

Dissertation Title:

***Memory Performances
at a Memorial Heritage Site:
The Case of the Guided Tours at The
Museum of Memory and Human Rights,
Chile.***

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the memory performances that take place during the Museum of Memory and Human Rights (MMHR) guided tours. It proposes that guided tours at the MMHR are spaces of memory performances, that is, as democratic platforms for the unfolding of memories and experiences, transforming the Museum into a forum where visitors create, articulate, join, connect and expand their memories. The main question that guides this research is: What kinds of memory performances take place at the MMHR's guided tours? The findings suggest that there are three different kinds of memory performances: performances of knowledge, of power, and of emotion. Thus, these results demonstrate that visitors and guides actively appropriate the Museum's narrative, that guided tours provide a space for memory performances, and that the MMHR is open for discussion, debate and display of power and emotions, rather than being an empty space determined by its official discourse. This proposal was tested through fieldwork (interviews, participant observation of guided tours, field notes) and an autoethnographic approach based on my own experience as a former tour guide at the MMHR. The research also aimed to create a critical dialogue between the field of Critical Heritage Studies and other fields such as Critical Museology, Performance Studies, Tourism Studies, and Cultural Memory Studies. These different fields illuminate heritage by offering critical perspectives on how the Museum of Memory and Human Rights importance resides not only in its permanent exhibition, but also in the way its narrative is actively negotiated, appropriated and contested by visitors' and guides' different performances in the context of the guided tours. The main conclusion of this dissertation is that visitors, guided tours, guides and the Museum are active agents in the creation of meaning, rather than containers or passive recipients of pre-established discourses.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1. Research Question and Aims

In this thesis I will explore the Museum of Memory and Human Rights (hereafter MMHR/the Museum) guided tours as spaces of memory performances, that is, as democratic platforms for the unfolding of memories and experiences, a forum where visitors create, articulate, join, connect and expand their memories.

The Museum is located in the Quinta Normal neighbourhood in Santiago, Chile, and was inaugurated on the 11th of January 2010 by President Michelle Bachelet. Its mission is to demonstrate the systematic human rights violations committed during the seventeen years of Military Regime (1973 – 1990), in addition to paying homage to the victims of political repression (Brodsky 2011; Sepúlveda 2011; Scantlebury 2010). The Museum's narrative is based on the two Truth Commissions that were established after the fall of the Regime. These Commissions resulted in two reports: the Rettig Report ([1990] 1996) and the Valech Report (2004). Truth Commissions are non-judicial and autonomous institutions established for the purpose of investigating, documenting and shedding light on the systematic human rights violations committed during specific periods of time (González and Howard 2013, 13).

The Museum's construction began in November 2008, and it was inaugurated in record time only two years later (Sepulveda 2011, 17). Its architecture borrows several elements from other emblematic memorial spaces, such as Maya Lyn's Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin. The building is characterised by a horizontal structure that rises over two platforms. The Museum's soft and pacific colours (light blue and green) and glass-made walls celebrate the current democratic governments in contrast to the dictatorship's excessive secrecy (see Lagos 2011, 38; Lazzara 2011, 65 – 66; Scantlebury 2010) (See Figure 1).

Figure 1. The Museum of Memory and Human Rights, Chile (source: Red Noticias 2015).

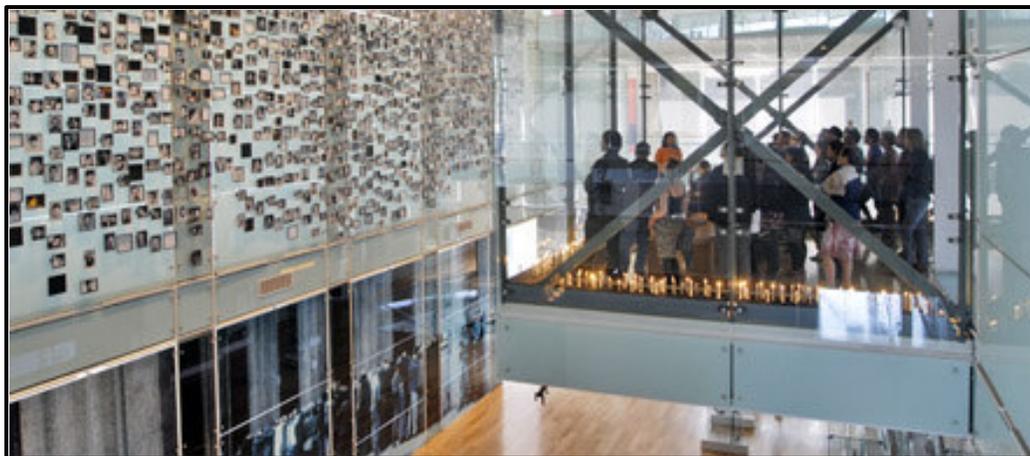


As the leader of the team behind the Museum told me, Chile had never seen such a cultural endeavour in such a short time. For Winn and Stern, the Museum's fast and effective realisation demonstrates how this project was seen as a tool not only to clean up the State's image in regards to human rights violations, but also as a way to celebrate the *Concertación's* 20-years rule (the political coalition that defeated Pinochet in the 1988 plebiscite and governed the country until 2010) (2014, 273). In 2009, president Bachelet decided that the Museum would be a private foundation run by a board of fifteen people coming from different political and academic backgrounds and headed by an executive director (Winn and Stern et. al 2014, 275; Sepúlveda 2011, 20; Interview with the Museum's Director).

In this study, I intend to demonstrate that the Museum's importance resides not only in its permanent exhibition, but also in the way its narrative is actively negotiated and appropriated by visitors and guides. I aim to raise new perspectives on the Museum's visitors, guides and tour guides, and connect my findings to wider Critical Heritage approaches. In this sense, I build on the theoretical approaches of Performance Studies and Tourism Studies to establish a critical dialogue with Critical Cultural Heritage Studies and Cultural Memory Studies. The dialogue between these different fields enables the study of heritage as a cultural platform of exchange, communication and creation (Smith 2006, 1). Consequently, the Museum can be seen as a heritage space where visitors and tour guides produce actions that constantly modify and renew it, that is why the main purpose of this research is to investigate what kinds of memory performances take place

in the Museum's guided tours. The idea of 'memory performances' refers to the deployment and staging of narratives that shape the individual memories of the people who visit the Museum, reflecting visitors' active and critical appropriation of the official discourse (Bagnall 2003; Jonasson and Scherle 2012; Larsen and Widtfeldt 2013; Overend 2012; Williams 2013) (See Figure 2). Three different kinds of performances - which derive from my own investigation - were analysed in this study: performances of knowledge, performances of power, and performances of emotion. These categories arise from this research and signify my personal contribution to the field of Critical Heritage Studies and memorial museums. These performances imply an understanding of visitors and tour guides as active agents in the creation and appropriation of individual and official memories and meanings in a museum context (Falk and Dieking 1992; Hooper-Greenhill 2006, 2000, 1994; Hein 1998).

Figure 2. Guided tours at the MMHR (source: Museo de la Memoria, n/d)



1.2 Connection to Critical Heritage Studies and General Framework

From the field of Critical Heritage Studies and Museum Studies, museums are understood as “dramatic fields”, that is, as cultural platforms in which visitors, curators, professionals and academics externalise and communicate their identities, and where meanings are constantly being contested (Bouquet 2004, 179; Sharon 2006, 2). For Susan A. Crane, “a museum is a cultural institution where individual expectations and institutional, academic intentions interact, and the result is far from a one-way street” (2004, 304). Currently, museum professionals and academics are beginning to see this communication model between the different actors that interact within the museum as a

“new ‘dialogical’ model in which heritage is seen as emerging from the relationship between people, objects, places and practices” (Harrison 2013, 4). This new model has been termed by Hooper-Greenhill as an “interpretive model” that focuses on negotiations of meaning inside the Museum (2006, 364). Under this perspective – that goes beyond the exhibition’s discursive analysis or the exclusive focus on exhibited objects – heritage and museums are seen as

“a mode of cultural production that has recourse to the past and produces something new [in the present]...[therefore] heritage is created through metacultural operations that extend museological values [...] to living persons, their knowledge, practices, artefacts” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004, 199).

In this sense, museums and “[heritage]sites are not just “read” and visited by tour groups, but also “written” and performed” (Overend 2012, 46). Consequently, my critical approach to museums, heritage, visitors and guides goes beyond the common understanding of ‘audience studies’ that focus their attention on quantitative methods of research and measurements such as satisfaction, frequency, and visitors’ needs. Quite the opposite, my approach is qualitative in so far as I am interested in how people create a ‘cosmology’ at the museum; how they make use of it, appropriate it, and transform it into a social platform of interchange and communication (see Butler 2007, 26; Macdonald 2002).

The concept of performances allows me to expand knowledge beyond the already well used criteria of the ‘never again’, ‘reconciliation’ and ‘symbolic reparation’. The ‘never again’ refers to the idea of avoiding human rights violations in the future through the education of the consequences of intolerance (Jelin 2005). However, the ‘never again’ is only accomplished if there is ‘reconciliation’, that is, the harmonious coexistence between the different parts involved in the conflict (Phelps 2006, 94; Levy and Sznajder 2002, 101). Lastly, ‘symbolic reparation’ has to do with the acts of moral and symbolic restitution of dignity – through memorials, museums, homage - from society (and the State) towards victims of human rights violations (Valech 2004, 615 – 619). These categories are part of the official State discourse, and in fact, the Museum is a State initiative in order to morally repair and dignify victims (Brotsky 2011, 9). In my opinion, the Museum’s impact should not be measured only in terms of these categories that come from the same official policies that created it. On the contrary, through the concept of ‘memory performances’, I

argue, following Williams, that “the source of their wealth [referring to memory museums] is contained in the stories entrusted to them...as both places of private mourning and public ceremony” (2007, 184), and not in pre-established values of ‘never again’, ‘reconciliation’ and ‘reparation’, concepts which are still very much contested and questioned, especially by victims’ relatives. Moreover, I am interested in going a step further than Williams’ statement about memorial museums as places of public ceremony, by adding the importance of the guided tour as the space in which those performances take place most prominently, and by highlighting not so much the role of the objects, but the role of the guide and the visitor in the production of these performances.

As Williams has noted, a memorial museum is a “specific kind of museum dedicated to a historic event commemorating mass suffering of some kind” (2007, 6). The memorial museum not only represents one or various kinds of memories, but also serves as a memorial itself enabling the victims’ homage and tribute, that is, a place where relatives can mourn, remember and dignify their loved ones. I employ Williams’ terminology of ‘memorial museum’ instead of ‘memory museum’ because I would regard every museum as a kind of ‘memory’ repository, representing a national, communal or historical memory. In other words, every museum displays some kind of memory (Crane 2000; Williams 2007). However, not every museum has a ‘memorial’ function, a place to pay tribute to victims of tragedy or mass genocides. For instance, the MMHR’s mission is to pay homage to the more than 40,000 people who lost their lives during the Military Regime (1973 – 1990). Furthermore, despite the fact that the Museum calls itself the Museum of Memory (rather than of *Memories*), I am interested in knowing what happens with the different memories that operate within the guided tours. Hence, my approach is not in its exhibition, or in its official discourse and objects of display, but it is in the problem of how visitors and guides build and elaborate the Museum’s narrative through their performances.

Memorial museums contradict the traditional museum logic of being examples of glorious and admirable identities (Williams 2007, 102). Instead, they reveal the flaws and fissures of national histories, and everything that history has tried to darken in order to highlight a one way progress development without genocides or bloodbath smears (Williams 2007, 160). Certainly, this makes them exceptional places for reflection and awareness about the past and the present, but at the same time they become suitable places for controversies, debates and confrontations (Carter & Orange 2011, 2012; Duffy

2001). As memory forums, memorial museums are pierced by disagreements about what to represent, how to exhibit, why, where and to whom they belong (Williams 2007; Carter and Orange 2011, 2012; Lazzara 2011, 56; Huyssen 2003, 99; Scantlebury 2010).

These memory struggles also expose that memorial museums are far from being places of inclusion, diversity and pluralism of perspectives. The fact that they are engaged in the promotion and defence of human rights does not make them automatically museums *of* human rights, and that is, perhaps, one of their main paradoxes (Purbrick 2011, 168). Many memorial museums can hide political aims, official and partial narratives, and can disguise certain human rights violations in terms of relieving others, or even, they can present narratives of national exaltation under the motto of 'never again' (Young 1993, 14).

In this introductory chapter I have presented my research question, aims, and given a brief overview of the literature and conceptual framework related to Critical Heritage, performances and memorial museums. The following chapters are structured in the following way: in the second chapter I examine the literature and conceptual frameworks around cultural memory, performance, guided tours and visitors. In the third chapter, I present the methods and methodology used in the collection and analysis of data. In the fourth chapter, I introduce the case study of the MMHR and provide a historical context for the 'memory question' in Chile (Stern 2009; 2010). In chapter five I present and examine the research findings around memory performances in guided tours, which are organised in performances of knowledge, performances of power, and performances of emotion.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

In this chapter I thoroughly examine the literature review and conceptual frameworks around the fields of Memory Studies, Performance Studies, guided tours and visitors, offering the foundations to understanding the different memory performances that take place at the MMHR's guided tours.

2.1 Literature on Cultural Memory

This study takes a "‘memorial approach’ as a starting point to chart out ‘alternative’ or ‘parallel heritages’" (Butler 2006, 471). This means that my focus is not on heritage as comprised of objects or displays, but on heritage constituted and understood as the actions, social practices, visitors' and guides' interactions and appropriations of the

museum space through their memory performances. Hence, Performance Studies – a field that will be introduced later - becomes a useful tool to understanding heritage more as a cultural/social practice than as a physical place or object.

This approach apprehends memory as a narrative of a past experience, of great historical and personal significance, and always built in the present (Radstone 2000; Huyssen 2003, 102). In Deleuze's words, "memory does not apprehend the past directly; it recomposes it with different presents" ([1964] 2000, 57). The creation of memory narratives in the present has to do with the fact that "we have no knowledge of past *people* except through present people; we have no way of knowing others except through ourselves" (Ingold 1996, 212, in Butler 2006, 471). In this sense, the past - and therefore memory - is always a present construction, "the very ground on which, in which, with which we stand, move and otherwise interact; out of which we continually regenerate ourselves in relations with others" (Feeley-Harnik, in Ingold 1996: 216, in Butler 2006, 472).

The construction of the past also involves the concept of 'liminality': memory is not exclusively individual, nor exclusively social (Hodgkin and Radstone 2003, 12). This means that shared personal memories provide frameworks of meaning in which individual stories are moulded (Halbwachs 1992)

The 'social' component of memories are manifested not only in how they provide frameworks of meaning, but also in the importance of 'sharing' and externalising to another person *my* memory about *my* past (Lechner and Guell 1998, 2). For Hodgkin and Radstone, this situation functions as a

"decentring of the subject, perhaps, and a reminder also that memory is social. Detached from the self who remembers, memory can become a property to be inherited and passed on, continuing to function in the minds of others" (2003, 10).

This phenomenon relates to the concept of 'intergenerational transmission' of memory: the process of communication, dialogue and appropriation of memory from one generation to another (Hite 2012, 19). Another concept worth noting is 'learned memory'. While I have not found literature on the subject, two of my interviewees suggested the idea of a 'learned memory' at the MMHR. This concept has to do with how new generations learn to react in specific ways and feel certain emotions when they deal with the traumatic

past. Thus, a child learns to mourn the disappearance of a grandfather whom he never met, or a young person learns to hate Pinochet's dictatorship even though he did not experience it. 'Learned memory' resembles Hirsch's idea of 'postmemory', although this concept is more particularly associated to post-holocaust generations (Hirsch 2001).

Memory is also articulated in narrative; it needs a 'speech' to be tangible, representable or sociable. For Young, "memorials provide the sites where groups of people gather to create a common past for themselves, places where they tell their constitutive narratives, their "shared" stories of the past" (1993, 7). Memorial museums are, in this sense, spaces 'of' and 'in' construction; they provide the physical environment and specific tools (e.g. guided tours, activities) for social interaction so that the construction of memory narratives can take place (Sather-Wagstaff 2011, 20, 31, 49, 51).

2.2 Literature on Performance

From an anthropological perspective, the concept of performance is essential to examining the ways in which visitors and guides appropriate the Museum and its discourse. One of the first and most prominent Performance Studies researchers was Victor Turner (1982), who since the early 1960s suggested that all societies have some degree of dramatisation (in their initiation rituals, ceremonies, exorcisms), establishing "points of contact" between anthropological and theatrical thought" (Komitee, S. (n/d), 5). In the last twenty years, this perspective has been expanded as something that includes different and various social acts (daily life, interactions) (Komitee, S. (n/d). This idea of performance comes from Richard Schechner (2002), a pioneer in performance studies. He was one of the first to define performances as an "interdisciplinary, intercultural" field of study focusing on actions and behaviours, with a "dedicated focus on the "repertory," namely, what people do in the activity of their doing it" (Schechner [2002] 2013, 1). In this sense, he states that "any action that is framed, enacted, presented, highlighted, or displayed is a performance" (Schechner [2002] 2013, 2).

In the same vein, but focusing on Gender Studies, Butler (1998) argued that performances are not essential or pre-set; rather, they are acts guided by social expectations. This perspective owes much to Erving Goffman, who in his book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959) stated, similarly to Turner (1983), that daily life "bears a dramatic structure" to the extent that through our actions we fulfil certain roles which are reaffirmed by our audience (family, friends, etc.) (Komitee, S. (n / d), 10). For

Goffman, then, daily life has a lot of "theatre": "every facet of social reality [is] to be seen as a performance, constructed through behaviours, actions and events" (Komitee, S. (n/d), 11).

Austin (1962), however, developed the concept of performance furthermore. According to this philosopher and linguist, "certain kinds of speech, too, are like performances" (Komitee, S. (n / d), 11). This means that the act of talking is not only an act of transmitting information, but also it "do[es] something; they create or usher in a new state of affairs" (Komitee, S. (n/d), 11), and he termed these processes "speech acts". In this dissertation, what visitors and guides say in the guided tour context will be regarded as 'speech acts', that is, as performances.

In the fields of Museum Studies and Critical Heritage Studies, there are two ways of understanding performances: as re-enactments and theatrical performances (Jackson and Kidd 2010; Magelssen 2007), or a more extensive activity where "anything, including everyday behaviour may be studied as if it were performance" (Williams 2013, 116). In this study I examine performance by blending aspects of both approaches (the ritual or theatrical aspect, and the daily aspect), in view of the fact that performances taking place inside the Museum, especially in the tours, have a lot of ritual, and theatrical aspects, as well as everyday (casual) aspects (see Bagnall 2003; Bridal 2004; Hugues 1998; Jackson and Kidd 2007).

To Schieffelin (1998), anthropologists have always had difficulty in conceptually defining the idea of performance, mainly because it is a human action that creates 'presences' and transforms people (a phenomenon which is not always easy to measure or observe). In his words:

"performances, whether ritual or dramatic, create and make realities vivid enough to beguile, amuse or terrify [that is, create presence]. And through these performances, they alter moods, social relations, bodily dispositions and states of mind" (Schieffelin 1998, 194).

In the case of the MMHR, visitors' performances make present the different accounts about the past, and it is that same 'presence' that alters and promotes the perspectives of others.

Material Culture Studies have analysed how performances transform individuals into active agents and subjects, moving away from the view that considers them as passive recipients or 'objects'. For Mitchell:

“Each transformation...involves the intersection/interaction of the material and the conceptual; but the material things – bodies, things and space – are not treated here as objects. Rather...they become subjects within the performative deployment” (2006, 399).

Kuhn (2012) has referred to the specific relationship between memory and performance with the concept of performative memory. While this concept is more closely linked to the use of photographs, the idea is useful for this study because it defines memory performances as “dynamic, interactive, and therefore potentially changing” and contested “re-enactment processes” (Kuhn 2012, 303). This view takes into account memory work as an active process of resignification in the present, where critical thinking plays a pivotal role: “memory work is an active practice of remembering that takes inquiring attitudes towards the past and the activity of its (re) construction through memory” (Kuhn 2012, 303).

Within Museum Studies, Casey (2003) has identified the existence of three types of museums (one type which refers to 'the performative museum'). First, she describes the 'legislative museum', which is characterised by the traditional display of objects and the transmission of concepts through an uncontested narrative (Casey 2003, 4). Today, she argues, this paradigm has been replaced by the 'interpretive museum', which is interested in the plurality of meanings and interpretations, and where the museum is no longer the unquestioned "temple" that it used to be (Casey 2003, 6). Finally, she refers to a more recent phenomenon: the 'performative museum'. In this kind of museum, knowledge is directly related to visitors' background, and their own appropriation processes are ultimately enhanced. Krishenblatt-Gimblett (2002) describes this museum practice as "performing museology". This “'performance' goes beyond employing interactive tools and multimedia technologies to engage visitors. Storying and sequencing combine with entertaining re-enactments and recreations to execute the Museum's didactic mission” (Casey 2003, 9). In my opinion, however, Casey's idea of 'performative museum' focuses exclusively on displays and the interaction between exhibitions and visitors, instead of focusing on the interactions between visitors themselves. In her article, the concept of performance is limited to how the museum, through its objects and displays, has become

more performative, but does not investigate how visitors are co-creators and participants of these performances. Therefore, I think that the idea of 'performative museum' should be extended not only to how exhibits become more performative, but also examine how visitors build these performances inside museums. I also think that the distinction between legislative, interpretive and performative disguises the fact that these different kinds of museums are diffuse and have always interacted with each other. I think all museums have some legislative, interpretive and performative elements (see Lindauer 2007, 306). In fact, however conservative, traditionalist and unilateral a museum can be, visitors never cease to become performative agents of their own agendas, opinions and views in regards to the display and other visitors (Miles & Tout 1994).

To illustrate this point, I believe that the MMHR has a lot of legislative (through the Truth Commissions), but also interpretive (by representing the victims' neglected voice) and performative (in the way guides and visitors appropriate the Museum space and discourse) aspects. So far, research on the MMHR has focused only on its legislative aspect, thoroughly discussing its history of creation, rationale and its official narrative (see Lazzara 2011; Lagos 2011; Mallea 2011). Thus, this approach has overestimated the power of its official speech, bypassing the active appropriation, performances and encounters between visitors and guides. This dissertation aims to fill this gap by raising the need to understand the Museum more like a forum which constantly creates meaning rather than a pre-established space.

2.3 Literature on Guided Tours

Guided tours can be defined as social spaces for the deployment and communication of knowledge, testimonies and narratives that takes place in museums and heritage sites, usually between guide and visitors (Jonasson and Scherle 2012; Overend 2012; Williams 2013). But this definition hides more complex elements: the guided tour is also a performance space; a space for passivity and activity; for social interactions; where power relations unfold (see Katriel 1997; Larsen and Widtfelt 2013); and where the story that is shared depends on multiple factors. To Jonasson and Scherle, a guided tour is a performance in itself, where guides must strive to reconcile their own perspective with the museum's discourse, and also with visitors' ideas (2012, 56). For them, guided tours are spaces where "rhythms and ways of representing places through [different] narratives" operate constantly (Jonasson and Scherle 2012, 63).

To analyse the guided tour as a performative space also means understanding that its main characteristic is not its pre-set speeches. Rather, it has to do with the actions and new narratives that are created in that same context (Jonasson and Scherle 2012, 57).

Traditionally, guided tours have been considered spaces for the transmission of knowledge to a passive audience rather than performative spaces. Performance during guided tours was commonly understood as the guide's ability to satisfy tourists, and the tourists' capacity to remain attentive. However, nowadays, the guided tour is being regarded as a performance in itself (Desmond 1999, in Bowman and Pezzullo 2010, 193). And while it may not be directly associated with a theatrical performance (since the guide is almost always the same - not a character - and the content of the visit is associated with information), the tour always contains many aspects of theatricality, such as talking, interrupting, offering personal testimonies, etc. (Williams 2013, 119). Thus, one might say that guides interpret different roles depending on the type of visit and the 'characters' who participate in these visits (Williams 2013, 121). For example, when I had to guide older people who lived through the period, I tried to play the role of the guide who wanted to learn from them: that made them feel respected in their authority to talk about the past. By introducing myself in that way, I almost never had any inconvenience, but it was drastically different if I intended to 'impose' the museum's narrative without any consideration of their experiences as witnesses.

A case study that exemplifies the relevance of performances in a museum context is Katriel's (1997) study on guided tours at two Israeli settlement museums. In her analysis of how the guided tours perform different narratives about "Israeli Settlement, immigration, and the relationship between Jewish and Arab inhabitants" (Hooper-Greenhill 2006, 373), she demonstrates how "museum narratives are always collaboratively constructed and individually inflected", and describes tour guides as active agents "injecting narrative segments into their interpretive accounts" (Katriel 1997, 144).

Citing Austin (1962), Polly Williams goes beyond the notion of the 'tour with performative elements', stating that

“guided tour's performativity goes further than merely indicating performance-like qualities. Austin (1962) describes how words or “speech acts” can actually produce action...the guided tour in a historical setting *enacts* “bringing the past to life” for the visitor, as it requires them

to take part in a narrativised physical journey “back” to the past”
(Williams 2013, 116).

Young (1993) has also raised concerns about how being in or participating in heritage sites is in itself a performative act, and how in the act of speaking at heritage sites creates heritage as well. In fact, he claims that “most discussions of Holocaust memorial spaces ignore the essentially public dimension of their performance, remaining either formally aesthetic or almost piously historical” (Young 1993, 11).

Despite the excellent studies about guided tours and performances in museums, there are still some questions that remain open and that this study may help to answer partially. For instance, there are no studies that analyse guided tour performances in the context of a South American memorial museum. Studies that have focused on heritage sites have provided useful insights in the different kinds of attitudes that characterise guided tours, but there is still a gap in the study of guided tour performances at sensitive sites, as would be the case of the MMHR. Polly Williams, in her study of guided tours at industrial heritage sites in England, provides a detailed categorisation of the various types of performances that take place, focusing her attention on how the guided tour becomes “a performance practice” that “utilize[s] and create[s] liminality – an experience of being in-between qualitatively different times and spaces” (2013, 115). This categorisation considers a) 'scenography': when visitors make use of spaces that replicate the past; b) 'characterization': when guides are dressed up in costumes and act as past characters; c) 'narrative': when guides use testimony as the main tool to approach the past; and d) 'collective experience': when the narrative of the guided tour is based both on the experiences, comments and questions of the guide and visitors (Williams 2013, 118). In this paper, I believe that the different performances that take place at the MMHR's tour range from 'narrative' to 'collective experience', since guides and visitors build the tour with their testimonies and comments. However, since this categorisation focuses more on heritage sites in general rather than specific to a memorial museum, I prefer instead to use my own categorisation of 'performances of knowledge', 'performances of power', and 'performances of emotion', which will be described in chapter five.

2.4 Literature on Visitors

In this paper, the concept of visitor is understood as a person, foreign or domestic, who visits the museum and walks through it as a group member or alone (Sather-Wagstaff 2011, 29). The spectrum of visitors to memorial museums is diverse: it includes victims, relatives, new generations, people who lived or experienced trauma, perpetrators and their immediate relatives, indifferent people, etc. (Williams 2007, 132). Given this, my idea of the 'visitor' is that of an agent who actively appropriates the museum's narrative and exhibition, in other words, visitors are not completely determined by the museum's discourse (Doering 2011).

In recent years, academic and professional curiosity that focuses on the 'dialogue' between the museum and visitors has been growing (Crane 2004, 305). Under this new paradigm, visitors are not only people who go to a museum and 'read' the speech. Far from it, they are agents in the creation of new meanings, reflecting, discussing and internalising (or even rejecting) what the museum exhibits (Fleming 2012, 252). In this sense, for Young, "how and what we remember in the company of a monument depends very much on who we are, why we care to remember, and how we see" (Young 1993, xii).

However, many of the qualitative studies that have focused on visitors have mainly been interested in the relationship between visitors and objects, and have overlooked the museum's social context (see Purbrick 2011). Moreover, in the case of Chile, studies about memorials have made valuable contributions to demonstrate how visitors actively interact and re-create these places demonstrating how they are able to generate reflection and critical thinking (see Hite 2012, 1 - 21). However, there are still no detailed studies focusing on the dialogue between visitors and guides at a museum context. This study wants to go a step further by proposing how people appropriate their traumatic heritage focusing on the different memory performances at the guided tours with the case study of the MMHR.

In this chapter I have explored the relevant literature and conceptual frameworks on Memory Studies, Performance Studies, guided tours and visitors. These frameworks illuminate the different memory performances that take place at the MMHR's guided tours, which will be described in chapter five.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

In this chapter I introduce the methods and methodology used in this research. My methodology consisted primarily of ethnographic research and autoethnography. From the perspective of American Visitor Studies, I also used Falk and Dierking's idea of 'social context' to examine the MMHR's performances taking place at the guided tours.

3.1 Methods for data collection

The guided tour is a privileged space in which to observe and analyse visitors' interactions. At present, Tourism Studies have begun to analyse guided tours as spaces of guides' and visitors' performances (Jonasson and Scherle 2012; Larsen and Widtfeldt Meged 2013; Overend 2012; Williams 2013; Coleman & Crang 2002).

The research methods consisted mainly of autoethnographic work and fieldwork. On the one hand, the autoethnographic exploration is based on the period in which I worked as a tour guide at the MMHR, from March 2013 to July 2014. On the other hand, fieldwork took place from the 21st May until the 8th of July 2015, and consisted of semi structured interviews with visitors and guides, participant observation during guided tours, and field notes.

I carried out interviews with the Museum's director, with the person who was in charge of the Museum project in 2008 and 2009, and with three tour guides. Furthermore, I conducted email interviews with two people who were invited by the Museum to perform guided tours during the Heritage Day (Sunday 24th of May). Heritage Day is a festival that celebrates Chilean cultural heritage: different heritage sites are opened and museums organise special workshops and guided tours. On that day, the Museum invited people who lived through the dictatorship and could share their testimonies in the context of their own guided tours.

I engaged in participant observation during six guided tours and interviewed eight visitors in total. Three participant observations took place during Heritage Day. I also participated in two other guided tours in the next weekends (Sunday 7th and Saturday 13th of July). These guided tours were called '*Fútbol y Dictadura*' (football and dictatorship), and its purpose was to demonstrate how the Regime used football as a tool of mass control and political power. Finally, I also participated in a general tour guide that took place on the 14th of June 2015.

I decided to interview visitors when the guided tour had finished, asking brief questions to reduce the emotional stress. I was very conscious of the fact that many people who lived through and/or lost family or friends to it are still alive. Their emotions were likely to be heightened during the visit, and I was aware that I had to remain extremely sensitive to their needs and avoid causing any distress to participants when approaching them or collecting data. Contrary to what I expected, all my interviewees were always very willing to help me and we often stayed talking for several minutes.

A very important part of the collected data comes from my own experience as a tour guide at the MMHR. Being a guide allowed me to make a deeper connection with visitors' experiences, and also made me more curious about the importance of the guided tour as a space of encounters between different memory camps, and between the visitor, the guide and the Museum. During my period of employment, I was inquisitive about how the guided tours became 'particular stages' (Edensor 2001, 71) in which visitors could display their testimonies and individual memories, where they could confront or reject the Museum's narrative, or where they could unfold emotions and knowledge, and even negotiate their authority to tell the *true* story of what had happened.

To Davies, autoethnography should be regarded as social research, different from autobiography, in so far as it uses concepts and theory that connect the findings to the academic and scientific world (Davies [1998] 2008, 222). One kind of auto ethnography – 'native autoethnography - occurs when the researcher becomes a native, therefore investigates not only 'others' but at the same time s/he becomes the 'other' and explores her/his own experiences (Davies [1998] 2008, 220). There is also another approach that comes from Feminist Studies. Since the 70s, several feminist academics began studying their childhood memories to examine gender patterns (Davies [1998] 2008, 223). In this approach, autoethnography is produced by the interpretation and analysis of past memories and experiences.

In this study, I carried out autoethnography with elements from these two approaches. On the one hand, by participating in the Museum's guided tours as a common visitor, I became part of the guided group itself and experienced the *same* as every group member. On the other, based on my practice and memories as a tour guide, I became my own key informant. Consequently, I analysed my own testimony as a guide from a theoretical perspective.

3.2 Methodology for data analysis

Regarding data analysis, I studied the interviews and field notes in search of performances that later were interpreted “by organising [them] into internally coherent topics that [could] be used to illustrate conceptual points” (Lull 1990, 180, in Rose, [2001] 2011, 280). In this way, data was transcribed and organised in different categories that, once created, made it much easier for the various kinds of performances to be located and analysed. These categories were created from the data obtained in the first two visits and also from the analysis of my own experience as a guide.

In addition, I built on the Interactive Experience Model by Falk and Dierking (1992), who in their paradigmatic book *The Museum Experience*, argue that the museum space is not only comprised by exhibitions and objects, rather, it is created from the “personal, social and physical contexts” (1992, 55).

The personal context is related to visitors’ personal background: knowledge, experiences, values and emotions that they bring to the museum (Falk and Dierking 1992, 2). The physical context, which includes architecture, the use of space, the sensory experience and the exhibition’s design, is also an important element that conditions visitors’ involvement in the museum (Falk and Dierking 1992, 3).

In this study, however, I intend to focus on the social context: the combination of social interactions that take place at the museum, particularly in the guided tour. This study draws on the perspective that the museum’s significance goes beyond its exhibitions; rather, its meaning is constructed by the social interactions that take place in its premises (Byrne et al. 2011, 8). As Falk and Dierking have noted, “every visitor’s perspective is strongly influenced by the social context” (1992, 3) and “most visitors come to the museum as part of a social group, and what visitors see, do, and remember is mediated by that group” (1992, 143). In this social context, the tour guide is a relevant actor that significantly affects visitors’ experiences (Falk and Dierking 1992, 157).

Accordingly, the originality of my thesis resides in the fact that my focus is not placed on the exhibition itself, or in its narrative and objects, rather, in its social context: how visitors, through their performances, construct the museum experience. Furthermore, with this study, I aim to overcome the lack of ethnographic research around visitors and performances in memorial museums’ guided tours. As Shelton has said, currently, Museum Studies and Critical Cultural Heritage Studies

“is deficient in both emic and etic ethnographic case studies. It requires enormous foci on [...] descriptive and interpretative understanding of what happens inside museums [...] more attention on the *role of memory*” (2006, 481. Emphasis added).

In this chapter I introduced the methodology used in my research, which consisted of ethnographic research and autoethnography (for data collection), and Falk and Dierking’s idea of ‘social context’ (for data analysis). I also created different categories of performances in order to systematise my findings.

Chapter 4 - Introduction to the Case Study: The Museum of Memory and Human Rights, Chile

In this chapter I introduce the development of Chile’s memory around the dictatorship and human rights violations. Chilean society has gone from a state of impasse to a state of ‘memory as unfinished work’, and the MMHR is part of this latter stage (Stern 2010, 211 - 216). In this chapter, I also introduce a brief summary of the Museum’s permanent exhibition, and examine how the literature on the Museum has focused primarily on its official discourse - rather than on how visitors and guides actively appropriate it.

Since the return to democracy in March 1990, when after losing in the 1988 plebiscite General Augusto Pinochet had to give up his power to Patricio Aylwin (the opposing coalition leader), Chile had been defined almost exclusively by its experience of the dictatorship (Winn and Stern et. al 2014, 206; Garretón 2003, 218). In other words, every aspect of Chilean society, from politics to economic and cultural development, has been influenced by the impact of the Regime. It is beyond the scope of this study to present a detailed summary of the period of the Dictatorship (September 1973 – March 1990), but it is worth stressing the amount of dead and tortured people to get an idea of the magnitude of human rights violations: over 3.000 executed and disappeared, and over 38.500 tortured people (Rettig Report 1990, Valech Report 2004).

For Stern, memory struggles during democracy – or what he calls the ‘memory question’ in Chile - have had a particular historical path that is illustrated usefully with the idea of ‘memory box’ (2009, 21 – 35). The concept refers to the set of memories that define the experience of the dictatorship from different angles and points of view (Stern,

2010, xxix) (Lechner and Guell (1998) refer to it as the *Caja de Pandora* [Pandora's Box]). Within this memory box, the 'memory as salvation', as 'rupture', as 'persecution and awakening', and as 'indifference' (or 'closed box') can be found.

On the one hand, 'memory as salvation' is linked to those people who regard the military coup (Sept. 1973) and the dictatorship as a miracle against the economic and social chaos that Allende's socialist government had created in Chile. Under this viewpoint, the military and Pinochet should be considered national heroes that risked their lives in order to ensure peace and prosperity. In this line, human rights violations are regarded as a necessary cost or an unfortunate but acceptable consequence (Stern 2009, 37 - 70) (See Figure 10).

Figure 10. Image taken from Pinochet's funeral in 2006, representing memory of salvation: "THANK YOU GENERAL, HISTORY WILL RECOGNISE YOU" (source: Orno 2010).



On the other hand, 'memory as rupture' is related to those people who suffered the most terrible harassments: people who were tortured, persecuted, or victims' relatives. For them, the coup meant a breakdown in their lives that has not yet healed completely (Stern 2009, 77 – 109) (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. Image representing women demanding an answer about their disappeared and tortured relatives (source: Candia 2013).



Memory as 'persecution and awakening' is connected to those groups that risked their lives in the defence of human rights: activists, relatives and friends, members of staff of human rights NGOs (Stern 2009, 77 - 109).

Lastly, 'memory as a closed box' is related to those groups that stand for the importance of obliterating the past, or the need to 'move on' and forget in order to heal the wounds and protect the stability of democracy (Stern 2009, 127 – 132).

Hitherto, Stern has been the researcher who has most coherently and systematically categorised Chile's different memories about the dictatorship and the coup, and in this study I draw on these categories – particularly on the memory as salvation and memory as rupture - to refer to the different memory performances taking place at the MMHR (for a discussion on memory in Chilean public opinion see Huneuus and Ibarra 2013).

The idea of a memory box is essential to understand the MMHR's creation and positioning in Chilean society. For Stern, in the past few years, the memory box has endured a transformation from a state of 'impasse' to a state of 'memory as unfinished work' (2010, 297) (the Museum is born from this latter context).

The period of 'impasse' (1990 – 2006) is characterised by the struggle between different forces (Stern 2010, 362 - 363). On the one hand, civil and family groups who strive to set up the foundations for a human rights culture of recognition, added to the democratic governments' interest in establishing human rights as their main source of political legitimacy; on the other, the doctrine of 'justice as far as possible' (in other words, incomplete justice) and the military's constant threats and retaliations to prevent progress

in this area (Stern 2010, 362 - 363; Lechner and Guell 1998). All these forces participate in a '*tira y afloja*' (tug of war) that finally produces an impasse: there is some progress on human rights violations recognition while at the same time there is a setback in these same issues, creating a stagnant water in the politics of memory (Stern 2010, 360 - 361).

In fact, for Stern, the Truth Commissions (Rettig 1990, Valech 2004) were the first elements to contribute to this impasse. He argues that the recognition of human rights violations through the Truth Commissions also included the closing of the memory box by not mentioning perpetrator's names and by installing a reconciliation policy which tried to leave behind resentment and hatred (2010, xxxi). Of course, victims' relatives saw these Truth Commissions as a kind of '*punto final*' (final point), like a reconciliation formula that hampered a real commitment to truth and justice (Stern, 2010, 33, xxxi). Since the MMHR is based on the Truth Commissions, many relatives and victims feel dissatisfied with the Museum's narrative since it strives more to create reconciliation rather than directly pointing out and condemning criminals (see Figure 12).

Figure 12. Truth Commissions display at the Museum of Memory and Human Rights (author's source).



The breaking point of this impasse was Pinochet's detention in London, a moment in which Chilean society saw itself confronted with the possibility of prosecuting the most prominent human rights violator, someone who until recently seemed to be unbeatable (Stern 2010, 211; Collins and Hite et.al 2013, 12 – 14). The latter opened a variety of new

possibilities in terms of justice and memorialisation, and many people started talking about torture, a topic that until that moment had remained a national taboo (Stern 2010, 273; Collins and Hite et. al 2013, 12 – 14; Lechner and Guell 1998).

These changes formed the foundation of what would happen in the 2000 – 2006 period: a reopening of memory struggles, increased legitimacy of the human rights topic, and the impossibility to deny human rights violations (Stern 2010, 273; Lazzara 2011, 58; Collins and Hite et.al 2013, 20). In this period of time, “new memory reckonings” were created, where thanks to new testimonies on torture (stemming from the Valech Commission, 2004), Chilean society as a whole embraced the impossibility of looking to the future denying what had happened (Stern 2010, 273). In other words, as Stern has said, the dictatorship is recognised as a “shared national tragedy” and as “unfinished work” (Stern 2010, 273). This “shared national tragedy” relates to a global phenomenon of human rights violations acknowledgement, where human rights are institutionalised and seen as a useful tool of governability (Levy and Sznalder, 2010, 4; Huysen 2003, 95 - 98).

The museum reflects very well the state of affairs of Chilean democracy after the year 2006 when, according to Stern (2010, 211), a culture of validation of human rights was established and when the support to the memory as salvation decreased significantly. However, the Museum also reflects the ambivalence so typical of Chilean culture in regards to human rights defence: the Museum promotes human rights culture, but only to a certain point (Winn and Stern et. al. 2014; Lazzara 2011). In fact, Winn and Stern emphasise that “it was not a grassroots memorialisation project, but an official commitment...it was Bachelet’s personal project” (2014, 273 [author’s translation]). In its creation, for example, victims associations and relatives were not invited to participate, therefore they have always had a tense relationship with the Museum (Hite and Collins 2009, 398; Winn and Stern et. al 2014, 273; Lazzara 2011, 64). Consequently, the Museum has a very strong political burden, not only in regards to what it shows (and its silences), but also with whom it was created, and with whom not.

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that through the MMHR, the State officially recognises seventeen years of human rights violations. At the same time, however, this becomes the Museum’s main disadvantage in so far as it represents an official version of the past and becomes a glorifying apparatus in the service of the State. According to

Carter and Orange, the inability to criticise itself is precisely one of the main risks for human rights museology (2012, 262).

4.1 The MMHR's Narrative

Once you enter the Museum, the first thing visitors see at the left hand side is Bachelet's signature under the headline: "*we cannot change our past, we can only learn from what we have lived through, that is our responsibility and our challenge*" (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Bachelet's signature (author's source).



This signature aims to highlight the president's name and has evident political objectives of legitimisation (see Lazzara 2011, 63). After this, the visitor can approach the different Truth Commissions that have been held all over the world (see Figure 14). Just in front, there is a section that displays the two Chilean Truth Commissions (see Figure 12). On the next floor (-1), visitors are introduced to 11 September 1973, the day of the Military Coup (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. First Floor: 11 September 1973 section (author's source).



At the left, along the hall, the Museum displays the breakdown of rule of law, the political and military establishment of the Dictatorship, the international condemnation against the Regime, and Condor Operation (the collaboration between different military regimes throughout South America in the 70s) (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. International Condemnation / Condor Operation room (author's source).



This section is followed by the rooms 'Repression and Torture' (see Figure 6) and 'Children's pain' (see Figure 7). The former shows how the State used torture as a means for suppressing political opponents and creating a state of fear. The latter demonstrates how children were also victims, whether directly (torture, execution, disappearance) or indirectly (murder of their parents).

Figure 6. Repression and Torture Room (author's source).



Figure 7. Children's Pain Room (author's source).



The second floor changes the narrative into a more hopeful situation: it focuses on the role of human rights organisations and the Church in the defence of human rights during the dictatorship. This floor also contains the 'Memory and Absence' room, a section surrounded by candles (as a kind of funerary ritual) where visitors can contemplate the more than 1,600 pictures of disappeared and executed victims (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. Mural of disappeared and Executed Victims (seen from the Memory and Absence Room) (author's source).



This room is followed by the section dedicated to explore the 1980s: a period in which the Regime's power decreased due to the many protests and rallies that workers and students began organising. After this, in the 'Culture' section, the Museum displays the different cultural endeavours that contributed to overthrowing the Regime. The Museum ends with the 1988 plebiscite in which Chile had to decide whether to stay with the Regime or not. The last display is a video showing the act that took place at the National Stadium on 11 March 1990, celebrating the return of democracy (see Figure 9).

Figure 9. Last section at the MMHR with a video showing the celebrations at the National Stadium, 11 March 1990 (author's source).



However extensive this narrative may apparently look, it also hides certain conflictive points. For instance, it does not show the pre 1973 coup context (the causes of the coup are still very controversial); avoids referring to the US involvement in the overthrowing of Allende and the establishment of the dictatorship; abstains from talking about the systematic human rights violations of indigenous peoples; it refers to victims solely as victims, rather than active political subjects; and does not mention perpetrators nor speaks about the scarce judicial progress (Lazzara 2011, 71), among other things (although the Museum is currently planning to include this topic soon) (Interview with the Museum's Director; for an analysis of the Museum's silences see Lazzara 2011, 67 – 68; for its controversies see Basaure 2012). Nevertheless, I have made this contrast clear in order to emphasise that however 'official' this discourse might be, visitors and guides are not determined by it; on the contrary, they actively appropriate and contest it through their memory performances (Hooper-Greenhill 2006, 367).

4.2 Literature about the MMHR

Since its inauguration, the MMHR's permanent exhibition has stimulated academic criticism. For instance, Lazzara (2011) criticises the way it conceals and silences historical aspects that may be open to debate. For him, the Museum imposes a 'hygienic' official discourse without any counterweight and it does not invite for reflection nor critical thinking: hence, the Museum presents a "polished narrative and unquestionably triumphant progression" (Lazzara 2011, 66. Author's translation). For him, this narrative is the outcome of Chilean politics of consensus that characterised the transitional democratic governments (Lazzara 2011, 69). In my opinion, although it is true that the Museum has an official narrative that dodges criticism; it is precisely that what makes it such a special and interesting place for analysis. Based on my experience, I can say that visitors are mostly aware of these silences and criticise and debate them arduously (Macdonald 1996, 4). This situation could be termed as the 'Museum's paradox': the more it avoids conflict, the more conflictive and controversial it becomes. In this line, Carter and Orange argue that memorial museums are "a productive space for promoting not only "action" but also critical thinking" (2012, 263). Notwithstanding, despite the emphasis on criticising the Museum's permanent exhibition, Lazzara makes a point when he says that:

"it is necessary to recognise that its importance and contribution *does not reside in its objects* or in its conciliatory [...] account, rather [its importance] is in its ability to summon Chileans [...] in order to open

dialogue about memory and history” (2011, 75. Author’s translation and emphasis added).

The interest in the creation of the Museum and its official discourse is also found in the BA thesis of Lagos (2011) who investigated the different factors and elements that make the Museum a tool for State legitimacy. Hence, she argues that the MMHR “is part of a public policy born from ideological criteria” (Lagos 2011, 7. Author’s translation), therefore she focuses on the Museum’s silences and how the democratic ruling coalition (*Concertación*) installs an official speech of achievements through it (Lagos 2011, 7, 9, 41).

By focusing only on the Museum’s display and official discourse - hence having a ‘semiotic approach’ (Macdonald 1996, 4 – 5) -, most of these studies assume that the Museum is more a memory ‘container’ rather than a place of memory construction, and give too much attention (and concern) to the official discourse rather than to what actually happens inside with visitors and guides (Sather-Wagstaff 2011, 46; Macdonald 1996, 4). In other words, the discussion has focused too much on the ‘exhibitionary complex’ (Bennet [1988] 1999) rather than the ‘performative complex’ (Roche 2000, 37 – 40, in Macdonald 2003, 12). In this sense, I follow the anthropologist Sather-Wagstaff’s approach, who says that “if we are to understand places and memory both to be truly processual [...] Then I propose that we should treat and speak of such sites as places *for* making memory and history, rather than *of* memory and history” (2011, 47).

In this vein, I argue that the MMHR is a space for discussion and reflection; its narrative and permanent exhibition is frequently contested, created, received, and modified by visitors. Citing Lefebvre, Sather-Wagstaff brilliantly summarises this point by saying that:

“the historical importance and meaningfulness of commemorative sites are not simply imposed super structurally but are constructed through actions generated by a broad public, and, as such, they are thus places that human “imagination seeks [both] to change and appropriate” (Lefebvre 1991 [1974]:33)” (2011, 50).

I agree with the author when she says that academia usually tends to show and understand these spaces as pre-made, with their fixed and stable meanings. On the

contrary, “these landscapes and museums are [...] continually made and remade through visitation and active interpretation by tourists” (Sather-Wagstaff 2011, 51). For the author, museums and memorials oftentimes generate fear among academics as they are seen as tools to polish the 'true' story or hygienise it with an ideal and neutral speech (Sather-Wagstaff 2011, 102; Fleming, 2011). In her words, scholars are often inclined to “constantly invoke the “authentic” and the “past” as though both have an apparent, somehow recoverable ontological reality that can be precisely captured and (re)presented” (Sather-Wagstaff 2011, 104; see Lowenthal [1968] 1998; see Levy and Sznajder 2002, 89). Using as the basis of her study visitor performances at the World Trade Centre (performances such as contesting, debating, taking photographs, leaving/buying memorabilia), the author concludes that

“all museological narratives are implicitly partial, [and] controversial.
[...] However, individual subjectivities enable visitors to such exhibitions to construct their own interpretations and responses, some of which may fill in the gaps of these partial narratives, contest or assign unintended meanings” (Sather-Wagstaff 2011, 160).

Bearing this in mind, I consider that before criticising the MMHR as a space for the imposition of an official discourse, it is important to take into account the specific nature of it as a memorial museum, and take into account that its flaws and omissions are part of the political/social context in which it was born (Levy and Sznajder 2002, 91; Macdonald 1996, 4). From a Critical Cultural Heritage perspective, museums are and will always be apparatuses for the legitimation of specific discourses and realities (Lindauer 2007, 306); therefore we have to be cautious at the moment of excessively criticising it. As Carter and Orange have said about museums of memory and human rights' permanent exhibitions, "we now [need to] recognise the impossibility of impartiality" (2012, 261). Therefore, what should be calling our attention is not necessarily the official discourse itself, but how that official discourse is used, appropriated and contested by visitors.

So far, I have presented my research question (exploring what kind of memory performances take place at the guided tours of the MMHR); I have summarised my methodology; and I have discussed literature on memory, performances, guided tours, visitors, Chile's recent past and memories, and the MMHR's permanent exhibition. Assuming that “performances of guided tours go on at different levels and are co-optimally

produced by different actors at the same time” (Jonasson and Scherle 2012, 63), I intend to go beyond what has already been studied (performances at heritage sites [Williams 2013; Jonnason and Scherle 2012] and the Museum as an official apparatus [Lazzara 2011; Lagos 2011]) by analysing, from a Critical Cultural Heritage perspective, different performances at the MMHR and studying visitors and guides as relevant agents in the creation of the museum experience.

Chapter 5 - Findings: Performances at the MMHR

In this chapter, I will present the research findings around visitors’ and guides’ performances during the guided tours at the MMHR. The three different kinds of performances identified in this study - of knowledge, power and emotion - reveal how guides and visitors actively appropriate the Museum’s official discourse, and how the Museum is transformed into a platform for dialogue and heritage construction.

5.1 Performances of Knowledge

Performances of knowledge have to do with the display of experiences, working out of testimonies, knowledge demonstrations (e.g. complementing the information given by guides), re-enactments of certain memories, or the discussion around the Museum’s or the guide’s discourse and narratives.

The re-enactment of certain memories is part of this knowledge externalisation. The act of bringing memories to the present and displaying them in a social context, as it would be the case of a guided tour, is experienced in a very intense way by the tour members. To illustrate this point, one day, while I was talking about how the dictatorship censored the press and manipulated information, a man who was participating in the tour started saying very loudly that today Chile is experiencing exactly the same situation: “the press always finds the way to discredit the truth about human rights violations during the Regime”. He started talking about the *exonerados politicos* (political exonerates), people who lost their jobs during the dictatorship for political reasons, and how he, as an *exonerado*, felt very sad because due to the press, everyone falsely believed that they are all hustlers who receive State benefits they do not deserve. Suddenly, he began to cry, and as he wept, he started saying to everyone that he was not a thief, that he was innocent and he needed that State benefit. In this case, the man used the visit to

externalise his own knowledge and truth about the *exonerados*, and also as a way to redeem himself against stories generated by the press.

Thus, the externalisation of experiences and memories are of crucial importance in the tour. Virtually, all visits have at least one person who demonstrates or shares his/her own experience. For a teacher who participated in one of the 'dictatorship and football' tours, externalising 'knowledge', that is, testimonies and memories:

"has to do with the person's position, you have to feel owner or part of this process, not as a mere spectator but also as part of, then one also can provide some elements, and you can work or *contrast or correct* what the guide is saying" (Author's translation and emphasis added).

In this case, performance of knowledge is related to how the visitor feels owner of the narrative s/he is constructing, and how this relates not only to the act of giving a testimony, but also 'contrasting or correcting' what the guide says.

This aspect of 'contrasting or correcting' is very common during the Museum's guided tours. These range from complementing, reinforcing or discussing information, or demonstrating personal knowledge against what the guide or other visitors might be saying. In one of the tours in which I participated during my fieldwork, for example, the guide asked if anyone remembered the 1978 plebiscite (which was done by the Regime to reaffirm its power) and what happened to peoples' ID cards when they went to vote. A woman about 50 years old answered by saying "Yes, by voting they cut off one corner of the ID card, with which they marked you so they knew you had voted in favour of the Regime. I still have that ID card". By participating and sharing her experience, she reaffirmed the guide's information by adding the fact that people were "marked". In this sense, the act of giving a testimony in the guided tour is an act of construction; the guided tour's narrative is created through the knowledge and experience of the ones who participate.

Guides also participate in performances of knowledge. An example of this occurred while I was doing a guided tour in 2013. I remember that, from its start, it was a very tense tour because many people who were participating had a 'memory of salvation' (supporting the Regime), and they were constantly rejecting what I was saying. In that context, I knew I had to talk about my own experience in order to gain the tour's sympathy and support.

Hence, I started talking about how I had grown up in an environment where the topic of the Dictatorship was barely mentioned, and how only recently I came to find out about the massive human rights violations, particularly when I started working at the Museum – the moment in which I ‘opened my eyes’. Of course, I exaggerated my story to emphasise the fact that I had gone through a transformation, from not knowing ‘anything’ to knowing ‘everything’. This story made the rest of the visitors - who did not embrace the memory of salvation - admire me and protect me against those who were constantly criticising my speech. From that moment on, whenever there was a critical, there was always one person in the group tour ready to *defend* me. In this performance, I used my testimony as a strategy for protection. In fact, in their study of three empirical cases, Jonasson and Scherle stressed that the guide is actually an agent of performances: “[the guide performs] narratives of subjects and objects which were intertwined and new relations between them were defined” (2012, 56, 67).

Moreover, guides as well as visitors, contest, complement or extend the Museum’s narrative. This performance ranges from avoiding certain topics or rooms, such as skipping the ‘children’s pain room’ (since most people get very upset there), to diverting the script or official narrative to other subjects and inciting visitors to think critically about the Museum’s discourse. On one of the guided tours I assisted with in June, I noticed how the guide diverted the official speech to encourage a conversation with one of the visitors regarding financing projects on memory. The two discussed the Museum’s budget compared to other sites of memory, and how that influenced the development of historical memory in Chile. Of course, ‘funding’ is not part of what guides are supposed to talk about, but this example demonstrates how guides and visitors appropriate the official narrative to other uses.

It is not uncommon that visitors use guided tours to discuss certain topics by asking tricky questions, or by arguing against the Museum’s or the guide’s speech. Hence, there are several ways in which to appropriate the tour’s discourse, which Bagnall calls ‘emotional mapping’: at one end of the ‘continuum’ is the ‘confirmatory’ mapping, where the visitor accepts and assimilates the speech, and at the other end the ‘rejective’, in which the speech is criticised and contested (2003, 89).

According to one of the guides, the ‘rejective emotional mapping’ is produced by “spells”: “it goes in spells I don’t know why, I had a streak in which I had to guide a lot of

people that were very conscious about the human rights issue, but who also maintained a memory of salvation, therefore they criticised many aspects of the Museum” (Guide No. 1. Author’s translation). The ‘memory of salvation’ is usually manifested in the questioning of the lack of historical context about the military coup and in the justification of human rights violations. I remember a visit that I did when I worked at the Museum as guide that exemplifies this point. We were in the room ‘torture and repression’ and I was describing the *parrilla eléctrica* (electric grill, torture instrument). Once there, a man approached me and exclaimed: “Ok, but if it was not them, it was me!”. Once he said that, I realised that I was in front of someone who had been a torturer, and he still believed that to eliminate the ‘subversive’ by the means of torture was justified. Immediately after that, he looked at me with disdain and left the Museum.

Another situation that exemplifies this type of performances is illustrated in a tour I made with a group of students from a conservative Chilean university. When we were standing in front of a photo of prisoners inside the National Stadium (main concentration camp for political prisoners in 1973), I told them that this photo was ‘not *real*’ because it was a farce set up to make people believe that prisoners were treated well while their conditions were deplorable (see Figure 13). In saying this, the group joined against me claiming that the photo was in fact real because they were looking at it, and what the picture showed – prisoners being held in good conditions - was true. I tried to explain to them that this was a press fraud, and the picture could look very real but it could also hide a lie. Influenced by the ‘memory of salvation’, they took my concept of ‘not real’ too literally. This episode marked a first break, and during the rest of the visit they remained with a distant attitude, somewhat offensive: laughing from time to time and installing a physical distance between them and me.

Figure 13. Photograph of prisoners inside the National Stadium (1973). It was taken to demonstrate that prisoners were being held in good conditions; meanwhile inside the dress rooms they were being tortured (source: Memópolis 2012).



Also, other cases have to do with those people who suffered directly during the dictatorship or have victim relatives. They usually want to see their own experience represented, therefore they too contest the narrative because they cannot accept that their own personal suffering has not been acknowledged at the Museum. For example, one of the guides told me that:

"on Saturday I had to guide a group, several people who had been victims, and instead of taking [my speech] as something positive, it was like...like...a little aggressive on their behalf, they constantly repeated that I shouldn't be talking about that because 'I was the one who lived through that' and that the Museum 'should have more pictures of this and that' [...] (Guide No. 2. Author's translation).

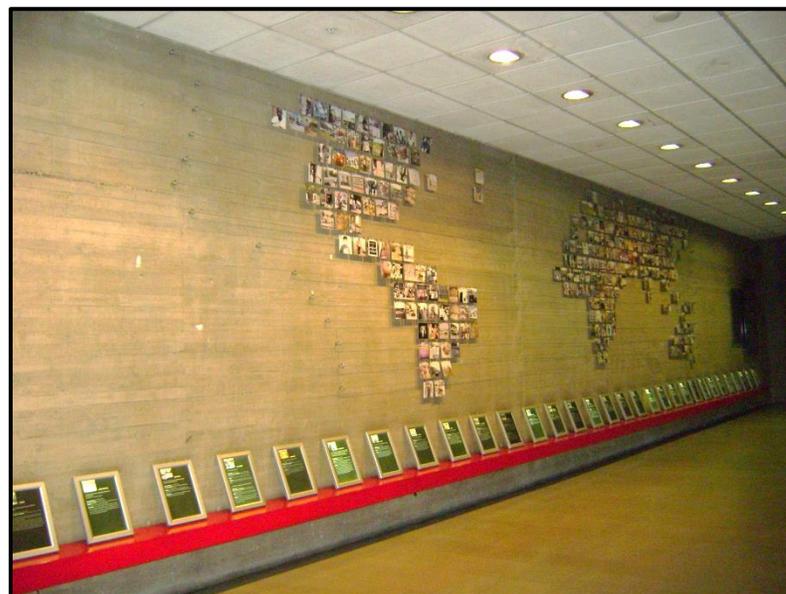
In this type of performance, visitors want the Museum guide to talk exclusively about what they know and experienced: their suffering and personal account of what happened. Since it is an official discourse, it is very common that they do not see themselves represented, therefore they interrupt the guide's speech by giving their own point of view or displaying their 'memory of rupture' or 'memory as salvation' (Stern 2009). This was the case with an exiled woman who, as one of the guides told me, furiously disapproved the fact that her suffering as an exiled person was not fully acknowledged:

"I once had to guide a person that continually claimed [...] her memory as a victim of the dictatorship [...] she wanted to be placed and regarded

as a victim, although she was not directly a victim [in the sense of tortures or disappearances], thus everyone wants to be a victim, because they are convinced they indeed are” (Guide No. 1. Author’s translation).

In a similar case, while I was doing fieldwork, I participated in a guided tour in which one participant criticised the way in which Truth Commissions were displayed: ‘I am struck by the insufficient attention given to Truth Commissions in this Museum, it seems that the boxes [where they are displayed] should be much larger and evident, since they are so important!’ (see Figure 14). In the same vein, many people criticise the fact that Allende’s speech is not ‘clearly’ displayed (as you can only hear it from a video) (Guide No. 3. Author’s translation), and the fact that Pinochet’s famous picture with sunglasses is displayed at the beginning of the exhibition on the first floor. When I worked at the Museum, many people complained to me that they disliked coming to the Museum and encountering his “evil face”. These examples demonstrate how the Museum’s exhibition and discourse is actively appropriated by visitors.

Figure 14. Truth Commissions from different parts of the world displayed at the entrance of the MMHR (author’s source).



These different performances transcend different generations. Not necessarily those who act out and discuss their 'knowledge' (memories, testimonies, experiences) during guided tours are people who lived through the period, but also young people who

have learned this kind of memory. That is why, as a last aspect of the performances of knowledge, I refer to 'learned memory'.

Two cases illustrate the performance of learned memory. The first case was told to me by one of the Museum's tour guides. When I asked him about what the tours meant to him and how he incorporated his own testimony/narrative during the tour, he told me that, in a sense, he has assimilated his grandfather's traumatic memory (who was a victim of the Spanish Civil War). He told me that one day his mother visited him and participated in one of his guided tours. She told him that she had seen and heard her father talking through his voice, that is, his grandfather's memory had come to life in his own account. He asked:

"Why was I connecting with my grandfather's traumatic memory? Why did I appropriate that memory? My grandfather is no longer here!, but why did my grandfather *speak* through my speech while I was making a tour?" (Guide No. 1. Emphasis added and author's translation).

Other cases of learned memory relate to situations in which young people learn their parents' memories, either 'memory of salvation', 'rupture', 'persecution and awakening' or 'indifference' (Stern 2009). For example, one of the guides told me that one weekend he received a group of high school students from the north of Chile. Once they arrived to the Absence and Memory room (see Figure 15), one of the boys said his grandfather had been murdered and he would like to look him up in the mural and find his photo. After finding him, the guide said:

"*Look this is a tribute to him*', and as I spoke his face changed and he started crying [...] his schoolmates hugged him and it was very nice on their part, but the whole situation was very difficult, he was just a child, this makes me quite sad and a little angry about the fact that his grief was clearly learned from his parents" (Guide No. 2. Emphasis added and author's translation)

Figure 15. Memory and Absence Room. This room is located at the centre of the Museum and is surrounded by candles. It also offers a wide view to the mural of photographs of disappeared and executed victims. Pictures can be found using the data base screen at the centre of the room (author's source).



5.2 Performances of Power

Power is a crucial element during the visit. On the one hand, by controlling visitors' attention, enthusiasm, participation and physical movement, the guide has to perform his/her own power. On the other, visitors also perform power by validating or discrediting the guide and by paying attention (or not) (Larsen and Widtfeldt 2013). As one of the guides told me "I sometimes set the rules at the beginning, for example, I say that they can discuss and argue, but only if they respect other people's memories" (Guide No. 1. Author's translation). In this section, I will refer to two situations which, in my opinion, exemplify how the tour is a stage for performances of power.

The first situation relates to the tours during which older people, who lived through the period of the dictatorship and maintain a memory of rupture or persecution and awakening, participate. With this kind of audience, negotiation of power is a crucial skill because the authority over deciding what happened and how it happened is a very sensitive issue since these people lived through the period. Hence, the guide cannot pretend to explain something they already know. In this kind of tour, I always began with

the statement: "The idea here is that you feel free to participate because your testimonies are invaluable. I am your guide but I'm also here to *learn from you*". By saying this, I relinquished my 'knowledge' to the visitors, and subordinated myself to their power and authority by saying that I would 'learn' from them rather than they would learn from me. As I mentioned earlier, if I did not negotiate my authority, it was undoubtedly going to be more difficult to achieve the participants' confidence and acceptance.

A case that illustrates the opposite situation occurred one day (when I first started working) when I had to guide a group of teachers, whose age was over fifty years old (hence they had lived through the Regime). I made the visit as with any other group and strictly followed the Museum's script. When I was in the middle of the visit, I realised that the half of the group had abandoned the tour, and only two people were attentively listening. I asked them if they wanted to continue, and the two attentive visitors answered 'yes', but the rest did not reply. Soon, I noticed that the group's mood was not the best, and they manifested a clear distance and rejection. When we reached the last room, one of the teachers approached me and asked in a very loud tone: "Why can't you shut up your little mouth? We are tired of you telling us something that we already know and lived through". I was absolutely stunned and shocked, and left the tour immediately with a brief good bye. I came to the conclusion that the fact of having lived the period is a determining issue in power negotiation. As a person who 'was not there' and who has no victim relatives, I should have been aware beforehand that my 'memory capital' was much lower indeed than theirs and, therefore, I should have negotiated my power with them at the beginning of the tour. In fact, for one of the guides I interviewed, this is one of the most complex scenarios in a tour:

“[The most complicated guided tours] have been precisely the ones in which people who lived through the period, as victims or witnesses, participate. And, of course, they come with *that power* given by the fact they witnessed [the period]” (Guide No. 2. Emphasis added and author's translation)

In this scenario of knowledge 'competition', visitors often want to test how well the guide is able to answer their questions, or how much does he/she know in relation to them. As one of the guides told me, there are people who present themselves "in a very critical way to know how much the guide knows" (Guide No. 3. Author's translation). In

this regard, it once happened to me that, in a guided tour, as soon as I said that the Valech Commission had registered about 38,500 tortured people, a man asked me what the exact number was. I told him that I had no exact figure in that moment, but we could find out later after the visit. He got exasperated by my response and replied by saying that it was not possible that the Museum's guides were so poorly trained, adding that it did not matter anyway because in fact he did know the exact number. There I realised that his goal was basically to challenge or test my knowledge. In other words, he wanted to show his power over me.

5.3 Performances of Emotion

In this category, I explore visitors' and tour guides' performances related to the emotional display that arise during the guided tour. For Bagnall, heritage has a very strong emotional component: "emotional appeal of the sites can lead visitors to experience a heightened sense of place" (2003, 92). In this section, I will examine the performances of catharsis, empathy, guilt and indifference, categories which have arisen from my own research.

The performances of catharsis are related to how guides and visitors experience and unleash strong emotions during the guided tours. Regarding memorials, Hite has already raised this possibility, pointing out that they "can be cathartic and empowering as well as conflictive...as catalysts for political dialogue, solidarity and action" (Hite 2012, 3).

In one of the guided tours in which I participated in June, the guide took us to 'the bridge', a space on the second floor that links the Museum's right side with the left side. Once there, the guide asked visitors how they were feeling. One man said that for him this was extremely powerful since he had lived through this period: 'I lived through it'. As he spoke, his voice cracked and he began to cry. After a few seconds, he confessed that he had never been able to mourn this, that since the coup he had not shed a single tear because of his experience during the dictatorship: "since then I had failed to mourn, from 1973 that I did not cry, but this really broke my heart". For him, and for all of us who were participating in the visit, this was a very powerful experience in which he had shared with us his traumatic memory. It was certainly a kind of catharsis, a moment he used to release his painful memories that had remained trapped and contained for many years.

Another type of performance is related to empathy. Empathy is a crucial element in the tour: when visitors put themselves in the place of those who suffered and visualise the victim's pain without necessarily being or feeling like a victim.

I will describe two situations which exemplify this type of performance. The first is the case of a group of seventh grade students that I had to guide while I was working at the Museum. The visit unfolded as usual, and I shortened the route in order to not overwhelm them with information. Also, I used images to complement the Museum's narrative. One of the photos depicted a man in a car pointing a gun out through the window. I told them that this man belonged to the CNI (secret police from 1978 to 1990). The CNI were given weapons in order to quash those who thought differently. At that same moment, one of the boys in the group exclaimed "but that's cool! I want to be given a free gun!". Although I knew that the boy was trying to challenge me, I tried anyway to make him empathise and become aware of the gravity of the situation. Accordingly, I showed him an image that presented a girl of about five years who was surrounded by soldiers who were pointing out their guns. I asked him to imagine how the girl would be feeling in the sight of all those weapons so close to her. The boy hesitated a moment, and I asked him to imagine himself living in the country of that child, where those who thought differently could be instantly killed by these people who received 'free' weapons. He said 'no, I don't like that'. While I could not force him to empathise completely with this situation, at least I think I managed to make him appreciate the gravity of the context through the image of the girl.

During the Heritage Day, empathy was a fundamental tool in the tour called 'Music and Dictatorship'. During this visit, empathy performance was promoted through music, singing and sounds. Eighteen young people participated in the tour. I arrived to this tour when the group had already gone through most of the Museum, but I had the chance to participate in the most interesting part. When I got there, the guide was sitting on a kind of drum, with a bell and a tambourine in his hands. While we were there (in the 'Culture' room, see Figure 16), he started making a music performance, involving the young visitors in the atmosphere of cultural development and resistance that characterised the years of 1988 – 1989. Visitors attentively listened to the music, and some began to dance to the beat of the drum. Then, we all went to the Absence and Memory Room. We surrounded the candles and images, and then we started an intonation the guide taught us, which we began to repeat: 'aaa eee oooo...aaa eee oooo'. He said that we were collecting and

creating positive energies to pay tribute to the victims (see Figure 8), and while he said that, he started playing his instruments. We all followed this rhythm and sang in unison. The sound caught other visitors' attention, who started joining this performance. In the end, a very positive energy was felt among all because we knew we were making a musical tribute to the victims with which we had empathised through a non-conventional way. As one of the visitors told me, "I really felt a very special connection with the victims".

Figure 16. Culture Room (displaying the culture of resistance during the Dictatorship) (author's source).



However, not all visitors perform 'empathy'. There are also performances of indifference, ways in which people clearly express that they do not want to know anything about this past, or do not want to be transformed in any way. The performances of indifference are more common among those who come from environments prone to the dictatorship and among those who hold an 'indifferent memory' - who believe it is better to forget in order to continue living peacefully - (Stern 2009). I once gave a guided tour to a group of school students from a conservative school (associated with the memory of salvation) in which the active indifference of those participating was so obvious that I felt very ridiculous when I realised I was speaking to *no one*. From the fifteen students who were participating, in the middle of the tour, I ended up talking to just one person; consequently, I decided to end the tour and avoid the humiliation of not talking to anyone while at the same time sparing them the boredom of listening to my speech. Later, I had the chance to speak to one of the participants, and she told me that if they came here, it was only as part of the history class, and she thought this topic only served to create more hatred and animosities.

Performances of guilt are also part of the scope of different performances of emotion during the guided tour. Guilt is related to the feeling that something wrong was

done during the visit, or that something wrong has been done in regards to past actions and experiences.

It is very common that guides feel guilty when some visitors cry during the visit or become emotionally unsettled. In my case, sometimes I took visitors to the most sensitive spaces ('torture and repression' and 'Children's pain' rooms) without realising they were already very upset. In this context, if one of my visitors cried, I felt extremely guilty. This feeling also emerges when, as guides, we realise that we have inadvertently hurt somebody with something we have just said. During a visit with victims' relatives, one of the guides told me that:

"Despite the care I had put in my speech, I said just one word that discomfited them...but at the end you know that whatever you say, she had the need to storm into, whatever I said...that is a feeling we recurrently have, because it is not our fault, but we feel guilty anyway"
(Guide No. 1. Author's translation).

In relation to visitors' sense of guilt, it is very common that, after participating in the tour, they feel they were blind to human rights violations and that they did not do "anything" to prevent them when the Regime was in power. In April 2013, at the end of one of my first tours, I was approached by a man of about 38 years who told me that what he had seen in the museum was new to him, and he felt 'guilty' for not having realised before the crimes that were taking place in Chile. Despite his guilt, he said he now felt released from the burden of 'not knowing', and he would do his best to transmit to his children what had happened so that the new generations could reflect upon this traumatic past.

In this chapter, I examined the performances of knowledge, power and emotion in the MMHR's guided tours. Together, these performances reveal the multiple ways in which visitors and guides appropriate the Museum's narrative.

Chapter 6 – Evaluation of Results and Conclusion

In this study I researched the different types of memory performances that take place at the Museum of Memory and Human Rights's guided tours. The results obtained demonstrate the existence of performances of knowledge, performances of power, and performances of emotion. Performances of knowledge relate to those attitudes and acts in which visitors externalise knowledge, memories and testimonies about the recent dictatorial past. They also include complimenting the guide's information, debating, discussing and/or rejecting what the guide is saying. Performances of power are shown in the different power negotiations between the guide and the visitor, and each one's authority to speak about the traumatic past. Finally, performances of emotion demonstrate how visitors and guides use guided tours to reveal and feel catharsis, empathy, indifference and guilt.

Drawing on these performances, this study provides material to investigate visitors, guided tours, guides and the MMHR within another perspective, one that takes into account these spaces and actors as active agents in the creation of meaning, rather than containers or passive recipients of pre-established discourses (Macdonald 2006, 3). In this context, the guide becomes a memory performer, acting not only as a mediator and negotiator, but also as an agent of creation and promotion of memories, who also contests the discourses and enables the spaces for others' performances. As one of the tour guides told me, guides at the MMHR are "*memory DJs*": they manage, synchronise, regulate and create (or suppress) memory negotiations. Consequently, guided tours become spaces of new meanings (or new *music*).

With regard to new perspectives on the Museum of Memory and Human Rights, this study shows that the Museum's importance goes beyond its exhibition or official narrative; through visitors' and guides' performances, it becomes a democratic platform or "microcosm of the wider society" (Shelton 2006, 79) for the unfolding of testimonies and experiences, a forum or, borrowing Clifford's (1997) term, a 'contact zone' in which visitors can enunciate, articulate, assemble, compare and share different memories and points of view. Using Alex Wilde's term, it is a place where 'irruptions of memory' can be seen. In this sense, memorial museums present an ideal context in which to explore these different performances, because, as controversial spaces, they dynamically encourage debates and arguments (see Huyssen 2003, 109). Particularly, the MMHR is a vivid and dynamic space where the 'memory battles' (Illanes 2002) take place, and where Chile's 'memory

box' is performed and opened (Stern 2009, 2012). In other words, the MMHR is used by visitors to perform/construct/socialise their different memory camps. Referring to the field of memorials, Hite points out this idea by saying that they are "lenses into the deep politics of struggle and conflict and a suggestive arenas for imagining democratic practice" (2012, 21).

The methodology used in this research consisted of ethnographic fieldwork (interviews, participant observation, field notes) that took place between May and July 2015 at the MMHR, and also of an autobiographical account of my own experiences as a tour guide. As a researcher, I had to be very conscious of the limitations of this kind of methodology. From a Reflexive Ethnography perspective, in so far the researcher becomes his/her main "key informant", the boundaries between the "insider" and "outsider" become rather diffused (Davies [1998] 2008, 222). I also had to bear in mind that the fact of having experience as a tour guide and having imbued myself completely in this culture does not necessarily guarantee an unlimited and 'real' access to knowledge (Davies [1998] 2008, 228). For this reason, I have decided to complement the autoethnographic data with ethnographic fieldwork in order to obtain a more balanced perspective (both from *insider* as a former guide, and *outsider* as a researcher and visitor). Future investigations should add other materials for data collection, such as visitors' Book of Comments and primary sources such as press.

Hitherto, literature about the MMHR has focused solely on its 'physical context' (its exhibitions), or on its 'legislative' aspect (the Museum's history of creation and its official discourse riddled with political consensus), rather than on its 'social context'. Moreover, until now, no research had focused or analysed visitors' and guides' performances at a South American memorial museum. The originality of my study derives precisely from this new focus, and from the fact that I was a tour guide myself, hence, I had the opportunity to mix up different perspectives in the study of Critical Cultural Heritage: the 'native' (as a former guide), and the 'researcher' and 'visitor' (by participating in tour guides during fieldwork).

Notwithstanding, this does not mean that performances take place only during the Museum's guided tours; rather, they can also occur outside the tour, for instance, in the context of family or individual tours. In addition, it is important to add that the difference between 'knowledge', 'power' and 'emotion' is purely analytical; these categories blend

with and superimpose each other. Furthermore, there are many more types of performances that could be included in future research. For instance, I believe that future investigations could address the role of humour performances during the guided tours. Humour, as a means to engage visitors, is used, of course, not against the victims, but to mock Pinochet or the dictatorship. Also, there is still much to investigate on performances of oblivion: how do visitors use the Museum space, specifically the guided tour, to 'forget' about certain memories or to silence certain narratives?

Bearing this in mind, it must be said that Performance Studies illuminate Critical Heritage Studies with new questions: how are the different performances at heritage sites structured? What are the consequences and effects of these performances for the creation, communication and reinforcement of new identities? (Komitee, S. (n/d), 4). Moreover, Performance Studies reinforce the idea that gave rise to Critical Heritage Studies: the fact that identities are not stable but exist only in constant transformation and change (Harrison 2013). In this line, I argue that the identities and memories of visitors are not static and preconceived, and they do not leave the Museum the same way they entered it, with a steady identity. The Museum offers a platform in which these memories undergo certain changes, they are expanded, articulated and contested, and where narratives are assembled in different ways depending on the social interactions that take place at the guided tour. This does not mean that visitors do not possess previous identities or memories, as that would be an extreme relativism and simplification. Rather, I am interested in highlighting that, although a person can pretend to have a stable narrative about his/her past, the MMHR, throughout the many performances that it hosts, is able to stimulate the transformation of these different memories. Crane has said that "we possess knowledge, which we deploy in the midst of the museum, equally as much as we gain knowledge and experience from the information and objects presented" (2006, 103). Drawing on my results, this dissertation contributes to the idea that this broadening of knowledge takes place not only from the "information and objects presented", but also from the social interactions between visitors and guides in the context of guided tours. Finally, studies on Cultural Memory which understand memory as a constructed narrative about the past, illuminate this research by regarding the Museum as a 'social context' in which Chilean memories about the Dictatorship are dynamically elaborated, presented and performed *in the present*.

With this in mind, this study marks a contribution to Critical Cultural Heritage to the extent that, through the case of the Museum of Memory and Human Rights, it exposes the idea that memorial museums' guided tours are spaces of performances both for visitors and guides. In this sense, what really matters, from a theoretical perspective, is not only the study of exhibitions and their objects, or the building's architecture and underlying official narrative and silences, but also *how* these elements are actively appropriated and used in social practice (Hooper-Greenhill 2006, 374). This becomes particularly important in a context in which memories are still very much contested and alive, as they are in the Chilean case.

In addition, I do not intend to argue that there is always debate, reflection, or deployment of knowledge, power and emotions during the Museum's guided tours. This is not always the case and, in fact, the MMHR's approach have always been rather 'transmissional', focusing on communicating "exact data" and information based on the Truth Commissions. Besides, guides are not always predisposed to initiate or encourage dialogue with visitors (tendency I was familiar with), and visitors are not always communicative. Nevertheless, it is my opinion that however passive they can become, and however official the Museum's discourse is, performances at guided tours are a fundamental part of the Museum experience and, as Larsen and Witfeld have said, the visitor is never completely passive (2013, 100).

In practical terms, my research draws light on the importance of offering spaces at the MMHR for the creation of Heritage, that is, for social interchange and for the sharing of personal experiences. This becomes particularly relevant as there is currently still a great amount of people alive that lived through the period. As demonstrated in this study, guided tours at the MMHR stand in for the need visitors have to share, legitimate, deploy and discover other points of view. This 'need' is quite evident and it must not be avoided by the Museum. On the contrary, this must be promoted and embraced. Already, "the Museum offers the opportunity to talk and express what had been silenced for so long" (Scantlebury 2010, 6). One way to even further accomplish this would be by offering a space - beyond the 'Book of Comments' - for visitors in which they could leave their testimonies. Perhaps, it could be a cabin or a special room where to write or record that experience. Actually, the person who was in charge of the Museum's creation and development told me that the original design included cabins at the end of the exhibition where visitors could tape and video record their testimonies. In my opinion, this is an

excellent idea that should be resumed. However, the Museum should also be aware of the different memory camps and, consequently, take the necessary precautions to avoid offensive comments. Overall, this practical implication means that heritage should be regarded as a social space rather than a static and preconceived place of unchangeable meanings.

Finally, what is the future of this line of research? What is the future of heritage as a performative field? Undoubtedly, it will remain open as to why do guided tours at heritage spaces become platforms for the relief and unravelling of memories, particularly in Chile's case. Is it because of the lack of spaces like this (in a society in which the topic of the dictatorship can still be considered a taboo [Lazzara 2011, 59])? To what extent does the fact that this is still a 'living memory' affects the different performances at the Museum? In this sense, can the Museum be understood as "both remedy and poison", that is, as a positive and negative factor? (Derrida 2004, 70, in Butler 2012, 354). Certainly, this research points to answer these questions affirmatively, but it is still necessary to further investigate these problems and paradoxes. What remains from with this thesis is that the guided tour at the Museum of Memory and Human Rights is and always will be a space of performances.

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