torture, and death that co-existed with “normal” everyday living in Chile during the 70s and 80s. However, Fernández also registers the presence of these individuals in her narratives, describing their photographs, which give a physical concreteness to their existence. The narrator states: “Hay un sector del museo que es mi favorito ... Desde un mirador rodeado de velas ... se pueden ver ... más de mil fotografías de muchas víctimas ... Imágenes protectoras, luminosas que establecen lazos a pesar de los años y la muerte” (Fernández 45). She indicates that by clicking on these images, one can obtain information about each individual. In another instance in the novel, when a lawyer is showing photographs of the disappeared to the former torturer so that he can identify them and provide information, the narrator states: “Cada una de estas fotos es una postal enviada desde otro tiempo. Una señal de auxilio que pide a gritos ser reconocida ... recuerda quien soy, dicen. Recuerda donde estuve, recuerda lo que me hicieron. Donde me mataron, donde me enterraron” (80). Thus, remembering the victims and their suffering, giving presence to their existence, is a fundamental aspect of *La dimensión desconocida*.

LA RESTA

Like Nona Fernández, Alia Trabucco Zerán grew up partly during the Pinochet dictatorship. Although Trabucco Zerán belongs to a younger generation, both writers fit into the category of children of the dictatorship whose memory of the dictatorship in their writing is largely influenced by stories about it from the previous generation. In *The Generation of Postmemory*, Marianne Hirsch explains:

“Postmemory” describes the relationship that the “generation after” bears to the personal, collective, and cultural trauma of those who came before — to experiences they “remember” only by means of the stories, images, and behaviors among which

they grew up. But these experiences were transmitted to them so deeply and affectively as to seem to contribute memories in their own right. Postmemory's connection to the past is thus actually mediated not by real but by imaginative investment, projection and creation. (5)

Trabucco Zerán's novel, *La resta*, although very different in approach from Fernández's, is also centered on the question of affect and feelings. While Fernández emphasizes history, Trabucco Zerán's novel is both symbolic and allegorical.⁶ Moreover, while Fernández appeals to readers' empathy, Trabucco Zerán stimulates affect by startling the reader. Despite some overlap between affect and emotions (affects can stimulate emotions), the fundamental difference lies in the fact that emotions create empathy and sympathy (e.g., identification with characters), while affect simply provokes some sort of visceral reaction in the reader (e.g., being startled, afraid, or angry) to which an emotion is then attributed. The attributed emotion might eventually lead to empathy, but in Trabucco Zerán's novel, affects more often lead to feelings of shock, surprise, and indignation, rather than empathy. These two novels have been paired here because they share this strategy of inducing an uncomfortable sensation in the reader. Although to some degree readers may experience disquiet when reading any novel about a dictatorship that narrates atrocities, most other dictatorship novels tend to focus less on provoking this type of reader reaction than on other aspects of authoritarianism. For example, Augusto Roa Bastos's *Yo el Supremo* concentrates on the motivations of the dictator, while Mario Vargas Llosa's *La fiesta del chivo* examines the psychological effects of dictatorship on the population.⁷ Arturo Fontaine's *La vida doble* and Carlos Franz's *El desierto* focus on the production of Stockholm Syndrome in gray zone characters. In contrast, the main purpose of Fernández's and Trabucco Zerán's novels is precisely to unsettle the reader, whether through processes of identification that create empathy (as in *La dimensión desconocida*) or through allegory and symbolism (as in *La resta*). While Fernández emphasizes the notion of identification to communicate memories of the dictatorship, Trabucco Zerán's novel employs the technique of symbolic and allegorical structures perhaps because they are more indirect and thus better capture her protagonists' relationship to the Pinochet era. Fernández's protagonists were directly involved in events of the dictatorship, either as torturers or victims, while Trabucco Zerán's protagonists are children of Allende supporters who experienced the effects of the Pinochet era more indirectly. Fernández's novel relies heavily on references to historical events and people, while the characters in Trabucco Zerán's novel are purely fictional. Trabucco Zerán also employs symbolism

to evoke the general climate of the Pinochet era in a more non-specific way. The novels, thus, ultimately convey somewhat different messages. Fernández concentrates on the need to remember and contextualize past events so as not to repeat them, while Trabucco Zerán's focuses on how to move on from the Pinochet era.

La resta's two principal narrators are Felipe and Iquela. Both are children of Marxist supporters during the Pinochet years. Throughout the novel both recall events from their childhood. We glean important details from their narration, such as that Rodolfo/Víctor, Iquela's father, was captured by the military and betrayed Felipe's father who was subsequently murdered. A third character, Paloma, the daughter of Iquela's mother's best friend Ingrid, also recalls childhood events. Her parents, Ingrid and Hans, fled the country when Pinochet came to power, and now Paloma is attempting to grant her mother's last wish by returning her body to Chile.

LA RESTA AS ALLEGORICAL NOVEL

In *Cultural Residues*, Nelly Richard describes the important role of art in literature in turning what she terms the "remains" and "residues" of memories that cannot be represented within the "disciplinary framework of philosophy and sociology" into a "poetics of memory" (50). Perhaps not coincidentally, Richard speaks at length of "remainders wrapped in an overabundance of artifice destined to repair the contents of lessness (... enduring violence) with the luxury of a form of more ... with a proliferating and mobile diversity of creative signifiers" (50). Thus, the title of Trabucco Zerán's novel, *La resta* (*The Remainder*) purposefully evokes Richard's notion of the use of creative signifiers to express the violence experienced during the dictatorship. Among these "creative signifiers," Richard highlights the use of the "allegorization of ruins" or allegorical mode, which she examines at length in the novel *El padre mío* by Diamela Eltit. As I similarly argue below, Trabucco Zerán's novel relies on this same allegorical mode (Felipe's cadaver counting and the violent childhood games) to represent the atrocities of the dictatorship and the post-dictatorship struggle to come to terms with them.

Although *La resta* does not employ every characteristic of allegory, it does exhibit at least three of the five major traits of allegorical fiction set out by Angus Fletcher.⁸ The first characteristic, according to Fletcher, is daemonic agency, which he describes as a character identified with a single, obsessive idea: "If we were to meet an allegorical character in real life, we would say of him that he was obsessed with only one idea, or that he had an absolutely one track mind ... I shall therefore use the word "daemon" for any person ... acting as if possessed by a daemon" (40-41).

Fletcher's description fits the character Felipe Arrabal. Felipe is portrayed as a somewhat odd and troubled individual. For example, Felipe kills his pet parrot because he wants to look inside him to understand more about where the parrot's voice comes from. In another instance, Felipe beats Iquela up when she refuses to beat up another student. He does this because he claims that the only way Iquela can recover from her father's death is through inflicting pain on someone else. During the course of the novel, Paloma asks Iquela "¿por qué Felipe era así?" (Trabucco Zerán 173), confirming the impression that the reader already has of Felipe, that he is very strange. There are two elements that make Felipe seem like an "abnormal" person.⁹ The first is his obsessive habit of counting cadavers. This fixation started sometime in Felipe's past, probably due to the atrocities of the dictatorship, and it continues into the present:

Saltaditos: un domingo sí y el otro no, así empezaron mis muertos, ... sorprendiéndome sin falta en los lugares más extraños ... flotando rapidito Mapocho abajo ... entiendo que debo apurarme de una vez por todos, aplicarme para llegar a cero ... ¿Cómo igualar la cantidad de muertos y las tumbas? ¿Cómo saber cuántos nacemos y cuántos quedamos? ¿Cómo ajustar las matemáticas mortales y los listados ¿sustrayendo ... usando la aritmética del fin de los tiempos para así de manera rotunda y terminal, amanecer el último día, apretar los dientes y restar. (11)

Throughout the novel, Felipe obsessively continues to contemplate how to arrive at a zero sum of dead bodies, considering such issues as how to account for disinterred people (a reference to when the body of Chilean poet Pablo Neruda was disinterred in 2013 to see if he had been murdered by the Pinochet government) (101). He does this as a way of coping with the atrocities of the Pinochet dictatorship. The chapter titles reflect this theme; they appear in descending order, from eleven to zero. In contrast, the chapters narrated by Iquela are indicated by "0" with no number. Felipe's obsession makes him a "daemonic agent," pointing to the allegorical functioning of the episodes, in the sense attributed to allegory by Fletcher.

During his cadaver counting, Felipe constantly points to the failure of arithmetic to solve his problem. He repeatedly asks questions such as "¿Qué se hace con los muertos-vivos? ¿Se suman o se restan? ¿Y qué hago cuando llegue a cero? ¿Recuperaremos el equilibrio? ¿Será posible empezar de nuevo? La aritmética es imperfecta" (75). In another instance, when contemplating whether to include Paloma's mother Ingrid, who died of natural causes, in his death count, he wonders: "¿Quién sabe si su mamá estaba contemplada en el censo mortuario y debo restarla o si ya estaba

restada y en ese caso llego a negativo? ... Nunca imaginé tantos problemas, la aritmética es imperfecta" (126).

Felipe's insistence on the failure of arithmetic is an important way in which the novel rejects logic, as well as the factual or historical approach to what transpired under the Pinochet dictatorship. The failure of arithmetical logic coincides with an emphasis on affect, feeling, and emotion in the novel. Arithmetic is normally considered rational and precise, while emotions are irrational and imprecise. By rejecting arithmetic as a solution to how to make sense of so many murders and disappearances and move forward, the novel suggests an affective and allegorical pathway to comprehending the past.

It is also worth noting that Felipe's cadaver counting gives rise to the novel's title, *La resta*. "La resta," which refers to subtraction, is not only a mathematical term, as in Felipe's calculations, but also refers here to "the remainder," or what is left, in this case, the aftermath of the Pinochet dictatorship. Thus, the novel's title, like its techniques, is also symbolic in nature.

Felipe's odd behavior, particularly that of cadaver counting, is one of the many ways in which *La resta* startles the reader, since this is not a typical activity. The presence of cadavers scattered throughout Santiago is likely to shock and perhaps even frighten the reader. In turn, these physiological responses or affects might cause the reader to experience surprise, indignation, and other similar emotions.

Another central way in which affect and allegorical reference to the dictatorship are created in *La resta* is through the aggressive childhood games that are described by both Felipe and Iquela. With the exception of one game in which the two pretended to be their parents, Felipe and Iquela engaged in violent play. The first example is when Iquela recalls how they played a "hanging" game in the backseat of the car:

Felipe susurraba en mi oído. Hagamos algo nuevo, Ique, juguemos al colgado ... dice esa voz infantil ... saca de su mochila uno de sus lápices y un largo pedazo de hilo negro, me toma la mano, mis dedos cortos y regordetes y me dice que los estire bien, Ique, sin moverse. Mi mano inmóvil sobre sus rodillas, palma arriba, mientras Felipe dibuja concentradísimo, puntos negros como ojos, un círculo a modo de nariz y una línea recta para indicar la boca en cada una de las yemas de mis dedos ... Felipe, el elegido, pasa al frente. Saliste tú ... mi mano, mis cinco obedientes *soldados* sostienen el hilo, el largo cordel que mi *ejército* ata con determinación, Ique, más fuerte, apriétalo, dice esa voz ... Hasta ver estancada su sangre, sudando estrangulado, los ojos salidos, el hilo hundido en el primero de los nudillos, una cabeza a punto de estallar y nuestras risas ahogadas. (143; emphasis added)

Recalling Tomkins' definition of rapid neural firing as causing a response of being startled (495-496), one might imagine that this could be a typical reader reaction to this game and to others described by the narrators because they inflicted actual physical pain on one another, which the two seemed to enjoy and which the reader is unlikely to expect during a narration of child play. On a symbolic level, this episode evokes the sadistic pleasure of the torturers during the Pinochet era and fits into Fletcher's allegorical category of symmetrical plots/ double meanings (Fletcher 282-300). The games in which the children torture one another contain a double meaning that refers to the parallel "plot" of the dictatorship. This parallelism is highlighted by Iquela's reference to her fingers as "soldiers" and her "army." A second violent game involves Iquela trying to blind Felipe (Trabucco Zerán 167), while in a third, Felipe scatters rocks on the ground and provokes Iquela: "Carrera de obstáculos, decía provocándome ... mientras yo miraba horrorizada ... cristales, diminutos que resplandecían bajo el sol antes de clavarse en mi piel ... hasta obligarme a parar y rendirme" (260-61). These painful games extend to other children as well. Iquela recounts a scratching game she played with a fellow classmate that once again may serve as an allegory for the violence of the Pinochet era:

Camila, se llamaba, y fuimos compañeras un solo invierno, suficiente para que ella me revelara la competencia de rascarse. Consistía en resistir. Dejar que la otra se rascara el anverso de la mano el mayor tiempo posible. Como la gota de agua que cae persistente sobre la cabeza. Su uña se movía a un ritmo constante. Raspaba, abría ... hasta que bajo su uña ya no quedaba más espacio porque lo invadía mi piel descascarada. Porque mi sangre se amontonaba ... Mi mano tardaba semanas en sanar. (166)

The representation of children's aggressive play during the Pinochet era is an illustration of affects in children stimulated by the threatening and violent atmosphere of the dictatorship. According to Lisa Dion in her book *Aggression in Play Therapy*, aggressive play is a neurobiological reaction (as is affect, as we have seen in the work of Tomkins), that results from memories that arise during play. Dion states:

When we look at aggression from this perspective [neurobiology], we begin to understand that children's biology is attempting to integrate their sympathetic (hyper-aroused) and dorsal parasympathetic (hypo-aroused) states as they work through their traumatic memories and sensations ... Aggression ... is a normal biological response that arises when our sense of safety or our ideas about who we think we are, who others are supposed to be, and how we think the world is supposed to operate are compromised ... The playroom is the children's safe and

contained place for exploring whatever they need to explore to help them feel better. (9-22)

Dion's ideas stem from previous studies on the topic. For example, in the article "Aggressive Toy Play," Jaqueline Jukes and Jeffrey Goldstein define aggressive play to include "mock fighting, rough and tumble play, and/or fantasy aggression" (127). Jukes and Goldstein explore reasons for aggressive play among which they mention that it "affords the child an opportunity to come to terms with war, violence, and death" reflecting "adult behavior and values" (131). Jukes and Goldstein also suggest that aggressive play may be a form of exploring the physical environment within a context of safety: "In play, children explore not only their physical environment but their emotional, social, and cultural environments also. According to Dolf Zillmann, play is a means for achieving emotional and physiological self-regulation." (137-39). Finally, Elenor Palmer Bonte and Mary Musgrove, who conducted a study of children's play in Hawaii during World War II, found that war play occurred extensively among kindergarten children whom she observed.

Thus, the violent play described in *La resta* can be seen as both an imitation of the violence experienced during Felipe and Iquela's childhood, and an attempt on their part to work through the trauma of that violence. On a larger scale, this is what the novel as a whole attempts to do: to come to terms and move past the trauma caused by the Pinochet dictatorship. Later in the novel, we learn that Felipe and Iquela had a tacit agreement never to speak of certain things they had overheard as children, such as the fact that Iquela's father had betrayed Felipe's father to the government, an act that resulted in his death. Thus, their participation in these activities does not necessarily imply that they themselves subscribe to violent values, but rather, that they were trying to deal with the stories of the dictatorship through play. Indeed, the novel suggests that the two are attempting to break free from this violent past identified with their parents. This can be observed at the very end of the novel when each rejects his/her parental past.

A series of episodes revolving around same-sex relationships is a third way in which readers may experience a physiological response of being startled. On one occasion, Felipe encounters another man while cadaver counting, who tells him that he has a "lindo pecho" (Trabucco Zerán 105). After a brief discussion in which Felipe asks him if he has seen the cadavers, the two have a sexual encounter that is graphically described in the novel (108-09). Similarly, *La resta* includes a sexual relationship between Iquela and Paloma (174).

In an interview in 2019, Trabucco Zerán commented on the importance of these same-sex relationships in *La resta*:

The three characters have sexual encounters with same sex partners. When I ask about this she replies: "I'm glad you mention the queerness of the characters because that is something that is not very commented on in Chile, especially because it's something that is still taboo. The three characters have a queer relationship with their bodies and with the others because it gave them the desire to transgress and for me that made them a lot more complex and different than their parents' generation." (Rothlisberger)

Thus, for many readers, the description of these sexual relationships may elicit a response of being startled that may then be associated with emotions of disgust or distaste. These are the same emotions experienced by children of the dictatorship. The important point is that Trabucco Zerán signals how these passages are a form of transgression that symbolizes the desire of the children of those who lived during the dictatorship to rebel against their past and move on to a different future. This tendency can be seen in both Felipe and Iquela.

Iquela is shown to have a somewhat problematic relationship with her mother throughout the novel. At the very beginning, she indicates the memory of the 1988 plebiscite in Chile was not her own memory, but one that was foisted on her by her mother (Trabucco Zerán 15). Later on, when Paloma convinces Iquela not to inform her mother about their trip to Mendoza to recover Ingrid's corpse, which was diverted there when a volcanic ash storm hit Santiago,¹⁰ Iquela imagines a conversation with her mother in which she says: "¿por qué Mendoza, por cuánto tiempo? Exactamente cuánto, Iquela, no me mientas. Que es lo tan importante, diría, si todo lo que tú haces es perder el tiempo. Tanto tiempo perdido" (139-40). Iquela refuses to return to Santiago and to her mother with Paloma, remaining in Mendoza, while Felipe drives the hearse back to Santiago. Iquela is seeking to free herself from the past, which can be seen as an act of rebellion against her mother, as symbolized by the birds described in the following passage:

Vi muy cerca de nosotras, iluminados por los focos de la camioneta, a decenas de pájaros preparando su vuelo, sus alas encendidas por esa luz ... Mi cabeza comenzó a sacudirse de lado a lado, negándose ... y la [a Paloma] vi partir sin más, dejando frente a mí ... la perfecta sincronía de los pájaros en vuelo, desprendiéndose de la tierra en medio de un arrullo desconocido, un rumor que estalló de pronto en una algarabía incontenible. (278-79)

In a similar manner, Felipe asserts his difference from his father. First, when his grandmother Elsa used to tell him that his eyes were just like his father's he would say "no, eso es mentira ... No tengo los ojos de ningún papá, mis ojos son míos ... Eso soy, hijo de mí mismo" (256). Second, at the novel's end, Felipe imagines that he is like a bird who can fly away and be reborn: "Corro por el centro como corren las aves grandes ... arde Santiago completo y son sus llamas que alumbran ... mientras me nazco a mí mismo, mientras me engendran las llamas, debo quemar el aire con mi voz ... con mi cifra, menos uno, menos uno, menos uno" (276). In Felipe's imagination, he is reborn, while the old Santiago, site of the destruction caused by the dictatorship, goes up in flames. Moreover, his new number "menos uno" (minus one, no longer zero), suggests that he is one less person held under the influence of the past. This is the "remainder" alluded to by the novel's title, *La resta*.

In addition to the double meanings, a third allegorical element defined by Angus Fletcher is a symbolic battle or questing journey: "There is usually a paradoxical suggestion that by leaving home the hero can return to another better 'home.' Self-knowledge is apparently the goal" (151). In *La resta*, the questing journey takes the form of a road trip in search of Ingrid's body. Paloma, Iquela, and Felipe travel in a hearse across the border to Mendoza and eventually locate the body in an airport hangar. The following passage narrated by Felipe suggests a symbolic association between the corpses found in the hangar and those disappeared and murdered during the dictatorship: "Eran decenas. No, muchísimos más. Cientos de ataúdes ... Cientos de muertos queriendo volver, retornar, repatriarse" (Trabucco Zerán 235). Ingrid's missing body is undoubtedly a symbol of the disappeared, and when the journey results in finding her corpse and returning it to Chile, this act symbolizes the putting to rest of the past that the protagonists Felipe and Iquela seem to desire. Also, as we have already seen, both Iquela and Felipe appear to find themselves, their own identity and freedom at the end of the novel as a result of this journey to Mendoza.

Felipe's cadaver counting, Felipe's and Iquela's aggressive play as children, and the discovery of multiple bodies in the airport hangar, are all symbolic elements designed to cause a physiological reaction, to startle or frighten the reader. These episodes stimulate these affects in the reader, that in turn lead to emotions such as surprise or indignation. Just as the characters need to experience these affects and emotions in order to come to terms with them and move on from the dictatorship, the reader can better understand the effects of that historical era by experiencing the same affects and emotions as those of the characters. This results in a form of identification of the reader with the characters, similar to the

identification already discussed in Fernández's novel, but achieved through affect rather than emotion.

While Nona Fernández's novel considers aspects of the Pinochet dictatorship that have been less focused on by other postmemory works, such as the viewpoint of the torturer, Alia Trabucco Zerán's *La resta* fits into a more traditional category that examines the effects on the victims. According to Ana Ros, in her 2012 book *The Post-Dictatorship Generation in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay*, "we know very little about the memory and perspective of those soldiers and officers who, in spite of being part of the military, did not identify with the regime and the repression and were caught in the middle of the conflict" (205). Fernández has illuminated this area to some degree by making the historical figure of "el hombre que torturaba" (Andrés Antonio Valenzuela Morales) the axis of *La dimensión desconocida*. In contrast, *La resta* inscribes itself within what María Angélica Franken Osario refers to as "relatos ficcionales con protagonistas infantiles y juveniles" (206), albeit with a twist. Although there are many flashbacks and recollections of when Felipe and Iquela were children, they are young adults in the novel and the principal focus is on how they negotiate their identity within the framework of memories of the past. Although Fernández's novel is historical and Trabucco Zerán's is symbolic and allegorical, both succeed in creating affective and emotional reactions in their readers that ultimately lead to a greater identification of the reader with the characters portrayed in these works as well as a more profound comprehension of the historical events that inspired them. While Fernández's readers are stimulated to feel the emotions of empathy and sympathy for her characters, Trabucco Zerán's readers undergo affects of being startled, shocked, and afraid, paralleling the physiological reactions of Felipe, Iquela, and Paloma. Indeed, the emphasis on the role of affect and emotion in recalling history in these novels might constitute a new category of works that has not been previously defined in existing studies on the Chilean dictatorship novel discussed in the introduction to this article.

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NOTES

- 1 In addition to *The Twilight Zone*, Fernández makes use of Billy Joel's (1989) music video "We Didn't Start the Fire" to describe events in Chile over the past fifty years. Fernández's narrator describes how flames come through the window and surround Billy Joel who is playing his drums in a kitchen in the

video, an image inspired by the lines of the song: “we didn’t start the fire, no we didn’t light it, but we tried to fight it.” The narrator comments that the flames burn everything “porque no hay cocina, en ninguna parte del mundo, en ninguna época, que se salve del fuego de la historia” (Fernández 212).

- 2 An example of a highly effective visual description that creates an affective reaction in the reader is the description of the death of Yuri (Alonso) Gahona on pages 107-108. The narrator vividly describes how, after being tortured with an electric current, Yuri suffered a horrible thirst. Left hanging in a bathroom shower, he opened the faucet to drink. The water ran all night, and in the morning, he was found dead from pneumonia.
- 3 Fernández’s narrator refers to at least two other *Twilight Zone* episodes. When she is watching the documentary on the Vicariato de la Solidaridad, her feelings are likened to those of Barbara Jean Trenton, the main character of *The Twilight Zone* episode titled “The Sixteen Millimeter Shrine.” The narrator also makes reference to another supposed *Twilight Zone* episode in which a man finds a book that forbids its reading because whoever reads it will die (207). I have been unable to find any *Twilight Zone* episode that corresponds to this plot, but Fernández’s narrator uses it to create a parallel with an episode in the novel in which a friend of the *Cauce* journalist who is supposed to bring a copy of the article to the *Washington Post* breaks his promise not to read it, resulting in a chain of events that leads to the deaths of several individuals in Chile. Perhaps it was inspired by the *Twilight Zone* episode “The Library,” which also deals with forbidden reading, but which is quite different in its development.
- 4 In the *Cauce* article we are never told why Flores turned informant and this is part of Fernández’s representation of the character in the novel.
- 5 Jaime Collyer provides an excellent overview of the different generations of Chilean writers from the time of Allende’s government to about 2008. See “Narrativa que resurge de las cenizas.”
- 6 I am using the term allegorical according to the definition of allegory provided by Angus Fletcher and discussed at length here. Since allegory is an extended metaphor that often points to political situations, there are also symbolic associations contained within the overarching allegory of the Pinochet era in *La resta*. In contrast to Van Alphen’s use of the term “allegorical” to mean a literal reading, I am employing allegory in the more traditional sense.
- 7 For this interpretation of Vargas Llosa’s novel see Weldt-Basson, “Mario Vargas Llosa’s *La fiesta del chivo*.”
- 8 According to Fletcher, the five characteristics of allegory are: daemonic agency (a character who is identified with a single, obsessive idea); the use of a cosmic image (kosmos) for both decorative purposes and also to evoke an intense emotional response; a journey or battle; a suspension of disbelief in magic

- often associated with accidental events that suggest supernatural intervention; symmetrical plots or dualistic themes.
- 9 There are numerous instances in which Felipe acts oddly that include killing his parrot to find where inside his voice comes from (Trabucco Zerán 53), feeding sleeping pills to the chickens (80-81), undressing in public (147), and swallowing the cow's eye that the students were given to dissect during science class (205).
 - 10 Note that the description of the volcanic ash storm raining down on Santiago may be another symbol of the tragic occurrences during the Pinochet dictatorship.

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